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**RESEARCH
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CHANGES IN NONWHITE EMPLOYMENT 1960-1966

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CHANGES IN NONWHITE EMPLOYMENT 1960-1966

Abstract

This study compares changes in various occupational categories between 1960 and 1966 for nonwhites and whites.

During the 1960-1966 period, employment of nonwhites in prestige occupations has increased dramatically, both for males and for females. However, the "employment gap" between whites and nonwhites is still extremely large, insofar as the better occupational categories are concerned. Use of data for "nonwhites" to represent Negroes results in overestimates of their proportions in white-collar occupations.

Changes in Nonwhite Employment 1960-1966

Joel T. Campbell and Leon H. Belcher

Introduction

The availability--or lack of availability--of employment opportunities for Negroes has received considerable attention in the last few years. "Jobs and Freedom Now" was one of the slogans of the August 1963 March on Washington. Picketing of construction sites protesting racial exclusion from union membership and employment, boycotts of selected companies, and sit-ins at banks and other business places have been among the more "active" emphases on employment. The formation of "Plans for Progress,"¹ the establishment of the President's Committee on equal employment opportunity, and some of the activities of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission are among the governmental and quasi-governmental activities.² Interest has also been reflected in written reports: newspaper and magazine articles,³ company publications,^{4, 5} conference reports,⁶ monographs⁷ and books.^{8, 9}

There is little question about the importance of employment and occupations in American society. Moynihan says "the principal measure of progress toward equality will be that of employment. It is the primary source of individual or group identity. In America what you do is what you are: to do nothing is to be nothing; to do little is to be little. The equations are implacable and blunt, and ruthlessly public."¹⁰

Employment opportunity probably affects motivation for education. Peterson has reported that a relatively high proportion of students in a Negro college regard education primarily as vocational preparation.¹¹ Thus, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the education of Negro college

students, and probably high school students as well, is profoundly affected by the career possibilities which they see in their future.

Russell¹² has studied the changes in nonwhite employment for the period 1955 to 1965, and has made projections of employment figures to 1975, considering both proportions of nonwhites in various occupations, rates of change during this period, and estimated growth or decline rates for total employment in the various occupations. He concludes that "the hypothetical estimates show that nonwhite workers will have to gain access to the rapidly growing skilled and white-collar occupations at a faster rate than in recent years if their unemployment rate is to be brought down toward the same level as that of white workers."

A recent report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics contrasts the occupational distributions by color and sex, for 1961 and 1965, again using annual averages. It also reports the nonwhite occupational distributions from 1954 to 1965 for both sexes combined.¹³

Hiestand has done a major study of nonwhite employment trends from 1910 to 1960. The survey shows over the 50-year period a reasonably steady but rather slow increase in nonwhite employment in the higher status occupations. A major conclusion, summarized in Eli Ginzberg's foreword, is "that the key determinants of the growth of minority group employment are noneconomic forces, such as changed attitudes and behavior of the white majority with respect to minorities."¹⁴

There are, obviously, difficulties in labelling a particular time period in respect to the forces operating on it. However, the periods 1960-63 and 1963-66 do appear to differ in respect to the activities of the Civil Rights Revolution--the former being a period of activity which came to public notice

only sporadically, and the latter a period which attracted concentrated public attention. Thus this report will concentrate on comparing the changes which have taken place during these two three-year periods, in terms of percentages and of numbers employed. How much effect on employment has occurred after the efforts of the Civil Rights Revolution to change the "attitudes and behavior of the white majority?"

Procedures

A percentage breakdown of occupational distribution by race and sex is published each month by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.¹⁵ These figures are based on a sample survey taken each month covering the week which contains the 12th of the month.

Using the figures for April for each of the years chosen will permit a direct comparison with census figures reported by Hiestand. While the figures based on a sample survey for a single month will not be as stable as the decennial census data used by Hiestand, they should reveal any major trends or changes. These figures will not, however, be directly comparable to those reported by Russell who based his study on annual averages for 12-month periods.

Percentage figures, while informative, do not give a complete picture, since for example an increase in the percentage of male nonwhite professionals may be due to an increase in the number of professionals or a decrease in the number of laborers or farmers--or possibly a combination of both. Although publication each month of the total number employed broken down by race and sex was discontinued after February 1963, these data were supplied by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on request. By applying the appropriate percentage

figure to the number employed, it was possible to reconstruct the number employed in each occupational category, within the limits of rounding errors incident to the percentages.

Results

Percentage Comparisons

Table 1 shows the occupational distribution in percentage terms for nonwhite males for 1960, 1963, and 1966. It will be seen that from 1960

Insert Table 1 about here

to 1966 the proportion of farm workers declined substantially, while the proportion in the other three major categories increased. White-collar workers increased from 13.7 percent to 17.1 percent, for example, and each of its subcategories similarly showed an increase. However, in the overall category, and in three of the four subcategories, the Negro percentage in 1966 is less than half of the white percentage. A similar pattern is seen in the "Craftsmen, Foremen" category. Here, the proportion of nonwhite males has increased from 9.0 to 10.8 during the six-year period--while the white percentage in that category for 1966 is 20.3.

Table 2 shows the occupational distribution in percentage terms for

Insert Table 2 about here

nonwhite females for 1960, 1963, and 1966, and the distribution for white females for 1966. Here there was a more substantial increase in the "desirable" job categories for the nonwhite group. The percentage in the professional and technical category increased from 5.8 to 8.3, and in the

clerical category from 8.9 to 13.7. Again, these are far below the corresponding percentages for the white group, 14.4 and 34.9 respectively. It can be concluded from Tables 1 and 2 that nonwhites were somewhat better off in 1966 than they were in 1960 insofar as employment is concerned, but that they still lag far behind the white group.

Numbers Employed

Table 3 shows the occupational distribution for nonwhite males for

Insert Table 3 about here

1960, 1963, and 1966, when the percentages have been converted back to actual numbers employed, and also shows the percent increase for the intervening time spans, 1960-63 and 1963-66.

In interpreting these figures, it should be noted that there was an increase in total employment during these periods, four percent between 1960 and 1963, and nine percent between 1963 and 1966. Despite this, there was a decrease in the number of farm workers from 602,000 in 1960 to 361,000 in 1966. This continues a trend which has existed for the past 50 years. The number of white-collar workers increased substantially, a 17 percent increase between 1960 and 1963, followed by a 22 percent increase from 1963 to 1966. In the category "Managers, Officials, and Proprietors," there was an increase of 42 percent between 1960 and 1963, and only one percent between 1963 and 1966. In contrast, the number of clerical workers and the number of sales workers decreased slightly in the earlier period, but increased substantially, 44 and 27 percent respectively, in the later period. One hypothesis is that many Negroes who were employed

below their educational or ability level were promoted to or hired into the professional or managerial level during the early years of the civil rights movement, but that by 1963 this pool was substantially exhausted and that pressures to increase the number of Negro employees was then met by the employment of men in the clerical and sales categories.

The number of blue-collar workers expanded during these time periods at about the same rate as the expansion in total employment. However, for laborers, there was an actual decrease during the earlier period, and a substantially lower rate of increase during the later period.

Table 4 presents similar data for nonwhite females. Again, there

Insert Table 4 about here

was an increase in total employment during these periods, eight percent between 1960 and 1963 and 14 percent between 1963 and 1966. Similarly, the number of farm workers declined in both periods.

The number of white-collar workers increased substantially in both periods--26 percent for 1960-1963 and 39 percent for 1963-1966. Of the white-collar occupations, the largest percent increase in the earlier period was in sales workers, 59 percent. The largest numerical increase was 60,000 for professional and technical occupations. In the 1963-1966 period, the clerical worker category increased from 285,000 to 464,000 or an increase of 63 percent. The number of nonwhite women employed in the managers, officials, and proprietors category, however, did not change appreciably in either period.

In the blue-collar worker category there was a slight decrease in the 1960-1963 period and an increase of about 100,000 or 25 percent between 1963 and 1966. These changes parallel the changes for operatives, who comprise the great bulk of the nonwhite females in the blue-collar worker category.

While the number of service workers increased by approximately 100,000 in each time period, the percent change was relatively small. The private household worker category increased slightly in the 1960-1963 period and decreased somewhat in the 1963-1966 period. There were, however, relatively large increases, 14 and 24 percent respectively, in the two time periods, in the "other" service worker category.

The farm worker category declined in both time periods.

Rates of Change for Occupational Categories

Table 5 shows separately for nonwhite and white males the increase or

Insert Table 5 about here

decrease in numbers and in percent for each of the major occupational categories between 1960 and 1966.

An inspection of this table shows that, except for farming where there was a net decrease for both groups, there was a larger percentage increase for nonwhites than for whites in every occupational category. The white-collar category shows an increase of 42 percent for nonwhites compared to 11 percent for whites. Similar comparisons can be made for each of the other occupational categories. Only the service worker category shows approximately equal percentage increases for whites and nonwhites.

A similar pattern is shown in Table 6, which compares the increases (or decreases) for white and nonwhite females.

Insert Table 6 about here

For the period 1960-1966, nonwhite females showed an increase of 75 percent in the white-collar category, whereas the increase for white females was 21 percent. Within the white-collar category, the percentage increase for nonwhite females was higher in every instance, except for the subcategory of managers, officials, and proprietors in which the increases were two and 13 percent respectively for nonwhite and white females during that period.

In the categories of clerical and sales workers, nonwhite females showed increases of 89 and 83 percent respectively. The increase in clerical workers for white females was 26 percent. During the same period white females showed an increase of seven percent in the sales workers category.

For blue-collar workers during the 1960-1966 period, nonwhite females showed an increase of 24 percent, while the increase for white females was 17 percent. Within the blue-collar category, craftsmen and foremen jobs held by nonwhite females were represented by a 42 percent increase. The increases in operative type workers were approximately the same for white and nonwhite females. The largest percentage change in the blue-collar category was the increase of 150 percent for nonwhite females engaged in nonfarm labor. However, this represents only a small number of persons. White females showed an increase of 18 percent in the nonfarm laborer category.

With reference to the category of service workers, an increase of 12 percent occurred for white and nonwhite females. However, within this general category the private household workers among nonwhite females showed a five percent decrease. A small increase of two percent occurred for white female workers involved in private household services.

As noted earlier, the trend toward a decrease in the percent of white and nonwhite females engaged in farm work continued to hold true. The decrease for nonwhite females was 36 percent and for white females 13 percent.

The Employment Gap

The percentage distribution shown in Tables 1 and 2 for nonwhites and whites in 1966 indicates clearly that an employment gap exists but does not show how large the gap is in terms of numbers. This is perhaps the most important comparison to make, since as Moynihan says, "The Negro revolution. . . is a movement for equality as well as for liberty."¹⁶ Therefore, Table 7 has been included to show what the occupational

Insert Table 7 about here

distribution of nonwhite males would have been for 1966 had they been distributed on the same percentage basis as white males. Generally, substantial increases would have been the case in all the areas of the white-collar job category. On the other hand, the nonwhite male occupational distribution would have reflected a decrease in the blue-collar worker category had the white male percentage distribution prevailed. The decreases in the percentage distribution of nonwhite males would have occurred in the blue-collar subcategories of operatives and nonfarm laborers.

Based on the hypothetical white male percentage distribution, a smaller number of nonwhite males would have been involved in service work activities in 1966. The same general pattern of nonwhite male workers would have been the case with regards to the number involved in farm work.

Table 8 similarly presents a hypothetical distribution of nonwhite females had they been distributed on the same basis as white females.

Insert Table 8 about here

Hypothetically, there would have been increases in the nonwhite female distribution in all areas of the white-collar worker category.

Based on the percentage distribution for white females, there would have been a small increase in the number of nonwhite females engaged in blue-collar work. Within the blue-collar category, nonwhite females engaged in nonfarm labor would have shown a decrease in 1966.

A comparison of the actual and hypothetical distributions of nonwhite females engaged in service work had they been represented by the same percentage distribution as white females in 1966, shows that a decrease would have occurred in the 1966 figures. The same thing would have been true for nonwhite females engaged in farm work.

Negro Representation in the Nonwhite Group

A special census of Negroes made in March 1964¹⁷ included a question on occupational distribution. This makes it possible to compare figures for Negroes only with those for all nonwhites, and thus to get some idea of how accurately the tables for the total nonwhite group reflect the occupational distribution for the Negro group. These comparisons are

shown in Table 9 for males and Table 10 for females. These tables also show the percentage which Negroes constitute of the total nonwhite group in each occupational category.

An examination of Table 9 shows that Negroes comprised 88 percent of

Insert Table 9 about here

the 4,289,000 employed nonwhite males in March 1964. In the 1960 census, male Negroes comprised 91 percent of nonwhite males of all ages.

Table 9 also shows that male Negroes comprise 69 percent of the nonwhites in the professional category, compared with 94 percent of the operatives and 92 percent of the nonfarm laborers.

In general, it appears that male Negroes are underrepresented in all of the white-collar occupations, in the craftsmen, foremen category, and in the farm workers category. Only in the operatives and the nonfarm laborer categories do the percent of male Negroes employed approximate their percentage of the nonwhite population.

Table 10 provides similar comparisons for females. An inspection of

Insert Table 10 about here

this table shows that Negroes represented 92 percent of the employed nonwhite females in March 1964. In the 1960 census Negro females accounted for 93 percent of the total nonwhite females.

An anomalous pair of figures occurs in the category of managers, officials, and proprietors, where it appears that there are more Negroes than total nonwhites! Presumably this results from variations in two different samples representing very small numbers.

In the other categories, Negroes are underrepresented in total white-collar, professional and technical, clerical and sales, nonfarm laborers, and farm workers. They are overrepresented in the total service workers and private household service categories. They have approximately their proportional representation in the total blue-collar category, in the craftsmen, foremen and operatives category, and in service workers other than private household.

This one-time comparison, of course, does not indicate to what extent changes over time in the total nonwhite employment pattern are indicative of changes in Negro employment and to what extent they are indicative of employment changes for other nonwhite groups.

Discussion and Conclusions

There are some qualifications on the picture presented in this report thus far which should be made specific. The data on which this study has been based came from surveys where employment categories are assigned if the individual reports any employment during the week covered by the survey. Thus, an individual who worked as a clerk for one day during that week and was unemployed for four days would in these surveys be listed as an employed clerical worker. These tables do not take into account those who are completely unemployed. It is known that proportionally more Negroes than whites are unemployed, or employed less than full-time.

There is evidence that nonwhites within an occupational category earn lower average incomes than whites in the same category.¹⁸ For example, the 1963 median income of Negro male professional, technical, or managerial workers was \$4,708, while the corresponding figure for whites was \$7,544.

In part, this was due to the fact that proportionally more Negroes than whites were employed less than full-time, but there is still an income discrepancy for those with full-time employment.

Even with these reservations, the employment status of Negroes and other nonwhites presents a pattern of general improvement during the period 1960-1966, and tends to confirm Hiestand's conclusions.

The number of nonwhites in higher status occupations increased substantially during this period. The proportion of nonwhites in the lower status occupations declined, even though total employment showed a substantial increase.

Noted earlier was the difference in rate of change for professional and managerial occupations, on the one hand, and the clerical, craftsmen, foremen, and operatives occupations on the other. It cannot be established that these differences were in fact associated with the changes in tempo of the Civil Rights Revolution, but the association is a plausible one.

Even with the improvement that has occurred, there is still a large "gap" or difference between nonwhite employment in the higher status occupations and what this employment would be if nonwhites were employed in the same proportions as whites. In their survey of 47 company chief executive officers concerning Negro employment, the National Industrial Conference Board found that 29 out of the 47 thought that Negroes were "pressing too hard."¹⁹ As they look at the existing gap between Negro employment and white employment, few Negroes are apt to share this opinion.

Notes and Footnotes

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17. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports (Series P-20 No. 142, "Negro Population, March 1964" [Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965]).
18. Ibid.
19. National Industrial Conference Board, Inc., op. cit.

TABLE 1

Percent Occupational Distributions of
Nonwhite Males for Selected Years
and White Males for 1966

	Nonwhite			White
	1960	1963	1966	1966
White-Collar Workers	13.7	15.4	17.1	40.8
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	4.0	5.0	5.4	13.0
Clerical Workers	2.7	3.7	3.4	14.1
Sales Workers	5.1	4.8	6.3	7.1
	1.9	1.8	2.1	6.5
Blue-Collar Workers	56.7	57.0	59.3	46.1
Craftsmen, Foremen	9.0	9.5	10.8	20.3
Operatives	24.4	25.4	27.8	19.9
Nonfarm Laborers	23.3	22.1	20.8	6.0
Service Workers	14.8	17.1	15.8	6.3
Farm Workers	14.6	10.6	7.7	6.8

TABLE 2

Percent Occupational Distributions of
Nonwhite Females for Selected Years
and White Females for 1966

	Nonwhite			White
	1960	1963	1966	1966
White-Collar Workers	18.0	21.0	25.7	62.2
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	5.8 1.8	7.4 1.8	8.3 1.5	14.4 4.9
Clerical Workers	8.9	9.6	13.7	34.9
Sales Workers	1.5	2.2	2.2	8.0
Blue-Collar Workers	16.1	14.8	16.3	16.7
Craftsmen, Foremen Operatives	.7 15.1	.6 13.6	.8 14.9	1.0 15.3
Nonfarm Laborers	.3	.7	.6	.4
Service Workers	57.7	59.8	54.7	18.8
Private Household Workers	36.9	35.7	28.5	5.1
Other Service Workers	22.8	24.1	26.3	13.8
Farm Workers	6.1	4.3	3.2	2.3

TABLE 3

Occupational Distributions for Nonwhite
Males for Selected Years and
Percent Increase

	Number Employed (in thousands)			Percent Increase	
	1960	1963	1966	1960-63	1963-66
White-Collar Workers	565	659	801	17	22
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	165 111	214 158	253 159	30 42	18 1
Clerical Workers	210	205	295	-2	44
Sales Workers	78	77	98	-1	27
Blue-Collar Workers	2,338	2,438	2,776	4	14
Craftsmen, Foremen Operatives	371 1,006	406 1,086	506 1,302	9 8	25 20
Nonfarm Laborers	961	945	974	-2	3
Service Workers	610	731	740	20	1
Farm Workers	602	453	361	-25	-20
Total	4,123	4,277	4,682	4	9

TABLE 4

Occupational Distributions for Nonwhite
Females for Selected Years and
Percent Increase

	Number Employed (in thousands)			Percent Increase	
	1960	1963	1966	1960-63	1963-66
White-Collar Workers	497	624	870	26	39
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	160	220	281	38	28
Clerical Workers	50	54	51	8	-6
Sales Workers	246	285	464	16	63
Sales Workers	41	65	75	59	15
Blue-Collar Workers	444	440	552	-1	25
Craftsmen, Foremen Operatives	19	18	27	-5	50
Nonfarm Laborers	417	404	505	-3	25
Nonfarm Laborers	8	21	20	163	-5
Service Workers	1,650	1,778	1,853	8	4
Private Household Workers	1,020	1,061	965	4	-9
Other Service Workers	630	716	891	14	24
Farm Workers	168	128	108	-24	-16
Total	2,763	2,973	3,387	8	14

TABLE 5

Number and Percent Increase or Decrease
by Occupational Categories for White
and Nonwhite Males, 1960-1966

	Nonwhite		White	
	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Number (in thousands)	Percent
White-Collar Workers	236	42	1,712	11
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	88	53	1,085	24
Clerical Workers	48	43	239	4
Sales Workers	85	40	141	5
Sales Workers	20	26	202	8
Blue-Collar Workers	438	19	1,716	9
Craftsmen, Foremen	135	36	753	9
Operatives	296	29	940	12
Nonfarm Laborers	13	14	67	3
Service Workers	130	21	396	17
Farm Workers	-241	-40	-788	-21
Total	559	14	3,116	8

TABLE 6

Number and Percent Increase or Decrease
by Occupational Categories for White
and Nonwhite Females, 1960-1966

	Nonwhite		White	
	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Number (in thousands)	Percent
White-Collar Workers	373	75	2,462	21
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	121 1	76 2	571 129	21 13
Clerical Workers	218	89	1,640	26
Sales Workers	34	83	120	7
Blue-Collar Workers	108	24	554	17
Craftsmen, Foremen Operatives	8 88	42 21	15 525	7 18
Nonfarm Laborers	12	150	14	18
Service Workers	203	12	471	12
Private Household Workers Other Service Workers	-55 261	-5 41	21 474	2 18
Farm Workers	-60	-36	-75	-13
Total	624	23	3,431	18

TABLE 7

Occupational Distribution of Nonwhite Males for 1966, and
Hypothetical Distribution if Employed Nonwhite Males
Had Same Percentage Distribution as White Males

	Actual	Hypothetical
White-Collar Workers	801	1,910
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	253	609
Clerical Workers	159	660
Sales Workers	295	332
	98	304
Blue-Collar Workers	2,776	2,158
Craftsmen, Foremen	506	950
Operatives	1,302	932
Nonfarm Laborers	974	281
Service Workers	740	295
Farm Workers	361	318
Total	4,682	4,682

TABLE 8

Occupational Distribution of Nonwhite Females for 1966, and
 Hypothetical Distribution if Employed Nonwhite Females
 Had Same Percentage Distribution as White Females

	Actual	Hypothetical
White-Collar Workers	870	2,107
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	281 51	488 166
Clerical Workers	464	1,182
Sales Workers	75	271
Blue-Collar Workers	552	566
Craftsmen, Foremen Operatives	27 505	34 518
Nonfarm Laborers	20	14
Service Workers	1,853	637
Private Household Workers Other Service Workers	965 891	173 467
Farm Workers	108	78
Total	3,387	3,387

TABLE 9

Occupational Distribution of Nonwhite and Negro Males,
 March 1964, and Percent Which Negroes Constituted
 of Nonwhites in Each Group

	Nonwhite Number (in thousands)	Negro Number (in thousands)	Percentage of Negroes in Nonwhite Group
White-Collar Workers	742	559	75
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	257 142	178 107	69 75
Clerical and Sales Workers	343	274	80
Blue-Collar Workers	2,440	2,240	92
Craftsmen, Foremen Operatives	476 1,064	404 1,005	85 94
Nonfarm Laborers	901	831	92
Service Workers	708	638	90
Farm Workers	399	321	80
Total	4,289	3,758	88

TABLE 10

Occupational Distribution of Nonwhite and Negro Females,
 March 1964, and Percentage Representation of
 Negroes in Each Category

	Nonwhite Number (in thousands)	Negro Number (in thousands)	Percentage Negroes in Nonwhite Group
White-Collar Workers	649	521	80
Professional and Technical Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	228 43	186 48	82 112
Clerical and Sales Workers	378	287	76
Blue-Collar Workers	438	398	91
Craftsmen, Foremen and Operatives	415	381	92
Nonfarm Laborers	23	17	74
Service Workers	1,707	1,657	97
Private Household Other Services	990 720	979 678	99 94
Farm Workers	51	43	84
Total	2,845	2,619	92