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THE SITUATION OF AFRICAN MIGRANT WORKERS IN DURBAN

BRIEF REPORT ON A PRELIMINARY SURVEY ANALYSIS

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JANUARY 1977

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

The Centre for Applied Social Sciences is currently under-
taking a major study of migrant contract labour on behalf of the
Chamber of Mines of South Africa. The project has been sponsored in
order to deepen understanding of the problems associated with migrant
labour and the social and economic factors which impinge on this very
important aspect of labour.

The study which forms the basis of this report was conducted
as a pilot investigation during the planning of the larger project.
Although very much a preliminary study, certain of the finding seemed
sufficiently suggestive to warrant wider dissemination.

The sponsoring body, the Chamber of Mines of South Africa,
must take full credit for supporting the project and grateful
acknowledgement is made of this assistance and of the permission granted
to publish these findings.

Other thanks are due to the Port Natal Bantu Administration
Board for permission to conduct interviews in hostels under their
jurisdiction.

The authors would like to express appreciation to their co-
workers on the project. The interviewers were Judson Kuzwayo, Shadrack
Maphumulo, Beata Mbanda, Moses Mntungwa, Dumisani Nduli, Doris
Sikhosana and Paulus Zulu. The typing was undertaken by Rosemarie
Fraser and computer work by Ulla Bulteel.

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INTRODUCTION.

Migrant labour is one of the most hotly debated issues in
South Africa. It is widely denounced as a system which leads to the
break-up of many families of migrant workers, which denudes African
rural areas of men in their most productive years, which leads to
various social pathologies in the urban areas where migrants work, due
to the artificial lives which they lead, and which encourages the
relative impoverishment of African rural areas because wages are
earned and very substantially spent in urban areas - only a proportion
of money is remitted to the areas from which labour is exported.
These claims, although persuasive, have by no means all been subjected
to systematic investigation.

The migrant contract labour system reflects historically
derived imbalances in the political economy of South Africa, in the
sense that labour permanently required in urban industrial areas has not
been socially or civically incorporated into the core society of
Southern Africa. Over the decades, the core economy has attracted labour
from peripheral African areas without being required to finance the
infrastructure of the community life from which the labour is drawn.
Hence urban industrial South Africa has saved substantially on costs
of urban development, housing, social amenities and services.

The creation of this labour supply from peripheral areas is
in part the consequence of land conquest which stripped many African
rural populations of productive or potentially productive land re-
sources, hence forcing them to work in the cash economy. Taxation
policies facilitated this development as well since Africans had to earn
money to pay hut taxes or poll taxes. It can be argued, however, that
the migrant labour supply would have been forthcoming even without these
factors. The attractions of a reliable cash income from migrant work in
the developed sector probably would have outweighed the advantages of
home-based independent subsistence agriculture in many regions, seeing
that such agriculture generally was technically undeveloped and subject

to the vicissitudes of Southern Africa's climate and to the often
inhospitable terrain.

These are merely very superficial observations on an
historical debate which is being conducted with energy and vigour by
historians of Southern Africa. Whatever the precise balance of factors
in the origins of the system, migrant contract labour is a massive and
firmly established phenomenon in Southern Africa today. Its eradica-
tion will require not only huge expenditure on urban housing, services
and amenities, a considerable expansion of group areas for Africans in
the urban areas but also a reorientation of political policy. While the
aim of a full civic incorporation of South Africa's urban labour force
is obviously desirable, structural changes to the system in the
immediate future are rather more likely to take the form of continued
efforts to decentralise industrial development so as to take work
opportunity closer to the areas of labour supply. In large measure,
however, the system is likely to persist in the established urban
industrial complexes for many years.

For this reason it is necessary to study the system as it
exists at present. Since the effects of the system are most critical
in their consequences for the quality of life of the participants and
their families, it is essential to look carefully at how migrant labour
is perceived subjectively by the participants themselves.

Different observers have different mental pictures of the
migrant worker. One such picture, which perhaps approximates to the
typical situation of a bygone era, is of a man with secure land rights,
crops and cattle in a tribal area, whose interest in migrant work is
simply to earn additional 'target' income to be deployed constructively
in the acquisition of more cattle, equipment or superior housing in his
home area. Being locked into a stable kinship and social network, he
would not remotely envisage withdrawing his family from his tribal
anchorage and becoming a townsman. His periods of absence from his
home area are intermittent and his identification with his home district is

complete.

Another picture is perhaps of a man living in a crowded
rural area with restrictions on cattle-ownership and little more than
a hectare or so of infertile land for cultivation. After the winter
months, cattle are too weak to plough and for other reasons as well
it is simply not worth the effort to cultivate the soil with serious
economic intent. The rural area has experienced an influx of squatters
from other areas and community cohesion and identity has been eroded.
The Chief or headman is little more than a petty administrator with
little claim to allegiance and support. The migrant and his family
are completely dependent on cash earnings and he sees no alternative
but to work permanently in the city for as long as he can. The distance
which separates his permanent workplace from his family is a source of
frustration or pain and hence he may wish to bring his family to the
city. On the other hand, housing shortages and social conditions in
the urban townships may make him dubious about attempting to bring his
family to town, even if influx control were to permit it. These
problems could produce a profound ambivalence in his identification and
sense of belonging, and also seriously affect his morale.

Other ideal-typical pictures of the migrant worker also exist,
but like the two examples given, they too are probably overly stereotyped.
The migrant situation undoubtedly contains a variety and range of
orientations among the people concerned and as yet we do not have
sufficient empirical information to portray adequately the complexity of
the situation of the migrant contract worker.

The history of the migrant labour system has been well docu-
mented for South Africa (Wilson 1972) and patterns of rural-urban
identification and western and non-western oriented group-cohesion in the
broader context of migrancy have been elegantly analysed by Mayer (1961).
Very little research, however, has been directed to the problems,
aspirations and conflicts specifically related to migrant work, among
migrants themselves. A survey intended to supply this information is

currently being conducted among male migrant workers in Durban.
The pilot interviews, collected in the preparatory stage before the
major survey work commenced, are thought to provide quite substantial
insight into the situation in which migrant labour finds itself. The
exploratory nature of this first inquiry requires some caution in
evaluation, and as a preliminary part of a more comprehensive study it
leaves many questions unanswered. In some small way, however, it
uncovers some of the complexities in the situation of the migrant worker
in Natal and as such could be a modest contribution to the wider on-
going debate on the problem of migrant labour.

1. The Pilot Survey Sample.

For purposes of this study an operational definition of migrant labour was adopted which includes persons employed in town whose respective families of origin or procreation are residing in the rural areas. This definition is wider than the legal definition of the migrant contract worker, since our definition made it possible to include some individuals who qualified for permanent urban residence but who chose to remain migrants in a de facto sense. These people conform to de jure migrants in every other way, however, and their inclusion was essential. Their numbers in the sample are very small, and generalisations are sub-stantially applicable to migrant contract workers in a de jure sense.

An attempt was made to reach men from various backgrounds in order to cover a wide range of persons engaged in migrant labour. Tables 1 through 6 indicate that this objective was in fact achieved. It will be noted that only information pertaining to male respondents is reported. The pilot survey sample includes 100 respondents originating from various parts of Natal and right into the bordering Pondoland areas. All ages are represented, the median age being 35 years. Approximately one quarter of interviewees are single migrants, whilst the majority provide for families of their own. The length of service in the current job ranges from under one year to over 15 years with a median six years of service. Approximately 70% of respondents are living in hostels in and around Durban, 14% reside in makeshift dwellings in Inanda District,[1]

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1) Inanda District is a peri-urban squatter district housing many migrants. It lies approximately 25-30 kilometres north west of Durban.

a further 16% are accommodated elsewhere - for the most part as lodgers
in township houses. The majority of respondents are labourers, but
smaller percentages of more skilled workers, drivers, routine non-manual
and clerical workers are included in the sample as well. Two self-
employed men and one pensioner were also interviewed.

TABLE 1.

DISTRICT OF ORIGIN.

	N
North of Tugela	46
South of Tugela	9
West of Durban	6
South of Durban	25
Other	14
	100

TABLE 2.

AGE.

Age in years	N
- 24	15
25-34	33
35-44	23
45-54	13
55 +	16
	100

TABLE 3.

MARITAL STATUS.

	N
Single migrants	22
Migrants with families of their own	73
Unknown	5
	100

TABLE 4.

LENGTH OF SERVICE.

in years	N
- 1	5
1-3	25
4-6	20
7-9	13
10-14	13
15 +	20
No information	4
	100

TABLE 5.

URBAN RESIDENCE.

	N
Dalton Road Hostel	32
S.J. Smith Hostel	17
Glebelands Hostel	21
Inanda District	14
Other	16
	100

TABLE 6.

JOB CATEGORY.

	N
Labourers, domestics, gardeners	56
Semi-skilled to skilled workers	13
Drivers	5
Routine non-manual workers	18
Clerical/sales workers	5
Self-employed workers	2
Pensioners	1
	100

2. Migration History.

As might be expected when a sample is drawn from a very heterogeneous population group, occupational history varies considerably. Urban experience ranges from less than a year to over 15 years, but the distribution is obviously skewed towards longer service. Half of the sample respondents have spent thirteen years or more in the city (cf. Table 7.)

TABLE 7.

NUMBER YEARS SPENT IN THE CITY.

years	N
- 1	1
1-3	6
4-6	14
7-9	11
10-14	23
15 +	45
	100

The chief reasons for seeking work in Durban are listed in Table 8. Migrants are motivated to come to Durban for work primarily because employment opportunities and wages are considered better here than elsewhere. This is especially true if the urban opportunity structure is compared to that, for example, in White farming, canefields and homeland agriculture. Durban is the largest migration centre which at the same time is sufficiently familiar to local workseekers; for instance reference is frequently made to Durban as "our city". One of the local migration streams ends in Durban, so that upon their arrival newcomers to the city can count on finding relatives and friends who can provide accommodation and aid in finding jobs. It is interesting to note that whereas about half of the respondents would state "good jobs and pay" as their first reason for coming to Durban, second reasons

frequently refer to social aspects such as numerous contacts at the
migration centre or familiarity with the city.

TABLE 8.

REASONS FOR SEEKING WORK IN DURBAN.

	%
Good jobs/best money in Durban	32,8
Friends, relatives live in Durban	16,9
Homelands poor/no jobs in homelands	13,7
Feels more at home in Durban	13,1
Low wages in White agriculture/canefields	4,9
Fashionable/people in home district tend to work in Durban	2,7
To escape from rural life/boredom	2,7
To earn lobola/cattle for lobola	2,2
Specific job obtained in Durban	1,1
Permits/accommodation easier in Durban	1,1
Young men come to town to work	1,1
To earn specific amount of money	0,5
Other	5,5
No information	1,6
	99,9

* Multiple responses   (N = 183 responses*)

The majority of respondents would not consider working else-
where (cf. Table 9.) In many cases a place might have momentarily been
regarded as an eligible migration target, only to be rejected because
it was located at too great a distance. Added to this, if few local
people had emigrated there in the past, a migrant would stand no chance
of securing a foothold there, and of locating himself within a familiar
network.

A smaller but nonetheless noteworthy number of respondents
mentioned Johannesburg as an alternative migration centre to Durban.

TABLE 9.

PLACES OTHER THAN DURBAN WHERE RESPONDENTS MIGHT HAVE WORKED.

	N
Johannesburg	29
Cape Town	2
Pietermaritzburg	6
Other Natal towns	15
None other than Durban	40
No information	8
	100

Johannesburg is considered the large city which evokes an image
of plentiful jobs and good pay for masses of migrants. Although
Johannesburg might be reasonably attractive to work-seekers, one of the
most prohibiting factors as regards emigration to the Rand is the long
distance. Almost half of the persons who named Johannesburg as a
migration alternative reported working experience in Johannesburg. The
majority of this group with a working knowledge of Johannesburg had at
a later stage in their migrant career preferred to work nearer home,
especially when they had established families of their own. A second
group who named the Johannesburg alternative reported previous contacts
on the mines but had never made use of them because they had meanwhile
found work closer to home. There is evidence that young people might
also fail to gain permission from their parents to travel very far
afield when seeking work. In a few instances permit difficulties were
given as prohibitive factors.

Closer to home only Pietermaritzburg is regarded as a viable
alternative to Durban. Smaller local centres are preferred if they offer
employment nearby, but frequently wages and the limited number of
available jobs mitigate against their attractiveness. The majority of
respondents state there is no real alternative to their working in Durban.
This is especially true for young persons faced with the decision of

choosing a migration centre. Many young migrants wittingly or un-
wittingly follow the main migration stream to Durban under the
assumption that homeboys will accommodate them and help them find a
job to start their migrant careers. Even more established migrants
in our sample say they have no contacts outside Durban.

Inexperience, lack of contacts elsewhere and strict super-
vision of kinsmen and homeboys prevents many youthful migrants from
moving farther afield when undertaking their first trip to a larger
centre. Towards the end of a migrant career distance to alternative
large centres prevents older, sickly migrants from considering alter-
native migration centres. The adequate wages offered in Durban at a
relatively short distance from the home district keep most local migrants
working close to home. One might therefore presume that under normal
circumstances it is highly unlikely that more distant centres can compete
in attraction. Seen in the light of this premise, it is understandable
that the idea of working farther afield "never occurred" to a number of
respondents who found work in Durban without delay.

It would appear that the two chief factors of distance and job/
wage opportunities determine the "pull" force emanating from urban centres.
Furthermore personal contacts at the migration centre are of eminent im-
portance - especially for persons seeking their first job. In this respect
our findings seem to be generally supportive of gravitation models of
migration which seek to predict migration behaviour in terms of distance
between the migration centre and the area of origin. In more sophisticated
versions of the gravitation model the number of people going a given
distance from an area of origin is not merely a function of distance
directly but of the spatial distribution of opportunities. The general
formula governing population movement states that the number of people
moving to a target area will increase as a function of the opportunities
at the target area as against those opportunities interposed between it
and the origin. Stouffer's (1962) introduction of the measures of "inter-
vening opportunities" and "competing migrants" represents such a refinement
of the basic physical distance concept in the gravitation model. According

to Lazarsfeld in his introductory remarks to Stouffer's work the "competing migrant" concept may be regarded as a general "accessibility" factor indicating that the migration centre holds differential attraction for migrants according to direction and distance of their origin. With reference to this accessibility or competing migrant factor one might be tempted to further distinguish between types of competing migrants. In the study context, survey findings suggest that the accessibility of a centre for a particular area of origin increases with the number of homeboys emigrating to this target and decreases with the number of 'competing migrants' of foreign origin. For centres at a distance, lack of recruitment from a social ecological area is a self-reinforcing barrier to migration. In a similar vein one might go on to relate the type of organisation found among homeboys to the distance factor. Consider the distinction between homeboy cliques which provide for the emotional needs of migrants and reinforce home ties to the exclusion of urban ones, and homeboy cliques which merely function instrumentally as agents assisting initial adjustment to urban life. Mayer (1962: 13) observes that groups with home-based networks achieve the highest degree of organisation among migrants whose rural homes are located at great distance. Migrants recruited from nearby may well choose home friends as companions in town but are less dependent on the "substitute gratification of an organised 'home community in exile' (Mayer 1962: 13)", because they are able to participate in the social life of the home community. More recently Mitchell (1973) has provided supportive evidence for Mayer's ideas when associating the proximity of migrants' areas of origin to town with their urban involvement. We shall return to the distance factor and its correlates later on when discussing attitudes toward the migrant system.

When questioned if they had had previous experience with working on mines, 15% of respondents answered in the affirmative. The proportion of persons with mine experience is significantly greater among older migrants, as shown in Table 10. This may simply reflect the fact that the number of opportunities for a person to gain mine experience increases with age. However, other explanations may be equally feasible. For instance the increase in local employment opportunities in the last

decades is stressed by several respondents. This may indicate that
migration streams in Natal have changed course in recent years and local
centres hold greater attraction for today's work seekers than in the
past.   Alternatively, mine work may have lost its former popularity
among the local migrant population. Older migrants give the impression
that mine work was at one time quite fashionable for youths first
venturing into employment. Moreover, the normal functioning of the
probability factor associated with age may be disturbed by the attitudes
held toward mine work, a point which will be discussed in the following
section.

TABLE 10.

MINE EXPERIENCE BY AGE OF MIGRANTS.

	Mine experience		
age	Yes	No	
- 34 years	1	47	48
35 + years	14	38	52
	15	85	100

chi square = 12,1, d.f.1, p < .001

3.   Attitudes toward Types of Work.

In order to gain some insight into the kinds of jobs which
migrants like to do, job satisfaction and related topics were explored.
Surprisingly, over half of the respondents do not wish to engage in work
other than what they are doing at present (cf. Table 11.). Job satisfaction
frequently stems from job requirements being suited to the capability of
the workers in our sample. Quite a sizable proportion of respondents feel
that their simple or light jobs are in keeping with their low educational
qualifications, flagging strength or ill health. As might be expected
adequate pay for the job contributes to job satisfaction. Some workers
will not contemplate doing another job, because they are accustomed to

their present work and fear losing the benefits attached to long
service on the job.

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TABLE 11.

ASPIRATIONS TO DO WORK OTHER THAN THAT DONE AT PRESENT.

</div>

	N
Satisfied with Present Job	
- unqualified	7
- long service	10
- good pay	7
- light work	4
- mutual trust with employer	1
- suits qualification, education	9
- suits health/age/vitality	6
- other	2
- pensioned	1
Cannot Aspire Due to Low Educational Qualifications	9
Alternative Job Aspirations	
- driving	10
- light unskilled job (messenger, delivery man)	2
- light unskilled job (manual work)	4
- light skilled manual work (machine operator)	6
- light skilled job (S.A.P., Blackjack, etc.)	2
- clerical/sales work	1
- self-employed — business, taxi	7
- self-employed — farming	3
- other work	5
- professional work	3
No Information	1
	100

Thorough knowledge of the job fosters self-reliance in some instances,
because workers can do without supervision when performing routine
tasks. Nine persons state that their low educational qualifications
effectively prevent them from aspiring to another job. It would appear
that seniority or age, and low education - factors which are likely to

be closely negatively associated in the South African context - account
for this lack of job aspiration. This is confirmed by figures shown in
Table 12. Long service and lack of aspirations are in all probability
a partial product of job satisfaction, but in some cases resignation due
to force of circumstances accounts for the low ceiling placed on job
aspirations.

TABLE 12.

ALTERNATIVE JOB ASPIRATIONS BY AGE.

Age	Alternative job aspirations		
	No	Yes	
- 34 years	19	29	48
35 + years	37	14	51
	56	43	99

chi square = 10.9, d.f.1, p < .001.

Whilst older persons might be satisfied to engage in light
work for age or health reasons, younger persons, who are more likely to
voice job aspirations, likewise consider light work as extremely
desirable. Again aspirations are set at a level in keeping with the
predominantly low educational qualifications of migrants. Better paying
jobs which require some extra skills such as machine operator in a
factory or driver are preferred to lower paying ones. The driving job
is extremely popular because it affords one of the few channels of
advancement to the less educated and combines the advantages of light
work, good pay and an opportunity to widen one's horizon by travelling.
In some cases the driving job may be regarded as a stepping stone to
starting a business of one's own in communications. Self-employment is
ideally conceived as a chance to gain freedom from White domination.
Similarly, by running a small retail business in the rural areas or
farming in the homelands a man can be his own boss and work near his

family at the same time. To sum up our findings as regards work preferences, well-paid light work is highly valued by our migrants. Opportunity to work independently of White or Indian supervision is a further significant factor contributing to job aspirations.

In a more structured inquiry into job aspirations, a sub-section of the sample was asked to select the most pleasant and un-pleasant jobs respectively from standard lists. The results are depicted in Tables 13 and 14.

TABLE 13.

MOST PLEASANT TYPE OF WORK.

		%
Farmer	- in homelands	17,6
Messenger	- in office	15,7
Factory worker	- on machines	11,8
Driver	- of trucks	9,8
Labourer	- building and construction	-
None of above		45,1
		100,0

(N = 51)

TABLE 14.

MOST UNPLEASANT TYPE OF WORK.

		%
Miner		43,2
Labourer	- canefields	40,5
Labourer	- building and construction	10,8
Gardener		-
Factory worker	- machines	-
All of above unpleasant		2,7
N/A pensioned		2,7
		99,9

(N = 37)

When forced to choose between 5 types of jobs, respondents cast their
votes on the farmer, messenger, factory worker and truck driver in
that order. Significantly, nearly half of persons questioned in this
section do not consider any of the standard jobs as very pleasant ones.
The labourer on the building or construction site comes last with no
votes in its favour at all. If the construction labour job is not re-
garded as particularly pleasant, then the job of the miner or cane
cutter is considered far less pleasant by respondents.

Factors which contribute to making a job acceptable in the
eyes of migrants are given in Tables 15 and 16.

TABLE 15.

FACTORS WHICH MAKE WORK PLEASANT.

	%
Light work	28,6
Good pay	23,8
No supervision	11,9
Short hours, fringe benefits	11,9
Familiar work	9,5
Escape from urban problems	7,1
Other	7,1
	99,9

* Multiple responses   (N = 42 responses*)

14.

TABLE 16.

FACTORS WHICH MAKE WORK UNPLEASANT.

	%
Low, inconsistent pay	28,3
Danger, threat to life	23,3
Heavy, tough work	21,7
Low status work	11,7
Exposure to elements	5,0
Long hours	1,7
Other	8,3
	100,0

* Multiple responses   (N = 60 responses*)

Pleasant work is light and pays well and requires little super-
vision. The job of the office messenger fits this description fairly
well. The farmer occupation combines several favourable factors such
as relatively light work, no supervision, familiar work and escape from
urban problems. Factors which make a job unpleasant are poor pay, danger,
heavy work and low status. It is interesting to note that danger - in-
cluding threat to life - tough job requirements and low status are most
frequently first considerations; pay is by comparison only of secondary
importance. Mine work combines virtually all these factors which make
a job unpleasant. "Not for all the money in the world" would some re-
spondents expose themselves to the dangers of the mines. Work in the
canefields is regarded as only somewhat less hazardous than minework.
Exposure to the elements, snakes and scars from cutting cane stalks are
feared, moreover the indignity involved in "wearing a sack" (which gives
a feminine appearance) while working is not balanced by the extremely low
pay offered. Direct supervision by White women is resented in the case
of the gardener job.

When asked how they would feel about working on the mines, most
respondents gave negative replies (cf. Table 17.). Senior migrants felt

they were too old to consider such strenuous work. Persons who had
worked on the mines before - it will be remembered that predominantly
older respondents have actual mine experience - were under the im-
pression that wages, working and living conditions had possibly improved
since their time.

TABLE 17.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MINEWORK.

	%
Negative responses.	
Fear of illness, injury, death; association of mine with grave	33,5
Bad working conditions : long hours, heavy work	12,4
Low wages	10,0
Isolation : distance from home, no contacts there	9,4
Loss of freedom through contract, tight control in compounds	4,1
Job for uneducated people	2,9
Bad living conditions (food, hostels)	1,8
Other negative responses	4,1
No knowledge/experience of mines	7,6
Positive responses.	4,1
Ambivalent responses.	2,4
Never considered minework	7,1
Other	0,6
	100,0

* Multiple responses   (N = 170 responses*)

TABLE 17.1.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MINEWORK BY ETHNIC GROUP.

Attitudes toward minework*	Ethnic Group		
	Zulu	Other	
Positive/ambivalent attitude	27	10	37
Minework considered unsuitable	69	7	76
Fear of minework	54	3	57
	150	20	170

chi square = 7,4, d.f.2, p< .05, N= 100 (computed on first responses)
*Multiple responses.

However, precisely these factors still contribute to the generally negative image of the mines in our respondents' minds. The impression of being imprisoned or trapped is closely associated with minework: Miners labour in tunnels in the bowels of the earth, they are transported to and from work in cages, they are housed in closed compounds where tensions between ethnic groups mount steadily and they are bound to a contract. That feeling of imprisonment is accompanied by a perception of isolation due to the fact that the miner's family is living far away, his ancestor spirits might not follow him to the mines and he might die un-comforted. The daily hazards encountered in underground work constitute the most significantly negative aspects ·of the mines. Death seems to lurk around the corner and the constant threat to life and health is an un-bearable thought to many migrants. This fear of danger and death is real to most respondents and based on actual and vicarious experience. Respondents themselves, relatives and homeboys have contracted tuberculosis and been injured or killed in mine accidents. The fear of the mines is exacerbated by news from the mines in the mass media which is invariably limited to casualty reports.

Viewed in connection with motivation theory pertaining to industrial organisations, our observations on attitudes towards types

of work provide us with a special insight into the need-priorities
of migrants. Consider that Abraham Maslow's motivation theory, which
might be regarded as somewhat outdated and crudely formulated today.
hypothesizes five broad classes of needs arranged in hierarchical
levels of prepotency so that when one need level is satisfied, the
next level is activated. The items in Maslow's model in order of
ascending needs are physiological needs, safety (in the sense of social
and residential safety) and security, belonging and social activity,
esteem and status, self-realization and fulfillment. Given the extreme
anxiety aroused in our migrants at the prospect of engaging in dangerous
work such as mining and to a lesser extent cane-cutting, it suggests
itself that Malsow's needs-priority model may be extended downwards to
include a yet more basic need than the physiological one, which might
be designated sheer 'physical survival'. There is however a possibility
of over-reaction to danger among the respondent group which calls for
some reservations when generalizing from our findings with regard to
motivational theory. This possible over-reaction may reflect the operation
of a socio-cultural variable which is specific to the majority in our
respondent group, and which is normally outside the theoretical frameworks
utilised in analyses of motivation. Although the number of non-Zulus
included in the survey sample is relatively small, there are indications
that non-Zulus may be less negatively inclined toward minework than
Zulus (cf. Table 17.1.).

4. Urban Commitment.

The majority of migrant workers interviewed expect to remain
in town for a considerable period of time - usually for the duration of
a working lifetime (cf. Table 18.). Under one-third of the sample respondents
expect to work in town until pension age, 15% as long as physically fit.
Thirteen per cent anticipate they will die in town. A further third will
remain in town until they have saved sufficient money to realise certain
projects or until their children are self-supporting. Although such
projects may be well defined they are frequently sufficiently ambitious to
keep a target worker occupied in town for the better part of his working life.

TABLE 18.

HOW LONG WOULD RESPONDENTS LIKE TO WORK IN THE CITY.

	N
Too young to know	4
Under 5 years	3
5 years or more	3
Until sufficient capital accumulated/projects completed	30
Until pension	29
Until strength fails	15
Indefinitely, until death	13
Other	2
No information	1
	100

Expressed in more specific terms of urban commitment on Table 19, our sample might be said to consist of equal proportions of target workers and pragmatic urban workers, i.e. persons working in town to reach a specific goal and working in town out of economic necessity without inclination towards participation in urban life respectively. A far smaller proportion of respondents - 18% - might be considered committed urban workers.

TABLE 19.

URBAN COMMITMENT OF RESPONDENTS.

	N
Target workers	39
Pragmatic urban workers	37
Committed urban workers	18
Uncertain	5
No information	1
	100

Respondents were asked if they would like to bring wives and children to town to live there permanently or if they would prefer them to stay where they were. This question was put to all respondents regardless of their having families of their own or not. As shown in Table 20 the majority of migrants do not wish their families to join them in town. Their wives must safeguard their rural property; furthermore city life is tendentially viewed as having negative effects on family life and as being extremely expensive. This last financial aspect is usually a primary consideration and frequently offered as first reason. Only slightly more than 10% of respondents would like to stake claims in both rural and urban areas or in the urban area respectively. In some of these cases respondents feel their children will encounter fewer difficulties in securing employment if brought to town at an early age.

TABLE 20.

ASPIRATIONS TO BRING WIVES AND SMALL CHILDREN TO LIVE PERMANENTLY IN THE CITY.

Response	Qualification	%	%
No	Wife must attend to fields, maintain property Insecurity/anxiety of city life City undesirable/corrupting City life expensive City is for Whites Inadequate accommodation Other	16,1 15,5 13,5 11,6 5,8 3,2 5,2	70,9
Equivocal	Yes, but keep rural home So that children can get jobs	9,0 1,9	10,9
Yes	For the future of the children Unqualified Other	4,5 5,2 3,2	12,9
	Single	5,2	5,2
		99,9	99,9

* Multiple responses   (N = 155 responses*)

To sum up findings on urban commitment it is evident that
our sample respondents are largely rural-committed and view the city
as the place where they work. For reasons of finance, security and
quality of life the city cannot provide an adequate home for their wives
and children.

The migrants who exhibit the highest urban commitment in our
sample are at the same time persons who intend to remain in town for
longer than others and who might consider bringing wives and children
to town in higher proportions than the sample as a whole (cf. Table 21.).
Our data further suggests that urban 'push' factors as regards family
accommodation may be decisive for the formation of urban commitment.
The urban committed group appear to be less affected by regulations
preventing their families from joining them in town.

TABLE 21.

URBAN COMMITMENT BY ATTITUDES TOWARD URBAN RESIDENCE INTENTIONS FOR ONE'S
SELF AND ONE'S FAMILY.

Urban residence intentions	Urban commitment type			
	Target worker	Pragmatic urban worker	Committed urban worker	
Uncertain till 5 years	2	7	1	10
Till specific target achieved	17	10	2	29
Till pensionable age	3	13	28	44
Till death	1	4	8	13
	23	34	39	96

chi   square = 42,9, d.f.6, p. < .001.

Intentions of bringing family to town.				
Yes	2	2	9	13
Equivocal	2	6	3	11
No	14	27	20	61
	18	35	32	85

chi square = 6,6, d.f.2, p < .05, N = 85 (computed from table with
Target and Pragmatic categories combined)

5. Attitudes Toward Family Separation.

For the majority of respondents, working in town away from
their families presents serious problems both for themselves and for
the people staying behind at the rural home. A list of problems arising
from family separation is given in Table 22. When problem issues are
grouped under four broad headings, it would appear that migrants are
most concerned about neglecting their family and property in the rural
areas. The lack of contact with the family and its consequences is a
related central theme which figures under headings connected with
visiting and social problems at the rural end. By contrast problems
arising for the migrant in his social life in town tend to be de-
emphasized.

TABLE 22.

PROBLEMS ARISING FROM MIGRANTS WORKING AWAY FROM THEIR FAMILIES.

		%
- no problems		24,0
- rural property problems		25,7
house neglected	(11,1)	
agriculture neglected	(8,2)	
expenses incurred by absence of male labour	(6,4)	
- visiting problems		19,9
visits too short	(8,8)	
insufficient opportunity to visit	(6,4)	
expenses involved in visiting	(4,7)	
- social problems at the urban end		10,5
wives cannot visit hostel migrants	(5,3)	
hostel life undesirable	(1,8)	
role reversal resented (ie. having to cope with housewifely chores)	(1,8)	
urban temptations	(1,8)	
- social problems at the rural end		10,5
'fatherless' children	(5,8)	
family exposed to danger	(3,5)	
loss of male authority in home	(1,2)	
- other		9,4
		100,0

Multiple responses   (N = 171 responses)

Young men who have not reached courting age tend to feel
the strain of living away from home least intensely. Courting and newly
wed migrants complain they are not given sufficient opportunity to see
their lovers. It is however the married men with families of their own
who feel the disadvantages of oscillating between town and country most
acutely. Their wives must frequently shoulder the extra burden of
traditional men's work besides their own. Most respondents take their
role as chief decision-maker in family matters very seriously and deplore
the fact that they cannot fulfil this duty adequately. According to
respondents' reports their wives have shown their ability to manage on
their own and also to cope with emergency situations to varying degrees
and it is suggested that the wives' capability to adjust to this
aspect of the migrant system at the rural end determines the satis-
faction derived from migrancy by their husbands to an appreciable extent.
Even when a migrant praises his wife's prowess in running the rural
home single-handed, he frequently feels he is being deprived of the joys
of watching his children grow up. The migrant father is in constant
fear that some casualty might strike his home - the case of an ailing
child is most frequently offered by way of example - and he might arrive
home too late to assist. Lastly, the married migrant misses being near
his wife and children and feels his family must also miss his presence
at the rural home as well. There are a few exceptions to this general
attitudinal pattern where men reckon they gain in authority by limiting
their physical presence at the rural home to a few visits per year.
However, on the whole, the larger proportion of respondents agree that
they do not see their families frequently enough (cf. Table 23.).

This evaluation of visiting frequency is understandable when we
learn that the majority of respondents see their families less often than
bi-monthly (cf. Table 24.). There is indeed a consistent but
statistically insignificant association between visiting frequency and
satisfaction with visiting behaviour, in the sense that more frequent
visitors feel they see enough of their families and vice versa.

TABLE 23.

RESPONDENTS' EVALUATION OF CONTACT WITH FAMILY.

	N
Feels he should see family more often	51
- work prohibits more frequent contact 25 - resigned 20 - discontent 6	
Feels he sees enough of his family	43
N/A single	6
	100

TABLE 24.

HOW OFTEN RESPONDENTS SEE THEIR FAMILIES.

	First response %	Multiple responses %
Once yearly	22	15
Twice yearly	5	5
Once every 2 to 4 months	28	20
Monthly	31	20
Fortnightly	4	4
Weekly	1	2
Live with family	1	1
Whenever possible (financially etc.)	2	16
Whenever necessary or desirable	6	17
	100	100

(N = 100 responses)(N = 164 responses)

When allowing for multiple responses, there is an indication that in-
frequent contacts are dictated by circumstances. Week-end duty, time
and expense involved in travelling are factors which prevent migrants
spending as much time with their families as they would like to.
Moreover, the fact that intervals between family visits are decided
arbitrarily in advance by the work schedule and are not simply left
to individual inclination is frequently a source of frustration. Some
migrants appear to be caught up in a dilemma; on the one hand they
know full well that travelling expenses might be put to better use if
spent on the material needs of the family, on the other hand they feel
that the few hours spent with their families over a short week-end are
a justification in themselves. Consequently, the physical and emotional
fatigue involved in the brief visit, together with the risk of arriving
late for work on Monday morning, have led to a certain resignation on
the part of some migrants who have renounced their claims to frequent
home visiting.

The larger proportion of married respondents, who expressed
their attitudes toward leaving their wives on their own, are unhappy
about doing so (cf. Table 25.).

TABLE 25.

ATTITUDE TOWARD LEAVING WIVES ON THEIR OWN.

		%
Discontent		47,1
- anxiety, tension manifest	(21,4)	
- no option	(20,0)	
- young couples	(5,7)	
Reasonably content		21,4
- material advantages of leaving wife behind stressed	(8,6)	
- parents/relatives/neighbours reside at home or nearby	(8,6)	
- wife accepts situation	(4,3)	
Single N/A		20,0
Other		11,4
No information		
		99,9

(N = 70)

This is especially the case for newly married migrants. Generally
speaking migrants tend to be less anxious about leaving their wives
behind when she is staying at the parents' home and/or they can trust
in the assistance and social control of relatives and neighbours.

In such a situation where the well-being of his wife, children
and rural property are by and large dependent on relationships with
neighbours and people in the vicinity, it is important to know that
approximately three-quarters of sample migrants report they are on good
terms with their kinsmen in the home district (cf. Table 26.). The
majority of those feeling secure about kinship relationships qualified
this by saying that they co-existed peacefully with relatives or they
appreciated their kinsmen's kindness and support. A feeling of in-
security stems chiefly from jealousy or land disputes among kinsmen.

TABLE 26.

PERCEPTION OF RELATIONSHIP WITH KINSMEN AND RELATIVES IN HOME DISTRICT.

	N
Feeling of security	77
Feeling of insecurity	15
Other	4
Little contact with kinsmen	1
No information	3
	100

6. Rural Ties of Migrants.

The fact that migrants to town retain their rural ties has
frequently been referred to as the chief characteristic of African
rural-urban migration (Gugler 1968). According to our sample definition,
all respondents should theoretically have family ties in the rural area
and we have discussed problems connected with maintaining these ties
above. In this section we shall inquire specifically into the nature
and strength of property ties in the home district.

Signs of attachment to the land are given by the popularity
of the homeland farmer occupation in the section on attitudes toward
various types of jobs. Similarly, in Table 27 the figures demonstrate
that the majority of respondents are keen to return to farming upon
retirement. Smaller proportions of migrants aspire to opening up a
business in the home district and some intend to live from their
savings and pensions.

TABLE 27.

HOW MIGRANTS WOULD LIKE TO LIVE AFTER STOPPING WORK.

Response category	First response %	Multiple responses %
Farming/cash cropping	42,4	32,5
Animal farming	8,1	11,9
Small business, handicrafts etc.	26,3	19,2
Pension	10,1	11,3
Children's support	5,1	5,3
Expression of positive attitude toward retirement	2,0	10,6
Expression of anxiety about future	3,0	4,6
Other	3,0	4,6
	100,0	100,0

(N = 99 responses)(N = 151 responses)

Figures in Tables 28 through 33 indicate that three-quarters
of respondents have access to rural land. A large proportion of the
balance will use their parents' land or share land with brothers. Seventy-
five per cent of respondents feel secure about their rural land rights.
This security is embedded in the knowledge that the land traditionally
belongs to one's people and Whites will not interfere with its distribution.

TABLE 28.

LAND RIGHTS.

	N
Yes	71
No	29
	100

TABLE 29.

PERCEPTION OF SECURITY OF TENURE IN HOME DISTRICT.

	N
Feeling of security	75
Feeling of insecurity	14
No land	7
No information	4
	100

TABLE 30.

SIZE OF LAND.

	N
Adequate for ploughing	10
Inadequate for ploughing	38
Garden only	13
No land	2
No information	37
	100

TABLE 31.

PLACE TO GRAZE CATTLE.

	N
Yes unspecified	30
Yes but inadequate	6
No cattle	15
No information	49
	100

TABLE 32.

NUMBER OF CATTLE OWNED BY RESPONDENTS.

	N
No cattle	17
Under 5	2
6 to 10	4
Over 10	4
Unspecified number of cattle	24
No information	49
	100

Insecurity is frequently caused by fears of resettlement schemes and
introduction of policy change. There is however some evidence that
in many cases there is insufficient land for agricultural purposes
(cf. Table 30.). Approximately half of the sample respondents supplied
information on access to grazing land and cattle ownership. In the
majority of cases grazing land is available - and presumably adequate -
but this might merely reflect the small number of cattle owned by
individual migrants. A fair proportion of this informant group reported
that they did not own any cattle at all, which might reflect scarcity
of grazing land in their home areas.

An estimate of the adequacy of land potential to fulfil the
needs of migrant labourers and their rural-based families is given in
Table 33. Only some 11% of those giving information on this item state
unconditionally that they could live by farming alone and 14% are entirely
dependent on their urban wages. Over half of the respondent group would
require starting capital if they were to rely on farming as their sole
means of livelihood. These findings suggest that farming must remain
wishful thinking for most migrants so long as they have a growing family
to support. Only in old-age - when children are self-supporting - can
a migrant expect the return from the land to suffice family needs. Even
then, a supplement from other sources of income, such as pension money
and contributions from children, will possibly be necessary.

TABLE 33.

RESPONDENTS WHO COULD LIVE BY FARMING.

	%
Yes	11,3
Conditional - if sufficient capital available	56,5
Conditional - when old/retired	8,1
No - dependent on migrant labour	14,5
Other	9,7
	100,1

(N = 62)

One of the most striking findings in our study is that
security of tenure in the home district and access to rural property
do not constitute an effective rural pull which keeps a rural-based
male from seeking work in an urban centre. Regardless of whether a
respondent in our sample desires to become a farmer in the home district
or not, he is forced to sell his labour for economic reasons.

A cross-tabulation exercise, employing the parameters concerning
rural property ties introduced above, reveals that all parameters are
significantly positively interrelated with the exception of the
'livelihood from farming' parameter (cf. Table 34.). This inter-
relationship pattern can be interpreted by saying that migrants who have
access to more land and property than others also feel greater security
and inclination to farm when they stop work. However, despite its
advantageous position, this more privileged rural group is not released
from its dependence on the migrant labour system. We therefore conclude
that although access to land of adequate size (which is closely related
to single ownership of a plot in the rural community) is conducive to
perceived momentary security and anticipation of security in old age,
it by no means guarantees independence from the migrant labour system.
In this connection it is perhaps significant to learn that precisely
those persons deriving little security from rural land tenure tend to

project various sources of income after retirement: in all probability
this should be interpreted as an attempt to compensate for the lack
of an agricultural base, which is a prerequisite for the adequate
functioning of the migrant labour system in terms of the push-pull model.

TABLE 34.

SIGNIFICANTLY CORRELATED RURAL PROPERTY AND SECURITY VARIABLES.

Variable identification	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Access to rural land	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	
2. Access to own vs. shared land	X	-	X	X	X	X		
3. Size of this land	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	
4. Access to grazing land	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	
5. Cattle ownership	X	X	X	X	-	X		
6. Perceived security of tenure	X	X	X	X	X	-		
7. Possibility to live by farming at old age *	X		X	X			-	
8. Current possibility to live by farming								-

X indicates significance at .95 level of confidence or greater.
* Positive answers isolated in first and second responses.
X^2 calculated on true N.

TABLE 35.

ANTICIPATED SOURCE OF INCOME AT RETIREMENT BY CURRENT POSSIBILITY TO LIVE
BY FARMING.

Anticipated source of income at retirement.*	Current possibility to live by farming			
	Yes	Conditional	No	
Farming	4	20	17	41
Business	1	8	13	22
Pension	1	2	10	13
Children	2	0	2	4
Other	0	2	8	10
Positive attitude	2	1	4	7
	10	33	54	97

chi square = 16,7, d.f.10, $p < .10$, N = 61 (computed on first responses)
* Multiple responses.

7. Attitudes Toward the Migrant Labour System.

When questioned toward the end of the interview session about other problems faced by migrant labourers, just over a third of respondents felt that most problems had been discussed and they had no further contributions to make to the inquiry. Roughly another third said they could not think of any other problems. Some members of this group qualified their response by alluding to their ability to provide for their families while their people coped with duties at the rural home during their absence. A last third of respondents named various items presenting problems for migrants. Problems connected with accommodation in town and influx control head the list. Inadequate accommodation, lack of privacy in hostels, the constant demand for proof of rights of occupancy reduces a migrant's sense of freedom and dignity and undermines his health when he is deprived of sleep during night raids. Despite the thorough discussion of problems connected with family separation above, some respondents found it necessary to repeat their feelings of anxiety about leaving family, children and property behind. Lack of suitable accommodation for visiting wives was also deplored by some respondents. Insecurity of living in town was stressed by those who imagined themselves to be living among strangers, those who feared assault or illness or losing their jobs through misfortune.

Judging from the opinions voiced by respondents throughout the interview session, attitudes toward the migrant system range from satisfaction, resignation to disenchantment.

TABLE 36.

GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF MIGRANT LABOUR SYSTEM.

	N
Reasonably satisfied	38
Cannot say	9
Resigned	14
Discontent	39
	100

Strangely enough it is the least committed "target worker" who is manifestly discontent with the lot of the migrant worker; the more "committed urban worker" seems less dissatisfied and the majority of "pragmatic urban workers" are by and large resigned in their outlook on migrant life. This pattern may appear somewhat puzzling at first glance, but readily lends itself to explanation after inspection of Table 37.

TABLE 37.

URBAN COMMITMENT BY ATTITUDE TOWARD MIGRANT LABOUR SYSTEM, JOB ASPIRATIONS, ACCESS TO LAND AND RURAL TENURE SECURITY.

Attitude toward migrant life	Urban commitment.			
	Target worker	Pragmatic worker	Committed worker	
Reasonably satisfied	6	3	14	23
Resigned	10	15	12	37
Discontent	21	5	13	39
chi square = 15,8, d.f.4, p < .01	37	23	39	99
Aspirations for job other than that held currently				
No alternative aspirations	7	27	21	55
Alternative aspirations	16	10	17	43
chi square = 10,4, d.f.2, p < .01	23	37	38	98
Size of rural land				
Adequate for ploughing	11	17	9	37
Inadequate for ploughing	0	10	3	13
Garden only/no land	2	4	6	12
chi square = 9,1, d.f.4, p < .10	13	31	18	62
Perception of rural tenure security				
Yes	22	24	28	74
No	1	12	8	21
chi square = 6,8, d.f.2, p < .05	23	36	36	95

Bearing in mind that we are using relatively coarse categories of
migrant types, we can only indicate trends. Furthermore, age
factors might intensify effects. The younger age cohorts are slightly
overrepresented in the target and committed group (small sample size
prohibited control by age). Consider, that if target workers are
predominantly young and aspire to new jobs in order to reach specific
goals, their discontent might be interpreted as youthful unrest. Lack
of urban commitment and rural orientation might be a partial product
of their perceived security of tenure in the rural areas. The satis-
faction of the more committed urban workers with the migrant system
might reflect less concern for a situation which is considered merely
a passing stage in life. Their extended time perception reaches beyond
the migrant phase of a working life and tends to focus on hopes for a
brighter tomorrow. It is possibly the pragmatic urban worker who
deserves our close attention and sympathy. His life chances in both
urban and rural context are not particularly rosy. In relation to the
other urban types he is frequently insecure in his rural landholdings
and dissatisfied or resigned with his migrant life. Moreover he is
bound to his present job, possibly for reasons of mature age.

Our survey data also suggest that factors affecting attitudes
toward the migrant system and urban commitment can be better understood
when seen in connection with marital status. For example, in another
Southern African context where the migrant labour system and labour
stabilization were operating side by side - simultaneously - it could
be demonstrated that a large proportion of migrants switched from migrancy
to permanent urban residence when becoming eligible for township housing
after official marriage (Møller 1976). It was also observed that the
less committed urban workers, i.e. those who did not aspire to family
residence in town despite their married status, solved the problem of
family separation by increasing their visiting frequency significantly.
Reconciliation of the incongruency between married status and single
residence status in town by increasing home visiting may be considered
a 'tension release mechanism' which may promote acceptance of the migrant
system as such.

Returning to our data for Durban, we note that married men are overrepresented among those persons who are resigned and discontent with the migrant labour system (cf. Table 38.).

It is also clear that married men perceive tension arising from the migrancy system to a greater extent than single men (cf. Table 39). Tension experienced by those dissatisfied with the migrant system may stem chiefly from problems connected with family separation and neglect of the rural home (cf. Table 40.). Noteworthy is the fact that those most dissatisfied with the system are precisely those persons who are loathe to leave their wives on their own and who evaluate contact possibilities with their families as being insufficient (cf. Table 41.). It would therefore appear that, by contrast to the context cited above, the home-visiting mechanism which might relieve tensions arising from family separation and migrancy in general, is not functioning adequately for family men even in the Durban-Natal context where distances are relatively restricted.

TABLE 38.

ATTITUDE TOWARD MIGRANT LIFE BY MARITAL STATUS.

Attitude Toward Migrant Life	Marital Status		
	Single	Married	
Reasonably Satisfied	15	22	37
Resigned	3	20	23
Discontent	4	31	35
	22	73	95

chi square = 10,3, d.f.2, p < .01

TABLE 39.

PROBLEMS ARISING FROM MIGRANT LIFE BY MARITAL STATUS.

Problems arising from migrants working away from their families.*	Marital	Status	
	Single	Married	
Neglect of fields and home/resulting in financial loss	2	42	44
Visiting	2	23	25
Family separation	2	18	20
Problems for those left at home	–	9	9
Problems for migrants in town	3	8	11
No problems	15	23	38
chi square =14,6, d.f.5, $p<.02$, N = 90**	24	123	147
Problems of being a migrant worker*			
No problems	15	26	41
Influx control, accommodation problems	4	30	34
Other problems in town	2	17	19
Problems arising from family separation	–	9	9
chi square = 6,9, d.f.3, $p<.10$, N = 61 ***	21	82	103

* Multiple responses.

** Computed on first responses.

*** Calculated on multiple responses but corrected to represent true sample size (N = 61).
Correction: $x^2 \dfrac{\text{N single}}{\text{N multiple}}$ = "true" x^2

TABLE 40.

PROBLEMS ARISING FROM MIGRANT LIFE BY ATTITUDE TOWARD MIGRANT LIFE.

Problems arising from migrants working away from their families*	Attitude toward migrant life.			
	Reasonably satisfied	Resigned	Discontent	
Neglect of fields and home/ resulting in financial loss	4	13	27	44
Visiting	3	9	16	28
Family separation	1	6	14	21
Problems for those left at home	–	4	6	10
Problems for migrants in town	2	1	8	11
No problems	32	4	5	41
chi square = 57,5, d.f.10, p < .001, N = 94 **	42	37	76	155
Problems of being a migrant worker*				
No problems	28	11	2	41
Influx control, accommodation problems	1	13	21	35
Other problems in town	2	7	14	23
Problems arising from family separation	–	2	7	9
chi square = 34,4, d.f.6, p < .001, N = 64 ***	31	33	44	108

* Multiple responses.
** Computed on first responses.
*** Computed on first responses.

TABLE 41.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MIGRANT LIFE BY ATTITUDES TOWARD LEAVING WIVES ON THEIR
OWN AND EVALUATION OF FAMILY CONTACTS.

Attitude toward leaving wives on their own.	Attitudes toward migrant life.			
	Reasonably satisfied	Resigned	Discontent	
Reasonably satisfied	9	3	3	15
Resigned	2	8	4	14
Discontent	1	2	16	19
chi square = 26,6, d.f.4, p < .001	12	13	23	48
Evaluation of family contacts.				
Reasonably satisfied	26	10	6	42
Resigned	5	9	12	26
Discontent	4	2	19	25
chi square = 31,4, d.f.4, p < .001	35	21	37	93

This conclusion is supported by the equally low proportions of
regular rural visitors found among both single and married men in Table 42.

TABLE 42.

HOME VISITING PATTERN BY MARITAL STATUS.

Visiting frequency	Marital Status		
	Single	Married	
Occasional visits	13	46	59
Regular visits	9	27	36
chi square = 0,1, d.f.1, p < .80	22	73	95

the migrant is rationally attempting to maximise his status position
according to the particular stage reached in his life cycle under
given contextual conditions and in the absence of any other alternative
for making a living, our respondents may be forced to accept migrant
work and the type of life that goes with it. Obviously a single
alternative for securing a living is likely to afford only a minimal
solution which may account for the resignation and dissatisfaction
with the migrant labour system expressed by respondents to our inquiry.
This is particularly the case for the pragmatic type of urban worker
who tends to exhibit a balanced constellation of low status designations
in both rural and urban contexts and little hope for improvement.

8. Conclusions.

The aim of this relatively unstructured pilot inquiry into
migrant labour is to indicate areas of contentment and discontent with
the migrant labour system as seen by the persons most intimately involved.
Judging from this cursory overview of preliminary survey results, one
might conclude that workers deriving greatest relative satisfaction from
the migrant situation are those who can maximise the benefits of
working in the urban areas with rural tenure security. Emphasis on
the advantages of the migrant system may in some cases be used as a
mechanism which successfully detracts attention from underlying tensions
caused by the migrant system and may result in resignation or even
satisfaction with one's life chances. Most notable examples of this
type of mechanism in the pilot survey are stress on the material benefits
derived from the migrant system such as monetary rewards achieved by
living apart from the family and/or spacing of visits. Similarly,
emphasis on immaterial gains such as increased freedom or authority achieved
by living away from the family are offered as justification of the merits
of the system. Equally remarkable is the number of migrants who aspire
to little change in their job prospects especially among older migrants.
One might conclude from this observation that the lowering of levels of
aspirations is one of the most effective mechanisms for increasing actual
and perceived urban security benefits. Where the rural security base is

found wanting, additional sources of security are actively sought.

Despite this type of adaptation on the part of the individual migrant in order to make the migrant labour system a rational choice of life style, many migrants cannot reconcile increased financial gain with the negative aspects of the migrant labour system. Family separation and the anxiety caused by it at the rural and urban pole, submission to degrading checks and controls are sometimes considered too great a price to pay, especially when other racial groups would not comply so readily to such untenable work conditions. Considering that living solely from rural sources is not viable in many cases, one might conclude that the Black migrant has no other option but to accept the situation.

Nevertheless, there may be limits to which a migrant will go in order to secure an adequate income for himself and his family. Survey results demonstrate, that if placed in a fictitious situation involving dangerous work conditions, bad living conditions, extended family separation and loss of freedom, some respondents "would rather starve at home" or attempt to eke out a meagre subsistence from the land. It is true that at present this extreme type of work situation is very remote when compared to jobs offered to survey respondents in Durban. Nevertheless these findings help identify the various problem areas which deserve attention if the present work force is to remain with us in the future.

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A few remarks concerning the typology of migrant workers employed in this study are perhaps apposite at this point. Although our sample consists mainly of so-called target workers and pragmatic urban workers while committed urban workers are in the minority, the first two groups comprise migrants who need not adhere strictly to the typical migrant career outlined by Mitchell (1969) in his migrant labour paradigm. The aspirations for specific targets and standards of living among South African migrants today may be set at such a high level that a continuous urban sojourn throughout the migrant career might be predicted for many target and pragmatic urban workers. It would appear that both these groups are so dependent on urban labour for a livelihood that they may become 'quasi-stabilized', i.e. stablized for the entire period of their working lives (Møller 1976, cf. van Velsen 1963). As noted above, in this age of extended communication networks career interruptions are rendered superfluous when the rural home can be visited regularly. In the study context we have concluded that it is precisely the inadequate functioning of the home-visiting mechanism which is closely related to the urban workers' discontentment with the migrant system. This line of reasoning as applied to our local sample does not, however, invalidate the classical push-pull model of migration (cf. Wilson, 1972.), if it is presented as an elliptical version of the Mitchell migrant career paradigm depicting only the original rural-urban in-migration and the ultimate urban-rural remigration. Theoretically the rural home retains at least a latent pull during the urban sojourn - which may span the entire working lifetime - and may be substantially reactivated immediately prior to the ultimate return home (cf. Reader, 1963). In actual fact one might propose - and our survey results support this supposition - that the push-pull model may prove increasingly inadequate as an explanatory device as regards South African migration. Both urban and rural pull forces are growing so weak (or alternatively urban and rural push forces are gaining in strength simultaneously) that today's 'men of two worlds' may be on the verge of becoming "men of no world" (Schlemmer, 1976). It is in this connection that the surprisingly high degree of acceptance of the migrant system in our survey must be appreciated. Assuming that