DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 155 345 CE 016 467

AUTHOR Mott, Frank L.
TITLE Racial Differences in Female Labor Force Participation: Trends and Implications for the Future.
INSTITUTION Ohio State Univ., Columbus. Center for Human Resource Research.
SPONS AGENCY Employment and Training Administration (DOL), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE May 78
NOTE 31p.; For a related document see CE 016 465
AVAILABLE FROM Center for Human Resource Research, College of Administrative Science, The Ohio State University, 1375 Perry Street, Suite 585, Columbus, Ohio 43201 ($0.80)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Black Employment; Blacks; Caucasians; *Employment Patterns; *Employment Statistics; Employment Trends; Females; National Surveys; Race Influences; *Racial Differences; Work Attitudes; *Working Women
IDENTIFIERS United States

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Data collected during the National Longitudinal Surveys were used to examine the labor force behavior of black and white women from fourteen to twenty-four and thirty to forty-four years of age. Focus is on racial convergence in labor force participation rates (the percentage of the population group either working or looking for work) over this 1967 to 1972 period. The findings include the following: for the most part, labor force participation rates for white women of all ages and marital statuses increased while declining patterns of participation were noted for most of the black groups; for white older women (35 to 44 years old), the most notable increases in work participation were among women who were either separated or divorced while the sharpest declines for black women were also for this same marital category; and overall, participation of black women in the work force is lessening in comparison to white women but those black women who continue to work appear to be relatively successful. The data suggests that there is a large pool of nonworkers who are willing to work (1) if the proper conditions for employment exist, (2) if appropriate guidance, skill training, and other assistance are made available, and (3) if jobs become available. (EM)

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Racial Differences in Female Labor Force Participation: Trends and Implications for the Future

by

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May 1978

This is a longer version of a paper which appears in Volume 11 of the Urban and Social Change Review.

Racial Differences in Female Labor Force Participation: Trends and Implications for the Future

Frank L. Mott

It is generally acknowledged that in recent years, female attachment to the labor force has increased dramatically, particularly for women of childbearing age. This trend has reflected not only demographic factors but in addition fundamental changes in how women's roles are viewed in our society.[1] What is less well known is that this trend has not equally affected all women. Whereas white labor force participation levels for women between the ages of 20 and 44 have consistently risen since 1960, black labor force rates have levelled off in recent years. As may be noted in Figure 1, there has been a major racial convergence in work participation. For example, as recently as 1960, blacks 35 to 44 years of age were almost 50 percent more likely to be working than their white counterparts, by 1975, this racial gap had narrowed considerably.[2]

This paper will examine in some detail certain aspects of this racial convergence utilizing a unique data set, the National Longitudinal

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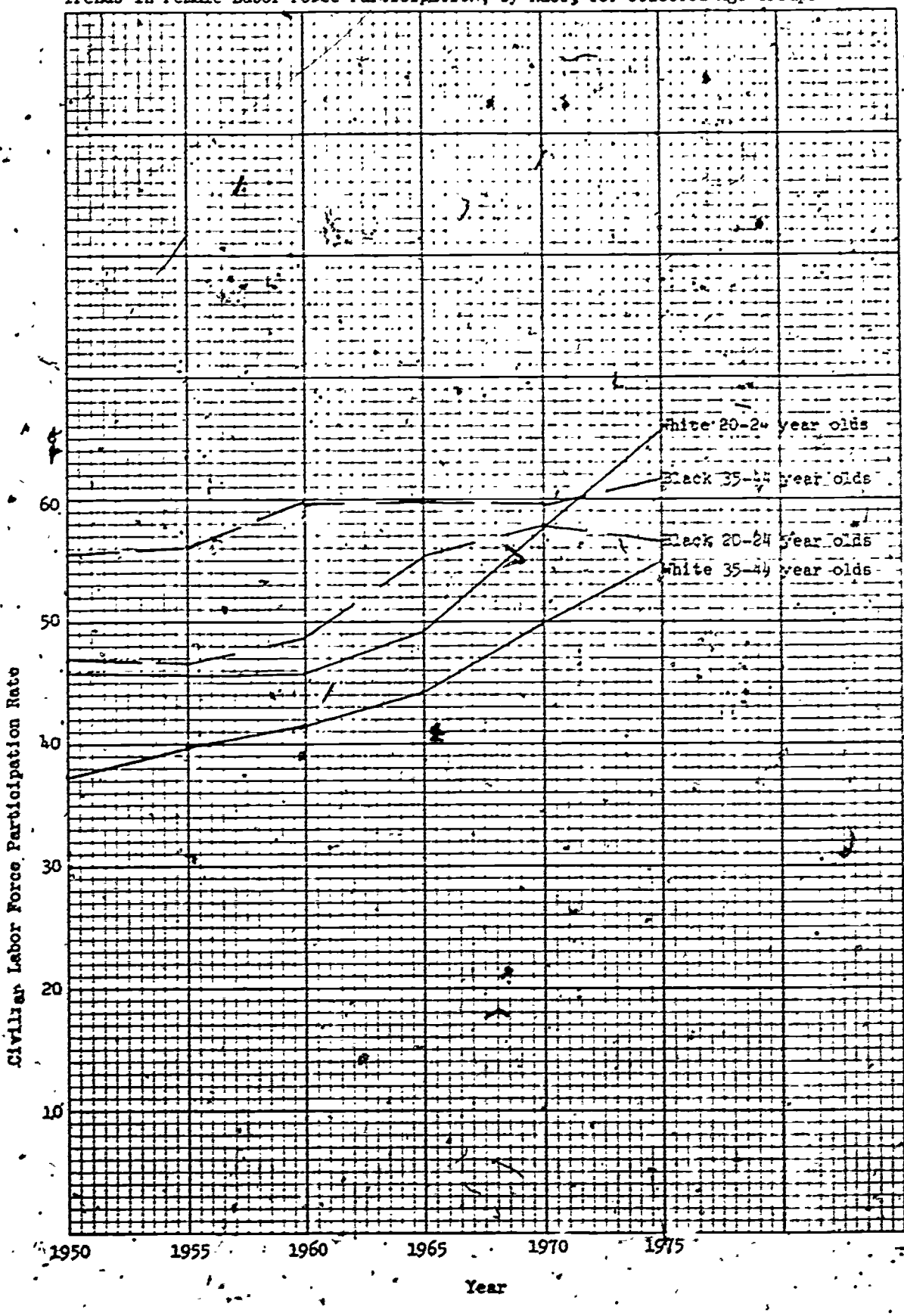
The author wishes to thank Jean Haurin, Sylvia Moore and Pat Rhoton for their helpful suggestions and outstanding research assistance on this project.

This paper was prepared under a contract with the Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, under the authority of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. Researchers undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express their own judgements. Interpretations or viewpoints stated in this document do not necessarily represent the official position or policy of the Department of Labor.

Figure 1
Trends in Female Labor Force Participation, by Race, for Selected Age Groups



SOURCE: Employment and Training Report of the President, 1977. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977.

Surveys of labor market behavior. These surveys encompass a series of interviews with four different population cohorts, although the focus of this paper will be on the interviews with nationally representative samples of black and white women 14 to 24 and 30 to 44 years of age.[3] In particular, detailed information about the labor force attitudes and behavior of women 20 to 24 years of age in 1968 and 1973 and 35 to 39 and 40 to 44 in 1967 and 1972 are currently available from these surveys. Thus, it is possible to minutely examine the dynamics of the above noted racial convergence in labor force behavior (for women almost a generation apart in age) and suggest what this convergence implies for the future labor force behavior of black and white women.

Trends in Labor Force Participation Between 1967 and 1972: A Detailed Examination

Even a cursory examination of Table 1 suggests that there are major differences between black and white labor force trends over this 1967 to 1972 period.[4,5] For the most part, labor force participation rates (the percentage of the population group either working or looking for work) for white women of all ages and marital statuses increased. In contrast, declining patterns of participation may be noted for most of the black groups, with the notable exception of young married black women. The 35 to 39 year old group can be used to demonstrate this convergence phenomenon; in 1967, the black and white labor force participation rates for this age group were about 70 and 46 percent, respectively. By 1972, the white rate had increased to about 54 percent and the black rate had declined to 62

Table 1

Labor Force Participation Rates in 1967 and 1972 by Age, Race and Marital Status[1]

	WHITE					BLACK				
	1967		1972		Change in rate 1967 to 1972	1967		1972		Change in rate 1967 to 1972
	Number of respondents	Labor force rate	Number of respondents	Labor force rate		Number of respondents	Labor force rate	Number of respondents	Labor force rate	
Ages 20 to 24[2]	1,235	57.4	1,396	65.9	+ 8.5	379	62.1	585	62.4	+ 0.3
Married, spouse present	766	48.0	821	58.4	+10.4	176	57.3	220	63.7	+ 6.4
Separated or divorced	76	67.9	88	68.6	+ 0.7	41	55.1	78	55.3	+ 0.2
Never married	392	73.3	485	77.5	+ 4.2	162	69.9	286	63.3	- 6.6
Ages 35 to 39	951	46.4	968	53.7	+ 7.3	367	70.4	338	62.3	- 8.1
Married, spouse present	835	43.1	832	49.6	+ 6.5	243	66.3	185	62.2	- 3.8
Separated or divorced	53	62.9	80	78.8	+15.9	86	84.8	104	63.0	-21.8
Never married	49	81.5	45	87.1	+ 5.6	16	3	35	56.9	—
Ages 40 to 44	1,086	50.3	951	55.9	+ 5.6	405	70.0	367	64.0	- 6.0
Married, spouse present	949	46.7	797	51.7	+ 5.0	267	66.4	234	63.4	- 3.1
Separated or divorced	81	72.3	81	81.5	+ 9.2	79	87.1	81	68.9	-18.2
Never married	28	89.1	44	80.6	- 8.5	28	80.4	13	3	—

1. Sample limited to women interviewed in all survey years.
2. All estimates for the 20 to 24 year old group are for early 1968 and early 1973. For ease of presentation, the table headings indicate only 1967 and 1972.
3. Rates not calculated where sample size is under 25.

percent. As a result, the difference between the black and white rate narrowed from about 24 points to only 8 points. Similar patterns were evidenced for the other two age groups here under discussion, although the pattern is less pronounced for the 20 to 24 year olds.[6] During this five year period, there were also significant declines in the proportion of women of childbearing age with children of preschool age in the home. Thus, the increasing work participation of white women is consistent with this changing child raising pattern whereas the black labor force trend is in apparent contradiction with the fertility trend. Indeed, the percentage of black 35 to 39 year old women with a preschool child in the home declined from 43 to 29 percent during the half decade at the same time that their labor force attachment also was declining.

Examining Table 1 more carefully, one finds that for white older (35 to 44 year old) women, the most notable increases in work participation were among women who either were separated or divorced. In contrast, the sharpest declines for black women were also for this same marital category. As a result, while black labor force participation rates for separated or divorced mature women were well above the white rates in 1967, by 1972 they were far below the white rates. From a policy perspective, this trend needs to be carefully considered. Not only has the maritally disrupted group been growing in recent years as a percent of the total population, but in addition, this is the group which is in greatest need of the financial remuneration which gainful employment can best provide.[7]

The changes in rates described in Table 1 disguise the actual dynamics behind the 1967 to 1972 transition. That is, the changes described represent "net" changes during the period and mask the considerable movement in and out of the labor force during the period. For example, it would be possible for the overall labor force participation rate for a group to remain unchanged simply because the same large number of individuals entered as left the labor force during the period. Table 2 decomposes the labor force transition process of the three groups of women. First, it may be noted that the percentage of all black women employed at both points in time is substantially above the white percentage. This is consistent with the "net" statistics which show higher black labor force participation rates at both points in time. However, for the older women, it may be noted that larger proportions of the black women left the labor force and larger proportions of all white women entered during the five year interval. However, most of this difference simply reflects the different labor force mix of the two racial groups in 1967. That is, since a larger proportion of all black women were in the labor force in 1967, it is not surprising that a larger proportion left following that point in time.[8] Conversely, since a larger proportion of white women were not working in 1967, everything else being equal, one would expect a larger proportion of all white than black women to enter between 1967 and 1972. As indicated in Table 2, if one takes into account this difference in labor force "mix" between the races in 1967, there are no major racial differences for the older women in the probability of entering or leaving the labor force.

Table 2

Gross Changes in Employment between 1967 and 1972, by Race and Age in 1967

	Number of respondents	Percent distribution	Employed in 1967 and 1972 (Stayers)	Employed 1967 and not employed in 1972 (Leavers)	Not employed 1967 and employed in 1972 (Entrants)	Not employed in 1967 on 1972 (Nonworkers)	Probability of Exit[1]	Probability of Entrance[2]
WHITE								
20-24	1,356	100.0	29.5	19.6	18.7	32.2	.40	.37
35-39	1,008	100.0	30.2	10.8	21.1	37.9	.26	.36
40-44	1,163	100.0	35.1	9.4	17.2	38.3	.21	.31
BLACK								
20-24	440	100.0	34.5	14.6	18.8	32.0	.30	.37
35-39	400	100.0	44.7	16.0	12.9	26.4	.26	.32
40-44	431	100.0	45.6	16.6	11.8	26.0	.27	.31

NOTES: See Table 1.

1. Probability of exit is equal to the employed 1967 - not employed 1972 group divided by the total employed in 1967 group.
2. Probability of entrance is equal to the not employed 1967 - employed 1972 group divided by the total not employed in 1967 group.

However, for the youngest age group, the 20 to 24 year olds, a significant racial difference in probabilities may be noted as the average white working woman was much more likely to withdraw from the labor force than her black counterpart. This is consistent with other evidence which documents conclusively that young white women are much more likely to leave a job when they have their first child than is true for the prospective black mother.[9]

Characteristics of Labor Force "Stayers" and "Leavers"

If the recent narrowing of the differential in labor force participation rates between black and white women were solely a reflection of the fact that a larger proportion of black women have been in the labor force (and thus "eligible" to leave the labor force), the phenomenon would perhaps only be of marginal interest. However, an examination of the characteristics of those who have been leaving employment and, conversely, the characteristics of those remaining at work, suggests that the trend has certain major implications for both social policy and programs.

Table 3 compares a number of basic socio-demographic attributes and work attitudes for the four categories of women described in Table 2. While there are some exceptions, primarily among the young 20 to 24 year old women who are mostly at a different life cycle stage, certain dramatic differences between the workers and non-workers are apparent. Some of these patterns are consistent across racial lines and others are not. First, all women, but particularly those women 35 to 44 years of

Table 3

Selected Behavioral and Attitudinal Characteristics, by Race, Age in 1967 and Labor Force Status

	20 to 24 years of age				35 to 44 years of age			
	Employed 1967 and 1972 ("Stayers")	Employed 1967, not employed 1972 ("Leavers")	Not employed 1967, employed 1972 ("Entrants")	Not employed 1967, not employed 1972 ("Nonworkers")	Stayers	Leavers	Entrants	Nonworkers
WHITE								
(1) Percent with less than 12 years of school	8.7	10.2	18.9	31.2	29.5	40.0	31.7	35.7
(2) Mean hourly wage in 1967	2.09	2.13	—	—	2.21	2.01	—	—
(3) Percent receiving welfare	0.9	1.0	3.0	4.0	1.5	1.5	4.1	3.1
(4) Percent agreeing "work of both parents necessary to keep up with high cost of living"[1]	57.2	39.1	56.4	42.5	75.0	65.6	72.4	46.6
(5) Percent agreeing "working wife feels more useful"[1]	45.8	34.1	53.5	35.6	62.8	50.5	55.1	35.8
BLACK								
(1) Percent with less than 12 years of school	27.4	35.7	38.7	51.6	52.7	74.2	56.7	70.2
(2) Mean hourly wage in 1967	1.71	1.76	—	—	1.75	1.52	—	—
(3) Percent receiving welfare	11.6	12.0	13.2	28.8	7.2	16.6	14.6	22.0
(4) Percent agreeing "work of both parents necessary to keep up with high cost of living"[1]	79.4	76.7	85.2	85.4	86.3	83.7	88.5	72.3
(5) Percent agreeing "working wife feels more useful"[1]	63.0	51.2	65.3	63.1	73.4	72.1	69.0	54.2

NOTES: See Table 1.

1 Attitudinal items were asked in 1972 for the 20 to 24 year old women and in 1974 for the women who were 35 to 44 years of age.

age, who had left the labor force had significantly less education than women employed both in 1967 and 1972. The educational differences between the stayers and leavers was much greater for black women than white women. Second, paralleling the educational differences, older women who left employment had been earning lower wages than those who stayed on the job. In addition, for the older black women, the leavers were much more likely to have been receiving welfare than the stayers. Thus, those women leaving the labor force were, on average, of lower socioeconomic status and had been less "successful," in terms of wages when they were working.

Shifting from the behavioral to the attitudinal side, several additional discrepancies are apparent. First, there was significantly greater agreement with the statement "work of both parents is necessary to keep up with the high cost of living" among white women who were job stayers than among the job leavers. This is certainly not surprising and suggests a greater degree of economic need for the working group. In contrast, undoubtedly reflecting the lower average level of economic well-being among the black women, there was far greater consensus among both the job stayers and leavers that "work of both parents is necessary." This suggests that, for the most part, the black job leavers who have little education and low wages nonetheless felt (after having left employment) that <u>their</u> employment was <u>necessary</u> to keep up with the high cost of living. Thus, there is an apparent inconsistency between the attitudes and behavior of many of these women.

It should also be noted that the older white women who maintained ties with the labor force were more likely than their exitting counterparts to feel that a "working wife feels more useful than one who doesn't hold a job." In contrast, there was no such contrasting pattern evidenced for the older black women. Not only were the job leavers as likely to respond positively that "working wives feel more useful" as the job stayers, but, in addition, their responses were much more positive than for the white women.[10] To the extent that this item measures something more than just the need to work due to economic necessity, the result, on the surface, is perhaps surprising. The principal point, however, remains that whereas white women show fairly large differences in attitudes between stayers and leavers in the expected direction, no similar systematic differences appear for most black women; that is, those black who left employment surely were not doing so because of any strong preference for doing so.

Whereas Tables 2 and 3 focused on the characteristics of women in 1967, Tables 4 and 5 compare women (of a given age) who were employed in 1967 and 1972. As highlighted earlier, black labor force participation rates have been declining and white rates have been increasing. In contrast, among those women who continue working there is evidence of increasing commitment to the work force between 1967 and 1972 on the part of black women relative to their white counterparts. As may be noted in Table 4, for those white women who were working, there were systematic declines in the proportion working full time, particularly at the older ages. Black working women, on the other hand, were more

Table 4

Percentage of Employed Women Working 35 or More Hours Per Week in 1967 and 1972, by Marital Status, Race and Age[1]

	1967						1972					
	Number of respondents	Total marital status	Number of respondents	Married, spouse present	Number of respondents	Other marital status	Number of respondents	Total marital status	Number of respondents	Married, spouse present	Number of respondents	Other marital status
WHITE												
20 to 24	839	80.8	442	81.6	397	79.9	831	78.6	426	80.0	405	77.3
35 to 39	362	75.7	288	71.2	74	93.7	438	61.2	341	61.5	97	80.0
40 to 44	450	80.0	359	76.3	91	94.3	454	75.9	346	73.2	108	84.1
BLACK												
20 to 24	280	74.8	122	70.2	158	78.6	303	87.9	115	88.3	188	79.5
35 to 39	215	72.8	138	69.5	77	79.5	192	75.8	105	77.2	87	73.8
40 to 44	252	72.3	155	69.8	97	77.5	206	81.9	128	85.1	78	77.8

NOTES: See Table 1.
1 Refers to "usual hours worked" on job.

Table 5

Respondent Mean Annual Earnings (in 1967 dollars) in 1966 and 1971, by Race and Age[1]

	1966		1971		Percentage change 1966 to 1971
	Number of respondents	Mean earnings	Number of respondents	Mean earnings	
WHITE					
20-24	874	2,590	1,063	2,729	+ 5.4
35-39	447	3,145	513	3,423	+ 8.8
40-44	532	3,394	497	3,711	+ 9.3
BLACK					
20-24	285	1,727	403	2,374	+37.5
35-39	255	2,493	213	3,170	+27.2
40-44	288	2,580	233	3,380	+31.0

NOTES: See Table 1.

likely to be working full time in 1972 than in 1967. Thus, while a smaller percentage of black women were working, those who were working were working more hours.

In addition, it may be recalled that black women from broken marriages were most likely to have withdrawn from the work force. This is also the demographic group which did the poorest in terms of maintaining full time employment (see Table 4). This then represents further evidence of the inability of this high-employment-need group to maintain much needed employment ties.

Table 5 indicates that those black women who remained employed were also generally successful in improving their earning power. Black working women increased their real annual earnings anywhere from 27 to 37 percent, depending which age group one focuses on.[11] White working women were not as successful in increasing their real annual earnings. As a result, there was a dramatic convergence in annual earnings between black and white working women over the half decade. Part of this narrowing reflected the increase among black women in hours worked and part possibly reflected a lessening of wage discrimination during the period. Undoubtedly, however, a significant part of the narrowing in the earnings differential also reflected the fact that the black women who left the labor force were those who had had, on average, less education and lower hourly wages.

Thus, two divergent trends may be noted. From an overall perspective, participation of black women in the work force is lessening in comparison with white women. However, those black women who continue

to work appear to be relatively successful, reflecting to some extent a "selecting out" process whereby the black women with the least job skills are the ones most likely to have left the labor force. By "success," the reference here is both to the extent of attachment to the work force as well as the earnings associated with the employment.

Some Interpretations of the Trend and Implications for the Future

It is clear that substantial proportions of black workers have in recent years been withdrawing from the labor force. It is also evident that the vast majority of these women have only limited education and had been earning relatively low wages. Table 3 also suggests that the majority of black women who were not employed either in 1967 or 1972 also have similar characteristics.

Job leaving may be either voluntary or beyond the control of an individual. In the case of these women, the reasons for withdrawal are undoubtedly mixed. The period 1967 to 1972 (as well as most years since then) represented a deteriorating period for the American economy. Typically, such a deterioration is accompanied by employment cutbacks, and these cutbacks tend to disproportionately affect those with the least experience, job skills and job tenure. Beyond this cyclical factor, there undoubtedly is also a secular trend operative. That is, we are in the midst of a long-term decline in the demand for many lesser skilled jobs which historically have provided jobs for a relatively large sector of the American labor force.

From the perspective of the individual, there may well be other forces at work. First, there is some suggestion that there is an

decreasing willingness by many American workers to accept many of the tedious, dirty, and unchallenging jobs at the bottom of the occupational ladder.[12] This unwillingness is undoubtedly enhanced by the relatively low wages which many of these jobs pay. Indeed, there are not an inconsequential number of jobs in our society which do not provide a wage above the poverty level--even if the worker is employed full time year round! Under such circumstances, it is difficult to anticipate great demand for such jobs.

For at least some of these low wage workers, one certainly needs to raise the question of whether or not they are worse off not working than working. Their choice may simply be between being "working poor" or "nonworking poor." The earnings they can draw from low paying employment may not far exceed the "nonearnings" they can receive from welfare or various other transfer payments. Also, employment often entails a number of expenses which a nonworker can avoid such as transportation expenses, child care costs and other items such as clothing and grooming costs.

The recent patterns of withdrawal probably reflect a mixture of both these demand and supply forces. For example, Table 6 indicates that for black women there has been between 1967 and 1972 a sharp increase in the proportion of families which have received welfare, primarily AFDC, during the preceding year. This receipt is most pronounced for women who are separated or divorced, the group we know has evidenced the sharpest decline in labor force participation. On the other hand, the average annual AFDC payment during that period

Table 6

Percent Receiving Welfare During Past Year. by Race, Marital Status and Age, 1967 and 1972

	WHITE				BLACK			
	All respondents	Married, spouse present	Separated, divorced or widowed	Never married	All respondents	Married, spouse present	Separated, divorced or widowed	Never married
1967								
20 to 24	2.4	1.9	12.4	1.5	19.1	8.7	44.8	24.3
35 to 39	2.5	1.2	16.2	6.5	14.5	6.2	27.9	55.9
40 to 44	2.5	1.3	12.6	4.3	12.9	9.3	22.8	14.3
1972								
20 to 24	6.0	3.8	36.3	4.4	27.9	6.6	60.2	36.0
35 to 39	5.1	3.2	20.2	8.9	30.1	12.0	54.3	54.3
40 to 44	3.5	1.4	18.8	4.7	27.7	16.5	46.9	55.3

NOTES: See Table 1.

was well below the annual earnings level for most unskilled jobs and the increase in AFDC payments over the 1967 to 1972 period was below the average increase in real wages over that period (see Table 7). In fact, the increase in average AFDC payments during that period was significantly below the increase in the general cost of living.

As may be noted in Table 7, the ratio of the average blue-collar wage to both the poverty level estimates and average welfare payments increased over the half decade. By 1972, the average female "blue collar" worker in our sample earned a wage which would have left her family about 22 percent above the poverty line even if no one else in her family was working. Her year-round-full-time wage would have earned her more than twice the amount she would have received from welfare.

These are average estimates, of course, which means that there are many individuals well below the average who might not have been able to earn above a "poverty wage." The data, however, do suggest that for most women the economic incentive was probably sufficiently strong to push or keep her in the labor force. Of course, for many of the black women not working or leaving work, the situation was beyond their control. Either they were laid off from their job or else they could not find employment commensurate with their limited job skills.

It is useful to note that the attitudinal data cited earlier reinforce much of the above theme. For example, among black women who were not working, or who were laid off from work, there was substantial agreement with the propositions that work is necessary for economic reasons and that working women feel more useful. These are ideas

Table 7

Selected Economic Indicators, 1967 and 1972[1]

	1967	1972	Percent change
Consumer price index (1967 dollars)	100	.125	+25.0
Minimum wage	$ 1.40	$ 1.60	+14.3
Annual average AFDC payment per family	$1,940	$2,290	+18.0
Low income threshold for a nonfarm family of four	$3,410	$4,275	+25.0
Blue collar mean annual income	$3,897	$5,228	+34.2
Ratio of mean blue collar wage to low income threshold	1.14	1.22	
Ratio of mean blue collar wage to average family AFDC payment	2.01	2.27	

1. Sources of Estimates: Consumer price indices from Table 699 of the 1976 Statistical Abstract of the United States, Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976. Minimum wage estimates from Table 6.4 of the same volume. AFDC estimates (monthly averages) are from Table 140 in the 1972 Annual Supplement to the Social Security Bulletin. The 1967 and 1972 low income threshold estimates are from Table A-1 of U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports P-60 No. 91, "Characteristics of the Low-Income Population 1972," Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973.

expressed by the vast majority of the less skilled black women who left the work force between 1967 and 1972.

The attitudinal data in Table 8 are also consistent with this view. The vast majority of both black and white women feel it is okay to work if their husband agrees and agreement with this attitude increased between 1967 and 1972. By 1972 about 30 percent of black women and between 20 and 25 percent of white women felt it was okay to work even if their husband disagreed! Indeed, agreement with this attitude increased sharply for black and white women over the five-year period. To the extent that positive attitudes reinforce work behavior patterns and vice versa, one may anticipate some escalating of both white and black work attachment in the years ahead just on the basis of these apparent normative shifts.[13]

All of the above suggest that there probably is a large and growing pool of nonworkers in our society ready and willing to work if the proper conditions (including rational pay levels) for employment exist; if appropriate guidance, skill training and other assistance are made available; and most importantly if jobs become available.

Largely because the basic determinants of the work participation of these women is so complex, the future labor force participation levels of black and white women are hard to predict. It is likely, however, that in the short run the racial convergence in the rates will continue to the point where white participation rates may exceed the black rates. However, this trend will ultimately cease for a number of reasons. First, as the proportion of black women who are employed declines, and

Table 8

Percentage Agreeing with Specified Work Role Attitudes in 1967 and 1972, by Race and Age

	Number of respondents 1967	Number of respondents 1972	Okay to work if husband agrees			Okay to work even if husband disagrees		
			1967	1972	Percent change	1967	1972	Percent change
WHITE								
20-24	1,344	1,819[1]	65.1	83.3	+18.2	12.4	25.6	+13.2
35-39	931	947	76.8	86.9	+10.1	13.3	22.6	+ 9.3
40-44	1,067	931	70.2	84.2	+14.0	11.3	19.7	+ 8.4
BLACK								
20-24	436	815[1]	80.9	92.5	+11.6	17.5	29.8	+12.3
35-39	360	328	88.0	87.9	- 0.1	25.4	34.9	+ 9.5
40-44	391	360	76.0	86.1	+10.1	22.9	28.6	+ 5.7

NOTES: See Table 1.

1 For this table only, the reference interview for the "20-24" year old respondents in 1972.

the proportion not employed increases, the numbers eligible to leave employment will naturally decline and the numbers eligible to enter will increase. This highly mechanistic interpretation suggests that if everything else were equal, an equilibrium in participation rates between the races should occur when the rates for blacks and whites attain equality.

Second, and perhaps more important, recent young cohorts of black women are completing, on average, much more schooling than their mothers' generation. For example, whereas about 50 percent of black 40 to 44 year old women had not completed high school, the comparable figure for 20 to 24 year olds is only 25 percent.[14] Indeed, it may be recalled that black 20 to 24 year olds were the one age group in this study where the probabilities of black women leaving the labor force were lower than the corresponding probabilities for white women. Thus, the more alike black and white women become in their socio-demographic characteristics in the future, the greater the likelihood that they will behave similarly in the labor market.

As a final note, it is useful to recall that for both economic and noneconomic reasons most black women prefer to work--whether they are working or not. This is the surest evidence that, if jobs are available, the future of most black women lies in the labor market.[15]

Footnotes

[1]"The Changing Economic Role of Women" in the U.S. Manpower Report of the President, 1975, U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975, discusses this trend in some detail.

[2]James A. Sweet, Women in the Labor Force, New York: Seminar Press, 1973, highlights the longer term dimensions of this trend.

[3]Under Labor Department sponsorship, four nationally representative samples of 5,000 respondents each have been interviewed by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for a decade with interviews continuing for at least five more years. Young men 14 to 24 years of age were first interviewed in 1966, reinterviewed each year through 1971 and then reinterviewed in 1973, 1975 and 1976. Men 45 to 59 years of age were first interviewed in 1966 and reinterviewed in 1967, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1973, 1975 and 1976. Women 30 to 44 years of age were first interviewed in 1967 and reinterviewed in 1967, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1976 and 1977. Women 14 to 24 years of age were interviewed annually between 1968 and 1973 and reinterviewed in 1975, 1977 and 1978. Each cohort included approximately 1,500 black and 3,500 white respondents and appropriate weights are available for combining the separate racial groups into an overall nationally representative population sample. See The National Longitudinal Surveys Handbook, Center for Human Resource Research, The Ohio State University, Revised November 1977, for further details about the surveys. This Handbook is available gratis from the Center.

[4]The reader may note that the labor force estimates from the National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) differ somewhat from comparable data from the Labor Departments' sponsored monthly Current Population Survey (CPS)--the survey which generates the monthly national employment and unemployment estimates. A number of reasons have been advanced for these differences including the following: (1) all of the NLS interviews are with the respondent herself whereas the CPS interview may be with any responsible adult in the household, (2) the obvious labor force focus of the NLS survey may elicit more information about marginal labor force activities, and (3) there are seasonal differences between our results and many of the published CPS estimates. Most of suggested reasons for the differences are consistent with expected higher reported labor force activity levels for the NLS compared with the CPS data.

[5]All of the results for the 20 to 24 year old women in this report reference interviews which took place in early 1968 and early 1973. The interviews with the 35 to 39 and 40 to 44 year old women were during the summers of 1967 and 1972. For ease of presentation, all of the above time periods shall be referred to simply as "1967" and "1972."

[6]It should be emphasized here that other data sources indicate that this convergence pattern holds for virtually all age groups. We focus here on these three five-year age groups because they are the only age groups for which we have detailed work data. See, for example, The 1975 Manpower Report cited above.

[7]See Frank L. Mott and Sylvia F. Moore, "The Determinants and Consequences of Marital Disruption" in Years for Decision, Vol. IV, Columbus, Ohio: Center for Human Resource Research, The Ohio State University, 1977; and Beverly Johnson McEaddy, "Women Who Head Families: A Socioeconomic Analysis: in the Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 99 Number 6, June 1976, for comprehensive analyses of the characteristics and behavior patterns of maritally disrupting women.

[8]Francine D. Blau, "Longitudinal Patterns of Female Labor Force Participation" in Dual Careers, Vol. IV, Columbus, Ohio: Center for Human Resource Research, The Ohio State University, 1975.

[9]Frank L. Mott and David Shapiro, "Work and Motherhood: The Dynamics of Labor Force Participation Surrounding the First Birth" in Years for Decision, Vol. IV, op. cit.

[10]John R. Shea focuses on this theme in the chapter "Work Attitudes, Satisfaction and Job Attachment" in Dual Careers, Vol. I, Columbus, Ohio: Center for Human Resource Research, The Ohio State University, 1970.

[11]Reynolds Farley in his paper "Trends in Racial Inequalities: Have the Gains of the 1960s Disappeared in the 1970s" in the American Sociological Review, April 1977, Vol. 42 No. 2, and Stuart Garfinkle, "Occupations of Women and Black Workers, 1962-74" in the Monthly Labor Review, November 1975, Vol. 98 No. 11, considered carefully the occupational concommitant of this trend noting the increasing occupational level of those black women in the labor force.

[12]See Work in America, a report of a Special Task Force to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, January, 1973.

[13]Anne Macke, Paula Hudis and Don Larrick, "Sex-Role Attitudes and Employment among Women: A Dynamic Model of Change and Continuity." A paper presented at the Secretary of Labor's Invitational Conference on the National Longitudinal Surveys of Mature Women, Washington, D.C., January 26, 1978.

[14]U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20 No. 314, December 1977, "Educational Attainment in the United States: March 1977 and 1976," Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977, Table 1.

[15]There is some disagreement about the relative importance of supply and demand factors as future determinants of the volume of lower level manpower. Harold Wool in "Future Labor Supply for Lower Level Occupations" in the Monthly Labor Review, March 1976, Vol. 99 No. 3, feels that there will be substantial reductions in the proportion of lower level workers who will be available in the years ahead. He, of course, includes the basic caveat that the size of the available pool is of course partly a function of the wages these jobs will pay. Other suggestions include restructuring of lower level jobs to increase the level of responsibility and variety associated with these jobs.

The Center for Human Resource Research

The Center for Human Resource Research is a policy-oriented research unit based in the College of Administrative Science of The Ohio State University. Established in 1965, the Center is concerned with a wide range of contemporary problems associated with human resource development, conservation and utilization. The personnel include approximately twenty senior staff members drawn from the disciplines of economics, education, health sciences, industrial relations, management science, psychology, public administration, social work and sociology. This multidisciplinary team is supported by approximately 50 graduate research associates, full-time research assistants, computer programmers and other personnel.

The Center has acquired pre-eminence in the fields of labor market research and manpower planning. The National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Force Behavior have been the responsibility of the Center since 1965 under continuing support from the United States Department of Labor. Staff have been called upon for human resource planning assistance throughout the world with major studies conducted in Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela, and recently the National Science Foundation requested a review of the state of the art in human resource planning. Senior personnel are also engaged in several other areas of research including collective bargaining and labor relations, evaluation and monitoring of the operation of government employment and training programs and the projection of health education and facility needs.

The Center for Human Resource Research has received over one million dollars annually from government agencies and private foundations to support its research in recent years. Providing support have been the U.S. Departments of Labor, State, and Health, Education and Welfare; Ohio's Health and Education Departments and Bureau of Employment Services; the Ohio cities of Columbus and Springfield; the Ohio AFL-CIO; and the George Gund Foundation. The breadth of research interests may be seen by examining a few of the present projects.

The largest of the current projects is the National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Force Behavior. This project involves repeated interviews over a fifteen year period with four groups of the United States population: older men, middle-aged women, and young men and women. The data are collected for 20,000 individuals by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, and the Center is responsible for data analysis. To date dozens of research monographs and special reports have been prepared by the staff. Responsibilities also include the preparation and distribution of data tapes for public use. Beginning in 1979, an additional cohort of 12,000 young men and women between the ages of 14 and 21 will be studied on an annual basis for the following five years. Again the Center will provide analysis and public use tapes for this cohort.

The Quality of Working Life Project is another ongoing study operated in conjunction with the cities of Springfield and Columbus, in an attempt to improve both the productivity and the meaningfulness of work for public employees in these two municipalities. Center staff serve as third party advisors, as well as researchers, to explore new techniques for attaining management-worker cooperation.

(Continued on inside of back cover)

A third area of research in which the Center has been active is manpower planning both in the U.S. and in developing countries. A current project for the Ohio Advisory Council for Vocational Education seeks to identify and inventory the highly fragmented institutions and agencies responsible for supplying vocational and technical training in Ohio. These data will subsequently be integrated into a comprehensive model for forecasting the State's supply of vocational and technical skills.

Another focus of research is collective bargaining. In a project for the U.S. Department of Labor, staff members are evaluating several current experiments for "expedited grievance procedures," working with unions and management in a variety of industries. The procedural adequacies, safeguards for due process, cost and timing of the new procedure are being weighed against traditional arbitration techniques.

Senior staff also serve as consultants to many boards and commissions at the national and state level. Recent papers have been written for the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, The National Commission for Employment and Unemployment Statistics, The National Commission for Manpower Policy, The White House Conference on the Family, the Ohio Board of Regents, the Ohio Governor's Task Force on Health, and the Ohio Governor's Task Force on Welfare.

The Center maintains a working library of approximately 6,000 titles which includes a wide range of reference works and current periodicals. Also provided are computer facilities linked with those of the University and staffed by approximately a dozen computer programmers. They serve the needs of in-house researchers and users of the National Longitudinal Survey tapes.

For more information on specific Center activities or for a copy of the Publications List, write: Director, Center for Human Resource Research, Suite 585, 1375 Perry Street, Columbus, Ohio 43201.