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IMAGES OF MINE WORK  
AMONG NON-MINING MIGRANTS IN DURBAN

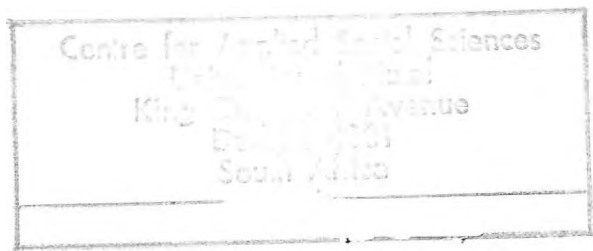
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Centre for Applied Social Sciences  
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Durban  
1977

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Durban

**COMMUNICATION OF THE**  
**CENTRE FOR APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**SENTRUM VIR TOEGEPASTE MAATSKAPLIKE WETENSKAPPE**

**UNIVERSITY OF NATAL**  
**DURBAN**



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CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	(ii)	
LIST OF FIGURES	(iii)	
PREFACE	(iv)	
CHAPTER I	DISPOSITION TOWARD WORKING IN JOHANNESBURG	1
CHAPTER II	DISPOSITION TOWARD WORKING ON THE MINES	8
CHAPTER III	ATTITUDES TOWARD MINE WORK IN RELATION TO OTHER JOBS	26
CHAPTER IV	ACCEPTANCE OF A MINE JOB WITH PAY INCENTIVES	29
CHAPTER V	DIFFERENTIAL ACCEPTANCE OF A JOB ON THE MINES	33
5.1	The Transkeian Case	33
5.2	Age Differentials	35
5.3	Mining Experience	41
5.4	The Composite Image of Johannesburg and Mine Work	43
5.5	Minor Differentials	44
CHAPTER VI	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	48
REFERENCES		52
APPENDIX		53
Table A1		54
Table A2		56
Table A3		57
Table A4		58

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1	How Respondents Feel About Working in Johannesburg	2
TABLE 2	Consideration of Working on the Mines in the Past	8
TABLE 3	Knowledge of Mine Work	10
TABLE 4	Associations to Working on the Mines	11
TABLE 5	Relationship Between Negative Factors Associated With Johannesburg and With the Mines	24
TABLE 6	Rating of "Worst" Job	26
TABLE 7	Acceptance of a Hypothetical Mine Job Which Pays Cash Wages Equal to Those in Factories	29
TABLE 8	Qualifications for Acceptance/Refusal of a Mine Job Which Pays Cash Wages Equal to Those in Factories	31
TABLE 9	Attitudes Toward Working in Johannesburg and on the Mines by District of Origin	34
TABLE 10a	Attitudes Toward Working on the Mines by Age (All Respondents)	36
TABLE 10b	Attitudes Toward Working on the Mines by Age (Zulu Respondents Only)	37
TABLE 11	Attitudes of Former Miners and Migrants With No Mining Experience Toward Working on the Mines	42
TABLE 12	The Relationship Between Consideration of Working on the Mines in the Past and Current Attitudes Toward Johannesburg and the Mines	45
TABLE 13	The Relationship Between Acceptance of a Fictitious Equal Pay Mine Job and Attitudes Toward Johannesburg and the Mines	47

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1	Factors Involved in Migration	6
FIGURE 2	Negative "Mine" Factors	23
FIGURE 3	Percentage Positive Attitudes Toward Working in Johannesburg and on the Mines by Age and Ethnic Origin	38
FIGURE 4	Age Differentiated Migratory Flows of Zulus and Transkeians	40
FIGURE 5	Factors Involved in Migration	50

PREFACE

In this report the disposition of migrant labour in Durban toward working farther afield is assessed and some of the motivating factors involved in job selectivity are discussed. For this purpose a cross-section of contract workers currently residing in Durban was interviewed during the period May 1976 to June 1977. Representatives of two major industrial sectors - railway and dock workers - are not included in our inquiry as they are still in the process of being surveyed. The 496 male workers contributing to our study are recruited from all corners of Natal and the Transkei, and represent a wide range of age and educational groups. The exact distributions for district of origin, age and education are given in the appendix to this report.

It needs to be added that interviews were very lengthy (2 - 4 hour), and were of the intensive focussed interview type, involving careful probing in 'open-ended' questions. Great efforts have been made to establish good rapport with respondents.

Due to the impossibility of establishing an adequate sampling frame for migrant workers in Durban, the sample is of a 'quota' type. Care has been exercised to avoid selectivity in approaching Africans for interviews. The refusal rate has been low - under 5 per cent.

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## CHAPTER I

### DISPOSITION TOWARD WORKING IN JOHANNESBURG

Initially our respondents were asked to air their views on working in Johannesburg. Although any urban centre offering jobs at a distance might have been selected for this purpose, the choice of Johannesburg has two advantages. Firstly, apart from being the largest industrial centre accessible to South African labour, Johannesburg may theoretically be considered the urban centre immediately superordinate to Durban. Secondly, for practical purposes Johannesburg is located near the mines and ultimately we shall wish to expose our respondents' attitudes toward working on the mines.

The first impression gained from observing respondents' reaction to our question, is that Johannesburg is closely associated with the mines. In our respondents' eyes any person leaving home for Johannesburg will be going off to the mines.

Table 1 depicts our respondents' reactions to the proposition of working in Johannesburg. Roughly one in twelve respondents would like to work in Johannesburg, and one in fifteen respondents would only work in Johannesburg under certain conditions. However, the majority of the sample respondents reject the proposition.

Although qualifications to positive and conditional acceptance of work in Johannesburg must be regarded perhaps as idiosyncratic responses due to the small numbers involved, it is still worthwhile reviewing them for interest's sake. Positive responses to work in Johannesburg are elicited from those persons who hold a favourable view of Johannesburg and would welcome the opportunity of seeing the city for themselves. Judging from hearsay, job and wage opportunities are abundant and a range of extra benefits is offered to those migrating there.

TABLE 1

HOW RESPONDENTS FEEL ABOUT WORKING IN JOHANNESBURG

(Assuming they can get the same job/same pay as they have at present)

	%
would work in Johannesburg	7,9
would work in Johannesburg under certain conditions	6,5
would not like to work in Johannesburg	85,7
	100,1
no information	1
Qualifications *	percentage of sample
<u>positive response</u> N = 39	<u>total</u> N = 495
unqualified	3,4
positive association with Johannesburg	1,2
enthusiasm	0,8
previous own (or vicarious) experience	0,8
age, marital status advantageous	0,8
contacts, friends	0,6
new experience	0,6
location	0,4
job, wage opportunities	0,4
fringe benefits	0,4
local disincentives	0,4
climate	0,2
undecided	0,2
other	0,2
<u>conditional response</u> N = 32	
good wages	4,2
type of work	1,2
in desperation	0,6
fringe benefits	0,6
on a temporary basis	0,4
same employer	0,4
employment for wife	0,2
under specific circumstances	0,2

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TABLE 1 continued

<u>negative response</u> N = 424	
unqualified	7,0
distance	35,2
separation from family, home	14,7
age, health prohibitive	9,2
travel expenses	7,3
strange environment	4,0
family obligations	3,6
negative associations with Johannesburg	3,4
emphatic negation	3,4
rough environment	2,8
expense, high cost of living	2,8
local ties to job and friends	2,6
previous own (or vicarious) experience	2,6
poor pay	1,4
reluctant to be uprooted	1,2
political atmosphere	1,0
personal reasons	0,6
alternative plans	0,6
climate	0,6
never considered Johannesburg	0,4
multiple ethnic groups	0,4
urban status	0,2
* multiple qualifications	

For young, single men with contacts or friends to receive them at their destination, the trip to Johannesburg might appear particularly opportune. Unfavourable circumstances at the present place of work might also motivate men to leave Durban for Johannesburg. The Rand may appear even closer to home than Durban, if a migrant originates from an area in northern Natal.

Conditional responses emphasize the attraction of good wage and job opportunities and certain benefits such as secure accommodation. In some cases the preferred type of work and the employer may be

specified. A few respondents would 'give Johannesburg a try' for a short period of time or if they were in desperate need of a job.

In short, Johannesburg may appear more attractive to the younger, more mobile migrant whose enthusiasm for new work experience can most easily be aroused. The relationship between age and reaction to work in Johannesburg consistently supports this notion, but the trend is statistically not significant.

- *I would love this (work in Johannesburg) very much, because I so wish to see Johannesburg instead of hearing others bragging about having been there.*
- *I would like this, because I would have a chance of seeing this famous place while I am still young and not married.*

Looking at the more numerous qualifications for not wanting to work in Johannesburg, we find that distance is the chief obstacle. Over one-third of the entire sample would not wish to work at such a distance. In a similar vein a sizeable proportion of our respondents are reluctant to be separated from their families and home for long periods of time. Related to the distance factor is the expense involved in travelling. Advanced age and deteriorating health tend to magnify the disadvantages of being away from the care and protection of the home for long. Travelling long stretches is more strenuous for elderly migrants. Moreover, some senior Durban workers feel they have gained a foothold in their local urban centre. Persons who are used to their current jobs would be loathe to leave their families behind, and to have to start afresh in new, unfamiliar surroundings.

- *I don't want this (work in Johannesburg), because I would be far away from home. I love my family, so I can't be free and happy if I were away from it.*
- *Seeing them (wife and children) once a month is painful enough - once a year would be worse.*

- *Say one of my children fell ill or died, I'd come home when grass has grown over the grave.*
- *Imagine my coming home only to find my children already buried.*
- *I would be in a strange place among people who do not know me. Who knows, they might even kill me.*
- *If I went to Johannesburg, I would be as good as lost; I would be far away from home.*
- *Wages would be the same, yet Johannesburg is very far.*
- *If I work in Durban I can afford to see my family; I could not if I was working in Johannesburg.*
- *I would not go to Johannesburg, now that I am a family man.*
- *I would not go to Johannesburg as I have been there and besides I feel it is too far from my family.*
- *I would not go, because I have never been to Johannesburg.*

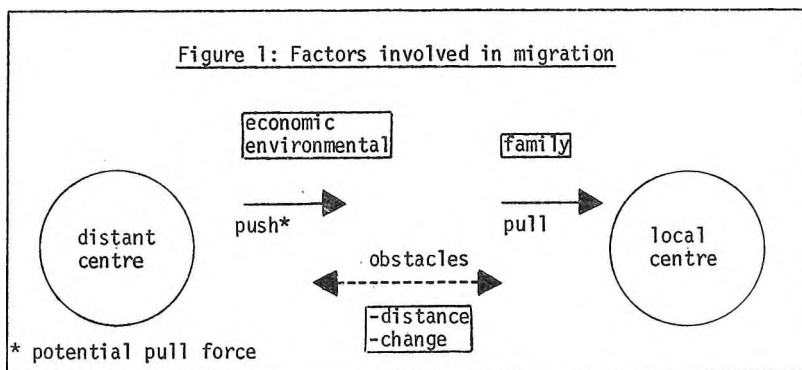
Johannesburg may appeal to the few who view it positively as an exciting, trendy and sophisticated place full of opportunity, but to the majority of respondents Johannesburg is forbidding and evil. Johannesburg assumes this negative image partly because it is an unknown quantity and partly because it is renowned for its large size, fast pace of living and foremost its toughness and violence. It is also said that Johannesburg is expensive and the wages paid there are poor. Some antagonists simply declare they hate Johannesburg for no reason at all. The remainder of qualifications refer to various other negative aspects of living in the capital city and to personal reasons for not wanting to work there.

In order to obtain an overview of the negative factors preventing local migrants from seeking work at the Johannesburg centre, we may summarize and order the factors according to their weighted

qualifications as follows:

Negative 'Johannesburg' factors
family separation
distance
economic
environmental
age
change

When assigning survey responses to the various factors, it was observed that the factors tend to be interrelated. Sorting out the factors according to conventional 'push-pull', 'gravitational' and life-cycle models of migration,<sup>1)</sup> one might equate the family factor with a 'pull' force pertaining to the local centre and the economic and environmental factors with forces pertaining to the distant centre (cf. Figure 1). Distance and change may be envisaged as obstacles to be overcome when moving from the local to the distant centre. The age/health factor tends to act as an amplifier which shifts the weight of factors and their perceived interrelationships in the course of a lifetime.



1) Cp. Wilson 1972; Zipf 1946; Stouffer 1962; Galle, Taeuber 1966; Tarver 1961; Lee 1969; Mitchell 1969.

In the case of our sample, what should theoretically operate as a 'pull' force attracting migration to the distant Johannesburg centre, in actual fact detracts from migration. The potential 'pull' force acts as a 'push' force inasmuch as our respondents do not consider Johannesburg attractive for economic or general environmental reasons. There is a feeling among our respondents that Johannesburg wages should be sufficiently high to compensate Natal migrants for the financial and emotional strain of having to travel long distances and visiting their homes irregularly. On the other hand, the attachment to their families and homes pulls migrants closer to the local centre. It is observed that respondents measure the distance to be overcome in both physical and social terms: the increasing number of kilometres means extended separation from home and family. Age tends to exaggerate the exhaustion involved in travelling long distances and intensifies the reluctance to leave one's family behind. Whereas a youth will eagerly accept the challenge of a new job and a new environment, the more senior person is more circumspect when it comes to changing the habits of a lifetime, especially if he has already secured himself a local position.

CHAPTER IIDISPOSITION TOWARD WORKING ON THE MINES

In many respects working on the mines may be considered to be a special case of working in Johannesburg. We may expect that factors attracting or repelling local workers to join the Johannesburg work force may be equally valid for recruitment to the mines.

In a first instance a suggestive cue was given to respondents merely to test spontaneous reaction to the thought of working on the mines. Fieldworkers were instructed to give a verbatim version of interviewees' responses.

Table 2 indicates that almost three-quarters of our respondents have never considered working on the mines in the past.

TABLE 2CONSIDERATION OF WORKING ON THE MINES IN THE PAST

<u>response categories in order of increasing consideration</u>	<u>%</u>
strong negative attitude	24,4
no consideration	53,4
brief consideration	6,7
conditional consideration	2,6
serious consideration (inclusive mining experience)	<u>12,9</u>
	100,0

Judging from the tone of their responses, at least one-quarter of interviewees strongly oppose any suggestion of mine work. Approximately 7 per cent of the sample report that they had on one occasion fleetingly thought of working on the mines. Such a brief consideration of taking a mining job would usually occur in youthful days before respondents joined the Durban work force. A very small proportion of the sample might have considered mine work if certain conditions had obtained. As these conditions could not be fulfilled, they had meanwhile looked for work elsewhere. Some members of the 'conditional' group imply that they might reconsider working on the mines under changing circumstances. Approximately 13 per cent of our sample have seriously considered working on the mines; in fact 60 of the 64 men in this group have actually taken up a job on the mines at some stage of their migrant career.

- *I can't consider a job if I know nothing about its nature, because I may get there and find it's too heavy or low paying for me and leave it. That would be spoiling my pass for future instances.*
- *I have never been near thinking that way and my mind has never reached there.*
- *I would have worked there when I was still young and brave. Now I think of the mine shafts falling on me.*

When giving their views on mine work the majority of the respondents make no specific mention of the source of information which has assisted them in forming an opinion of the miner's job (cf. Table 3). Just under one-fifth of the sample refers to anonymous hearsay or the media, mainly radio and newspapers, when discussing mines. Only a fraction of the sample mention that they know about working on the mines from people in their home district, or from friends and relatives. Some few persons in this group have come into contact with the mines through a father, brother or uncle who works or has worked there. The last group comprises those men who have actually worked on the mines and is

almost identical with those categorized as 'seriously' having considered mine work above.

TABLE 3

KNOWLEDGE OF MINE WORK

<u>response categories in order of increasing knowledge</u>	<u>%</u>
no experience/knowledge cited	62,3
indirect experience/knowledge through hearsay, media	18,8
vicarious experience through homemates, relatives, friends	4,4
next of kin is/was mine worker	2,2
personal experience on mines	<u>12,3</u>
	100,0

- *I have always read about accidents, accidents all the time.*
- *I know every job can be dangerous, but in this case I should admit I am a coward. I have heard terrible stories about mine workers buried underground.*
- *When I grew up I used to hear frightening stories about mine work. They were related by people who had worked there before, so I decided that the mines were not for me.*
- *I used to hear about mine disasters when I was a small boy and I made up my mind that I would never work there.*
- *Radio Bantu tells a lie when it says that you can buy a car within three months. I have worked there for more than three months, but where is the car?*

To sum up, we may assume that little consideration has been



given to mine work by our sample respondents in the past and opinions formed on working on the mines are largely based on hearsay and media reports.

The survey responses to this initial probe and to further more specific questions related to a job on the mines were subjected to a content analysis and the items which emerged are listed in Table 4.

TABLE 4

ASSOCIATIONS TO WORKING ON THE MINES

N = 496 positive items* related to working on the mines	Sample percentage referring to item
fringe benefits	2,6
good wages	2,4
day work acceptable	1,6
access to jobs, job opportunities	1,4
opportunities to save	1,4
working hours	0,8
working conditions/reasons at work	0,8
has/had contacts at the mines	0,8
prestige/custom	0,6
opportunity to gain experience	0,4
work for young, healthy men	0,4
propinquity to Johannesburg	0,2
<u>negative items related to working on the mines</u>	
danger to life and limb	52,8
underground work	34,7
cave/tomb symbolism, live burial	30,6
strenuous work	26,6
family separation, visiting/communication difficulties	22,2

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TABLE 4 continued

<u>negative items related to working on the mines (continued)</u>	
physical distance from home	21,6
danger to health	16,3
poor pay	12,3
contract system	11,3
working conditions (apart from underground work)	10,9
unspecified danger	9,3
mine work not suitable for the old, weak, unhealthy	8,3
fear of isolation, estrangement, concern for those left behind	8,1
working hours	7,7
dislike of mines or Johannesburg	7,7
no experience/knowledge	7,1
rough environment (faction fights, strikes)	5,4
lack of local tradition, no parental consent or recommendation	5,2
regulations, restrictions, loss of personal freedom, exploitation	4,4
low prestige work	4,2
occupational mobility, job opportunities limited	3,8
no compensation in case of injury or death/no welfare benefits	3,4
multiple ethnicity of work force	3,4
living conditions in general and compound system	3,2
<u>items contributing to attitudes toward working on the mines</u>	
job insecurity	2,8
habit, accustomed to working in Durban	2,8
work for desperate people	2,8
other: (mainly superstitious and religious beliefs)	2,4
family obligations	2,0
no Johannesburg or mine contacts/unfamiliarity with mine work	1,6
poor treatment, lack of fringe benefits	1,4
climate	0,4
* multiple responses	

It can readily be seen that the positive items listed at the top of the table are only supported by very few respondents and must be regarded as rather idiosyncratic opinions. Positive aspects of working

on the mines include the fringe benefits offered and the relatively good wages which were paid to miners during a certain period in the past. Day work and certain other work-related aspects of the job are referred to in positive terms. Job accessibility and the opportunity to save are appreciated in some instances. Mine work is attractive to those persons who have contacts on the mines or for whom a job on the mines confers prestige.

*I worked there for two years. It was customary for Basothos to go to the mines to earn a living after initiation after we had stopped herding cattle. We enjoyed mine work because it was our first job and there were quite a number of us. We were well accommodated, well protected by indunas, were well fed. Food was plentiful. Although we knew about the inevitability of danger, that did not preoccupy us, because we were strengthened at home so we knew our ancestors were with us all the time.*

The support given to negative factors is far more substantial. An average of 3,4 negative items is enumerated by each respondent. This is very high by social survey standards and bespeaks of high negative significance for mine work. Items relating to danger to life and limb head the list. Danger of an unspecified nature and danger to health are found further down the list. The hazards and discomforts involved in underground work are feared by at least one-third of respondents. A further third envisage the mine shaft as a tomb which guarantees certain instant death or the prolonged agony of being isolated from the outside world with little chance of being rescued. Exacerbated by the difficult working conditions, the work itself is strenuous and dirty, and hours are long. The wages paid on the mines are regarded as a pittance *in relation* to the task which has to be performed under conditions of danger and family deprivation. Equipment ranging from the lifeline lift to the miner's own torch may be faulty and this adds to the perceived danger. The heavy machinery used in excavating constitutes yet another risk factor according to some respondents.

- *Mines are killers.*
- *People are dying day in, day out.*
- *People get killed like flies.*
- *It's only your ancestors who can save you ... and you can never be sure of their protection, because some might have been offended by you at some stage.*
- *There are slim chances of detecting the looming danger. Death is unavoidable.*
- *(There are) a lot of unnecessary accidents (on the mines) and their standards have deteriorated from bad to worse.*
- *There is nothing good about the mines, there is such a high accident risk that one is always grateful to be alive at the end of the day.*
- *People get lost, trapped and isolated from fellow workmates.*
- *At times, should one lose one's torch, one might lose one's way and die.*
- *Mine work is the toughest job I have ever seen...the rocks falling inside the mines...or to be knocked down by the truck inside the mines...or to be locked inside the cage in a shaft and it may take days before you are rescued...that is if you are fortunate.*
- *People who have been there have scratches all over their bodies because of exposure to sharp rocks.*
- *You work in darkness with a safety lamp.*
- *...carrying a torch on one's forehead and crawling along to dig rocks above...*
- *When you work on the mines you have to inhale a lot of dust in each and every second.*
- *People either disappear in them (the mines) or are bitten by big ground rats.*
- *I contracted TB whilst working on the mines and was ruined. I cannot take any job now because of ill*

health.

- *The week-end days are not observed but taken as ordinary days of the week.*

A second important group of negative items concerns the distance of the mines from the homes of migrants and the consequent separation of the miners from their families. Some respondents know they would pine for those close to them and express anxiety about estrangement or isolation from their families at home. In the case of a fatal accident on the mines this excommunication would be permanent.

- *By being away from home for long periods, I would keep thinking of home and be unable to do anything about it. It would be a frustrating experience.*
- *Their (miners') families don't even know where to find their bones.*
- *In fact, in the old days relatives and parents were very much against mine work. They would literally shed tears if their children left for the mines, because this would always keep them in suspense - waiting for bad news all the time.*
- *I always imagine the rocks falling and my being buried alive where my children won't even see my grave. Many people who go there seldom come back and we never know what happened to them; very few ever come back. When they do come back their wives have left the home.*

The contract system tends to strengthen negative attitudes toward the mines. For instance, the contract system epitomizes the severance of the migrant from his family. It is resented for the hold it takes of the worker. Together with what are perceived as low rates of pay, the contract system is regarded as a powerful instrument of oppression and exploitation in the eyes of some respondents. The feeling expressed is that the heartless employer may compel the worker from responding to his impulsive decision to return home prematurely by

threatening to withhold wages. Attitudes toward the duration of the contract period itself are ambiguous. On the one hand the contract period is too long in that it prolongs the period away from home. On the other hand it is too short to guarantee job stability or a permanent, albeit migrant career.

- *I regard it as a job of oppression. To me work on the mines is like digging one's grave at all times.*
- *I would not work on the mines as I think of them as a place of punishment.*
- *Oh no, me to go and work on the mines as if I had murdered somebody, not in my lifetime.*
- *Mines are semi-slavery camps.*
- *I may die before even getting paid if I am unlucky.*
- *People are treated roughly because they can't break their contracts before expiry.*
- *I wouldn't like to be depersonalized. One works under harsh supervision. One has no personal initiative - is not part of the establishment, but a tool in the hands of management and the foreman who always "knows the Bantu". I still want to live as a human being.*
- *Workers are not shown their production in the final stage which dispirits one's ego.*
- *I have not noticed any betterment among people from the mines. Most of them come back as invalids without any money - with nothing save the ugly mine uniform.*

The fact that mine work can only be adequately performed by young, strong and healthy men is frequently stressed by those persons, who, by their own assessment, are not eligible for work on the mines for this very reason.

A small number of respondents express categorical dislike of

the mines or Johannesburg, an attitude which can usually not be qualified further. Johannesburg and especially the mines also have a reputation for being tough places to live in; for instance faction fights and strikes are notorious in the eyes of some migrants.

- *People there are rough and short-tempered.*

Although reference to mine work as being non-customary in an abstract sense is seldom made, a number of respondents, predominantly Zulus, report that they have never been tempted to join the work force on the mines because there are no miners in their district to emulate. This lack of a local tradition would also mean that there would be few 'home boys' to welcome new mine recruits at their destination and to initiate them into the way of life on the mines. A factor closely related to the lack of a local mining tradition is that mine work carries little prestige for some respondents.

- *There was no reason to travel long distances when there was work here in Durban. Even where I come from I don't remember a single person who mentioned mines or is working in the mines. We all started in the kitchens here in Durban.*
- *No one in my family has ever worked there and that goes to prove that the mines have never been a suitable place for any sensible person.*
- *People laugh at a person who works on the mines.*
- *Even if I meet death there, people would simply laugh at me as a bloody foolish man.*
- *My friends would laugh at me that I am working for the mines.*
- *I'd be ashamed to tell my parents.*

A series of less frequently mentioned items remains to be enumerated. Few opportunities for occupational mobility are perceived on the mines. According to some interviewees, mine work for Blacks is

limited to underground work with little chance of improving oneself. In fact, the contract system is seen as an artificial mechanism which obviates promotion being awarded for continued service.

- *(An ex-miner:) I realised I would only be a labourer and that meant working underground. It is all right for those working in offices and such places.*
- *I do not like the mines because their jobs have no promotion for Blacks.*
- *They propagate the worst ethnic separation; people sleep at compounds of their ethnic group and certain work is done by people of a certain ethnic group.*
- *(Contract periods) are short to get rid of one immediately, so as to avoid an increment or a pension fund. And you are always on a new contract and start with the same wages as you earned before.*

Several respondents resent the fact that to their knowledge no compensation would be paid to the bereaved in the case of their being injured or meeting their death on the mines. Under such circumstances exposure to danger seems pointless. If a man is the sole breadwinner, he simply cannot afford to take up mine work and leave his family without support in the case of his meeting ill fate on the mines.

- *My two uncles died when the mine collapsed and my father had to look after their five wives and twelve children, and the responsibility affected my father very much; there were too many people to support.*
- *I do not wish to die at this early age when I have not seen much. No, even if they were to trade me as a slave, I would not go there. When people die in the mines, they are not compensated; they cheat them and pay very little money.*
- *To work under the terrible risk of the mine collapsing is worst. The worst part of it is that my family will never get anything. Nobody will care.*



Multiple ethnicity is usually seen in connection with faction fighting, but some respondents feel they would have difficulty in communicating with persons who speak another language and have different customs. Multiple ethnicity tends to raise doubts about the individual capacity for adapting to a strange environment and unfamiliar work.

- *I would be working among foreigners.*
- *Besides, many people speak funny languages there which I do not understand.*
- *I am told the place is too cosmopolitan and there is so much witchcraft, my uncle worked there and came back mentally unbalanced.*

Living conditions, especially the communal living in the mine compound, are unacceptable to some respondents. Migrants who have grown accustomed to a freer residential environment, tend to resent the encapsulated type of life in a compound. They do not feel they could subject themselves to its regimentation and perversions even if they once experienced them in the past.

- *Mine accommodation is as good as staying in barracks and people are packed like sardines.*
- *Your free time is spent doing nothing in the compound.*
- *(An ex-miner:) Life there is tough. There are no girls allowed in there. You have males as girl friends. I just cannot start that life again.*

Due to such negative factors as low pay, low prestige, and hard work under dangerous conditions, mine work is considered a job for desperate people. At the same time this implies that a mine job is easily accessible, always waiting for those prepared to stoop low enough. If this high accessibility is seen as a positive aspect of mine work by some of our respondents, others are aware of its negative implications: Employers who hire quickly, tend to fire with equal facility.

A few respondents, especially older ones, react to our cue on a personal level. They reject the proposal of working on the mines because it would mean uprooting themselves and leaving a familiar job, familiar faces and the habits of a lifetime.

Only a very small proportion of the sample sees the benefits on the mines as insufficient (apart from inadequate accident insurance). On the contrary, the abundance of fringe benefits are even seen as false trappings displayed to attract the unsophisticated recruit. In some cases workers fear their superordinates will misuse the total control over workers in hostels and disregard any grievances arising in the work situation.

A residual category includes some diverse items. A disinclination to take up mine work may stem from religious or superstitious convictions. In the latter case the belief in mine ghosts may intensify respondents' fear of danger and exploitation.

- *People disappear and are discovered by a ghost who keeps them for days or forever.*
- *The safety lamp at times switches off and I am told that when this occurs and miners are at a corner where no one can see them, ghosts come and take charge of the workers. I know of a man whose side of the face was discoloured and it was asserted that a ghost hit him.*
- *I have heard enough of the mines with the white ghosts that exist there...of bad Whites who disappear with people at times. (According to the field-worker's report the respondent believes mine ghosts are white because if a White dies whilst working in the mines, he is so used to commanding Blacks that he cannot stop, and continues to haunt the living Blacks, even after death.)*

To summarize our respondents' attitudes toward working on the mines, we see that the distance and family factors are very strong, but

the danger factor overrides them. Danger is seen to be extreme in that it verges on suicide if one knowingly exposes oneself to the risks or certain death awaiting one at the mines. Moreover this type of suicide is seldom viewed as the altruistic act of the desperate man struggling to feed his starving family at home. It is the nonsensical act of the foolhardy man who is easy bait for an exploitative system such as the mines; a man who will unwittingly leave his dependents without support for the rest of their lives.

- *People are recruited to go and die there.*
- *I don't think a sober person can sign a contract of death and risk his life for the mines.*
- *I'm not a fool to go and bury myself alive.*
- *I don't want to go to the grave with both eyes open.*
- *I can't go to death on my two legs.*
- *Working for the mines is sacrificing one's life for nothing, even if they paid R1 000.*
- *It would be like marrying death. I can't sacrifice my life.*
- *Danger is unpredictable and there is no escape.*
- *I have no hope of coming out of the mine alive.*
- *It's no place to work if you still want to live longer. That's hell in the true sense of the word.*
- *No, never, because I don't have two lives, only one. I could not sacrifice my only life to the mines because there death is unavoidable, it has to come.*

It will also be noted that mine work is automatically associated with underground work, which is seen as intrinsically dangerous. Resistance to descending below surface may also be given additional support and rationalisation by the local belief system.

- *Even the idea of working underground is repulsive.*

- *When I think of being underground, I think of suffocation.*
- *Working underground is not healthy; you do not see the natural sunshine. Beneath the ground there is no natural fresh air. Many things underground are artificial.*
- *I have heard there are dangerous animals underground which might harm people.*
- *I am not happy about going underground. I am not scared of death, yet I am scared of the lift... and I am told lifts are the sole means of transport in the mines.*
- *I would hate getting into the hole...I don't know why. I have no specific reason. It's not that it's dangerous, because danger is intrinsic to any job.*
- *God made me to dwell on earth not under, so I fear to work underground.*
- *It is not a Zulu custom to go underground whilst one is still alive.*
- *By Zulu tradition one is not supposed to enter any hole while one is still alive. One only enters the grave when one is already dead or when one helps to lower the coffin into the grave. Entering a hole under normal circumstances has bad consequences... I have also been told that people who belong to my clan are not allowed to enter any hole.*

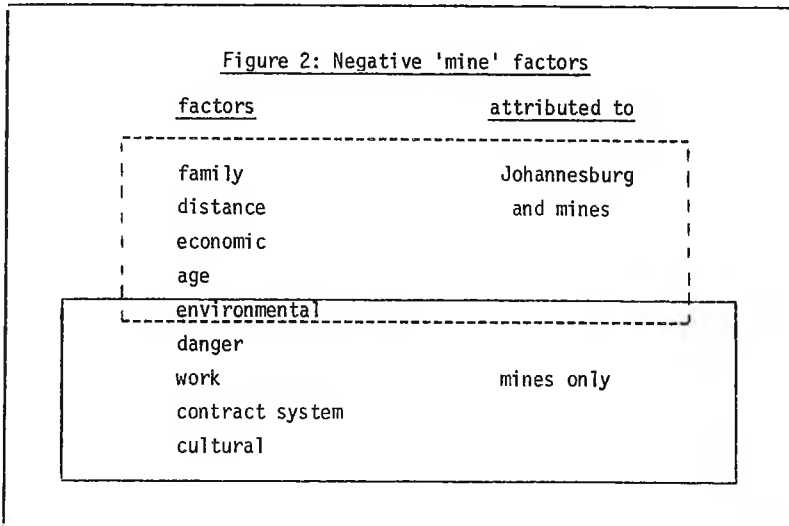
Returning to the proposition introduced at the outset of this section, we may attempt to demonstrate that the image of the mines held by our respondents is at least partially shaped by attitudes toward the location of the mines near Johannesburg.<sup>1)</sup> If we condense the negative

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1) Consider that this fused imagery is consistent with the linguistic connection between Johannesburg, which is referred to as 'Egoli' or place of gold in the vernacular - and the gold mines.

It is also worth noting that the title given to the recruiting film shown during the more recent propaganda campaign initiated by the Chamber of Mines is 'Egoli' (Kane - Berman 1976:41).

items related to working on the mines to a limited number of factors, we find that the set contains the 'Johannesburg' factors listed above, plus a number of 'mine' specific factors (cf. Figure 2).



One might say that attitudes toward mines are composed of a combination of Johannesburg and mine specific factors. The '*family*', '*distance*', '*economic*', '*age*' and '*environmental*' factors can be assigned to the encompassing Johannesburg setting, but are also relevant for the mines. The items referring to the specific mine '*environment*', '*danger*', '*working conditions*', the '*contract system*', and '*cultural*' inhibitions toward working on the mines' are combined in factors which are valid only for the mine context.<sup>1)</sup>

1) It will be noted that the 'change' factor from the 'Johannesburg' factor set has been eliminated from the 'mine' set. Due to the wider range of factors contained in the 'mine' set, items related to change can meaningfully be subsumed under other factor headings.

TABLE 5

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEGATIVE FACTORS  
ASSOCIATED WITH JOHANNESBURG AND WITH THE MINES

mine factors* (figures in lower triangle)		Johannesburg factors* (figures in upper triangle)						
		dis- tance	family	age/ health	econ- omic	environ- mental	change	
distance	N=95	N=196	N=601	N=147	N=122	N=112	N=77	
		25,3	44,2	6,3	15,8	5,3	3,2	100,1
family	N=91	12,2	7,0	4,1	12,3	4,5	3,9	7,6
		15,4	62,6	7,7	7,7	1,1	5,5	100,0
age/health	N=37	7,1	9,5	4,8	5,7	0,9	6,5	7,3
		10,8	37,8	35,1	5,4	2,7	8,1	99,9
economic	N=66	2,0	2,3	8,8	1,6	0,9	3,9	2,9
		12,1	42,4	16,7	9,1	15,2	4,5	100,0
environ- mental	N=82	4,1	4,7	7,5	4,9	8,9	3,9	5,3
		11,0	47,6	13,4	11,0	11,0	6,1	100,1
culture	N=79	4,6	6,5	7,5	7,4	8,0	6,5	6,5
		15,2	51,9	8,9	6,3	10,1	7,6	100,0
danger	N=425	6,1	6,8	4,8	4,1	7,1	7,8	6,3
		17,4	43,8	8,9	12,7	9,6	7,5	99,9
work	N=299	37,8	30,9	25,9	44,3	36,6	41,6	33,9
		14,7	52,8	12,4	5,7	8,0	6,4	100,0
contract system	N=81	22,4	26,3	25,2	13,9	21,4	24,7	23,8
		8,6	44,4	21,0	8,6	16,0	1,2	99,8
		3,6	6,0	11,6	5,7	11,6	1,3	6,5
		15,6	47,9	11,7	9,7	8,9	6,1	99,9
		99,9	100,0	100,2	99,9	99,9	100,1	100,1

N=1255

\* multiple responses

Judging from the combined weight of the 'mine' factors and those inherited from the 'Johannesburg' set, it is small wonder that mine work is rejected by our respondents. Mine work is tainted by two sets of mutually supporting characteristics.

The distribution in a cross-tabulation of the negative aspects of Johannesburg and those of the mines supports the proposition of an intimate relationship between the Johannesburg and mine images on the level of the individual respondent (cf. Table 5). The mine-specific 'danger' and 'work' factors tend to dominate the distribution pattern of answers in the mine work-related answers, but the closely associated 'family' and 'distance' factors from the Johannesburg set re-emerge strongly in the 'mine' pattern.

CHAPTER IIIATTITUDES TOWARD MINE WORK IN RELATION TO OTHER JOBS

In the section above it has been demonstrated that working on the mines can be regarded as a particular instance of working in Johannesburg. In this section it is analogously proposed that mine work can be treated as a specific type of work removed from a series of similarly unpopular jobs. In order to check the rank position of the miner's job among other assumedly unpleasant jobs, respondents were requested to select the 'worst' or the 'most unpleasant' job from a standard set of jobs which was read to them twice. The rank order of these jobs, which is given in Table 6, is obtained by pooling individual votes for the 'worst' job.

TABLE 6RATING OF "WORST" JOB

(Assuming wages are the same for each job)

<u>most unpleasant, worst job</u>	<u>%</u>
miner in gold-mines	48,8
labourer in sugar-cane fields	23,0
gardener at a house	7,3
labourer on the roads	6,7
labourer in construction/building	5,2
cleaner in a building	2,0
factory worker on machines	0,6
miner and other job equally unpleasant	1,8
two other jobs equally unpleasant	0,2
all jobs equally unpleasant	2,6
all jobs acceptable as such	0,8
no choice	1,0
	<u>100,0</u>



Although the order of topics discussed during the interview session may have influenced the respondents' choice to some extent, the job of the miner in the gold-mines is without doubt the 'worst' job in the opinion of our sample. The cane cutter follows closely, and the gardener, road worker and construction worker receive smaller percentages of votes for being unpleasant. Securing only three votes, the factory worker's job cannot be considered a lowly esteemed job and might be excluded from the set.<sup>1)</sup>

Not all respondents were in a position to cast a decisive vote. A small sample proportion selected two very unpleasant jobs from the set and more often than not, the mining job was one of the two chosen. All jobs in the set were regarded as unpleasant by a slightly higher proportion of respondents. It is interesting to note that some members of this group regard the earning capacity of a job as all important and would disregard the nature of the job entirely. Among those persons not making a choice, one respondent questions the validity of the exercise. He points out that any migrant faced with a fictitious choice from a set comprising only unpleasant jobs is in a marginal position in the first place. Any 'choice' made by the marginal migrant is 'forced' under such circumstances.

- *For instance, I am working here not for milk or honey; conditions are terrible here, but I am working because I am suffering. When I'm suffering I can't choose anything, I'll take what I'm being offered.*
- *I do not think there is a job which is worse than others. It all depends on what one makes out of a job. I do not think a starving man has a choice.*

The reasons for selecting the miner's job as the worst one in

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1) Identical items were included in the sets of 'best' (not discussed in this report) and 'worst' jobs for methodological reasons, to aid in estimating the prestige gap between the two sets. The factory worker is one such item.

the set are incorporated into the list of negative items shown on Table 4 and discussed above. No formal analysis of qualifications to the selection of the other jobs in the set has been attempted to date, but judging from first impressions it is most likely that the 'danger' and 'family separation' factors are decisive when it comes to rating the miner's job as the 'worst' one. Although danger and/or unpleasant working conditions may also be attributed to the other jobs<sup>1)</sup> in the set, the horror of being buried alive and the two-fold separation from home in time and space is extreme in the case of the miner's job.

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1) Cleaners are frequently assigned window cleaning tasks on high rise buildings by our respondents. The cleaner's job is therefore associated with the danger of falling from great heights.

CHAPTER IVACCEPTANCE OF A MINE JOB WITH PAY INCENTIVES

Despite the general observation that the majority of respondents are negatively disposed toward the mines, it remains to discover whether migrant workers in Natal might be induced to accept a mine job if certain incentives were provided. Would a mine job which pays cash wages equal to those paid in factories be attractive to our respondents? Sample response to this hypothetical proposition is shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7ACCEPTANCE OF A HYPOTHETICAL MINE JOB WHICH PAYS  
CASH WAGES EQUAL TO THOSE IN FACTORIES

	<u>%</u>
acceptance	3,8
conditional acceptance - additional incentives required	6,7
conditional acceptance - in desperation	10,3
refusal	43,8
refusal - emphatic	<u>35,5</u>
	100,1

Approximately 80 per cent of the respondents would not accept the equal pay mine job and over one-third of the sample strongly reject such a job. Of the remainder only 3,8 per cent would accept the proposition as it stands. A small percentage would accept if additional incentives were given, and another small group of respondents would take on an equal pay job if they were desperate.

Glancing at Table 8, we find that even the straightforward acceptors have certain reservations as regards the hypothetical mine job. They fear they might be too old for the job or the distance might prove too great for them. If the present job is satisfactory, the proposition loses some of its impact.

The conditions set by the group requiring extra incentives before accepting the equal pay mine job are also revealing. As might be expected from our review of negative factors associated with mining above, approximately half of the 'conditional acceptance' group stipulate surface work. The equal pay clause is repeated by some few respondents, but more often higher pay is demanded by way of compensation for the drawbacks involved in mine work. Congruent with the reaction to the Johannesburg job proposition, these respondents point out that higher wages must at least compensate for the expense of working at a great distance from home in order to render the proposition economically sound.

- *I would not consider working for the mines as long as they do not compensate me for their long distance and hard work.*

Apart from specifying other working conditions besides surface work, some 'conditional acceptors' demand a particular job and request to be promoted in due course. Some persons in the 'conditional acceptance' group would work on the mines temporarily. Others would accept the equal pay mine job if special home-visiting arrangements can be agreed upon.

The 'desperate acceptors' would turn to mining as a last resort if they could find no alternative work to make a living from, and if they or their children were starving. With their definitely negative attitude toward work in Johannesburg and work on the mines some 'desperate acceptors' adopt a fatalistic outlook.

TABLE 8

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ACCEPTANCE/REFUSAL OF A MINE JOB  
WHICH PAYS CASH WAGES EQUAL TO THOSE IN FACTORIES

response category	qualifications* to responses	sample percentage N=496 qualifying response
acceptance N=19	past positive experience reservations regarding advanced age present job satisfactory reservations about distance	0,8 0,2 0,2 0,2
conditional acceptance - additional incentives required N=33	surface work pay conditions other working conditions job opportunities length of service/contract, visiting opportunities if without local work fringe benefits	3,4 <sup>+</sup> 2,8 1,4 0,8  0,6 <sup>+</sup> 0,6 <sup>+</sup> 0,2
conditional acceptance - in desperation N=51	if no alternative work if self or children were starving fatalistic outlook	4,6 2,0 0,8
refusal N=392	fear of danger pay irrelevant preference for staying at home, un(der)employment, starvation age/health past negative experience, tired of mine work distance, family separation unthinkable little prestige or job mobility, exploitation preference for worse paid, lower prestige job mine disaster in family alternative work available  other	12,9 10,5  8,9 8,1  7,9 <sup>+</sup> 6,3 4,0  2,8  2,6 1,2 1,2  0,4
* multiple responses		
† qualifications are given to responses outside this category		

Qualifications for refusals figure on Table 8 only in those cases where one main reason for refusing overrides all other negative factors, or if the refusal itself is qualified.

For some 'refusers', fear of danger is so acute that pay is irrelevant. Some respondents declare they would prefer to starve or eke out an existence at home than go to the mines.

- *Better to go hungry and be safe than try to cure hunger, knowing full well that you are selling your life.*

Others would choose to do some other low prestige job nearer home. For reasons of danger or prestige the mine job may be out of the question for a small number of 'refusers'. For the older person the mine job is equally unthinkable, because of the strenuous nature of the job. The equal pay job is irrelevant for a small sample percentage because job alternatives are available to them. Some 'refusers' cite past negative experience on the mines as a partial reason for refusing and a few ex-miners are simply 'tired of the mines'. Although they represent only a minute sample proportion, six respondents do in fact report a mine disaster in their family which has placed a tabu on mine work for all those surviving the deceased miner.

- *No, I don't even think about it in my dreams. I would never consider working there because my father died telling me never to work in the mines because my half brother died in a mine disaster, so it was decided that nobody in our family should work there.*

CHAPTER VDIFFERENTIAL ACCEPTANCE OF A JOB ON THE MINES

As demonstrated above, one of the reasons why our sample respondents strongly oppose the mine job is that mining in the local context simultaneously carries the stigma of being a Johannesburg job as well as an undesirable job, which results in a multiple rejection. We would therefore expect those persons who are more disposed toward working in Johannesburg and those who consider that there are jobs still worse than mining, to be most likely to accept a job on the mines if given certain incentives.

5.1 The Transkeian Case

This is clearly so in the case of the Transkeians in our sample. Migrants from the Transkei are more likely to accept work in Johannesburg. A larger proportion of Transkeians than the sample as a whole, report that they have mine experience, indicating that mine work is a less unacceptable occupation for Transkeians. Positive factors concerning the mines are more likely to be mentioned by Transkeians than other respondents. Whereas cultural, family and distance factors concerning the mines are more frequently referred to by persons originating from Natal districts, age/health factors appear to be more pertinent to Transkeians. This may be interpreted as individual Transkeians being prevented from participating in an otherwise socially recognised occupation for age or health reasons. More importantly, the Transkeian response to the equal pay proposition is significantly more positive and a smaller proportion of Transkeians than Natalians consider the mine job most unpleasant. Table 9 illustrates the consistently more favourable attitude of the Transkeians in our sample to mine work on the Rand.

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TABLE 9  
 ATTITUDES TOWARD WORKING IN JOHANNESBURG  
 AND ON THE MINES BY DISTRICT OF ORIGIN

	District of origin	
	Transkei <sup>*</sup>	Natal
<u>attitude toward working in Johannesburg</u>	N=98	N=398
acceptance	12,2	6,8
conditional acceptance	11,2	5,3
rejection	76,5	87,9
chi sq.=8,4, 2d.f., p<0,02	99,9	100,0 <sup>**</sup>
<u>consideration of mine work in the past</u>		
no	44,9	85,9
brief	11,2	5,5
conditional	3,1	2,5
serious	40,8	6,0
chi sq.=94,7, 3d.f., p<0,001	100,0	99,9
<u>mining experience</u>		
no	62,2	94,0
yes	37,8	6,0
chi sq.=73,4, 1d.f., p<0,001	100,0	100,0
<u>type of factors associated with mine work</u> <sup>***</sup>		
negative	89,8	97,7
positive	10,2	2,3
chi sq. <sup>****</sup> = 13,5, 1d.f., p<0,001	100,0	100,0
<u>acceptance of hypothetical equal pay</u>		
<u>mine job</u>		
full and conditional acceptance	20,4	8,0
acceptance only if desperate	10,2	10,3
refusal	69,4	81,7
chi sq.=13,0, 2d.f., p<0,01	100,0	100,0

Continued on next page/...



TABLE 9 continued

	District of origin	
	Transkei*	Natal
rating of 'worst' job		
miner's job worst	37,8	53,8
other job worst	62,2	46,2
chi sq.=8,1, 1d.f., $p < 0,01$	100,0	100,0
<p>* includes four persons originating from the Ciskei, Mocambique, Rhodesia and Malawi respectively - the category is termed 'Transkei' because it overwhelmingly represents this ethnic group.</p> <p>** N=397</p> <p>*** multiple responses, totals=329, 1410</p> <p>**** chi square calculated on response proportions corrected to reflect true N</p>		

## 5.2 Age Differentials

The hypothetical equal pay mine job is also significantly more attractive to the younger migrant, who very probably has only briefly considered the mines in the past. The relationship between acceptance of the equal pay mine job and age is consistently linear: acceptance increases with youthfulness and decreases with age. It is important to note, however, that the positive attitude adopted toward Johannesburg and the mines is far less pronounced even among younger Zulu migrants than for any Transkeian group. As regards the Zulu, the relationship between youthful age and acceptance of mine work is particularly strong, while there is only a weak relationship between age and this attitude among Transkeians.

It might be argued that given pay incentives the more youthful

migrant may disregard the negative factors associated with mining and make light of such obstacles as distance.

- *I would push myself for the money's sake. One gets into a fight even though one is not sure of winning.*

Without doubt the younger man is best able to cope with the strenuous work assigned to miners underground. Tables 10a and b afford an overview of the age-determined response to work in Johannesburg and on the mines.

TABLE 10a  
ATTITUDES TOWARD WORKING ON THE MINES BY AGE  
(all respondents)

	age		
	low -29yrs.	medium 30-44yrs.	high 45+yrs.
attitude toward working in Johannesburg	N=150	N=203	N=142
acceptance	12,0	5,9	6,3
conditional acceptance	8,7	6,4	4,2
rejection	79,3	87,7	89,4
chi sq.=7,9, 4d.f., p < 0,10	100,0	100,0*	99,9
consideration of mine work in the past			
no	83,3	76,0	74,6
brief	8,0	6,9	4,9
conditional	4,0	2,9	0,7
serious	4,7	14,2	19,7
chi sq.=18,3, 6d.f., p < 0,01	100,0	100,0	99,9
acceptance of hypothetical equal pay mine job			
full and conditional acceptance	116,0	8,8	7,0
acceptance only if desperate	12,7	14,7	1,4
refusal	71,3	76,5	91,5
chi sq.=26,2, 4d.f., p < 0,001	100,0	100,0	99,9
* N=203			

TABLE 10b  
ATTITUDES TOWARD WORKING ON THE MINES BY AGE  
 (Zulu respondents only)

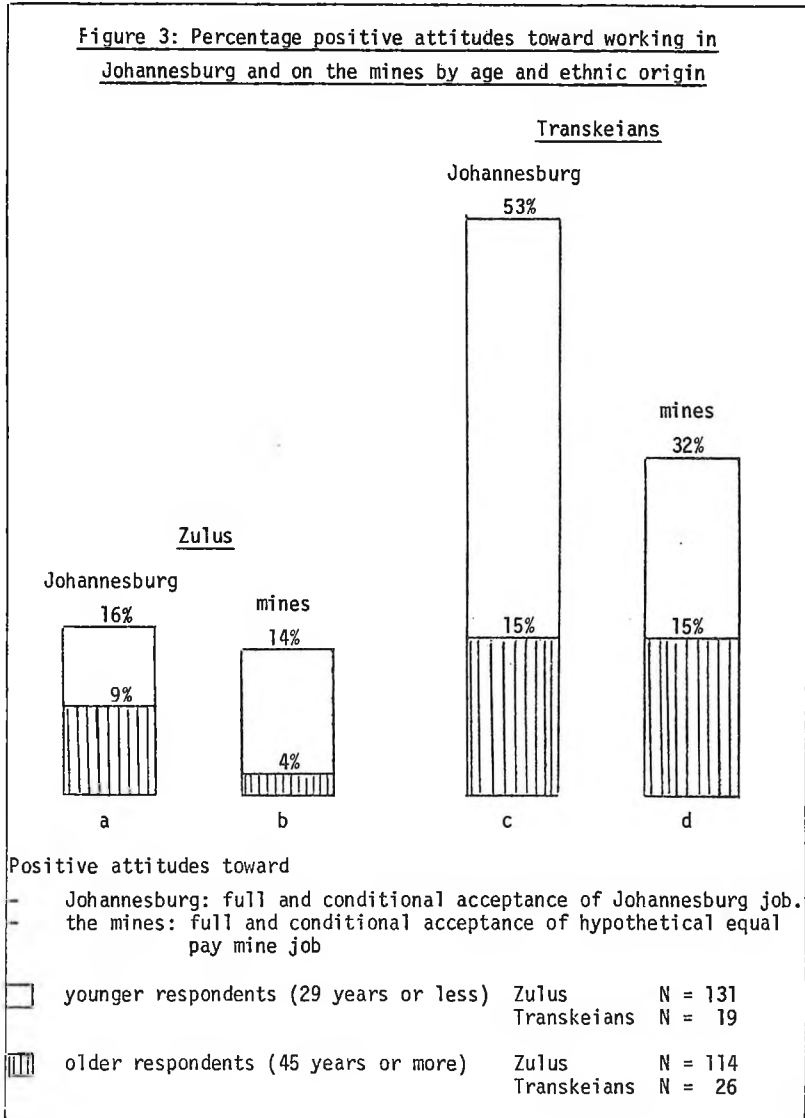
	age		
	low -29yrs.	medium 30-44yrs.	high 45+yrs.
<u>attitude toward working in Johannesburg</u>	N=131	N=153	N=114
acceptance	9,9	4,0	7,0
conditional acceptance	6,1	7,2	1,8
rejection	84,0	88,8	91,2
chi sq.=8,0, 4d.f., p < 0,10	100,0	100,0**	100,0
<u>consideration of mine work in the past</u>			
no	87,8	85,6	84,2
brief	6,9	5,2	4,4
conditional	3,8	3,3	0,0
serious	1,5	5,9	11,4
chi sq.=14,8, 6d.f., p < 0,05	100,0	100,0	100,0
<u>acceptance of hypothetical equal pay mine job</u>			
full and conditional acceptance	13,7	5,9	4,4
acceptance only if desperate	13,7	13,7	1,8
refusal	72,5	80,4	93,9
chi sq.=22,9, 4d.f., p < 0,001	99,9	100,0	100,1
** N=152			

If these results are depicted graphically, a clear pattern emerges which can readily be explained within the framework of 'gravitational' and 'life-cycle' migration theory.

The bar graph in Figure 3 highlights the disparate migratory patterns followed by the Zulu and Transkeian subgroups in our sample.

1) Striking is the difference in the proportions of Zulu and Transkeian respondents accepting Johannesburg and mine jobs.

Figure 3: Percentage positive attitudes toward working in Johannesburg and on the mines by age and ethnic origin



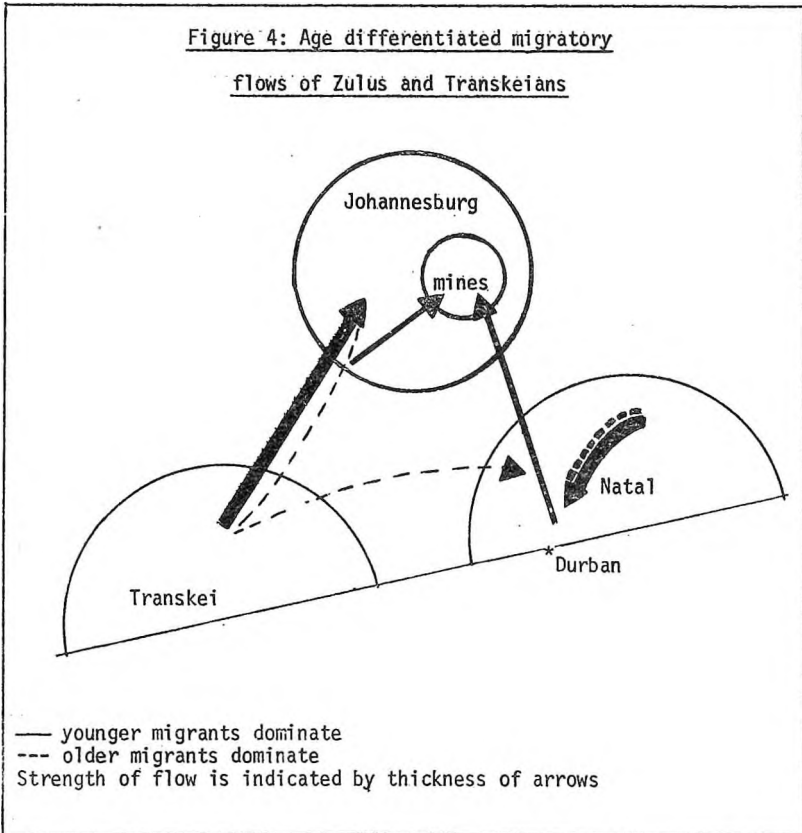
The level of acceptance is markedly higher in the Transkeian group regardless of age (cp. columns a,b against c,d in Figure 3). This suggests that Johannesburg and the mines figure as a dominant migration centre for Transkeians but not for Zulus.

2) In the Transkeian subgroup a distinction is made between Johannesburg and the mines concerning jobs. Johannesburg is regarded as the more attractive destination. The greater acceptance of a Johannesburg job by the younger Transkeians might be regarded as a manifestation of the typical participation of younger migrants in the migration stream flowing from the Transkei to Johannesburg. In this interpretation a tributary of the major migration stream is only diverted to the mines once it reaches the dominant centre. The navigation of the Transkei-Johannesburg stream is perceived as increasingly difficult with advancing age of migrants.

3) Among our Zulu respondents there is little differentiation between attitudes toward working on the mines and in Johannesburg. Johannesburg and mine imagery is fused and a job either in Johannesburg or on the mines is seen as what might be called a 'package deal'. In this 'package deal' it is the 'mine' rather than the 'Johannesburg' component which attracts the younger Zulu migrants. Because mine work is particularly unsuitable for older men, there is relatively little acceptance of the mine job among the older Zulu group as shown in the percentage drop between the plain and shaded bars in column b in Figure 3.

4) Summarizing the above observations of tribal and age differentiated migratory flows in terms of 'gravitational' and 'life-cycle' theory in Figure 4, we might postulate that the increasing age of Transkeian migrants affects a) their gradual retirement

from the dominant Transkei-Johannesburg migration stream<sup>1)</sup> and b) the diversion of this stream toward lesser urban centres closer to the rural home.



1) The age composition of our sample supports this argument. Whilst Zulus of all ages are equally represented in our sample, Transkeians are significantly over-represented in the older age groups. The cross-tabulation between age and origin is significant at the ,02 level.

By contrast a Natal-Johannesburg migration stream is a secondary flow, which has to be channelled off from the strong Natal-Durban current (cp. Moller, Schlemmer 1977: 4ff.]. The Natal-Durban migration stream is composed of migrants of all ages. Only young Zulus are likely to break off from the main migration stream to follow a counterstream flowing towards Johannesburg and then only during their youthful days.

### 5.3 Mining Experience

Experience on the mines tends to promote a more discerning approach toward the mines and mine work; this is especially the case for Zulu ex-miners in relation to their counterparts with no knowledge of mines. Migrants who have actually worked on the mines, more readily enumerate positive as well as negative aspects of the mines. Their choice of negative factors for discussion reflects their inside knowledge of work at the mines: ex-miners raise issues connected with the work situation, life on the mines, the contract system and wages to a greater extent than other respondents. Privations connected with working away from the family and the danger involved in mine work tend to be somewhat under-emphasized by ex-miners. Possibly such factors are taken as given in connection with mining and are automatically dismissed as obvious to interviewee and interviewer alike. The age/health factor, which is most probably directly related to the interviewee's own age or state of health is of greater concern to ex-miners than other respondents.

Ex-miners are in fact proportionally over-represented among the older sample respondents ( $p < .001$ ). Advanced age and actual involvement in the physically strenuous mine work tends to prevent senior ex-miners from wholeheartedly accepting the equal pay mine job. Nevertheless a number of former miners genuinely appreciate the pay increase granted by the mining companies to their employees, even if this will only benefit their successors. Despite refusing the equal pay

proposition, ex-miners give the miner's job a better rating than other less favoured jobs. The effect of mining experience in the past on current attitudes toward the mines is shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11  
ATTITUDES OF FORMER MINERS AND MIGRANTS WITH NO MINING  
EXPERIENCE TOWARD WORKING ON THE MINES

	mining experience	
	former miner	none
<u>attitude toward working in Johannesburg</u>	N=61	N=435
acceptance	6,7	8,0
conditional acceptance	11,7	5,7
rejection	81,7	86,2
chi sq.=3,1, 2d.f., not significant	100,1*	99,9
<u>type of factors associated with mine work**</u>		
negative	88,5	97,5
positive	11,5	2,5
chi sq.*** = 12,2, 1d.f., p<0,01	100,0	100,0
<u>acceptance of hypothetical equal pay mine job</u>		
full and conditional acceptance	18,0	9,4
acceptance only if desperate	8,2	10,6
refusal	73,8	80,0
chi sq.=4,3, 2d.f., not significant	100,0	100,0
<u>rating of 'worst' job</u>		
miner's job worst	32,8	53,1
other job worst	67,2	46,9
chi sq.=8,8, 1d.f., p<0,01	100,0	100,0
* N=60		
** multiple responses, totals = 241, 1498		
*** chi square calculated on response proportions corrected to reflect true N.		



#### 5.4 The Composite Image of Johannesburg and Mine Work

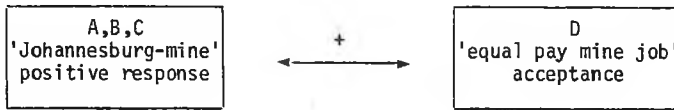
Our survey findings suggest that any incentives given in order to boost the attraction of the mines must build upon a certain positive disposition toward Johannesburg and the mines in the first place. In terms of the survey variables, this type of positive disposition may be traced in the following response pattern to what might be called the 'Johannesburg-mine' variable cluster, as shown below.

Positive response pattern to 'Johannesburg-mine' variable cluster		
A	B <sup>1)</sup>	C
positive attitude toward working in Johannesburg	some consideration of mine work in the past	non-mining job rated most unpleasant

The 'Johannesburg-mine' variables A, B, C are all consistently inter-related in the above emphases. The cluster is also significantly correlated with the acceptance of the equal pay mine job variable D.<sup>2)</sup>

- 
- 1) Usually 'brief' or 'conditional' consideration, in the case of Transkeians 'serious' consideration.
- 2) The interrelationship between the 'Johannesburg-mine' variables A, B, C and the equal pay variable D as measured by the chi square test is statistically significant. The extent of association between variables is indicated by the contingency coefficient in the matrix below.

Variable	A	B	C	D
A	-			
B	,326	-		
C	,219	,262	-	
D	,367	,424	,299	-



This means that given a positive disposition toward Johannesburg and mining, any offer of a mine job with better conditions, such as the equal pay job, might be more favourably accepted.

In our inquiry, the Transkeian respondents represent such a potentially positively disposed group (see Table 9 above). A significantly higher proportion of this group consistently follow the positive 'Johannesburg-mine' response pattern shown above.

### 5.5 Minor Differentials

With other groups of migrants the response to the items in the 'Johannesburg-mine' variable cluster is more subtle. We have observed above that although experience on the mines tends to increase the number of positive factors attributed to the mines and the rating of the mine job, ex-miners are just as likely as others to reject the suggestion of working on the mines with pay equal to other industries - mainly for age reasons.

Survey findings suggest that a hitherto uncommitted group of younger men might be attracted by certain incentives offered by the mines such as increased rates of pay. Although numbers are small, survey results indicate that persons who initially state they would 'conditionally' consider working on the mines are in fact more apt to accept the equal pay proposition than others. As marginal members of the larger group of 'acceptors' we should expect these members of the 'conditional consideration' group to follow the positive response pattern to the 'Johannesburg-mine' variable cluster. This is the case as shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSIDERATION OF WORKING ON THE MINES  
IN THE PAST AND CURRENT ATTITUDES TOWARD JOHANNESBURG AND THE MINES

	consideration of working on the mines in the past			
	no	brief	con- ditional	serious
<u>attitude toward working in Johannesburg</u>	N=386	N=33	N=13	N=64
acceptance	5,7	21,2	46,2	6,3
conditional acceptance	4,1	9,1	23,1	15,9
rejection	90,2	69,7	30,8	77,8
chi sq.=58,8, 6d.f., p<0,001	100,0	100,0	100,1	100,0*
<u>acceptance of hypothetical equal pay mine job</u>				
full acceptance	0,8	24,2	0,0	12,5
conditional acceptance	3,4	15,2	69,2	9,4
acceptance only if desperate	10,1	9,1	23,1	9,4
refusal	85,8	51,5	7,7	68,8
chi sq.=162,1, 9d.f., p<0,001	100,1	100,0	100,0	100,1
<u>rating of 'worst' job</u>				
miner's job worst	57,5	21,2	7,7	32,8
other job worst	42,5	78,8	92,3	67,2
chi sq.=36,5, 3d.f., p<0,001	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
* N=63				

In this connection a last group of survey respondents, namely persons who would accept the equal pay mine job if they were desperate, merits our attention. The group of 'desperate acceptors' is not in the least disposed toward mine work and accordingly its response pattern on the 'Johannesburg-mine' variable cluster tends to be negative

in emphasis (cf. Table 13). The majority of 'desperate acceptors' would dislike having to work in Johannesburg and they have a clearly negative view of the mines. It is, however, interesting to note that when rating unpleasant jobs, 'desperate acceptors' are slightly more positively inclined toward the miner's job than 'refusers'. In fact the relationship between the variables 'acceptance of the equal pay mine job' and 'rating of worst job' is progressively linear as shown in the last cross-tabulation in Table 13. We might interpret this relationship as indicating that there is some potential for attitude change concerning mine work and the 'desperate' group may be potentially most amenable to this change. Even if the relative number of 'desperate acceptors' observed is at present very small, the very fact that this group crystallized spontaneously in response to our inquiry is possibly noteworthy. This might imply that migrants in less secure job positions are growing aware of their declining range of occupational choice in the present economic situation. Migrants may actually anticipate that hitherto 'unthinkable' jobs will have to be included in their list of alternatives when reviewing employment opportunities in future.

- *Despite the fact that I hate working on the mines I feel that I will end up there because...jobs are very scarce.*
- *Before, I had never thought of going to the mines, but now I do think of it, because of the desperate problems I am faced with...that is, my being out of employment for such a long time...One goes to the mines only because of desperate problems.*

TABLE 13

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACCEPTANCE OF A FICTITIOUS EQUAL  
PAY MINE JOB AND ATTITUDES TOWARD JOHANNESBURG AND THE MINES

	acceptance of equal pay mine job		
	full and conditional acceptance	desperate acceptance	refusal
	N=52	N=51	N=393
<u>attitude toward working in Johannesburg</u>			
acceptance	32,7	7,8	4,6
conditional acceptance	21,2	7,8	4,3
rejection	46,2	[84,3]	[91,1]
chi sq.=77,1, 4d.f., p<0,001	100,1	99,9	100,0*
<u>consideration of mine work in the past</u>			
no	30,8	[76,5]	[84,2]
brief	25,0	5,9	4,3
conditional	17,3	5,9	0,3
serious	26,9	11,8	11,2
chi sq.=108,6, 6d.f., p<0,001	100,0	100,1	100,0
<u>type of factors associated with mine work**</u>			
negative	65,4	96,1	99,0
positive	34,6	3,9	1,0
chi sq. = 112,7, 2d.f., p<0,001	100,0	100,0	100,0
<u>rating of 'worst' job</u>			
miner's job worst	15,4	25,5	58,5
other job worst	84,6	74,5	41,5
chi sq.=48,5, 2d.f., p<0,001	100,0	100,0	100,0
* N=392			
** multiple responses, totals = 134, 158, 1447.			
*** chi square calculated on response proportions corrected to reflect true N.			

CHAPTER VISUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

An indepth study is being conducted among a cross-section of migrant labour working in Durban to assess attitudes toward working in the mines and to discuss a range of topics concerning the migrant labour system in general. Four-hundred-and-seventy-six male workers have been interviewed to date.

The survey results reveal that little consideration is given to working on the mines and opinions concerning working conditions there are largely based on hearsay and media reports.

In a probe of spontaneous attitudes toward the mines, mention of negative items dominate. Negation of mine work stems chiefly from such factors as *danger*, *family separation* involved by long absences on the mines, and *distance* to the place of work. The reputedly low remuneration received for dangerous work in a situation of family deprivation is not considered justified. The miner's job also receives a very low rating when compared with other low prestige jobs. The majority of sample respondents would refuse a hypothetical mine job which pays wages equal to those offered by the manufacturing industry.

It is proposed that apart from *intrinsic* factors related to mining as a dangerous job which is performed under adverse conditions, *extrinsic* factors related to the location of the mines near Johannesburg and social perception reinforce the negative view of a job on the mines. The fusion of the negative images of Johannesburg and the mines is empirically supported by the consistent negative response to a set of variables referred to as the 'Johannesburg-mine' cluster.

It is proposed that a positive disposition toward the mines,

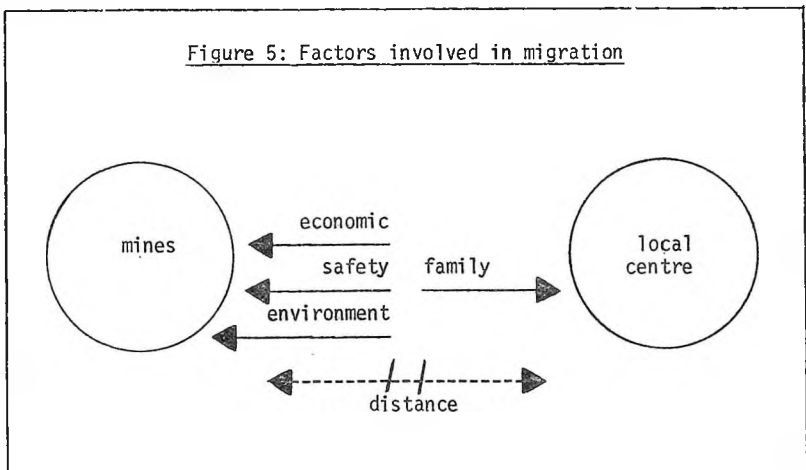
which may be operationalized by a positive response to the 'Johannesburg-mine' variable cluster, may be essential to the acceptance of a job on the mines.

In this context we observe that members of various groups tend to differ considerably in their disposition toward the mines. Significantly more positive attitudes toward working in Johannesburg as well as higher acceptance of a mine job are recorded for migrants originating from the *Transkei*, for *younger persons*, and in some instances for those persons with *previous mining experience*. Among the last group, ex-miners from Natal differ most markedly from their counterparts who have never worked on the mines. It should however be noted that this positively disposed group is in the minority.

Although the hypothetical equal pay mine job holds little attraction for migrant workers in Natal, our findings do suggest that promises of a a) more substantial increase in wages to offset travel expenses, b) less dangerous surface work and possibly c) special arrangements for family visits during a contract period, might soften the rigid rejection to a certain extent. On the other hand external economic factors may increase the proportion of 'desperate' acceptors who would reluctantly work on the mines, rather than let their families starve. One might query if these additional recruits would be valuable assets to the mines as long as their negative attitude toward Johannesburg and the mines persists. Gauging from the predominantly negative view of the mines on the part of former miners, actual experience on the mines will not necessarily moderate such an extreme outlook. On the other hand, reassessment of the conditions offered by the mines to migrant workers coming from a distance may achieve a more favourable attitude in the case of Natal workers. We might attempt to spell out the conditions of an improved proposal in terms of the 'push-pull' model.

In the diagram in Figure 5 the mine 'pull' factors are

reinforced and some mine 'push' factors are readjusted or eliminated to make the mine job more attractive. For example, a number of economic incentives might be offered such as good wages, travel allowances, etc. Publicity concerning the exact dimensions of the safety problem could be considered - Zulu respondents, in particular, would appear to be more discouraged by the probability of injury or death. Arrangements for home visiting could be made which relax the local 'pull' force. From a theoretical viewpoint this would mean that the tension release mechanism, which is a prerequisite for the adequate functioning of the migrant labour system, is restored. Thus, with the reduction of family separation, the perception of distance would be artificially shortened as indicated in the diagram by the slashes through the distance dimension. If necessary, the age factor, which tends to amplify distance and family separation, could be eliminated by limiting recruitment to young, unattached men. If the perception of danger and family separation are altered in this manner, work on the mines will most probably still be far from ideal in the eyes of Natal migrants, but it will certainly become more tolerable and humane for those involved.





As a last consideration one might question why Natal respondents have such a uniformly crystallized negative perception of mining when compared with other groups included in our study. It is unusual to encounter such a clear-cut differentiation in attitudes along 'tribal' lines. We are nevertheless reluctant to accept uncritically some of the popular 'tribal' stereotypes which White mining personnel have evolved over the course of time. We alternatively suggest that explanations must be sought at a deeper level. In this report - being an interim one, we will not attempt to seek a full and adequate explanation; this will be pursued in later analysis. However, we might end off this report by suggesting some possible lines of exploration:

- Strong Zulu family ties may act as a deterrent to leaving the home for long periods of time and becoming involved in potentially dangerous work such as mining.

- The perception of threat in the environment may constitute one of the traits making up the Zulu modal personality, which accounts for the perception of safety problems in the mines.

- Bearing in mind the traditional Zulu reluctance to work on sugar estates it is possible that the general aversion to hard physical labour of a particular nature strongly affects attitudes toward mine work (cf. Möller, Schlemmer 1977:13).

- If the explorations into the above lines of inquiry yield negative results then the lack of a specifically Zulu 'tradition' of mine work will have to be considered as the major factor in checking the flow of Zulu migrant workers to the mines.

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A P P E N D I X

TABLE A1

<u>District of Origin</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Zululand</u>	80,2
Alfred	3,8
Babanango	0,2
Bergville	1,0
Camperdown	1,8
Dannhauser	0,2
Dundee	0,4
Eshowe	6,9
Estcourt	0,2
Hlabisa	1,2
Impendle	0,6
Ingwavuma	0,6
Ixopo	4,8
Kranskop	1,8
Lower Tugela	1,0
Lower Umfolozi	3,0
Mhlabatini	1,0
Mapumulo	6,7
Moorivier	0,2
Msinga	1,8
Mtonjaneni	5,0
Mtunzini	3,2
Ndwedwe	4,2

Continued on next page/...

TABLE A1 continued

<u>District of Origin</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Zululand (continued)</u>	
Newcastle	0,8
New Hanover	1,4
Nkandla	3,6
Nongoma	3,6
Nqutu	0,6
Polela	3,6
Port Shepstone	3,4
Richmond	1,2
Ubombo	0,4
Umbumbulu	2,4
Umvoti	1,8
Umzinto	6,0
Underberg	0,4
Utrecht	0,4
Vryheid	0,6
<u>Transkei</u>	19,0
Other	<u>0,8</u>
	99,6
	N=496

TABLE A2

<u>District of Origin in the Transkei and Other Areas Beyond Natal</u>	<u>%</u>
Bizana	11,2
Engcobo	1,0
Flagstaff	4,1
Lusikisiki	4,1
Matatiele	13,3
Mount Ayliff	4,1
Mount Fletcher	4,1
Mount Frere	5,1
Nqamakwe	1,0
Port St. Johns	2,0
Qumbu	2,0
Tabankulu	4,1
Umzimkulu	39,8
Mocambique	1,0
Ciskei	1,0
Rhodesia	1,0
Malawi	1,0
	99,9
	N=98

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TABLE A3

<u>Age in Years</u>	<u>%</u>
15 - 19	4,8
20 - 24	8,3
25 - 29	17,1
30 - 34	13,7
35 - 39	13,3
40 - 44	14,1
45 - 49	12,9
50 - 54	6,9
55 - 59	6,0
60 - 64	2,0
65 - 69	0,6
70 -	<u>0,2</u>
	99,9
	N=496
median age	35 years
mean age	37 years

TABLE A4

<u>Education</u>	<u>%</u>
no schooling	34,1
literacy classes	1,4
lower primary - Sub-standard A to Std. I	11,9
higher primary - Standards II to IV	26,6
junior secondary - Standard V to Form II	20,0
senior secondary - Forms III to V	5,6
university	<u>0,4</u>
	100,0
	N=496
median (total)	Std. II
median (of persons with schooling)	Std. III





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