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Employing the Disadvantaged: Clarification of the Literature and Development of a Holistic Perspective

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Introduction

During the past ten years increased national attention has been focused on the problems of unemployment and underemployment among disadvantaged Americans, especially among minority group members and the poor. One response to these problems has been the development of numerous programs designed to aid disadvantaged individuals and employing organizations in successfully adjusting to each other. Among the most well known programs designed to facilitate employment of the disadvantaged are the federally sponsored Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA), the industrial and federal cooperatively developed National Alliance of Businessmen (NAB), and the privately run Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OIC).

As these programs have developed, a large literature has grown assessing the effectiveness of the many efforts to employ the disadvantaged. Unfortunately this literature is very confusing. It contains great variation in disciplines, methodologies, levels of analysis, key variables, and results. Clearly, clarification and integration of this literature are required.

The first objective of this paper is to clarify the past approaches that have been taken in studying employment of the disadvantaged. Consequently, past studies have been sorted into three families of approaches which will be reviewed in the first three sections of the paper. It is believed that this typology of approaches can
provide the reader with a useful framework for understanding past work.

In addition to the need for clarification of existing approaches, the field of employing the disadvantaged requires integration of the insights provided by each of the competing perspectives. The second major objective of this paper is to delineate a perspective that integrates the important findings of the present particularistic approaches. In this regard, a perspective that is believed to be more holistic will be presented in the fourth and final section of the paper. This perspective draws upon and further clarifies the literature review presented in the three earlier sections.

In order to sharpen and limit the analytic focus somewhat, the clarification and integration provided in this paper will primarily focus on the following general research questions: What are the most important determinants of the successful employment of disadvantaged individuals? How do these determinants influence the disadvantaged? (i.e., What is the process of successful employment?) Thus the three present approaches will be critiqued in terms of how well they answer these questions, and the holistic perspective will integrate the key determinants and processes that can be drawn from the present approaches.

Two points should be made regarding these research questions. First, it is believed that these are the central (though often implicit) questions that are asked in most studies of employing the disadvantaged. Though a study may focus primarily on counseling techniques, pay, or organizational climate, the usual question being asked is what is the influence of this variable on successful employment of the disadvantaged. Even when the main research question is clearly different from this focus, information is often obtained that relates to these questions. For instance, cost-benefit studies are often designed to examine the economic efficiency of manpower training. However, they also provide information on the success of individuals who vary in race, age, pay, and other important
determinants of success.

Second, these research questions are of primary importance to managers of manpower programs as well as to academicians. Obviously, the ability of practitioners to develop successful programs depends on their knowledge of the determinants of individual success.

Because this paper is written for a diverse group of readers, and because it attempts to clarify and integrate an extensive literature, it is, of necessity, long and somewhat repetitive. However, a summary of the three literature clarification sections has been provided in Table 1, page 30. Readers already familiar with the literature may prefer to examine this summary table and proceed directly to the holistic perspective proposed in Section 4. Readers who wish to review any of the three present approaches in less detail can inspect the summary table and/or the summaries provided at the end of each section.

While reviewing the literature, the reader is also advised to periodically scan Fig. 4 (after pg. 35). This diagram can provide the reader with some idea of where the literature review sections lead. The diagram summarizes the levels of analyses, variables, and processes that make up the Section 4 holistic perspective.

**Current Approaches for Studying Employment of the Disadvantaged**

At present three main types of approaches can be specified that provide information about the determinants of successful employment of the disadvantaged. It should be emphasized that the typology of approaches developed here is only a helpful abstraction; some studies do not fit precisely into a single classification. Thus the typology should be viewed as three "ideal types" that aid in clarifying and summarizing the literature. In the following three sections these three families of approaches - manpower economics, behavioral science, program descriptive - will be examined, and inadequacies and improvements in each will be suggested.
Section 1 - Manpower Economics Approaches

Many analyses by manpower economists of employment programs directed at the disadvantaged can be characterized as primarily quantitative and empirical evaluations of the program inputs and outputs. Typically the methods used are cost-benefit analysis and/or regression analysis. In the former case the economic benefits of the program for the individuals (e.g., earnings) or for society (e.g., taxes, welfare reductions) are weighed against the costs of running the program (e.g., costs of hiring, training, counseling, stipends). Mills (1968) has developed a taxonomy of evaluations of this type as well as an extensive critique of the usefulness and adequacy of such methodology. The critique provided in this paper will not overlap with his significantly, and the reader is advised to see his paper for a fuller review and critique of cost-benefit studies.

The latter methodology, regression analysis, typically regresses economic and demographic independent variables (e.g., wages, age, education, race) against dependent variables such as turnover and length of stay on the job. Examples of this methodology can be seen in Doeringer's (1969) study of ABCD (Boston's local antipoverty agency) applicants, and in Shlensky's (1970) thesis on NAB programs in the Boston area.

A third type of analysis in the manpower economics family is not associated with a well defined methodology but is mainly a perspective. This is the viewpoint of examining the nature of the job in which the individual is being placed. This perspective goes beyond the previously listed methodologies in that it examines more than just the changes in wages or months of employment in determining the desirability of a job and success of a program. Piore's (1969a) "dual labor market" work contains the best statement of this approach. Piore argues that

"the manpower problems of the urban ghetto appear best defined in terms of a dual labor market: A primary market offering relatively high-paying, stable employment, with good working conditions, chances of advancement and equitable administration of work rules; and a secondary market, to which the urban poor are confined, decidedly less attractive in all of these respects and in direct competition with welfare and crime for the attachment of the potential labor force."
Piore goes on to assert that lowering the unemployment rate in the ghetto requires changing secondary jobs to more closely resemble primary jobs or opening up primary employment to ghetto workers. For purposes of this paper the main insight that Piore gives is that success of employment efforts may be dependent on the nature of the jobs trained for, in terms of pay and other job factors such as stability of employment, working conditions, and advancement opportunities.

In summary, manpower economics approaches indicate that key variables to look at in understanding success in employing the disadvantaged are wages, demographic characteristics, and the nature of the job (i.e., primary - secondary). There is empirical support of the importance of the first two types of variables, but because primary and secondary jobs have not yet been adequately operationalized and related to individual performance, there is less rigorous evidence of the importance of this third factor. The previously mentioned studies by Doeringer and Shlensky give clear illustrations of the importance of wages and demographics. Both studies used turnover as a dependent measure. Doeringer found lower turnover among individuals placed by ABCD in higher paying jobs, and among older individuals. Shlensky obtained similar results in a study of six companies participating in Boston area NAB programs. He also found lower turnover among females and whites.

Shlensky's work is also interesting because it provides an initial attempt to relate Piore's primary-secondary job characteristics to individual success (i.e., turnover in this case.) However, he was not able to relate job characteristics other than pay to turnover because he found little variance in the characteristics and because the trainees "had not considered" most of them (i.e., they couldn't respond to interview questions asking them to rate these job factors). It should be noted that two of the most important characteristics of primary jobs, skill requirements and promotion opportunity, generally were not present in the jobs that Shlensky studied. It is therefore possible that trainees may not have been such able to rate job factors because/questions appeared meaningless in reference to
the types of jobs they occupied.

Though the cost-benefit studies have not been designed to directly uncover the effect of the three types of variables discussed here, it is the result of these studies because they make up an important part of the manpower economics literature, and because they can be reanalyzed to draw conclusions about the effects of these three kinds of variables. Generally the main finding of many of these studies is that manpower training brings substantially greater margins of benefits over costs. Such findings have led Mangum (1968) to conclude in reference to contracts under MDTA that "the program had been a good economic investment."

To support this view, Mangum cites various studies including one by Page (1964) on 907 Massachusetts trainees which estimated that a public investment of $600,000 in training would return more than $4 million in benefits over the worklife of the trainees, and another by HEW (1965) on a sample of 12,700 trainees which estimated a return to gross earnings of $2.24 per year for each dollar invested.

For purposes of this paper it should be noted that such findings can be broken down to provide information on the effect of the three types of variables of interest. For instance, cost-benefit ratios or measures of performance are included in these studies or can be computed for trainees of different age, race, job category, etc. Such a reanalysis of these studies has not been carried out to date, however.

Critique

The approaches reviewed so far can be criticized on two points, each relating to one of the two research questions being addressed in this paper. First, the validity of the manpower economic findings are questionable because the effect of social-psychological variables are not included in these studies. Cost-benefit studies typically quantify only direct economic costs and benefits. Possible attitudinal and behavioral costs (e.g., lower coworker morale) and benefits (e.g., increased trainee self-respect, lessened crime) that result from undertaking employment efforts are typically left out of the analysis. Shlensky's (1970) study
is unique in that it included an assessment of trainee "psychological costs and benefits" of employment. However, in defense of the usual cost-benefit approach, it appears that a mammoth effort would be required to measure the relevant social psychological variables and put them into a cost-benefit equation. Such variables would probably increase the measured benefits of training anyway, and thus only make the results of the studies less conservative. (See Borus, 1966; for further discussion of this issue.)

More critical to the validity of cost-benefit and regression studies are other social psychological concepts such as motivation or attitudes toward working. Disregarding these variables (or substituting weaker demographic indicators for them such as previous pay or education) casts serious doubt upon the validity of the conclusions drawn. This problem has been pointed out by many manpower economists (e.g., Main, 1968; Mills, 1968; Somers, 1968; Taylor and Piore, 1969). Basically, the problem is that motivation to work and other personality traits may be significantly greater among individuals who enter into a training program than among those in control groups who do not. The effects of the training may therefore be biased by the nonmeasured motivational and personality characteristics of the trainees. It is thus possible that those who succeed in a program might have had the personality traits necessary to obtain similar employment even without training. If this is the case, then the cost-benefit studies may overestimate the gains of training. In addition, the demographic factors that predict success in the cost-benefit and regression studies may simply be concealing unmeasured personality characteristics. It is important from a practical viewpoint that these characteristics be identified so that appropriate interventions can be made to increase trainee success.

There is some indirect support for the belief that those who seek training may
indeed have different personality traits. Sheppard and Belitsky (1966) found that unemployed individuals who were more active in seeking jobs and more successful in finding them had higher levels of need for achievement and "achievement values" than other unemployed individuals. Though the study did not examine individuals certified as disadvantaged who sought admission to manpower programs, it is likely that such individuals would resemble the more active job seekers since admission to programs often requires active behavior. Applicants to manpower programs often have to interview with a number of agencies and employers over an extended period of time.

The second problem with approaches that ignore social psychological variables and use techniques such as cost-benefit and regression analysis is that, by themselves, such approaches don't provide an in-depth understanding of the processes involved in employing the disadvantaged. Regression analyses tend to be made at one point in time and therefore provide little information about changes in the individual or company environment due to the employment program. Similarly cost-benefit analyses don't detect changes in the company environment or changes in the trainee other than those of a financial nature. Thus if a relation is found in such studies between an economic or demographic variable and job performance, the reader obtains little feel of the processes that mediate the relationship.

The relationship may be mediated by such processes as decreasing coworker hostility, increased trainee perceptions of self-worth, or development of group norms. Studies which don't explore such processes are subject to the critiques directed at "dust-bowl empiricist" industrial psychologists. In both cases inputs and outputs are quantified, but the organizational system is viewed as a "black box". Such studies are often atheoretical, and after the correlations are determined, weak ad hoc explanations that utilize social psychological concepts are developed.

Even cursory examination of the phenomena being studied should make the previous
criticism clear. Disadvantaged individuals are being brought into companies that often have had few minority employees in the past. The disadvantaged may have unstable work habits and negative attitudes toward working. They are likely to have more than the usual number of personal problems. There may be prejudice against them or, at minimum, a lack of understanding of aspects of their lifestyles. They may be expected to learn academic skills (e.g., reading, math) in which they have previously failed. Given situations such as these, it seems inadequate to study such phenomena in terms of economic costs, benefits, and demographic data only. The static techniques of analysis used simply do not provide the depth needed to uncover the subtleties of complex social processes. In addition, interventions to improve programs are not sufficiently aided by such studies because the leverage points for change are not adequately identified in a static analysis.4

Promising Approaches: Analysis of Job Content

Piore's work offers promise in that it goes beyond the cost benefit and regression studies by recognizing that job factors besides pay may have important effects on employee performance. He descriptively relates these job factors to the culture of the ghetto and discusses how "secondary" employment partially generates and is generated by the ghetto subculture. As noted earlier, the work situation factors that Piore points to have not yet been systematically measured and related to the performance of a particular program. It is not yet clear whether it will be most fruitful and practical to have these factors rated by the researcher, by the program participant, or by both. In any case, the study of job characteristics and how they are related to trainee performance may prove to be a useful approach and should be followed up.

A related approach that appears to merit further attention has recently been
reported by Cleff and Hecht (1971). They developed a profile of 16 dimensions of work that describe the activities content of low to semi-skilled jobs. They interviewed 150 chronically unemployed individuals and obtained profiles of the activities they had experience in and those that they preferred. Supervisors filled out a profile of the activities content of available jobs. Individuals and jobs were matched by computer. The authors report that this system has been a useful aid in employing the hard core. Though the data reported are sketchy, further investigation of this approach could add insight into the relation between job content and performance.

A final point should be noted concerning approaches that advocate improving job content. Though both Piore (1969b) and Doeringer (1969) strongly recommend the provision of primary jobs to reduce unemployment, they also state that part of the problem in employing the disadvantaged is found in the employee's unstable work habits and behavioral traits. Neither author is very firm on how the provision of primary jobs will overcome such problems. Doeringer claims that preferred employment opportunities have "inherent motivational properties". However, Piore argues that we know little of how behavioral traits are acquired or changed, and that they can't be changed rapidly. He further argues that most disadvantaged individuals who acquire primary jobs through programs already possess the behavioral traits needed to obtain primary employment, and some of these individuals would have obtained primary employment on their own. Though Piore admits that his evidence for these assertions is not well documented, his assertions as well as Doeringer's point to the need to understand the processes at work in successful employment of the disadvantaged. Specifically we need to learn if behavioral and motivational traits do change through the provision of better jobs, or if success is due to selection of workers who already possess the required traits. More basic is the question of whether substantial change in traits is necessary for employment success. More will be said about personality traits of the disadvantaged in the next section.
Summary

Studies done by manpower economists generally relate demographic, economic (i.e., wages), and job content variables to trainee success in terms of wage improvement or time on the job. Principal research methods include cost-benefit and regression analysis. The former methodology is frequently used for societal level analyses of economy efficiency, while the latter is more often used to study the success of specific programs (i.e., organizational level analyses).

These approaches suffer because they disregard social psychological variables which could increase the validity of the findings and elaborate the processes in successful employment of the disadvantaged. Generally, little attention is paid to the employment process in these studies, though approaches concerned with job content are beginning to devote more attention to this issue. The latter approaches have suggested that high quality jobs bring trainee success by eliciting trainee motivation, or that trainees succeed when individuals are selected who have the personality traits required on the job. A summary of these points is contained in Table 1, page 30.

Section 2 - Behavioral Science Approaches

The research on programs to employ the disadvantaged done from the perspective of psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists has generally dealt with either (1) the "culture of poverty" and/or the behavioral patterns and personality traits that arise from this subculture, or (2) the supportive services and social environment in the training or employment organizations. In the first type of analysis, the variables have frequently been described alone. The variables have more often been related to dependent measures of performance (e.g., job performance or turnover) in the second type of study. The two types of studies are not necessarily discrete, and some researchers look at both types of variables. For instance, a researcher studying orientation sessions (a supportive service) and their effects on job performance may also examine changes in personality that mediate the effects of the
orientation.

Culture of Poverty and Personality Studies

Currently there are competing viewpoints in the literature concerning the first type of analysis. We do not know if the effects of the subculture of poverty on personality are such that they require personality change to make the individual employable, or if the problem of unemployment is more adequately explained by institutional exclusion of the disadvantaged from meaningful jobs. Put more simply, the argument is that the individual is unemployed because (1) he is lacking appropriate motivations and behaviors, and therefore he must change; or (2) he is discriminated against and the jobs he is offered are not worthwhile, and therefore it is the employment structure that must change.

This issue is not merely an academic subject of debate. It relates to the very practical problem of deciding how to allocate national resources to manpower programs. Though it is an abstraction to argue that the problem of unemployment is an "either-or" problem of changing personality or improving employment opportunity, interventions can be made that affect one determinant more than another. If we lean toward the personality explanation it makes more sense to devote resources to interventions such as achievement training (McClelland, 1965), counseling, and orientation. On the other hand, imperfections in the employment structure point to interventions in skill training and upgrading (Marks, 1968; Riessman, 1968), and changes in organizational structure and climate. Piore's and Doeringer's arguments in favor of the second alternative have already been mentioned in Section 1.

The importance of personality in the two alternatives must be further clarified. Allen (1970) has contributed a useful insight in this regard. He suggests that psychological traits of the poor can be viewed as independent or dependent variables.
It appears that the personality explanation of unemployment tends to view personality as an independent variable. This view implies that personality traits are formed early and are difficult to change. Thus if personality inhibits employment success, this view advocates that personality be dealt with directly by intensive clinical and counseling methods. The employment opportunity explanation tends to view personality as a dependent variable, however. Personality is seen as more when examined in this manner. Thus changing situational pressures fluid and linked to present situational pressures/(as illustrated by improving the quality of available jobs) appears to be a logical intervention for handling personality deficiencies such as negative orientations toward work. Doeringer's view of the "inherent motivational properties" of primary employment is illustrative in this regard. Other advocates of an employment opportunity explanation have gone beyond the position that needed personality change can be facilitated by better jobs, and have suggested that the personality traits of the disadvantaged are not substantially different from those of the wider society. This viewpoint asserts that direct interventions aimed at personality change are not warranted.

In the following pages some of the important empirical and theoretical work bearing on this controversy will be reviewed. The evidence for the personality explanation will be discussed first, and will be followed by the situational or employment structure evidence. Finally compromise positions will be reviewed. It should be emphasized that authors' positions disagree in degree along a continuum of personality to employment explanations. They have been placed in three discrete categories for convenience only.

Personality explanations

A strong argument has been made by Rutledge and Gass (1967) that providing job opportunity is not enough, and that directly dealing with personality difficulties is essential to successful employment of the disadvantaged. The authors studied 19 black males with unstable work records who were being trained in a year-long program to become practical nurses. The authors obtained data through methods such as individual psychological counseling, group counseling, and psychiatric
interviewing. Concerning the issue of dealing with personality factors versus providing economic opportunity, Rutledge and Gass' experience with counseling led them to conclude:

"Good evidence may be found to support the case for a 'disadvantaged American Negro personality' in the sense of certain central features that must be taken into account by anyone who seeks to understand and alter the cycle of defeat. Any retraining program for vocational improvement must consist of more than merely the provision of economic opportunity if it is to be successful in helping to upgrade impoverished individuals. The personality predicament of Negroes, particularly those in the lower sociocultural and economic echelons, is not easily changed."

This point of view is supported by Tiffany and colleagues (1967; 1969; 1970) who have completed a program of research on the work involvement of ex-psychiatric patients and on the personal factors associated with "work inhibition" among adult males. They found that the level of work involvement (operationally defined by the questionnaire item "How many hours do you usually work?") was associated with the ex-psychiatric patient's self perception, and that work inhibited individuals (i.e., males who were viewed as "problem cases" by their vocational counselors and who were chronically unemployed or job hoppers) had a more external control orientation, more negative self concept, and faultier interpersonal relationships than vocational counseling clients who had made successful job adjustments. Due to such findings, Tiffany and his colleagues give overwhelming weight to personal factors as the cause of unemployment. They go on to criticize existing manpower programs for emphasizing training and for changing the physical environment rather than the individual. They recommend the following approach (1970):

"The personal causation approach recognizes the need to look at the whole person in terms of increasing self-direction, positive self-conceptions, and interpersonal competence with the resulting effect of increasing responsible behavior, level of aspiration, motivation, better adjusted family patterns, etc, which leads to better life adjustment - including work adjustment."
Further support for the necessity of directly dealing with personality deficiencies is obtained in some psychological analyses of the personality of the poor. For instance, Beiser (1965) has contrasted Erikson's (1963) eight stages of healthy personality development with the development of the "disintegrated" poor, revealing an extremely unfavorable comparison. Lawrie (1969) has given a psychoanalytic and cultural explanation of the hard core's negative views toward work and their failure in training programs.

Still other support for the viewpoint that the disadvantaged have strikingly different behavioral and motivational patterns that handicap their employment efforts comes from some of the sociological, anthropological, and autobiographical portraits of ghetto life. The strongest case for a subculture of poverty which creates different motivations and aspirations from the overall society can be drawn from Miller's (1958) work on the "focal concerns" of "lower class culture", Moynihan's (1967) analysis of the instability of the black family, and Lewis' (1966) view of a "culture of poverty" which affects attitudes, values, character structure, family structure, and numerous other traits of the most disadvantaged.

Situational or employment structure explanations

Many authors assert that often the disadvantaged individual does share the values and motivations of getting ahead that are held by wider society, but that he has been discriminated against and frustrated in his attempts, and has therefore resigned himself to the realities of menial work, welfare, and hustling which are available to him in his environment. The key point is that the motivation to succeed is potentially available, but due to the current institutional character of the wider society, motivation is not expressed. This point of view is put forth by anthropologists and sociologists such as Liebow (1967) and Valentine (1968), although they do not relate their viewpoints directly to employment programs. Valentine's argument is especially strong. He believes that the cultural values of the poor are similar to those of the middle class, but the situational pressures
the poor face are different. He goes on to criticize Miller, Moynihan, Lewis, and others who tend to see the problem as "in the poor".

Liebow and Valentine's point of view has been related to manpower training by other authors. For instance, in a study of a program aimed at training unemployed black youth to successfully apply for jobs, Wellman (1968) found that the participants did desire to work. However, they looked down on the unskilled work that they were trained to apply for, and resented the staff's attempts to change their personal characteristics. Wellman concludes that the program failed because the program staff took the point of view that "people are without jobs because of themselves". He believes that employment will be advanced by focusing on the discrimination and racism in society rather than by searching for psychological and cultural impediments in Negroes.

Ryan (1971) has characterized the type of phenomena described by Wellman as a "blaming the victim" ideology. He provides evidence that the negative characteristics attributed to the poor are often unfounded, and that such an individual focus obscures the more important structural determinants of social problems.

R. A. H. Rosen (1970) reports another study that supports this viewpoint. Twenty-two hard core individuals who had been hired into a training program by a midwestern utility company were given nondirective depth interviews by a professor of clinical psychology at his university office. The men's spontaneous comments reflecting their values and perceptions related to work were studied, and conclusions were drawn about their motivations toward work. Rosen states in her conclusion:

"It would appear that the hard-core have motivations and goals similar to workers in general. Where they differ, it seems to be due to the failures that the hard-core have experienced rather than to different sub-cultural values. As a whole, the workers studied gave no indication of different hopes and dreams than might be characteristic of the society. They merely had scaled down their expectations of what was possible, in terms of the realities of their lives."
And later she concludes:

"In essence, the hard-core, like most people, are looking for jobs which help them to feel worthwhile and which allow them to grow. It seems probable that, where such jobs are offered, they will stay on these jobs and do their work."

Rosen's study implies that the poor's personality and behavioral deficiencies are minimal, or at least that they can be corrected by changing the work environment. However, because these studies do not examine substantial environmental change, they cannot document the resulting personality change. A study by Zurcher (1970) that did examine substantial environmental change (though not in an industrial employment context) does support the hypothesized personality effects. Zurcher found that at the first administration, compared to middle class members, poor members of an O. E. O. community poverty group scored significantly lower on 9 of 10 social psychological traits that were indicative of competence and confidence. After participation in the organization, the middle class members' scores on the traits did not change, but the poor changed substantially toward more competence and confidence. This finding led Guttentag (1970) to conclude:

"When the poor exercise active power and responsibility in organizations, their attitudes and aspirations grow to be similar to those of the middle class. The evidence which Zurcher presents should give pause to those who claim that lower class culture is little influenced by new social contexts, particularly contexts in which the poor can exercise some power."

Compromise positions and critique

How can the personality and situational findings be reconciled? Are there separate norms that the disadvantaged hold which prevent their advancement, or do they hold values commonly found in the wider society but fail because of inadequate opportunity? Rodman (1963), Rainwater (1970), and Goodwin (1969) have provided theoretical and empirical evidence that indicate that both viewpoints have validity.
Rodman posits a "lower class value stretch" as a more adequate description of the values of the poor than the "either-or" positions. He suggests that the poor develop alternative values to help them adjust to their deprived situation, but they also learn the values of the wider society and never entirely abandon them.

Similarly, Rainwater points out that older and female family members, and institutions such as the church foster the norms of the wider society among the lower class. However, because adherence to these norms is not feasible within the opportunity structure faced by the poor, alternative values develop as a defense. These alternative norms are never entirely believed in, and thus either set of norms may be expressed under particular conditions.

An empirical pilot study by Goodwin has supported these views by demonstrating that teenagers in a poor Negro neighborhood share some of the attitudes and aspirations of middle class suburban youth, but diverge in certain other respects. The poorest black teenagers diverged from the suburban teenagers to a greater extent than did those blacks in a somewhat better financial situation.

These compromise positions show that researchers may validly be observing quite varying attitudes and values among the disadvantaged. However, while these and the other behavioral science studies document the present personality patterns of the disadvantaged, with the exception of Zurcher's study, they don't obtain data on the more important issue of change in personality under various circumstances. Thus, the studies may be asking an incomplete question. Instead of asking "What are the personality patterns of the poor?", we need to know "What are the patterns under varying circumstances?" Answers to the latter question could provide more useful information for making interventions into employment programs.

Perhaps this inadequacy in the research is due to the authors' inability to define or measure "circumstances". Behavioral science studies say remarkably little about economic aspects of the trainees' job circumstances (i.e., wages and job content). For instance, none of the studies cited that deal directly with training
programs reveals the wages paid at past or present jobs, or goes into any depth in analyzing how the trainees viewed the many aspects of their work.

Thus we cannot evaluate how (or if) personality and behavior patterns change over time as they interact with the content and demands of the job, since there is little examination of the nature of the work. Static descriptions that reveal if there are personality differences between the poor and middle class cannot answer this question. Therefore, just as in the economic research, there is little systematic study of the process of going through employment programs.

A behavioral science study has been completed by Gurin (1968) that is not subject to the criticisms of ignoring economic factors and the process of employment. In a longitudinal design, Gurin examined the relation of background factors, motivations, and attitudes, to the average weekly earnings over a six month period of hard core trainees who went through an institutional training program. Gurin's work arrives at a compromise position in the "in the trainee - situational" controversy. He cites evidence that characteristics in the trainee's background (e.g., education, percentage of males employed in the family) are related to earnings. However, four work orientation scales that would further support an "in the trainee" view were not related to earnings. Gurin also shows that situational factors in the trainee's home environment and on the job influence earnings.

Gurin further found that personal efficacy was related to earnings. Such findings have been cited by others (e.g., Tiffany, et al, 1970) as demonstrating that personality causes unemployment. However, Gurin's data are longitudinal, and they indicate a stronger relation between earnings causing efficacy than the reverse. He very reasonably suggests that the relationship is a circular and mutually reinforcing one, and concludes that "we cannot really separate the motivational and reality [situational] aspects of the problems that these trainees face, for their motivation is directly tied to the question of the reality payoffs available to them".
Gurin and Gurin (1970) have gone on to convincingly argue that a perspective is needed that relates the behaviors of the disadvantaged to both internal and situational factors. They have drawn on Atkinson's (1964) concepts of the "expectancy" and "incentive" aspects of motivation as useful conceptual tools in this respect. The Gurins' approach should be further developed by other researchers, for by examining the economic aspects of employment programs, using a longitudinal design that shows the interaction of job and individual personality, and suggesting useful conceptual tools, they have begun to overcome the deficiencies in much of the behavioral science research on employing the disadvantaged.

Supportive Services and Social Environment Studies

The second major type of behavioral science analysis examines the impact on trainee success of the supportive services and the social environment in an employment program. These two types of independent variables are generally viewed in the literature as contributors of "social support". Theoretical clarification of the concept of social support will be provided in Section 4.

An extensive study that looked at supportive services, social environment, and the previously discussed personality and attitudinal factors was done by Friedlander and Greenberg (1970). Studying a large number of participants in the federally funded AIM-JOBS program in Cleveland, they investigated:

1. the change in nine attitudes toward work due to participation in a two-week pre-employment training/orientation program;
2. the change in these attitudes due to being placed and employed on a job for 6 months;
3. whether ratings of work behavior and job retention could be predicted from
   a. biographic/demographic information known about the participant,
   b. the participant's attitudes toward work at entry into the program,
   c. changes in the participant's attitude toward work during the orientation program,
   d. the job climate as perceived by the participant.

The results of the study show that neither the orientation program nor placement and employment on the job for 6 months significantly changed any of the nine attitudes
toward work. In addition, the only predictor of job performance was the participant's perception of the supportiveness of the work climate.

Because performance was related to climate, but not to the attitudinal-personality variables, the authors side with the situationalist argument that instead of trying to change the "defective culture" and personality of the disadvantaged to fit into the overall social structure, we should change the overall social structure as represented by the work climate in most organizations.

However, before accepting these data as support for the employment structure argument, there are many questions about the study that must be resolved. First, the attitudinal and job climate data were obtained by questionnaire. As the authors point out in discussing the 66-item attitude questionnaire, "HCU's (hard-core unemployeds) represent a culture which may well have experienced these questionnaires as alien to its values, resulting in suspicion and resistance to the questionnaire." It should be noted that the 11-item job climate scale which did relate to performance appears to be much simpler in format, and more easily seen as relevant by trainees. Second, the aim of predicting performance from perceptions of job climate may not be accomplished by this study. The analysis is correlational in nature and it is very possible that causality may run the other way - i.e., high performing participants may cause their climate to be, as well as perceive it to be, more supportive (cf. Farris and Lim, 1969). Last, there is no description of the jobs in which the participants were placed, no analysis of past or present pay rates (except that average pay on present jobs was $2.30/hour), and although the relative importance to the participant of various job characteristics was measured, these characteristics were not related to any measures of the characteristics present on the jobs.

Another study that looked at factors such as supportive services, company climate, and personality was done by H. Rosen (1970). He studied 143 previously unemployed female trainees hired by Michigan Bell Telephone Company. Though the women were not considered "hard-core", their backgrounds gave them a "tendency" toward
being classified that way. Rosen found that trainees in the Plant who participated in a role-playing type of orientation program had more turnover than nonparticipant trainees in the Plant. However, in the Traffic Department there was no difference in turnover between participants and nonparticipants. Rosen explained these findings by examining the nature of the jobs and social relationships in the different departments. Plant trainees worked within interdependent teams of regular employees, and those trainees who left their work groups to attend orientation stood out from the group and received less co-worker support. Traffic Department trainees did not work in interdependent groups.

There are many other interesting findings in the Rosen study. One finding relating to social support was that retained trainees were more likely to view their supervisors, rather than friends or family, as being the appropriate people with whom to discuss on-the-job problems. Thus retentions may have had more receptive supervisors or felt freer to talk to supervisors. Two results relating to culture of poverty/personality were (1) terminated trainees had more family maladjustments (i.e., separations, divorces); and (2) retentions were more likely to have backgrounds in unskilled work (e.g., domestics), while terminations had more experience in white collar jobs. Rosen explains the latter finding through the higher level of motivation elicited, and greater meeting of aspirations provided by the phone company jobs for those with unskilled backgrounds. He goes on to suggest the use of demographic characteristics in trainee selection.

Perhaps the most valuable contribution of Rosen's study is found in his holistic approach. Unlike most studies, his work examines the relation of three important types of variables - characteristics of the job, social support variables, and culture of poverty/personality factors. Such an approach reveals that these variables and performance are complexly interrelated, and must be studied simultaneously.
Though this approach is more holistic than most others, Rosen, like other behavioral scientists, does not examine wages in any detail, and admits that the pencil and paper instruments used to study personality may have low validity.

Two other studies are worth noting in regard to supportive services and supportiveness of company environment. Nadler (1970) reviewed the experience of many companies and concluded that it is necessary to set up a support system consisting of aspects such as supervisory training, legal assistance, and counseling. The major purpose of this system is to change the trainee's typically negative attitudes toward himself and toward work, and to produce new behavior patterns. Nadler specifies five elements of a support system that are necessary to achieve such goals. Though the viewpoint of changing trainee attitudes differs from the Friedlander and Greenberg recommendations of changing the company rather than the trainees, the concept of creating a supportive and committed environment is a point of agreement.

The experience of the JOBS NOW program in employing disadvantaged black youth also affirms the value of supportive services and increased organizational commitment. Hearns (1968), the director of JOBS NOW, reports that providing a job and a salary is not enough to retain the disadvantaged. He claims that "disadvantaged workers modify their behavior, become cooperative and motivated to work, to the degree that representatives of companies adapt their behavior to become actively concerned and involved with the workers". JOBS NOW has found that companies who developed the most special provisions for the disadvantaged (i.e., "high support" companies with more than 8 special provisions such as waiving tests, using a buddy system, and providing training and orientation) had 73% retention. Companies with less than three provisions had 27% retention.
Critique

Studies of supportive services and social environment have demonstrated that "social support" is important in employing the disadvantaged. However, though the concept of social support has proven useful, it has not yet been adequately conceptualized. It is not clear how the elements of Friedlander and Greenberg's "job climate", the aspects of Nadler's "support system", and the provisions of Hearn's "high support" companies overlap. Nor is there agreement on how social support influences trainee performance. Does it reorganize particular aspects of trainee personality, or allow trainees to express their ability and motivation without meeting discrimination and hostility?

In terms of the major research questions, it can be concluded that a loosely defined concept termed social support has been demonstrated to relate to trainee success. However, research on the effect of particular elements of the concept such as orientation programs has not demonstrated a consistent relationship with success. Further, the process through which social support operates has not yet been adequately determined.

It should also be noted that studies of social environment and supportive services are subject to the criticism directed previously at the culture of poverty/personality studies. That is, they don't provide sufficient analysis of economic or job content factors. Such analysis might clarify the findings as was demonstrated in H. Rosen's work.

Summary of Behavioral Science Approaches

Studies done by psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists examine two main types of independent variables: (1) culture of poverty/personality, and (2) supportive services and social environment. Studies which look at services and environment do not agree on the processes through which the independent variables affect trainee success. In studies of personality the process often described is one of trainee change toward a more positive self concept, middle class attitudes toward
work, and increased motivation. However, some authors claim that a process of personality change does not take place and is not necessary, and that skill acquisition and lessening of discriminatory practices adequately describes the successful employment process.

Most studies use interview and questionnaire methodologies, though there are important questions about the validity of paper and pencil instruments with disadvantaged populations. Surprisingly, very few studies report the use of systematic observation techniques, though there are obvious advantages in less obtrusive types of methodology.

The level of analysis in most behavioral science studies is the individual. Some studies also look at organizational level variables (i.e., social environment, and supportive services) and relate these to individual level factors.

Behavioral science studies can be criticized because they usually ignore the impact of economic and job content factors which might clarify their findings. In addition, though a few behavioral science studies have used longitudinal time frames and have looked at interrelations among independent variables, most studies have made rather simple linear analyses. It appears that the few holistic studies have obtained results that go beyond the "either-or" findings of the linear studies. These holistic studies more adequately describe the complexity of the phenomenon of employing the disadvantaged. These conclusions are summarized in Table 1.

Section 3 - Program Descriptive Approaches

Studies of this type generally examine one or more programs to employ the disadvantaged and ask the question: What are the factors that make this program(s) succeed or fail? Such studies can be differentiated from the previously described economic and behavioral science studies in that generally:

1. they are less experimental in design.

2. they don't set out to examine a particular set of variables or use a particular technical methodology, but arrive at the key variables and methods inductively. (However, the variables arrived at are generally those examined by economic and behavioral science approaches.)
3. they are reported more descriptively and anecdotally.

Often work of this type is written in the form of descriptions of a program, or guidelines and tips on how to run programs. For instance, a recent book edited by Drennan (1970) contains a collection of essays by training directors, company vice presidents, and consultants to programs who relate their experiences in conducting effective programs. A similar contribution by Johnson (1969) tells of the author's impressions after visiting and studying 43 company programs. He gives information on understanding the disadvantaged employee's attitudes; recruiting, testing, and hiring the disadvantaged employee; training the employee and his foreman; and providing appropriate on-the-job supervision, counseling, and supportive services. Work of this type can be useful to the researcher in gaining a feel for programs, or in hypothesis generation. But generally such work doesn't contain enough rigorous data or careful methodology to be of great value in drawing conclusions or testing hypotheses.

The quality and usefulness of program descriptive studies varies greatly, however. At worst, such studies provide so little data and are so praiseworthy of the program that one begins to suspect that the reports were written to obtain favorable publicity for the program. (See for example articles by Murphy, 1969; Acuff, 1969). On the other hand, the articles in Doeringer's (1969) *Programs to Employ the Disadvantaged* provide more systematic and helpful analyses. In this book nine programs are reviewed by various authors, and critical discussions of the findings follow each review. Studies of this type are valuable in that they are sometimes more holistic in approach - that is, they combine the perspectives of behavioral science and manpower economics and examine many of the relevant variables. Such work may also provide a view of the process of employing the disadvantaged.

The nature of this work can be more clearly specified by briefly describing a few specific studies. Purcell and Webster (1969a and b) have described in detail the operation of the Westinghouse Electric program in Pittsburgh. They collected
data by interview and observational techniques, and descriptively reported on selection procedures, backgrounds of trainees and staff, operation of sensitivity sessions, types of jobs, co-worker resentment, and numerous other aspects in the operation of the program. They inductively determined five factors that appeared to be most important in understanding the success of the program: (1) the commitment of management, (2) the fact of obtaining a good job immediately, (3) careful and insightful selection, (4) a sensitive program fit to trainee needs, (5) dedication and ability of the staff.

Another illustration of this approach, also reported in the Doeringer volume, is found in the work of Banfield (1969). Studying IBM's plant in Bedford Stuyvesant, he, like Purcell and Webster, observed and detailed the day to day operation of the program. He also described the history of IBM's commitment to the program, focusing particularly on the high level decision making that took place in establishing the Bedford Stuyvesant facility. Though he didn't objectively list factors in the success of the operation, the study clearly pointed to factors such as corporate commitment, selection of employees, and the nature of the jobs as leading to a successful experience.

A final example of this approach is seen in the performance model developed by Goodman (1969). Goodman's work was less descriptive of daily program operation, but thorough in inductively determining key variables and processes. He empirically identified 50 variables that were related to the program performance of 20 organizations with MDTA experience. Specifically, he found that external structural factors (e.g., social unrest) and internal structural factors (e.g., the organization's manpower needs) led to the employer's decision to participate and degree of commitment. All of these factors influenced the program structure variables (e.g., the training plan) which in turn influenced program performance (i.e., expected versus actual number of recruits trained and retained).
Critique

One of the major faults in program descriptive studies is their inability to adequately answer the first research question: What are the determinants of success? On the surface it may appear that they give better answers to this question than do the approaches discussed earlier, because program descriptive studies usually arrive at a list of factors related to program success. However, the inadequacy in results is due to the particularistic nature of the research. The studies generally discuss only the program being reviewed and do not relate the findings to other work done in the field. Thus though both Purcell and Webster, and Banfield revealed that selection and pay were key factors in the programs they studied, neither related these findings to previous research.

This characteristic lack of coordination of program descriptions has resulted in a literature that contains a proliferation of reasons for program and trainee success and failure. These determinants cannot be combined and compared very easily, because they are described in different terminology and at different levels of analysis. Thus Purcell and Webster focus on individuals and program structure, Banfield on program structure and upper level managerial decision making, and Goodman on all of these plus external factors in the organization's environment. Though knowledge at all of these levels is necessary, some coordination between studies and levels is needed to build an understanding of employment programs that can be generalized beyond one program.

It should be pointed out that these studies are more adequate at answering the second research question of how the determinants work. For instance the observations and interviews in the Purcell and Webster, and Banfield studies provide insights into the daily operation of the programs and changes in trainees. Though insights can be obtained from systematic observational techniques, the looseness of the reporting format and analysis in many program descriptive studies constitutes a second serious weakness. Rarely is the methodology or data clearly
reported in such work, and as a result the reader has difficulty judging the soundness of the conclusions.

It is imperative that academic researchers interested in this type of approach devote serious attention to methodological issues. It often appears that these studies are based on a few interviews, a short period of observation, and accounts from the program staff of numbers hired and retained. Such procedures may not be adequate, since trainees may be initially suspicious of outsiders, and program staff have a stake in putting the program in a positive light. Members of program staffs have told the author that problems in a program can be effectively hidden from a researcher who is only in occasional contact with a program.

In addition, when these studies are done by program staff members, vice presidents, or personnel department officials, the impetus to praise the program rather than report objectively is quite strong. Though such people may have close contact with the program, their reports rarely provide the crucial interview, counseling, and observational data that appear to be available to them. (cf. Drennan, 1970).

Summary

Program descriptive studies do not draw upon a uniform underlying discipline. Program staff members and academics from various areas have done work of this type. In these studies variables of importance and techniques of analysis are inductively determined. Most often researchers interview program participants and observe the operation of the program.

These studies vary greatly in quality. A positive contribution of many studies is that their holistic approach and observational methods provide insights into the daily process of employing the disadvantaged. However, it is difficult to generalize the processes and independent variables beyond the program in question. This is because such studies vary greatly in levels of analysis and are often designed particularistically, rather than with the aim of building upon past findings. Another problem with these studies is that their methodology and findings are often reported in a format that is very loose and anecdotal. These points are summarized in Table 1.
### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Approach</th>
<th>Summary of Approaches for Studying Employment of the Disadvantaged</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Program Descriptive</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Science</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Manpower Economics</strong></td>
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| **Key Independent Variables** | | |
|-------------------------------| | |
| **Demographic; physical; wages; other job** | | |
| **Cultural environment and support** | | |
| **Social environment and personality** | | |

| **Principal Methodologies** | | |
|-----------------------------| | |
| **Psychology, sociology, and anthropology** | | |
| **Economics; manpower economics** | | |

| **How Do These Determinants Work?** | | |
|------------------------------------| | |
| **Characteristics of individual such as:** | | |
| | | |

| **Factors that lead to discription** | | |
|--------------------------------------| | |
| **Influence on Training** | | |
| **Socialization: Organizational, General** | | |
| **Instruction: Organizational, General** | | |
| **Instruction: Direct Influence** | | |
| **Economic; manpower economics** | | |

| **Criticize** | | |
|--------------| | |
| | | |

| **Independent Variables** | | |
|---------------------------| | |
| **Wages and Job Competence** | | |
| **Social-psychological variables** | | |

| **Process of Success** | | |
|------------------------| | |
| **Motivation and Brine success** | | |
| **Wages and Job Satisfaction** | | |
| **Characteristics of individual such as:** | | |
| | | |

| **Process of Failure** | | |
|------------------------| | |
| | | |
Section 4 - A Holistic Perspective for Studying Employment of the Disadvantaged

McKee (1969) defines a perspective as "a way of looking at the world, a point of view that selectively places some things in the foreground and gives them salience and places other things in the background". The literature review sections revealed that currently there are three rather disjointed perspectives for looking at the problem of employing the disadvantaged. Not only is there great variation in discipline, methods, levels of analysis, and key variables between perspectives, but often there is extreme disagreement within perspectives, as illustrated by the dichotomized personality versus situational viewpoints in behavioral science studies.

Clearly a perspective is needed that can integrate the divergent approaches already taken. Such a holistic perspective should provide a broader framework within which past studies can be fit together. Thus it should relate varying levels of analysis. It should also place in the foreground the most important insights from each particularistic perspective. For instance, a holistic approach should point out and interrelate the key variables that the manpower economics and behavioral science approaches have identified, and the processes that the program descriptive studies have detailed. Finally it should offer a more cohesive theoretical framework. Therefore, loosely used concepts such as social support should be better defined.

The task of the remainder of this section will be to delineate a holistic perspective. First a framework will be diagramed that interrelates the relevant levels of analysis, key variables, and processes in employing the disadvantaged. The framework will then be elaborated from a more theoretical point of view, and social support variables will be defined and differentiated from job variables.
A Diagrammed Framework

Levels of analysis (see Figure 1)

Efforts to employ the disadvantaged have been studied within a number of levels of analysis. Most studies examine variables at more than one level of analysis, though some studies have focused primarily on one level. Three levels that encompass the generality and specificity found in most previous work are diagrammed here. The levels and an illustrative study include societal (HEW, 1965), organizational (Banfield, 1969), individual (Tiffany, et al, 1970).

It has been empirically demonstrated in the literature that each level has an important direct effect on the next most specific level (i.e., level 1 on 2, 2 on 3, 3 on 4). Thus labor market characteristics (societal level) influence the organization's hiring policies and commitment (organization level, general influence). These factors in turn influence the job a trainee obtains, the environment he works in, and the supportive services he receives. These latter organizational factors have a direct influence on individual level factors such as skill acquisition and attitudes to work.

It should be emphasized that the key research issues posed in this paper concern the determinants of individual performance in programs. Thus the concern here is with individual factors, and organizational factors at a level that directly influences the trainee. The societal and organizational general variables are included in the diagram to reveal how broader level analyses relate to the key issue of individual performance. However, these broader level factors cannot be discussed in detail at this time.
Key variables (see Figure 2)

Though the literature reveals numerous determinants of individual success, it appears that three main types of variables are the key determinants of trainee performance. These have been termed individual, job, and social support variables.

**Individual variables** can be divided into two factors — ability and motivation — which are emphasized by different schools of thought in the literature on employing the disadvantaged. These two factors also correspond to the psychological determinants of career patterns emphasized by vocational psychologists (cf. Super and Bohn, 1970). The manpower economic and "situationalist" behavioral science literature tends to emphasize ability (i.e., skills, aptitudes, intelligence, behavioral traits) as the key individual level factor. On the other hand, the "personality" behavioral science literature emphasizes the individuals' motivation toward work, and personality characteristics that affect motivation such as locus of control, self concept, and work related values and attitudes. 

**Job variables**, emphasized in the manpower economic literature, consist of the pay, training, promotion opportunity, tasks, and working conditions that are available on a job. The economic literature has demonstrated that job variables, particularly pay, have an important influence on trainee performance.

**Social support variables** are more difficult to delineate because they have been described inconsistently in the literature. They will be defined in detail and differentiated from job variables later in this section. For the present they can be described as trainee relationships with company personnel and special program activities. The importance of social support variables has been pointed out in program descriptive and behavioral science studies. It should be noted that very few studies have examined individual, job, and social support variables simultaneously.

The three types of variables are of wide scope because it is not presently clear which aspects of each category significantly influence trainee performance. For instance, it is not yet clear which aspects of a job besides pay have a substantial effect.
Key processes (see Figure 3)

One of the most important elements of this framework is the identification of three processes and interrelationships that are important in understanding successful employment of the disadvantaged. Such an approach can be contrasted with the more static and linear types of approaches already reviewed.

Specifically, this framework points to the interaction between individual, job, and social support variables as critical to understanding the operation of employment efforts. Thus we must learn how the levels of these three types of variables change during the course of a program. These variables are best conceptualized as interdependent, and past work (excepting Gurin, 1968; H. Rosen, 1970) has not explored the nature of this interdependence.

The interdependence of these variables can be illustrated by current theories of motivation such as those of Atkinson (1964) and Vroom (1964). These theories indicate that motivation to perform a task is a function of a general internal motive strength, a subjective expectancy of success at the task, and the value of the incentives obtained in performing the task. Thus the motivation that a trainee demonstrates cannot be viewed as a completely individual or internal quality. Instead job variables which constitute the relevant incentives, and social support variables which may influence subjective expectancies, must be examined to understand the motivational process.

A second process indicated by this framework is the process of adaptation that the trainee goes through in obtaining employment. This adaptation can be thought of as a summary description of the many individual changes made by the trainee. The job and social support that the trainee receives will not only influence the trainee's motivation and ability, but these environmental factors can affect a range of personal factors such as values, speech, and dress. The sum portrait of changes can be termed an "adaptive style", and it may be interesting to determine the types of styles that trainees develop and their relation to successful performance. Though many authors give anecdotal descriptions of trainee adaptive styles (e.g., Lawrie, 1969), other than the Rutledge and Gass
(1967) study, there is little careful work on trainee adaptation to employment programs. Such work is needed to fill out our understanding of the employment process.

The final process of particular importance is the influence of performance and adaptive style on the three key interdependent variables. Davidson (1971) has indicated that early performance levels/may have an important impact on trainee attitudes and motivation, on the supportiveness of the work group, and on the nature of the job. Early performance and styles can set up positive or negative feedback loops and should be given careful consideration in future research.

**Empirical and Theoretical Bases of the Framework** (see Figure 4 - complete diagram)

The suggested framework was primarily developed by condensing many of the findings in the very divergent empirical literature. It was also formulated to be consistent with the writer's observations of various employment programs. Thus the key variables and processes can be viewed primarily as an empirically derived model of the major factors related to individual success in past employment programs. However, though the framework is highly empirical it is not atheoretical. It draws upon four theoretical bodies of knowledge.

First, at a general level, the framework is consistent with Lewin's field theory (Hall and Lindsay, 1970). As in field theory, the framework emphasizes that individual behavior is a function of the whole present situation. In the employment setting the situation is composed of the states of and interaction of the person (i.e., individual variables) and his environment (i.e., job and social support variables). As noted previously, much of the literature emphasizes either the individual or the environment as the major determinant of trainee performance. Lewin's formulation of the life space as the interaction of both person and environment points to the importance of both factors. In addition, the fact that the situation or life space changes over time is emphasized in Lewin's theory and in the framework.
The framework also draws upon a second body of theory that is much less concise. Schools of thought in organization theory have emphasized varying determinants of individual behavior in industrial organizations. The types of determinants emphasized in the framework have been selected to be consistent with the determinants stressed in organization theory. This was done so that the framework could provide a basis for a contingency theory that can explain organizational behavior of other workers besides the disadvantaged. Such an analysis is beyond the scope of this paper, however.

While field theory and organization theory have contributed to the general form of the suggested perspective, two other bodies of theory, role theory and interpersonal dynamics theory, have been drawn on to help clarify the concept of social support. As noted earlier, social support has not been clearly conceptualized in the literature.

A definition of social support

Social support of a trainee can be defined as the satisfaction of the trainee's needs or goals through (1) his relationships with individuals or groups, and (2) his participation in or knowledge of special program activities that usually have a referent to individuals or groups.

The properties of the social support concept can be understood by utilizing an expanded conception of role theory. Kahn and colleagues (1964) describe a process of role dynamics in which role senders (collectively a "role set") send prescriptions of appropriate job behavior to a focal person who occupies an organizational office. Social support can be understood as a process in which the trainee's role set sends him messages that satisfy various trainee needs. Role prescriptions types of are only one of the many/messages sent by the role set. While Kahn and colleagues concentrate primarily on the disfunctional aspects of role sending that arise through conflicting and ambiguous messages, the emphasis here is on need satisfaction obtained through messages.
More specifically the trainee's role set is composed of persons, groups, and special program activities that potentially satisfy trainee needs. Supervisors, coworkers, other trainees, and "orientation to the world of work" sessions are examples of important role senders.

The needs or goals that are satisfied by social support are those needs or goals satisfied by interpersonal relationships in general. Borrowing from Bennis and colleagues (1968), an interpersonal relationship can satisfy one or more of four types of functions: (1) An individual or group role sender can satisfy the trainee's needs for emotional expression through the development of friendships at work. (2) Any type of role sender (i.e., individual, group, or special program activity) can satisfy needs for self confirmation. For example, the trainee can satisfy needs for comprehending external realities by learning through his relationships with coworkers that "the time study man is not to be trusted". He can satisfy needs for attaining personal identity by learning through films shown in orientation class that he is an "Afro-American who is proud of his heritage". (3) Any type of role sender can satisfy needs for personal change. In order to succeed on the job, the trainee may need to change work related beliefs or values such as "it doesn't matter if I'm late for work". Messages from role senders can effect such changes. (4) Finally, any type of role sender can satisfy instrumental needs (i.e., can aid in the performance of a task). Teachers help the trainee improve his reading, and the special program activity of legal services helps the trainee overcome legal problems.11

The magnitude of social support is the amount of goal or need satisfaction obtained from a particular relationship with an individual, group, or special program activity. Relationships with supervisors may satisfy particular needs for self confirmation (e.g., provide knowledge that "I am a skilled, respected worker") to a greater extent than do orientation sessions, for example.
It should be obvious that relationships with one role sender can satisfy more than one goal or need. The influence that different role senders can have on satisfaction of trainee needs and goals varies with many factors. Among the most important are (1) the structure of the program, and (2) the needs and goals that the trainee has at different points in time in the program. Logical hypotheses along these lines are that full time counselors can provide more social support than can part time counselors. Counselors can provide more social support in the beginning of a program (when the trainee has not established stable relationships at his job site) than later in the program (when the trainee is integrated into his work group and has less need for the counselor's support).

The messages that the trainee receives from various role senders consist of verbal and nonverbal communications. These communications satisfy one or more of the four types of needs or goals. In the case of instrumental goals, communications include physical assistance as in teaching reading or providing legal services.

When the messages that the trainee receives are perceived to be in disagreement, the trainee experiences role conflict. For instance, relationships with coworkers can satisfy needs for self confirmation by providing messages such as "you are one of us, an average employee in this group". From this message the trainee learns what membership group he belongs to and what his status is in that group. On the other hand, his relation with his counselor may provide a message such as "you are a member of your work group and a trainee, and you are somewhat different from those who work at your job site". If the trainee perceives the two messages as being sufficiently in conflict he may reduce this inconsistency in various ways, which can be specified by a dissonance reduction framework (cf., Festinger, 1962). In this case the trainee might break off the relationship with his counselor, or if the relationship with the counselor is satisfying other needs he might maintain the relationship but reduce his acknowledgement of these particular conflicting messages. Dissonance reduction of discrepant
messages obtained from people within the company may be relatively easily accomplished compared to the difficulty of reconciling messages given by people at work with those given by non-working friends at home. In the former case the messages may be very similar, while in the latter the messages may be quite discrepant (cf., Kolb, 1971).

Kahn and colleagues give a useful summary of the types of role conflict that can be experienced. They also focus extensively on the coping efforts made by the focal individual to reduce the role conflict. The present framework does not provide an analysis of trainee coping efforts, but points to the need for adaptive mechanisms and styles to be identified in future research in order to understand trainee response to organizational stress.

Two other points should be made to clarify the effect of trainee "participation in or knowledge of special program activities" on need satisfaction. First, trainees need not participate in special program activities to receive particular types of need satisfaction from them. All that is required is that the trainee have knowledge of the activity. For instance, trainees who participate in or just have knowledge of a special legal service may receive (1) self confirmation via messages that tell the trainee he is a valued member of the company (as shown by the company's willingness to set up the service to help him), and (2) personal change of work values toward more positive feelings toward the company, the people at work, or his job.

Second, special program activities are usually linked to particular individuals or groups, and therefore trainees may perceive the support as coming from these people rather than from the activity. For instance, orientation classes may be run by the counselors, and the trainees may feel that any self confirmation or personal change that they obtain from such sessions is due to the counselor's efforts. Similarly, trainees obtaining basic education instruction may attribute the need satisfaction obtained from this activity to the instructors rather than to the activity. Even in the case of a legal service, where the relationship
with the lawyer may not be personal, the support can still be personally linked to the supervisor or counselor who encouraged the trainee to use the service.

The difference between social support and job variables

Are the social support aspects of the trainee's environment (i.e., his relationships with people and with special program activities) sufficiently different from the job aspects of his environment (i.e., pay, job security, work tasks, and promotion opportunity) to necessitate the use of two concepts rather than one? Social support variables satisfy individual needs and goals; but isn't need satisfaction also obtained from participation in work tasks and from receiving pay?

There are three important reasons for differentiating the support provided by social support and job factors. First, the sources of need satisfaction are different in the two cases. As was shown previously, social support factors almost always have a personal, human source (i.e., a role sender). Conversely, the pay scale and benefits a trainee receives, the security of his job, the tasks that technology and his job classification require him to perform, and the promotion ladder before him are determined to a much greater extent by impersonal and unknown forces.

The difference between these job factors and special program activities is highlighted by the word "special". All of the trainee's past jobs, and everyone else's job at both his present and past places of employment contained pay, benefits, a degree of security, etc. These are the normal expectations the trainee has in taking a job, and he might define "job" by naming these qualities. On the other hand, a specially developed basic education course that is available only to trainees is indeed different from an impersonal factor found in any job, such as pay.

A second reason for differentiating social support and job variables relates to
the practical issue of determining program interventions. Interventions aimed at changing incentives such as pay, benefits, and promotion opportunity require different types of organizational strategies than those required in changing interpersonal relationships and setting up special program activities.

Knowledge of the different intervention strategies is important because of the third difference between social support and job variables. The two types of variables have different effects on trainee need satisfaction. These differences are summarized in the following assertions:

(3A) Social support factors have greater influence than job factors on obtaining friendship. This assertion is implied by the fact that sources of social support are more personal.

(3B-1) In jobs in which the job factors are perceived by trainees as no better than those at past jobs, social support factors have greater influence on changes in personal identity and on personal changes in work values.

(3B-2) The more present job factors are perceived as superior to job factors at past jobs, the greater is the relative influence of job factors on changes in personal identity and on personal changes in work values.

When an individual takes a job that is perceived as no better than his past jobs in pay, promotion opportunity, and other job variables, these job factors will provide him with messages about his personal identity and about the meaning of work that are similar to those that he had upon entering the program (e.g., "My contributions aren't valued." "Work is not interesting."). Therefore in this situation, pressures toward changes in his identity and work values will be provided by messages from role senders such as counselors and supervisors who will provide contradictory messages. It should be noted that social support factors are purposely designed to change personal identity and work related values, and therefore they should be expected to influence satisfaction of these needs to some extent. However, when job factors are low in quality, little change in identity and work values is likely because the negative messages from the job factors will be inconsistent.
with those positive messages obtained from role senders.

On the other hand, when the new job provides better job factors than those provided at past jobs, the job factors will provide messages that contradict those originally held (e.g., "You are earning $3.50 per hour and have a responsible job and a good chance of promotion." "Work is interesting."). Such messages will have an influence on changes in personal identity and work-related values.

(3C) Social support factors have a greater influence on comprehending noneconomic external realities. Though an individual's pay or promotion opportunities may strongly influence his feelings toward taxes, such job factors (i.e., pay or promotion - not social class) have little influence on his views toward the whole range of noneconomic phenomena. However, personal relationships can influence his feelings toward both economic and noneconomic issues.

(3D) Job variables have greater influence on satisfying instrumental needs for economic achievement and successful performance of work tasks than do social support from non-job site people and from special program activities. Job factors such as pay and task assignments are designed to have a direct influence on economic need satisfaction and on performance of work tasks. Relationships with non-job site people are generally less concerned with these instrumental needs. However, relationships with supervisors and coworkers have a significant effect on satisfaction of these needs. This effect is interrelated with the effect of the job factors. For instance, the work task that a trainee is assigned provides him with a message about how hard to work via his personal evaluation of the task. However, his interest in the task is also influenced by the messages he receives from his coworkers.

It should be pointed out that some elements of a job have properties that are very similar to those of social support factors. Unlike pay or job security, a job element such as on-the-job training often has a personal source and
therefore can influence satisfaction of needs for friendship. It is classified as a job variable, however, because of its centrality to satisfaction of instrumental needs for economic achievement and successful performance of work tasks. In addition, OJT is common to all jobs to some extent, and therefore is not likely to be perceived as a "special" program activity.

Summary

The framework outlined in Figure 4 shows the relation of variables at three levels of analysis: societal, organizational (general and direct influence on trainees), and individual. Variables at each level have a direct effect on variables at a more specific level of analysis.

The key variables that determine individual performance in programs have been termed individual, job, and social support variables. Past work has demonstrated the importance of these types of variables, but has not limited the wide scope of these factors.

Most previous work has examined these variables separately. However, these variables have interdependent effects on trainee performance. The interaction of these variables over time is a key process in employing the disadvantaged. Other processes pointed to by the framework include the development of trainee adaptive styles, and the feedback effects of trainee performance and styles on the three key interdependent variables.

Though the variables and processes in the framework were primarily derived from past empirical work, the selection of variables was also influenced by developments in organization theory and by Lewin's field theory. The theoretical emphasis in the framework on the relation between the individual and his environment is consistent with field theory.

Of the three key variables, social support variables have been the most loosely defined in the literature. To attain greater clarity, social support was defined as a process of obtaining need satisfaction from messages sent to the trainee by his role set.
The needs that are satisfied by social support include needs for emotional expression, self confirmation, personal change, and instrumental attainment. The magnitude of social support that a trainee can obtain depends on factors such as the structure of the program and the current state of the trainee's needs or goals.

In order to clarify the difference between the social support and job aspects of the trainee's environment, three distinctions were made:

1. social support and job variables have different sources of need satisfaction,
2. different organizational change strategies are required to affect the two types of variables, and
3. the two types of variables have different types of effects on trainee need satisfaction.
FOOTNOTES

(1) The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance and encouragement provided throughout this investigation by D. Quinn Mills, George F. Farris, Charles A. Myers, Lotte Bailyn, Edgar H. Schein, and Dennis Bumstead.

(2) The population referred to in this paper has also been called the "hard core unemployed". The operating definition of disadvantage used here is that of the Manpower Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. Disadvantaged individuals (a) receive an income below the poverty line, and (b) meet one of the following criteria: high school dropout, minority group member, handicapped, under 21 years of age, over 45 years of age, unemployed 15 weeks or longer.

(3) This is obviously an oversimplification of the research done by manpower economists in general. However, in reference to the specific approaches described, these variables appear to be the most important. As mentioned previously, the issue of concern in this paper is the determinants of individual success. Thus analyses by economists of public policy and labor markets are excluded. Institutional factors that relate to program and individual success (such as supportiveness or commitment of the company) have been studied by economists, but such areas will be discussed under behavioral science approaches.

(4) It should be clear that these criticisms are being made in respect to the research questions of importance in this paper. It is important to note that some regression studies and many cost-benefit studies are not primarily concerned with these issues (i.e. why individuals succeed or fail in programs). The purposes of the studies themselves are often geared to answering societal level efficiency questions, monitoring the financial aspects of a program for political and policy reasons, or evaluating the success of a program in a rough, quick, unobtrusive and inexpensive way. The cost-benefit and regression studies have demonstrated usefulness at achieving these purposes, and it is hoped that manpower economists will view the present criticisms in the appropriate context. In any case, these studies, though subject to serious criticism, are valuable in the present context in that they demonstrate the relation of pay and demographics to trainee success.

(5) To further clarify the difference between social support studies and the behavioral science studies already discussed, the previous studies focused on the overall environment (i.e. income, education, housing, etc.) of the disadvantaged, and discussed the personality characteristics that are a product of this environment, as well as the effect of the environment/personality interaction on employment success. Social support studies focus on the internal environment of the employing organization, and, more specifically, on the social (as opposed to economic) aspects of this internal environment. These studies generally examine the relation of this environment to individual characteristics and trainee success.

(5A) See Friedlander (1970) for an excellent description of the problems with such research methods.
(6) Other articles illustrative of the program descriptive approach include: Hodgson and Brenner (1968); Nemore (1967); Schmidt (1969); N.I.C.B. (1969); McLaughlin (1970).

(7) I am not trying to underestimate the importance of the societal level analysis, for I believe it is just as important as the individual level analysis. As C.W. Mills has pointed out in The Sociological Imagination, 1959, the problems of social science concern both biography and social structure and their intricate relations. Therefore, the long range task is to put together the analysis of individual trainee success with analyses of the culture of poverty, labor market characteristics, organizational policy making, etc. At present, my concern is with the analysis of one large segment of the problem, the direct determinants of individual performance, though I believe that this investigation can be and should be related to broader level work.

(8) The literature on poverty and my experiences with the disadvantaged lead me to believe that underlying both the ability and motivational factors are two groups of direct influences from the community. A relatively stable influence on ability and motivation is the individual's educational background (e.g., his reading and math attainment), and the peer and family values that he has acquired over time (e.g., viewpoints about the value of work or the use of narcotics). A more unstable set of influences on ability and motivation are the changing pressures of family and community. For instance, illness in the family, dealings with the legal system, financial problems, and marital problems can have a powerful impact on ability and motivation.

These family and community influences, both stable and changing, are a fourth key factor in understanding trainee job performance. Their interaction with the three other key variables is an important element in the employment process. However, the influence of family and community typically cannot be given substantial attention by students of manpower programs for ethical (i.e., invasion of privacy) and practical reasons. Therefore it is suggested that individual ability and motivational variables be seen, in part, as indicators of family and community influences, and that ability and motivation be measured frequently so that they will be sensitive to underlying changes in family and community. If family and community information can be obtained (e.g., through normal application blank data), and reported to insure individual dignity and privacy, then this information should be utilized in further filling out the analysis of trainee performance.

(9) Vocational psychology has also come to emphasize both personal and situational determinants of career adjustment, as has recently been pointed out by Super and Bohn (1970).

(10) Briefly, each of the three independent variable categories described in this paper can be seen as representing one or more schools of thought in modern organization theory. Each school claims that "their" variable leads to individual adaptation and organizational performance. For instance, individual variables are seen to arise from the external social
system by sociologists such as Goldthorpe (1968) or Dubin (1958). Such variables are characterized as orientations such as "instrumental" or "bureaucratic", and lead to particular types of organizational performance. Industrial psychologists handle the problem by selecting new employees on individual variables, and using as criteria the performance of successful present employees (who therefore have already adapted successfully). Job variables are said to be important by practitioners of job enrichment (e.g. Herzberg, 1966) and sociologists who study technology (e.g. Woodward, 1965). Herzberg claims that making work more challenging leads to increased motivation and performance. Woodward shows that the technological process constrains individual and social behavior at work, and that setting up the organizational system (i.e. span of control, levels of authority) to meet these technological requirements results in higher organizational performance. Individuals are seen as passively accepting the organizational and technological requirements. Social support variables are stressed by industrial social psychologists (e.g. Likert, 1967; McGregor, 1960; Maier, 1965) and interactionist sociologists (e.g., Whyte, 1970). Such variables as leadership style, work group climate, group norms, communication, and participative decision making are seen as affecting individual and work group commitment and support for organizational goals. The commitment in turn affects performance.

A contingency theory would combine the three approaches. Such a theory would determine the types of orientations of entering employees that are obtained from the wider society (i.e. individual-societal variables). It would then determine the effects on these orientations of different job-technological variables and of different social support-interpersonal variables. The adaptive styles that would result from a position in this three-way matrix would then be described and related to dependent measures of organizational performance.

(11) It is important to note that trainees and program staff may not perceive any of the four types of needs accurately. This may be particularly true of needs for personal change. Trainees may not perceive any need to change their work related beliefs, or their supervisors and counselors may overestimate such needs. Either of these explanations may account for the finding in the literature that the use of techniques such as role playing and orientation sessions which overtly attempt to change trainee attitudes may be met with hostility, may not relate positively to performance, and may not change attitudes (cf. Wellman, 1968; Rosen, 1970; Friedlander and Greenberg, 1970, respectively).

(12) The differences between social support and job variables (Nos. 1, 2, 3A to D) illustrate why it is useful and necessary to divide the trainee's environment into two conceptually discrete parts, rather than leave it as one conceptually amorphous mass. The statements of these differences are logically derived assertions. They are almost entirely self-evident from the definitions of job and social support variables (except for 3B).
It should be emphasized that these assertions are neither research hypotheses nor partisan statements for one set of variables over another. The whole point of this paper is that characteristics of the individual, job, and social environment are all interactive. Thus, when research hypotheses can be developed, they will have to parallel this complexity. A sample hypothesis would be: "In high quality jobs with hostile social environments, individuals of high ability will adapt in style A, while individuals of low ability will adapt in style B." Clearly, the present assertions are not hypotheses of this type; they merely explain some of the basic differences between job and social support factors without utilizing the entire interactive model.
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