

CERTAIN ATTITUDES OF INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYERS IN DURBAN TOWARDS
THE INDIAN WORKER IN CONTRAST TO THE AFRICAN WORKER*

An Analysis Using a Semantic Differential Test

L. Douwes Dekker & H. L. Watts

Institute for Social Research
University of Natal, Durban.

1. INTRODUCTION:

During the closing years of the 1950's, increased evidence accumulated on the serious unemployment amongst the Indians in Durban. The need for finding work for Indians was brought to the attention of employers in the region in various ways. Local newspapers reported extensively on the question of Indian unemployment from 1958 onwards. In 1959 an 'Indian Unemployment Committee' was set up by Professor Leo Kuper of the Department of Sociology of the University of Natal. This received publicity, and the Committee included members from the Natal Chamber of Industries and the Natal Employers' Association. At the end of 1960 and early in 1961 the newspaper reports gave a picture of the plight of educated Indians who were unable to obtain employment commensurate with their qualifications. (*Natal Mercury*, 27:11:1960 and 1:5:1961). The reports were based on research carried out by Dr. S. Cooppan, of the Department of Economics at the University of Natal. Furthermore, towards the end of 1960, a local Rotary Club had expressed the hope that the flow of Indian labour could be regulated and directed to wider spheres of employment. Their aim was to set up a Vocational Service Bureau. Similarly, the Indian Technical College in Durban considered the establishment of an employment agency for Indians. (*Natal Mercury*, 12:11:1960 and 12:6:1961).

* This study was made possible by financial assistance from the National Council for Social Research, (now the Human Sciences Research Council). This assistance is gratefully acknowledged. The results obtained and the views expressed are the responsibilities of the authors, and not of the Council.

Centre for Applied Social Sciences
University of Natal
King George V Avenue
Durban 4001
South Africa

CASS/22·DOU

(k)

The problem of Indian unemployment was also highlighted by other events. A union of unemployed workers was formed in 1961 to make representations to the Minister of Labour. (*Natal Mercury*, 23:9:1961). In the same year, the Durban City Council's Finance Committee had recommended that a special grant-in-aid be made regularly available to the Indian Benevolent Society, which was helping the families of the unemployed. (*Natal Mercury*, 19:9:1961).

Against this background, the Institute for Social Research at the University of Natal, undertook a study aimed at establishing the full extent of Indian unemployment in Durban. The survey by Russell and Allen (1962: 1v) established that in 1962 about 15,000 or 27.7% of the Indian population of working age in Durban was unemployed. The rate of unemployment was highest amongst those with a lower level of education - over 90% of the unemployed had not passed Std. 6, and half had obtained only Std. 4 or less. Unemployment was heavily concentrated amongst skilled industrial workers and labourers. The high rate of unemployment could not be explained away by referring to the general slow-down at that stage in the South African economy. Consequently, it was postulated that part of the problem might be due to the attitudes of employers towards the Indian as an industrial worker.

It was therefore decided in 1963 to investigate a specific sector of Indian participation in the economy - namely the employment of Indians as industrial workers. The research was designed to deal with the interpretation made by employers of the performance of the Indian as an industrial worker, and to study the apparent resistance of employers to the greater utilisation of the readily available but not fully exploited Indian labour supply. The interpretation which the Indian himself put on the conditions of employment as offered by Industry could not be tackled by the research. In any event a study undertaken by Cooppan (1955) under the auspices of the Department of Economics of the University of Natal had already thrown some light on this aspect of Indian unemployment.

Actual work on the investigation commenced in 1964. It was hypothesised that White employers had clear-cut stereotypes of the Indian as a worker, and the type of work for which he could be used; and that these stereotypes would explain the use of African workers in preference to Indians in many types of industrial jobs.

2. DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

Limited financial resources did not allow a detailed investigation into all sectors of Indian employment in Durban. It was decided to focus attention on employment of Indians in secondary industry, undertaking an exploratory investigation. The universe was defined as those firms in the Durban-Pinetown industrial complex which were members of the Natal Chamber of Industries. Indians employed in these firms in 1960 totalled 36% of all Indian employees in manufacturing, construction and electricity. A total of 345 members out of a total of 371 for the whole of Natal were situated in the area selected. In terms of the total volume of manufacturing production, these firms were estimated to represent between 80% to 90% of the total manufacturing production by members of the Natal Chamber of Industries.

In defining the universe more sharply, firms with 20 or less non-White employees were excluded. A list of 223 firms in the region was thus obtained. Examining the 1963 Indian/African composition of firms' labour forces, stratification was applied in terms of whether a firm employed Indians ^{only} or virtually only Indians; Africans only or Africans with few Indians; or both Indians and Africans in significant numbers. A sample was then selected proportionately at random from each stratum, yielding a total of 85 firms.

Following on preliminary focussed interviewing, standardised interview schedules, incorporating a semantic differential, were constructed and tested. Thereafter they were applied to the 85 cases selected. In total, together with the pilot survey, 106 firms were interviewed. Three of these cases yielded such a very limited range of information that they should be regarded as non-response cases.

The structured interviews were conducted with senior officers of each selected factory. The actual informants varied according to managerial decision. Those interviewed were usually either the personnel manager, or the works manager, or on occasions in smaller organisations, the managing director himself.

A comparison of the main fieldwork sample and universe in terms of racial composition of the labour force, and type of industry, is provided by Tables I and II below. It will be seen that the fit between the sample results and the universe is very good in regard to the known characteristics of type of manufacturing industry and racial composition of the labour force. This suggests that the sample is likely to be representative.

TABLE I

COMPARISON OF THE SAMPLE OF FIRMS WITH ALL MEMBERS OF THE NATAL CHAMBER OF INDUSTRIES IN THE DURBAN-PINETOWN REGION, EXCLUDING FIRMS WITH 20 OR LESS NON-WHITE EMPLOYEES: COMPARISON IN TERMS OF TYPE OF INDUSTRY, 1963:

Type of Manufacturing Industry	No. of Firms		Percentages	
	All Firms	Sample	All Firms	Sample
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	34	13	15	15
Textiles & Clothing	28	9	13	11
Furniture & Wood	15	6	7	7
Footwear & Leather	4	2	2	2
Paper & Printing	13	6	6	7
Chemicals & Paint	43	18	19	21
Non-metallic mineral products	13	5	6	6
Metal Products	41	16	18	19
Transport, Equipment & Machinery	16	5	7	6
Miscellaneous	16	5	7	6
TOTAL:	223	85	100	100

TABLE II

RACIAL COMPOSITION OF THE LABOUR FORCE OF MEMBER FIRMS OF THE NATAL CHAMBER OF INDUSTRIES IN THE DURBAN-PINETOWN AREA, 1963:

Type of Unit	Percentage Composition of Labour Force				Total
	Whites	Coloureds	Indians	Africans	
All Firms	17	5	19	59	100
Sample	15	5	21	59	100

Mention has already been made of the use during the interviews of a semantic differential. This was essentially a set of attitude scales intended to measure the concepts of the Indian and African industrial workers held by the White employers interviewed. Following Osgood et al. (1957) a semantic differential test consisting of 17 sets of polar adjectives was designed in the following way: An initial list of opposites was compiled with the assistance of a representative from an employers' association, following on preliminary focussed interviews with employers. The initial list consisted of items relating to the work behaviour and performance of African and Indian workers, as seen by many employers. This list was then submitted to a panel of knowledgeable persons in industry. Using them as judges, the selection of the final list of 17 word-pairs was made, choosing those pairs which were regarded as the most important.

During each interview with the sample of informants, once the interview was satisfactorily in progress, and the respondent had independently agreed that a distinction existed between Indians and Africans in their performance as industrial workers, the respondent was then asked to complete the semantic differential. The need for recording his immediate response to the placing of the Indian worker along the scale for each item was stressed. The following instruction was given:

'In order to obtain a generalised image of the Indian as a worker the following set of scales has been compiled. You are requested to rate your appreciation of the Indian worker according to the scales. Please place a check mark on each scale', (and then an example was given to him). 'The direction towards which you check depends upon which of the two ends of the scale is the most characteristic for the Indian worker according to your judgement'.

The respondent was not told he would be requested to complete the same exercise for the African worker until he had finished the set of scales for the Indian worker. He then went through the same process, recording his attitudes towards the 'Bantu worker'.

Out of the 85 firms in the sample, four did not yield responses to the semantic differential, due to the reluctance of the informant to undertake the task. This represents a 95% response. However, the number of paired ratings for the Indian and the African worker were less, as in certain cases the informant contended that his experience was insufficient for him to be willing to rate either the Indian or the African worker, as the case may be. Only 74 complete pairs were obtained for both African and Indian workers. This represents a response of 87%.

The following is the Semantic differential used:

loyal	.....	.....	.....	.....	disloyal
inefficient	.....	.....	.....	.....	efficient
dishonest	.....	.....	.....	.....	honest
consistent	.....	.....	.....	.....	inconsistent
deserving	.....	.....	.....	.....	unworthy
weak	.....	.....	.....	.....	strong
congenial	.....	.....	.....	.....	quarrelsome
independent	.....	.....	.....	.....	dependent
lazy	.....	.....	.....	.....	hard-working
regular	.....	.....	.....	.....	irregular
demanding	.....	.....	.....	.....	accepting
pushing	.....	.....	.....	.....	retiring
dexterous	.....	.....	.....	.....	clumsy
polite	.....	.....	.....	.....	cheeky
responsible	.....	.....	.....	.....	irresponsible
emotional	.....	.....	.....	.....	calm
aggressive	.....	.....	.....	.....	passive

3. THE RESULTS OBTAINED BY THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL:

The results from the semantic differential constitute the major part of the fieldwork data. In analysing these results, following Osgood et al. (1957) the responses obtained have been regarded as representing an underlying interval scale. Means are used as a measure of central tendency. The statistical techniques used for testing significance are the Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks Test when paired ratings from informants are studied; and the Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance Test when the analysis is for Africans only, or Indians only, comparing

the three different strata of informants within the sample. Throughout, the 5% level of significance is taken as the minimum level for rejecting the null hypothesis.

For the 74 cases, the following are the mean ratings obtained for the Indian in contrast to the African industrial worker, listing each of the 17 scales used. The means are based on scores ranging from one (for the most positive position) to five (for the least positive position on a scale). A score of three represents a fairly neutral mid-point between the two poles in each case. The figures are shown graphically in Figure 1.

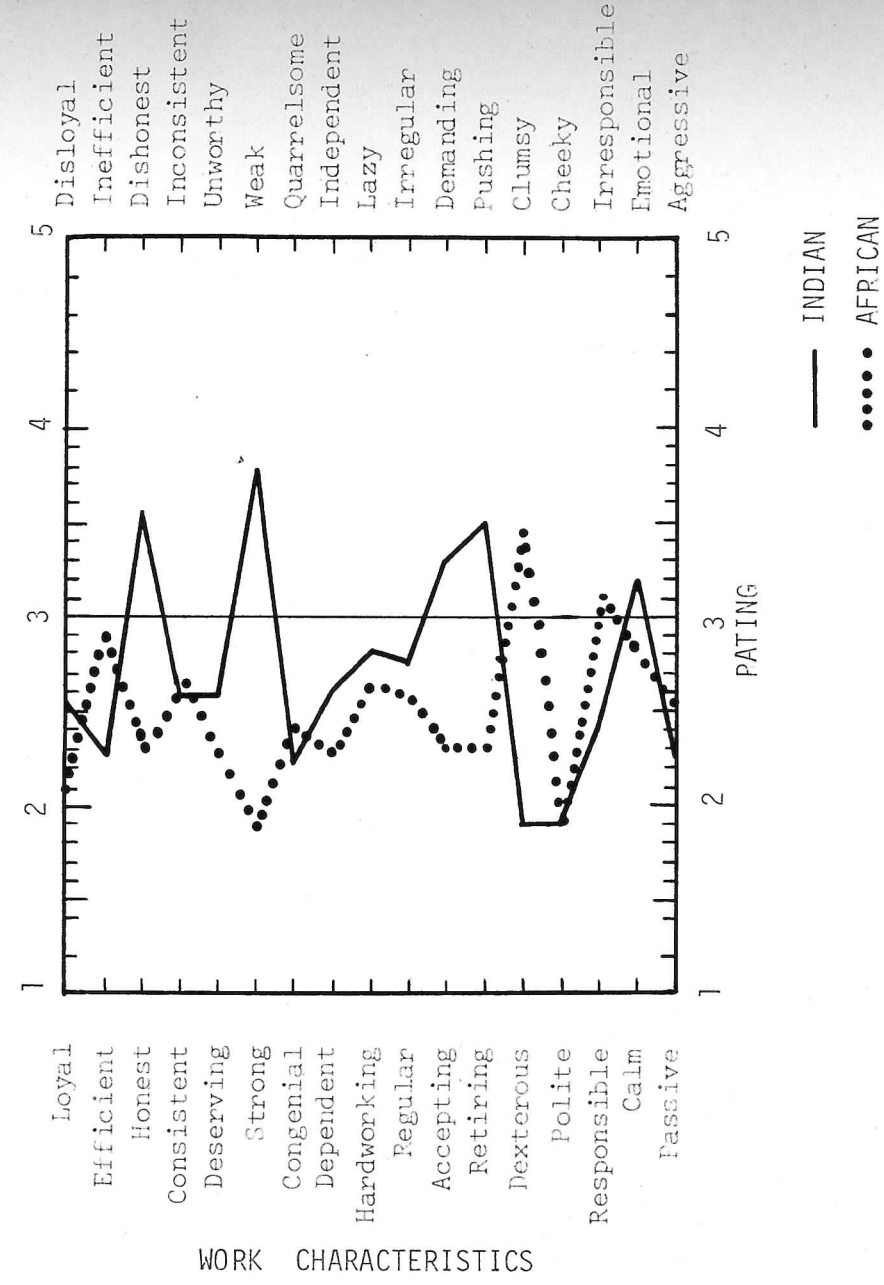
TABLE III
MEAN RATINGS FOR THE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL WORKER IN
CONTRAST TO THE AFRICAN WORKER, BASED ON
FIVE POINT POLAR SCALES

Scaled Characteristics	Mean Rating		Difference	Level of Significance of Difference
	Indians	Africans		
(1) (5)				
Loyal - Disloyal	2.54	2.13	.41	< .02
Efficient - Inefficient	2.28	2.91	-.63	< .0001
Honest - Dishonest	3.57	2.31	1.26	< .0001
Consistent - Inconsistent	2.54	2.64	-.10	-
Deserving - Unworthy	2.53	2.18	.35	< .05
Strong - Weak	3.77	1.89	1.88	< .0001
Congenial - Quarrelsome	2.20	2.43	-.23	-
Dependent - Independent	2.61	2.26	.35	< .05
Hardworking - Lazy	2.80	2.65	.15	-
Regular - Irregular	2.74	2.57	.17	-
Accepting - Demanding	3.31	2.30	1.01	< .0001
Retiring - Pushing	3.47	2.90	1.17	< .0001
Dexterous - Clumsy	1.88	3.46	-1.58	< .0001
Polite - Cheeky	1.85	1.99	-.14	-
Responsible - Irresponsible	2.41	3.11	-.70	< .0001
Calm - Emotional	3.19	2.80	.39	< .05
Passive - Aggressive	2.27	2.53	-.26	-

NOTE: A dash indicates no significant difference between the ratings for Indian and African workers. (i.e. $p > .05$). The test of significance used was the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test, as the pairs of ratings from the 74 subjects represented related samples.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN
 MISSISSIPPI
 MISSISSIPPI STATE LIBRARY
 3740 (4)

FIGURE 1
 PROFILES OF THE INDIAN AND AFRICAN INDUSTRIAL WORKERS:
 MEAN RATINGS ON A SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL SCALE,
 BASED ON RATINGS FROM A SAMPLE OF 74 EMPLOYERS



Using the measure of geometric spatial difference between the two sets of ratings which Osgood et al. (1957) suggest, $D = 3.4148$ for the set of 17 paired means in Table III.

By and large there is a substantial difference in the concepts which the employers have of the Indian and the African industrial worker. The differences are statistically significant, except in regard to the items concerning the degree of work consistency, congeniality, hard work, regularity, politeness and passivity. The major differences are that whereas the Indians are seen as rather more efficient than the Africans, considerably more dexterous, and to an extent more responsible, the Africans are seen as significantly more honest, physically stronger as workers, less pushing and less demanding than the Indians. Other smaller differences can be seen from the Table and Figure I.

A measure of the overall difference in the assessment of the Indian in contrast to the African worker is the grand mean for the 17 scales. While this is not an entirely satisfactory measure, nonetheless it is of some use. For Indians the grand mean is 2.7 as against 2.5 for Africans. This shows that generally-speaking Africans are seen in a somewhat more favourable light than Indians, as industrial workers.

A break-down of the ratings according to the type of labour force which the informants had in their factories is provided in Table IV. Figures 2 to 4 portray graphically the findings. In each of the strata, the concepts of the Indian and African industrial workers show certain significant differences.

Those employing Africans only have a critical view of the honesty, physical strength and 'pushing nature' of the Indian worker. However, in contrast to their views on the African worker, they see the Indian as significantly more dexterous (whereas the African could be regarded as clumsy), and significantly more responsible. They also tend to a lesser extent to be rather more critical of the loyalty of the Indian than the African worker, and accordingly see the Indian as less deserving. The overall general mean rating for all scales is 2.83 for the Indians, as against 2.46 for the Africans, showing the more favourable attitude of those employing Africans towards the African worker than the Indian worker. D for this stratum is 4.0569.

TABLE IV

MEAN RATINGS FOR THE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL WORKER IN CONTRAST TO THE AFRICAN WORKER
 BASED ON FIVE-POINT POLAR SCALES, ACCORDING TO TYPE OF LABOUR FORCE EMPLOYED
 BY INFORMANTS' FIRMS

Characteristic Scaled		Mean Ratings and Level of Significance of Differences, by Type of Labour Force Employed								
		African Labour Only			Indian Labour Only			African & Indian Workers		
(1)	(5)	Indians	Africans	p	Indians	Africans	p	Indians	Africans	p
Loyal-Disloyal		2.97	1.94	<.01	1.53	2.47	-	2.62	2.14	-
Efficient-Inefficient			2.75	-	1.77	3.00	<.01	2.57	3.10	<.05
Honest-Dishonest		3.89	2.14	<.0001	2.94	2.41	-	3.62	2.52	<.01
Consistent-Inconsistent			2.78	-	1.76	2.59	.05	2.95	2.43	-
Deserving-Unworthy		2.67	2.14	<.01	2.12	2.18	-	2.61	2.24	-
Strong-Weak		4.00	1.94	<.0001	3.18	1.76	<.01	3.77	1.89	<.01
Congenial-Quarrelsome		2.28	2.25	-	1.94	2.94	<.01	2.29	2.33	-
Dependent-Independent		2.78	2.28	-	2.06	2.35	-	2.76	2.14	.05
Hardworking-Lazy		2.89	2.61	-	2.18	2.94	<.05	3.14	2.48	-
Regular-Irregular		2.81	2.72	-	2.47	2.65	-	2.86	2.25	<.05
Accepting-Demanding		3.61	2.25	<.001	2.88	2.24	-	3.14	2.43	-
Retiring-Pushing		3.81	2.28	<.0001	2.94	2.29	-	3.33	2.33	<.02
Dexterous-Clumsy			3.39	<.0001	1.71	3.65	<.01	1.90	3.43	<.01
Polite-Cheeky		2.00	1.89	-	1.47	2.12	.01	1.90	2.05	-
Responsible-Irresponsible			3.33	<.0001	2.24	3.06	-	2.67	2.76	-
Calm-Emotional		2.81	2.81	-	3.47	2.76	-	3.62	2.71	<.01
Passive-Aggressive		2.22	2.28	-	2.29	2.71	-	2.33	2.81	-

No. of Subjects

N = 36

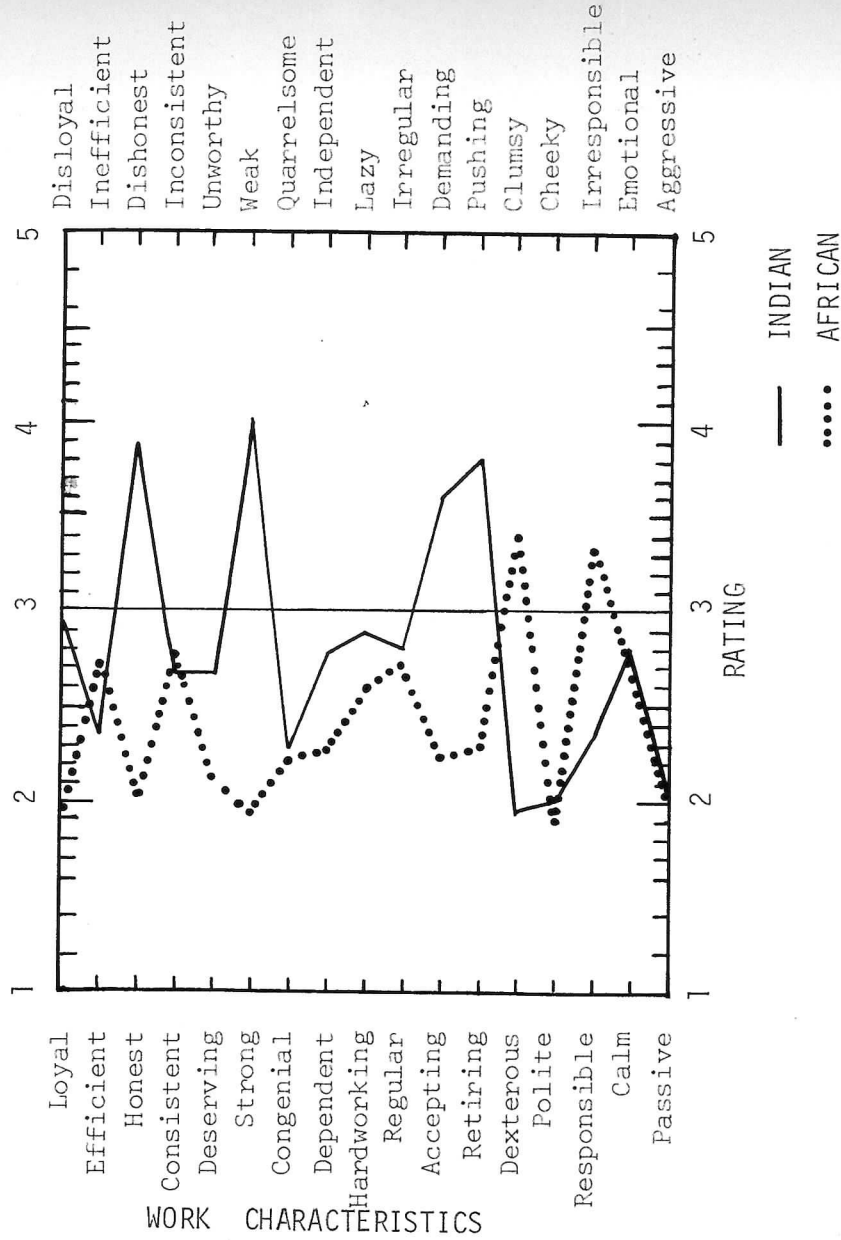
N = 17

N = 21

NOTE: A dash indicates no significant difference between the ratings for Africans and Indians, (i.e. $p > .05$), using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test.

FIGURE 2

PROFILES OF THE INDIAN AND AFRICAN INDUSTRIAL WORKER,
 BASED ON MEAN RATINGS BY 36 INFORMANTS FROM FACTORIES
 EMPLOYING AFRICANS AS THEIR ONLY NON-WHITE LABOUR
 BASED ON A SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL SCALE



UNIVERSITY OF NATAL
 INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH
 KING GEORGE V AVENUE
 DURBAN 4001

Centre for Social Sciences
 100 King George V Avenue
 Durban 4001
 Africa
 CASS/22-DOU

FIGURE 3

PROFILES OF THE INDIAN AND AFRICAN INDUSTRIAL WORKER,
 BASED ON MEAN RATINGS BY 17 INFORMANTS FROM FACTORIES
 EMPLOYING INDIANS AS THEIR ONLY NON-WHITE LABOUR:
 BASED ON A SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL SCALE

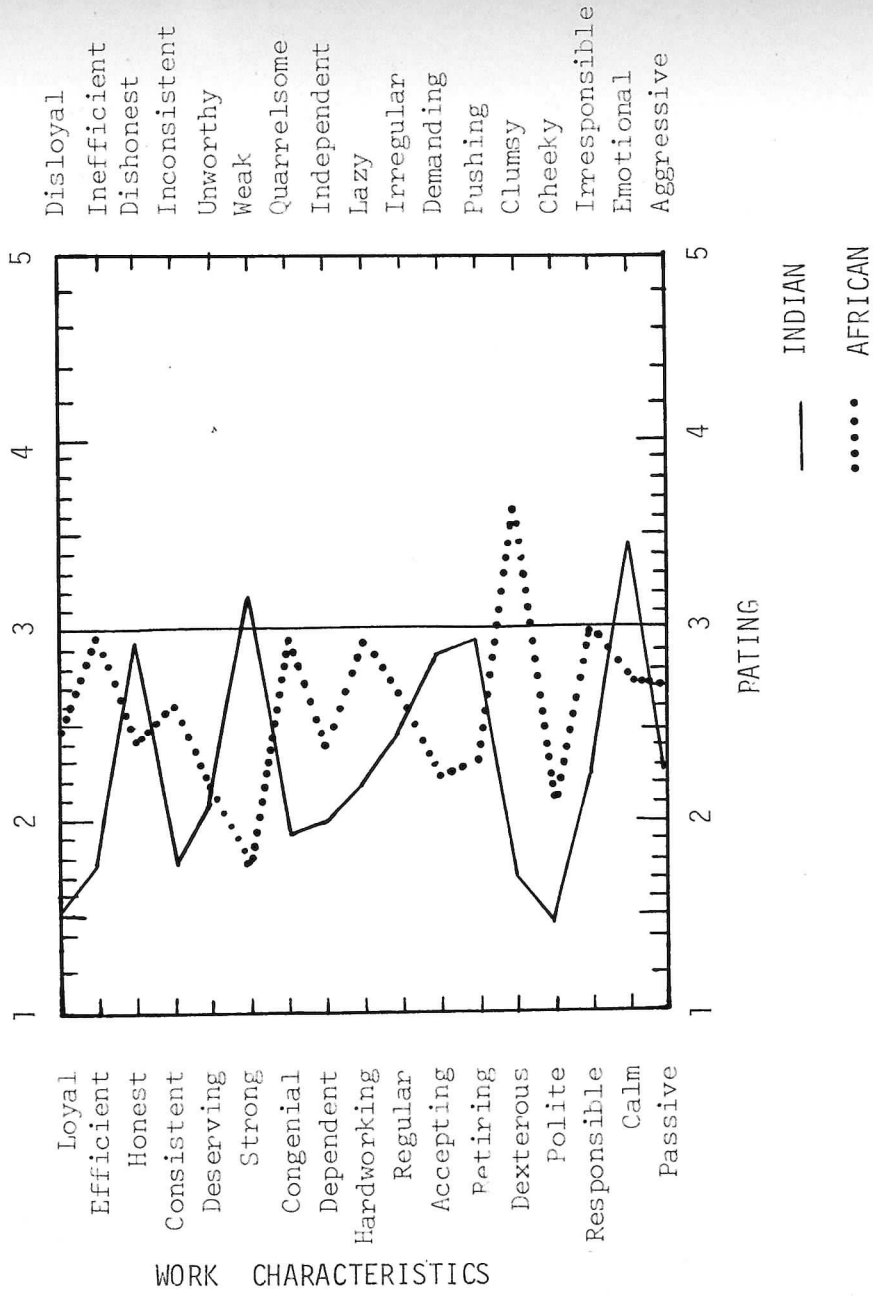
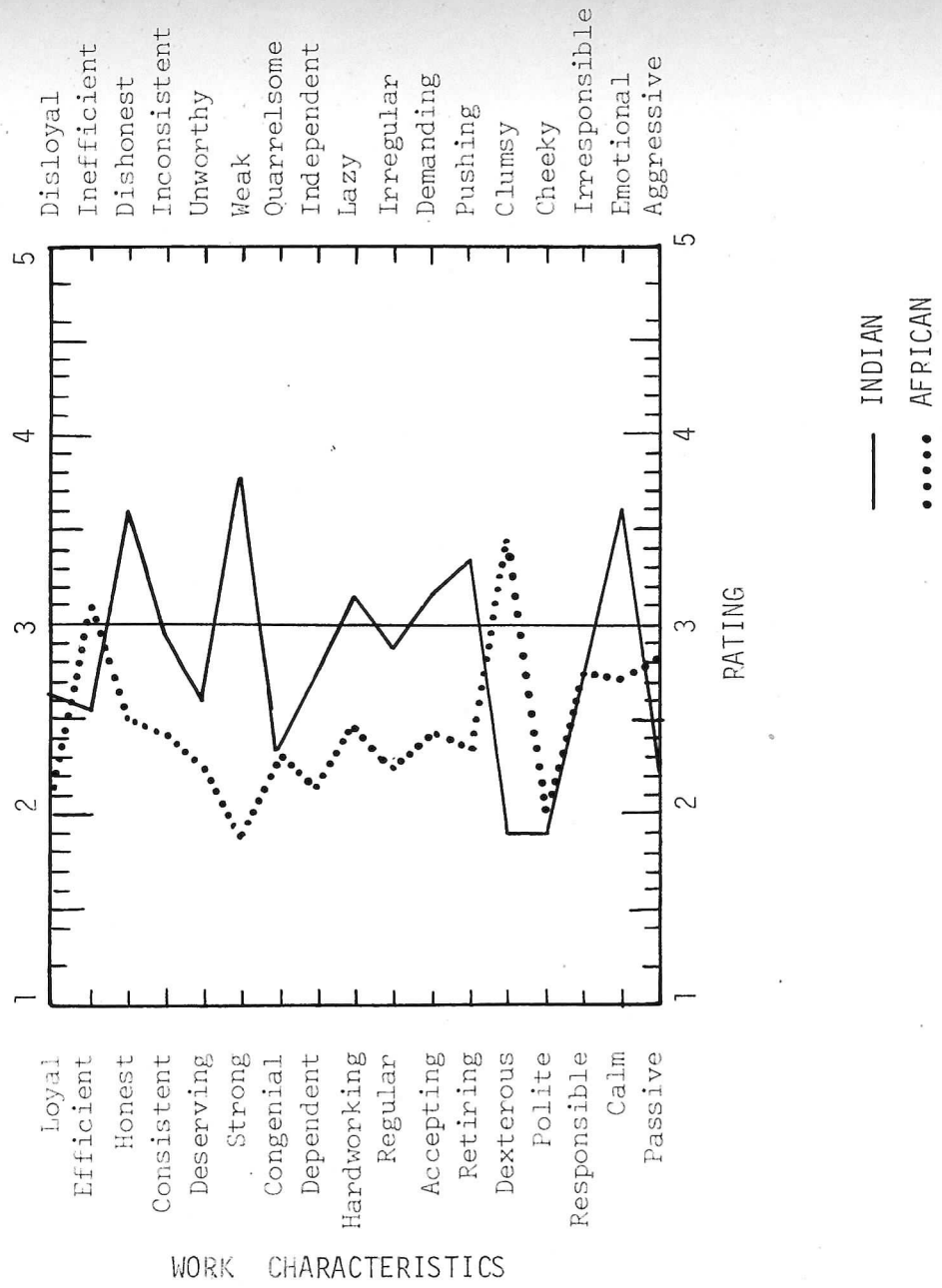


FIGURE 4

PROFILES OF THE INDIAN AND AFRICAN INDUSTRIAL WORKER,
 BASED ON MEAN RATINGS BY 21 INFORMANTS FROM FACTORIES
 EMPLOYING BOTH AFRICAN AND INDIAN WORKERS:
 BASED ON A SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL SCALE



The ratings of the 17 informants whose factories employed Indian labour only show a rather different pattern from that just described. The Indian is not seen nearly as negatively as in the previous case, and indeed with an overall grand mean of 2.29 for the Indians as against 2.60 for the Africans, this group of informants has a rather more critical attitude towards Africans than Indians. The Indian worker is seen as significantly more efficient, more consistent, more congenial, more hardworking, more dexterous and more polite than the African worker. Only in regard to physical strength is there a significant attitude in favour of the African worker, seeing the Indian as much weaker. Other differences in the table are not significant.

A D of 10.0319 for this stratum shows that the difference between the concept of the Indian and African worker is greatest than with other strata of informants.

The third group of informants, whose factories employ both African and Indian workers, tend to have attitudes rather similar to the first group employing only Africans. This can be seen from Figure 4. The Indian is seen rather more critically than the African, with the grand mean of 2.83 for the Indian as against 2.47 for the African worker. The Indian worker is seen as significantly less honest, less strong, less regular in work habits, more pushing, more independent, and more emotional than the African worker. Amongst the significant differences, the positive features in favour of the Indians are that they are seen as significantly more efficient, and decidedly more dexterous than the African. D is 3.5339.

There is no doubt that in each stratum there are important differences between the concept which the employers have of the Indian and of the African industrial worker. In terms of D, the differences are largest between the concepts held by those who employ Indians only, and least amongst those who through their labour force have experience of both Indians and Africans.

Do attitudes towards the Indian industrial worker vary significantly, according to the composition of the labour force of an informant's factory? It could be that the composition of labour force, and therefore the experience which the informant has, are associated with differences in concepts. Relevant figures are shown in Table V, while Figure 5 portrays them graphically.

The differences between the means shown in Table V were tested by the Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance Test, as the three different categories of labour composition represent independent samples. Except in regard to the

TABLE V

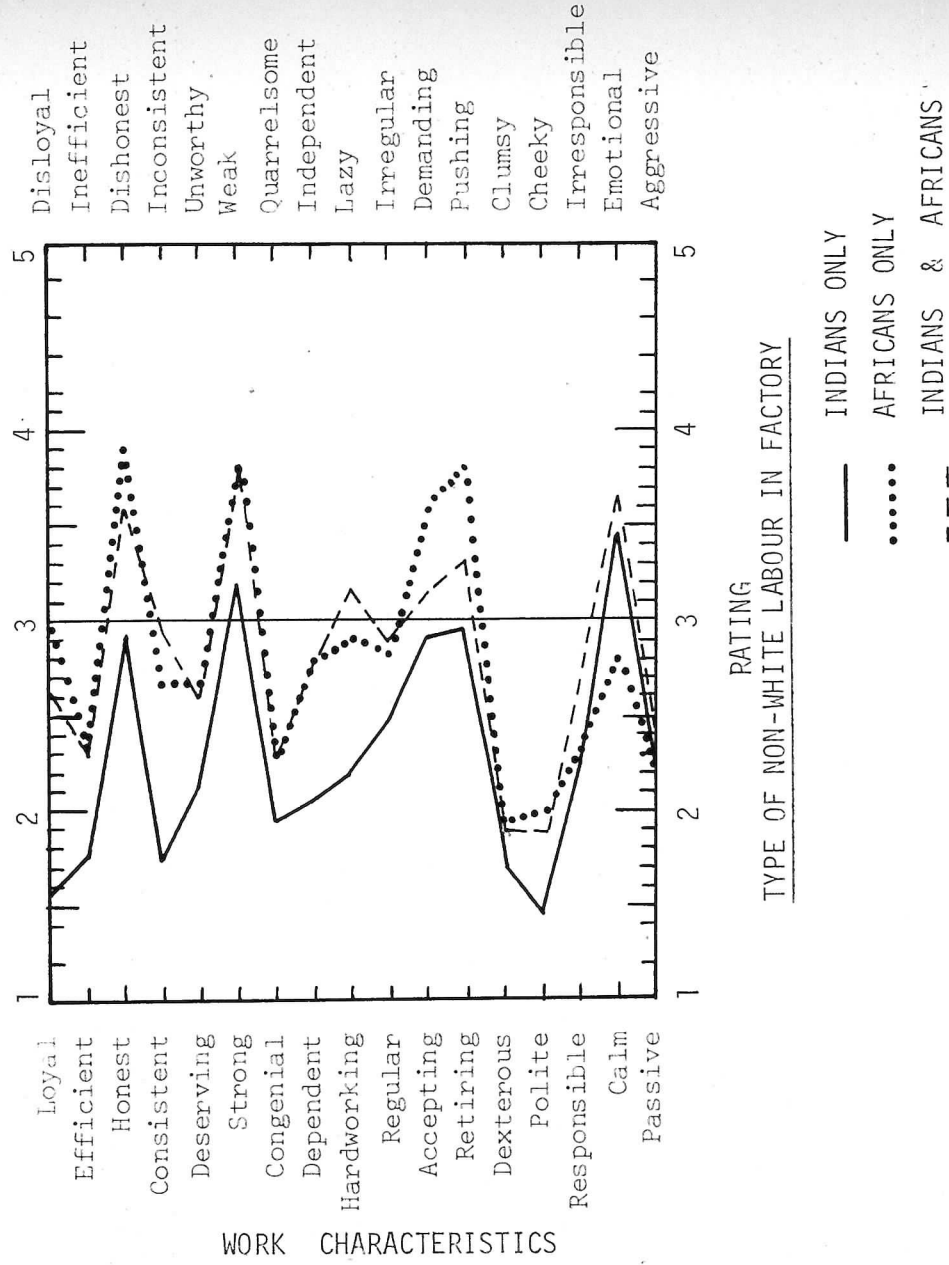
MEAN RATINGS FOR THE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL WORKER,
BASED ON FIVE-POINT POLAR SCALES, ACCORDING TO
THE LABOUR COMPOSITION OF THE INFORMANT'S FACTORY

Characteristic Scaled (1) (5)	Mean Ratings			Level of Signifi- cance
	Type of Labour Force			
	African Workers Only	Indian Workers Only	Africans and Indians	
Loyal - Disloyal	2.97	1.53	2.62	<.001
Efficient - Inefficient	2.36	1.77	2.28	<.01
Honest - Dishonest	3.89	2.94	3.62	<.001
Consistent - Inconsistent	2.67	1.76	2.95	<.001
Deserving - Unworthy	2.67	2.12	2.61	<.02
Strong - Weak	4.00	3.18	3.86	<.001
Congenial - Quarrelsome	2.28	1.94	2.29	<.05
Dependent - Independent	2.78	2.06	2.76	<.01
Hardworking - Lazy	2.89	2.18	3.14	<.01
Regular - Irregular	2.81	2.47	2.86	<.05
Accepting - Demanding	3.61	2.88	3.14	<.001
Retiring - Pushing	3.81	2.94	3.33	<.01
Dexterous - Clumsy	1.94	1.71	1.90	-
Polite - Cheeky	2.00	1.47	1.90	<.02
Responsible - Irresponsible	2.33	2.24	2.67	<.05
Calm - Emotional	2.81	3.47	3.62	<.01
Passive - Aggressive	2.22	2.29	2.33	-
	N = 36	N = 17	N = 21	

NOTE: A dash indicates no significant difference (i.e. $p > .05$). The test used for the study was the Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance Test, as the three different categories of labour composition represent independent samples.

FIGURE 5

PROFILES OF THE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL WORKER, AS
 SEEN BY INFORMANTS FROM FACTORIES WITH VARIOUS
 COMPOSITIONS OF NON-WHITE LABOUR.



scales for dexterity and passivity, significant differences were found. D for those employing Africans only compared with those employing Indians only equals 2.9074; while D for those with Africans contrasted with those having Indian and African workers is 1.2711. Finally, D calculated for those with Indian workers in contrast to those having both Indians and Africans is 2.6580. This shows that the concepts are closer together in regard to those who have some African labour (either Africans only or Africans and Indians) while on the other hand they are greatest when comparing those who have experience of only one type of force in their factory - either Africans or Indians. Those employing Indians only have the most favourable view with a grand mean of 2.29, whereas at 2.83 the means are the same for those employing Africans only, and African and Indian workers. From Figure 5 it will be seen that those who employ Indians only tend to stand out as having a rather different pattern of attitude to the other two types of informants. Their overall view is far more favourable.

Similarly it is worth examining whether the attitudes towards the African industrial worker also vary according to the composition of the labour force employed by the informant's factory. The necessary information is shown in Table VI, which is graphed in Figure 6.

There is not very much difference between the various attitudes, even though the differences in regard to ten of the seventeen scales are statistically significant. D is 1.2123 when comparing those who have African workers only with those who have Indian workers only; 1.1410 for those who have Africans in contrast to those who have African and Indian workers; and the lowest of all at 1.0706 for those who have Indians in contrast to those with African and Indian workers. The size of D is in all cases lower than it was for the attitudes to Indian workers. It will be seen from Figure 6 that generally the attitudes from different strata are much the same. The overall grand mean rating for Africans by those who employ Africans only is 2.46, and very much the same at 2.47 for those who employ Indians and Africans. Those with Indians only are rather more critical of Africans, with a grand mean of 2.60.

Examining Table VI in rather greater detail, and restricting our inspection to those differences which in terms of Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance Test are statistically significant, we find that the tendency is for those who employ African workers only to see them rather more favourably. The exception to

TABLE VI

MEAN RATINGS FOR THE AFRICAN INDUSTRIAL WORKER,
BASED ON FIVE-POINT POLAR SCALES, ACCORDING TO
THE LABOUR COMPOSITION OF THE INFORMANT'S FACTORY

Characteristic Scaled (1)	Mean Ratings			Level of Significance
	Type of Labour Force			
	African Workers Only	Indian Workers Only	Africans and Indians	
Loyal - Disloyal	1.94	2.47	2.14	< .05
Efficient - Inefficient	2.75	3.00	3.10	< .02
Honest - Dishonest	2.14	2.41	2.52	< .01
Consistent - Inconsistent	2.78	2.59	2.64	< .05
Deserving - Unworthy	2.14	2.18	2.24	-
Strong - Weak	1.94	1.76	1.90	-
Congenial - Quarrelsome	2.25	2.94	2.33	< .02
Dependent - Independent	2.26	2.35	2.14	-
Hardworking - Lazy	2.61	2.94	2.48	< .05
Regular - Irregular	2.72	2.65	2.24	< .05
Accepting - Demanding	2.25	2.24	2.43	-
Retiring - Pushing	2.28	2.29	2.33	-
Dexterous - Clumsy	3.39	3.65	3.43	-
Polite - Cheeky	1.89	2.12	2.05	< .05
Responsible - Irresponsible	3.33	3.06	2.76	< .001
Calm - Emotional	2.86	2.76	2.71	-
Passive - Aggressive	2.28	2.71	2.81	< .02

N =

36

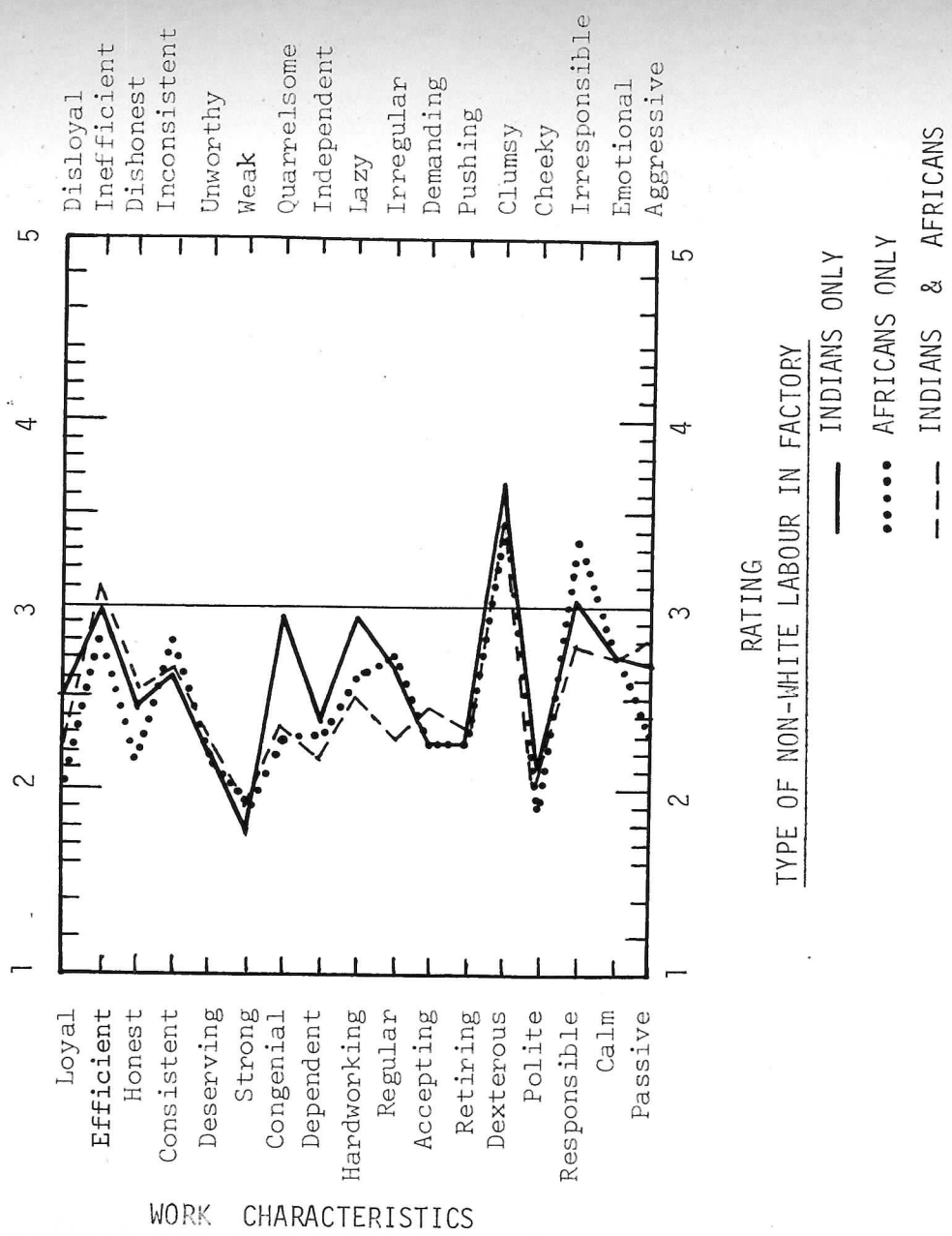
17

21

NOTE: A dash indicates no significant difference (i.e. $p > .05$). The Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance Test was used.

FIGURE 6

PROFILES OF THE AFRICAN INDUSTRIAL WORKER,
AS SEEN BY INFORMANTS FROM FACTORIES WITH
VARIOUS COMPOSITIONS OF NON-WHITE LABOUR



Centre for Applied Social Sciences
University of Natal
King George V Avenue
Durban 4001
South Africa

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL
CENTRE FOR APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES
KING GEORGE V AVENUE
DURBAN 4001
SOUTH AFRICA
W. COOPER

this rule is in regard to work consistency, where those with Africans only see them as less consistent than do any of the other two types of informants, and also see them as rather less regular in work habits than do the other two types of informants. These two characteristics, consistency and regularity, are related and therefore one would expect this same pattern in regard to responsibility - which is so, as those employing Africans only are, of the three strata, the most critical of them on the point of irresponsibility.

4. DISCUSSION OF THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL RESULTS, TOGETHER WITH OTHER RESULTS OBTAINED BY THE INTERVIEWS:

We have found that not only are there statistically significant differences between the concepts of a sample of employers in regard to the Indian and the African industrial worker, but that these differences are associated with the type of labour composition of a factory. As the sample appears representative, we conclude it reflects real differences. Generally we can conclude that those employing Indians only are rather more favourable in their assessment of the Indian worker than the other types of employers, and also that they tend to see the Indian in a more favourable light than the African worker. The reverse is true for the other employers, but we must note that there is in particular a general tendency throughout to see the Indian as more dexterous, but physically weaker than the African worker.

We note that viewed overall the Indian worker tends to be regarded less favourably than the African worker, and this suggests that the rather more negative attitude towards the Indian industrial worker is one of the factors which has been involved in the unemployment of Indians noted at the beginning of this paper. Just how important this factor is, it is not possible to establish on the basis of the results analysed here, but we can definitely conclude that attitude is a factor - probably a major factor. We face the old problem of which came first - the chicken or the egg? In this case are those who employ Indians only more favourably disposed than the others because of originally favourable attitudes which the management had, or is it because for a variety of reasons they gained more experience of Indians than others, and this affected their attitudes? Experience might well have something to do with it in that the results showed that those with no important proportion of the opposite type of labour - be it African

or Indian - tended to be rather more critical of it than those with experience. Thus those employing Indians only are more critical of Africans, and those with Africans only are more critical of Indians, than on the whole those that have experience of the type of labour force concerned, or of both types. This could mean that experience modifies critical attitudes, but it certainly does not prove this. It could be that those with critical attitudes reject using workers of the opposite racial group, and therefore never gain experience of their work qualities anyway.

In view of the differing attitudes towards Indian and African workers, it is interesting to examine whether or not those who have Indian workers only in their factories engage in a different type of manufacture from those who employ Africans only. For example, if the Indians are seen as more efficient and more dexterous, are they employed in those factories where these factors are important, whereas factories where physical strength is important tend to employ Africans? Table VII below classifies the respondents to the semantic differential according to the type of factory. It is notable that factories employing Africans only were mainly either chemical firms, or metal (light and heavy engineering) works (a total of 26 out of 36 firms were of this type). By contrast those employing Indians only show a wider spread of type of manufacture, with the main concentrations in textiles, and furniture and wood (four factories each); paper and printing (three firms), and two firms each for food, and footwear and leather. On the face of it, it would seem that Indians tend to be employed more by firms where skilled manual dexterity is important, than where physical stamina is a key requirement. The second last column of Table VII shows the position for informants from firms employing both Africans and Indians, and it would appear that the distribution is a combination of the patterns for Africans and Indians.

Apart from the semantic differential, further attitudinal information about Indian industrial workers in relation to African workers was obtained during the interviews. Each respondent was presented with the following statement and asked to react:

'Indian workers are regarded as being particularly suitable for skilled and semi-skilled work because of their reputed dexterity, intelligence and ability to make decisions. They are employed as operators particularly where a high quality product is turned out, and in occupations where a certain responsibility is involved, such as supervisors, checkers, clerks and drivers. Bantu tend to be employed in unskilled occupations in every factory, such as loading, handling materials, packing, etc. But Bantu have also been found to be particularly suitable for highly repetitive monotonous, semi-skilled work where relatively little training is required'.

TABLE VII

DISTRIBUTION OF CASES COMPLETING THE
SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL, ACCORDING TO TYPE OF
INDUSTRY AND LABOUR COMPOSITION OF THEIR FIRM

Type of Manufacture	Number of Respondents			Total
	African or Indian Labour Composition		Africans and Indians	
	Africans only	Indians only		
Food and Beverages	4	2	7	13
Textiles and Clothing	1	4	-	5
Furniture and Wood	1	4	1	6
Footwear and Leather	-	2	-	2
Paper Products and Printing	-	3	3	6
Chemical	16	-	2	18
Non-metallic Mineral Products	2	1	1	4
Metal Products	10	1	4	15
Transport Equipment and Machinery	2	-	-	2
Miscellaneous	-	-	3	3
TOTAL:	36	17	21	74

Respondents were asked if they felt this statement reflected the position in industry in the past. All agreed. Respondents were then asked whether this statement reflected the present (1964) position. Out of 87 of the 85 cases who responded, 92% agreed that it did reflect the present position to a greater or lesser extent. Only 1 in 10 of this group agreeing made some qualifications. This shows that there is almost unanimity in regard to the applicability of the statement in 1964. This is understandable in view of our semantic differential findings.

There was some variation in attitude according to the labour composition of a respondent's firm. Whereas all of those employing either African workers only, or Indian workers only, agreed that this statement reflected the present position, less (83%) of those employing both African and Indian workers agreed with the statement. This suggested that some of those who had current experience of both Indian and African workers saw a change in industry which made the statement no longer true at present, even if it had been true previously.

It is notable that only 18% thought that the position as described in the statement would last for a considerable period of time to come, and only 7½% emphasised basic unbridgable work characteristics ties between the Indian and African industrial worker. The general view was that training and education of the African would alter the position significantly. Half of those sharing this view introduced some qualification.

The subjects interviewed were asked:

'Do you agree that with proper selection Bantu and Indians can perform the job equally well?'

It was made clear that the issue was not whether an aptitude test battery would reveal an equal number of African and Indian workers from respective random groups, but whether once selected the performance of the two races would be equal. (Many respondents did stress that aptitude tests would reveal more potential candidates from Indian than from African workers). It was found that 95% of those employing only African workers, or African and Indian workers, agreed with the statement (whether or not they introduced some qualifications to their agreement). It is notable that 33% of those who employed only Indians agreed with the statement, so that the majority of the respondents of this type were convinced that the Indians on the whole would perform jobs better. (The idea that the Indian has greater

intelligence than the African was prominent; and the grasp of English and better education of the Indian were also mentioned in his favour by this group of respondents. Respondents also referred to the ability of the Indian to use imagination and initiative and to understand the job, and work consistently - 'the Indian realises that there is a job to be done by him, the African only works when he is watched').

It is worth remarking that one of the respondents from firms employing Indians only drew a distinction between different types of Indian workers which he felt had emerged during the five years preceding the survey. According to him there were the 'up-to-date Indians', the 'conservative Indians', and the 'no-good Indians'. Previously there had been only 'conservative Indians' on the labour market. The 'up-to-date Indian' was either the educated man, or else youths taken on straight from school, who had adjusted adequately to the factory situation and could be relied upon. According to him the 'conservative' Indian was characterised by being a subservient worker who was not well educated, and accepted the situation in which he found himself. The 'no-good Indian' he saw as resulting from youngsters who were unemployed for a period after leaving school, and suffered from the lack of discipline during this period before they entered employment in a factory.

An examination of the comments made by respondents during the interview shows that those firms employing both African and Indian workers are on the whole not as dogmatic in their assertions of difference between them as respondents from firms which employ either Indians only or Africans only. Whether this is due to direct observation of the effects of training on the two racial groups, or not, it is difficult to say - certainly some of the asides during the interview suggested this.

An examination of incomplete evidence in regard to the trend in labour composition during 1959 - 1964 amongst the firms studied, shows structural changes occurring in the labour force. With the passage of time there has been a tendency for greater use to be made of the African's occupational characteristics. That is to say, with the introduction of automatic or semi-automatic machinery, a lowering of skill requirements has taken place in certain manufacturing concerns. As a result Africans have been used to displace the Indian with his apparently higher dexterity. The African's assumed ability to be consistent with monotonous repetitive work has been an asset here, and will be so as long as the Indian is believed to be inconsistent in tasks where boredom and lack of change are prominent.

Further developments of automation could well further this trend, but for the fact that labour shortages of Africans in urban areas now (1970) favour the Indian in Natal.

5. CONCLUSION:

The findings obtained by means of the semantic differential confirm the postulated existence of a distinct image of Indian workers in contrast to African workers. This image is partly related to the type of labour force which a respondent's firm employs. The tendency is that firms employing Indians only regard them in a more favourable light than others, and those employing only Africans are less critical of Africans and more critical of Indians than other types of respondents. Generalising very broadly the Indian worker is felt to be somewhat dishonest, and disloyal, and hence unworthy. His 'pushing' characteristic is also held against him. On the other hand the dexterity of the Indian worker is not questioned and stands out clearly. Nonetheless, he is not regarded as a strong or necessarily a regular worker. His efficiency, and congeniality as well as politeness and to a lesser extent his responsibility, are seen as creditable features. For certain jobs his lower degree of dependence would also be an asset. By contrast, the African worker is seen as loyal, above all else strong, and also polite, honest, dependent and somewhat passive. His clumsiness and fair degree of irresponsibility are the main drawbacks. It is notable that his drawbacks are less in number than those which the Indian worker is seen to possess.

Responses to attitudinal questions put during the interview tend to underline the above findings, but suggest that changes in patterns of employment, particularly due to training and education of the African, are likely to occur in the future, and this could possibly be at the expense of the Indian.

It appears that a combination of the realisation by at least some employers that the African can be trained, and also the lower skill requirements resulting from the use of more automatic machinery by the 1960's, had brought a significant part of the Indian labour supply in the Durban-Pinetown area into competition with the African industrial worker. This increased competition between the Indian and African industrial worker, and the consequent decision of particular companies to concentrate on the employment of the African, was important.

So it is that while the firms studied showed during the period 1959 to 1964 in total an increase in the level of Indian employment, this increase did not match the increase in African employment. Changing technology coupled with key

differences between employers concepts of the Indian and African as industrial workers can account for this, and therefore to a notable extent can account for the high rate of Indian unemployment found in Durban by Allan and Russell (1962). The 1963 position for the industrial labour force in the Durban-Pinetown area (Table VIII below) reflects the greater employment of African than Indian workers in industry:

TABLE VIII

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION, BY RACE, OF THE LABOUR FORCE
ACCORDING TO TYPE OF INDUSTRY, NATAL CHAMBER OF
INDUSTRY FIRMS IN THE DURBAN-PINETOWN AREA, 1963.

Type of Manufacture	Percentage Distribution of Labour Force				Total
	Whites	Coloureds	Indians	Africans	
A. Food & Beverages	13	3	14	16	14
B. Textiles	10	44	39	27	29
C. Furniture & Wood	7	3	4	5	5
D. Footwear & Leather	1	10	9	1	3
E. Paper & Printing	7	2	8	4	6
F. Chemicals	22	3	6	12	12
G. Construction, etc.	16	1	2	16	12
H. Basic Metal	12	3	9	11	10
I. Transport, Equipment & Machinery	10	21	1	5	5
J. Miscellaneous	2	5	8	3	4
TOTAL:	100	100	100	100	100
No. of Workers	9,173	2,645	13,338	36,629	62,190
Percent	15%	5%	21%	59%	100

NOTE: This table is based on the universe, and not the sample returns.

Given a continuation of the image of the Indian and of the African worker which we found, it seems likely that further training and education of the African, together with a changing technology lowering skill levels, would lead to further employment of the African in preference to the Indian, provided no other factors change. However, it is known that during the 1950's, very rapid industrial expansion took place in the Durban-Pinetown area, and our impression is that labour shortages of Africans have led to a wider use of Indians and a reduction in their volume of unemployment. The Physical Planning Act has in fact also favoured the Indian industrial worker in the region studied.

Have changing conditions during the past decade altered the attitudes of White employers? How far are the racial stereotypes we found based on objective industrial experience, and how far are they influenced by a range of social-psychological factors other than work performance? Our findings of different attitudes to the Indian in contrast to the African raise these and other questions. As an exploratory study this research has yielded findings which warrant further research, both on a follow-up basis, and on a wider and more intensive basis.

In summary, a small-scale exploratory study undertaken in 1964 has yielded different profiles for the Indian and the African industrial worker as seen by the White industrial employer in the Durban-Pinetown area. The differences in attitudes seem to explain some of the Indian unemployment in Durban at the time, and the greater use made by industry of the African worker. It is suggested that further attitudinal research will be of value.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- BURROWS, R. (1952): *Indian Life and Labour in Natal*: South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg.
- COOPAN, S. (1955): *Employment of Indian Youth in Durban*: Department of Economics, University of Natal, Durban.
- DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF NATAL (1950): *The African Factory Worker*: Oxford University Press, Cape Town. Report No. 5, Natal Regional Survey Series.
- DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF NATAL (1961): *Studies of Indian Unemployment in Natal*: Oxford University Press, Cape Town. Natal Regional Survey Series, Vol. 11.
- EDWARDS, A.L. (1957): *Techniques of Attitude - Scale Construction*: Appleton - Century - Crofts, New York.
- KRECH, D., R.S. CRUTCHFIELD & E.L. BALLACHEY (1962): *Individual in Society*: McGraw-Hill, New York.
- LIKERT, R. (1932): 'A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes': *Archives of Psychology*, No. 140.
- MCNEMAR, Q. (1946): 'Opinion-Attitude Methodology': *Psychological Bulletin*, 43, 389-374.
- MULLER, A.L. (1963): *Die Ekonomiese Posisie van die Asiat in Suid-Afrika en enkele andere gebiede in Afrika*. Unpublished D. Phil. dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch.
- OSGOOD, C.E., G.J. SUCI & P.H. TANNENBAUM (1957): *The Measurement of Meaning*: University of Illinois Press, Urbana.
- PALMER, H. (1957): *The History of the Indian in Natal*: Oxford University Press, Cape Town. Natal Regional Survey Series, Vol. 10.
- RILEY, M.H., J.M. RILEY Jnr. & J. TOBY (1954): *Sociological Studies in Natal Analysis*: Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, N.J.
- RUSSELL, H. & I.K. ALLAN (1962): *Unemployment Among Indians in Durban*: Institute for Social Research, University of Natal, Durban.
- WOODS, C.A. (1954): *The Indian Community in Natal: Their Economic Position*: Oxford University Press, Cape Town. Natal Regional Survey Series, Vol. 9.