

ple of Negroes in a Southern city in 1960.¹ While there were some differences in the rank order they found and in the order suggested by Myrdal, the two were substantially similar. Equal employment opportunities ranked first, equitable administration of justice second, while items explicitly and directly related to segregation ranked lower in the scale. Ranking lower was "freedom to visit white homes, to swim in the same places, and eat in the same restaurants" as white people. This low ranking was largely the result of the fact that 43 percent of the Negroes failed to rank this item, saying that they did not care whether this change came or not. Yet the fact that this is still a goal for almost half of the Negroes in the sample was revealed by the fact that 48 percent did rank it. But, as Myrdal suggested, the goals receiving the highest priority were in the economic and legal sphere.

NEGRO PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

LEWIS M. KILLIAN

Florida State University

CHARLES M. GRIGG

No matter how often and with what confidence it is answered, the question "What does the Negro want?" continues to be asked both by laymen and by professional students of Negro-white relations. Such general values as "dignity," "first-class citizenship," "equal opportunity," or "full participation in American life" are adequate as general answers. But Negro protest activities shift spasmodically from one specific goal to another. Desegregation of schools, then of other facilities, increased voter registration, and increased employment opportunities are among the specific goals which have alternated in the limelight from time to time. The multiplicity of specific goals, the number of organizations engaged in the fight, and the wide range of techniques used suggest

passive spectators of the battle for dignity and that some, notably the Black Muslims, propose that dignity for the Negro can best be obtained through more segregation, not less.

The method for seeking the answers which immediately suggests itself to the sociologist is the familiar attitude survey. But the data thus obtained are most likely to provide only a gross measure of the direction of Negro attitudes toward general values such as "desegregation" or "equality." As has so often been observed of conventional attitude studies, these data are not likely to tell us what the subject is willing to do in support of the attainment of the value. If 90 per cent of a sample of Negroes say that they are in favor of school desegregation, do we know how many of them would be willing to be publicly identified as plaintiffs in a desegregation suit or how many would permit their children to be pioneers in the actual de-

that, even though such a general goal as "dignity" may be an adequate answer, another question remains unanswered. This is, "How does the Negro think he can best attain this general goal?"

Lomax, in *The Negro Revolt*, declares that Negroes are experiencing "widespread doubts about goals which had hitherto been unquestioned." He asks, for example, "Assuming school integration had proceeded as expected, how much would this have affected the current lives of the Negro masses?"¹ His answer is, "Very little." The problem is further complicated by the fact that so many Negroes seem to be only

¹ Louis E. Lomax, *The Negro Revolt*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962, p. 77.

passive spectators of the battle for dignity and that some, notably the Black Muslims, propose that dignity for the Negro can best be obtained through more segregation, not less.

The method for seeking the answers which immediately suggests itself to the sociologist is the familiar attitude survey. But the data thus obtained are most likely to provide only a gross measure of the direction of Negro attitudes toward general values such as "desegregation" or "equality." As has so often been observed of conventional attitude studies, these data are not likely to tell us what the subject is willing to do in support of the attainment of the value. If 90 per cent of a sample of Negroes say that they are in favor of school desegregation, do we know how many of them would be willing to be publicly identified as plaintiffs in a desegregation suit, or how many would permit their children to be pioneers in the actual desegregation of the local school system? How many Negroes who express themselves as being in favor of "lunch-counter desegregation" would therefore be willing to participate in "sit-ins" or "picket" lines, or would patronize desegregated lunch counters during the period when white reactions are still unpredictable? Or, of the small proportion of Negro subjects who might say they are not in favor of desegregation, how many would be reacting against the principle, and how many would be reacting to the heightened racial tensions which might accompany desegregation efforts?

Another problem is that while there may be argument on a general, ultimate objective there still may be a hierarchy of specific goals, a rank order of preference for change, as suggested by Myrdal.² Killian and Grigg looked for such a rank order in a sam-

ple of Negroes in a Southern city in 1960.³ While there were some differences in the rank order they found and in the order suggested by Myrdal, the two were substantially similar. Equal employment opportunities ranked first, equitable administration of justice second, while items explicitly and directly related to segregation ranked lower in the scale. Ranking lower was "freedom to visit white homes, to swim in the same places, and eat in the same restaurants" as white people. This low ranking was largely the result of the fact that 42 percent of the Negroes failed to rank this item, saying that they did not care whether this change came or not. Yet the fact that this is still a goal for almost half of the Negroes in the sample was revealed by the fact that 48 percent did rank it. But, as Myrdal suggested, the goals receiving the highest priority were in the economic and legal sphere.

Another approach to the study of what the Negro wants and, more specifically, how he thinks he can get it, is represented in research conducted by Jacqueline J. Clark.⁴ Using members of Negro protest organizations as her subjects, Clark examined the preferences of her subjects for various types of techniques for bringing about changes in race relations. She found that the techniques in which the most faith was placed were, in order, mass meetings, non-violent techniques (especially boycotting), and legal-judiciary measures, including voting. It must be observed however, that Clark selected her sample from members of protest organizations who were committed to an active role in the Negro struggle. While the selection of a

² Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944.

³ L. M. Killian and C. M. Grigg, "Rank Orders of Discrimination of Negroes and Whites in a Southern City," *Social Forces*, 39 (March, 1961), p. 235-239.

⁴ Jacqueline J. Clark, "Standard Operational Procedures in Tragic Situations," *Phylon* (4th Quarter, 1961) pp. 318-328.

sample from such a population as this increases the likelihood that there is a relationship between attitudes and action, it does not indicate to what extent the actors involved are in tune with the larger group of Negroes in whose behalf they act.

Theories of the nature of individual participation in social action in a mass society suggest yet another approach. The study of individual attitudes toward goals implies that the subject who responds to the attitudinal question is also an actor. But one of the most prominent features of mass society is the inactivity of many of its members with reference to the issues on which they may be willing to express attitudes. It is true that mass movements, such as the Montgomery bus boycott, sometimes arise to elicit the active support of large numbers. But, as Louis Wirth so aptly put it, "In modern democracies and to some extent in all inclusive societies on the scale of modern states, men exercise their influence and voice their aspirations through delegated powers operating through functionaries and leaders, through lobbies, party organizations, religious denominations and a variety of other organized groups having a complex internal organization of their own."⁵ This observation suggests that the delegation takes place through membership in and financial support of organizations. But delegation may also take place by default, with the support consisting only of a failure to repudiate the spokesmen. Hence, another way of getting at the orientation of the members of a mass society toward the issues which affect them is to inquire into their attitudes toward the organizations which purport to act in their behalf. In effect, for the question "What do you want?" is substituted the query "From whence

cometh your help?"

A recent analysis of the Urban Negro suggests that the Negroes concentrated in the large cities of the nation display increasingly the characteristics of the anonymous, unattached and impassive members of a mass society.⁶ Although he takes into account the direct action of many Negroes, such as college students, Silberman still observes:

"But among the great mass of working-class Negroes and a large part of the middle class, apathy exists side by side with a growing festering resentment of their lot. These Negroes are more and more convinced that they should have a better life; they are less and less convinced that they themselves can do anything about it."⁷

Silberman also identified what he perceived as another evidence of Negro apathy and passivity, the lack of the sort of self-help institutions through which the European immigrants climbed out of their slums. He relates this, in part, to a social change which has impinged not only on the Negro but on the entire population. He suggests "The paucity of Negro self-help organizations may also be due to the tremendous growth of public assistance during the past quarter century."⁸ It may be, however, that "self-help" organizations do exist among Negroes, but they have taken a different form from the charitable and social welfare organizations to which Silberman has reference.

For example, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People might be regarded as a "self-help" organization, although its means of helping Negro citizens has been that of prosecuting civil rights cases rather than acting as a legal aid society. Throughout its history it has sought to improve the status of Negro Ameri-

⁵ Louis Wirth, "Consensus and Mass Communication," *American Sociological Review*, 13 (1948), p. 8.

⁶ Charles Silberman, "The City and the Negro," *Fortune*, March 22, 1962, p. 91.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

cans by the elimination of legal barriers to advancement. The favored tactics have been legal redress and advocacy of anti-discrimination legislation.

CORE and similar direct action organizations reflect the traditional strategy of the NAACP—self-help through the removal of barriers to advancement. But their techniques differ not only from welfare-type programs but also from the legalistic tactics of the NAACP. Sit-ins, picket lines and mass demonstrations reflect a spirit of urgency and militancy which the older Negro organizations have found difficult to match. The NAACP, through the influence and activity of its youth council but with the sanction of its adult leaders, has recently added some of these tactics to its traditional methods.

In contrast, another large predominantly Negro organization, the National Urban League, has historically been regarded as more conservative than the NAACP because its efforts to help the Negro community have not been of the protest type but have tended toward emphasis on self-improvement. While its leaders have always made clear their opposition to segregation and other barriers to Negro advancement, the strategy has emphasized the preparation of Negroes to take advantage of opportunities as they develop. Efforts to increase opportunities, especially in employment, have depended primarily on negotiation with employers. Despite the rising tempo of the Negro protest and the dramatic tactics of the direct-action organizations, the Urban League has continued to rely on education and negotiation as its principal techniques.

Nor should the association which historically has been central to the Negro community and most nearly indigenous to it, the Negro church, be overlooked as at least potentially a "self-help" organization. Perhaps the type of help which it has provided during most of its history has been

psychological. Its leaders have often advanced a counsel of adjustment rather than one of protest or even of improvement. But since the desegregation decision of 1954, Negro ministers have been in the forefront of the protest movement. Much of their leadership has been exerted through new organizations, such as Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference, however, rather than through the churches themselves. Hence it may be asked whether the image of the Negro church as a place of refuge, not an agent of change, has been affected.

The latest comer to the Negro's struggle for improvement of his status, the Black Muslims, embodies in its program the most radically different strategy. The movement combines militant "Black nationalism" with a puritanical self-improvement theme.

At the same time the Negro has an opportunity to react to associations which may be neither exclusively, predominantly, or even partially Negro in composition, but which at times claim to be concerned for his welfare. Sometimes this concern is implied only by the claim of the association to serve "all the People," presumably including Negroes. Here we refer to such associations as various levels of government, the major political parties, and segregated white organizations, such as churches, chambers of commerce and businesses.

All of the organizations mentioned in the preceding paragraphs constitute potential sources of help for the Negro community. The research reported here examines the orientation of Negroes toward these sources of help. From the subjective evaluations of organizational effectiveness, inferences will be made as to desired goals and preferred means of obtaining them.

THE METHOD

The locale of this study was a Florida city with a 1960 population of slightly over 200,000, with a Negro

population constituting about 40 percent of the total. A sample of Negro adults in this city was asked, "How much do you think each of the following groups is doing things in Florida City that are in the best interests of people like you?" The subject was then read a list of sixteen organizations or agencies and asked to rate each as doing "A lot," "Some," "A little" or "None". A "Don't know" option was also available to the interviewer for coding when the subject could not make a choice. The list included: white churches, Negro churches, Democratic party, Urban League, city government, Republican Party, NAACP, state government, CORE, Chamber of Commerce, Black Muslims, federal government, Council on Human Relations, Labor unions, white businessmen and Negro businessmen.

The sample, selected primarily for use in a housing study, was drawn from a list of Negro families who had been forced to relocate because of the construction of an expressway through the area in which they formerly lived. The expressway had sliced through the largest area of Negro settlement in the city, from the city limits to the edge of the business district. It was felt, therefore, that the families included in this "slice" would constitute a reasonably good area sample of the Negro heads of households of the city. From a list of 1700 families displaced in this manner, a 33 percent sample was drawn with the use of a table of random numbers. Heads of households were interviewed. Comparison of this sample with the 1960 census population on certain characteristics (Table 1) shows that individuals over 50 years of age and persons reporting no years of school completed were slightly underrepresented. This bias may very well have resulted from the fact that the sample was limited to heads of households. The sample was also compared with the census population as to annual income of individuals. This compari-

TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF 1962 NEGRO SAMPLE POPULATION AND 1960 CENSUS

Education	1962 Sample		1960 Census	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
None	3	.6	2,170	5.1
Some Grade				
7th-12th	479	87.2	37,364	88.4
Some College	42	7.6	1,411	3.3
Compl. College				
Grad. School	24	4.4	1,309	3.1
No Response	1	.2		
Total	549	100.0	42,254	99.9

Individual Annual Income	1962 Sample		1960 Census	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Under \$3,000.	337	61.4	41,497	79.9
\$3,000.-				
\$5,000.	166	30.2	8,260	15.9
Over \$5,000.	31	5.6	2,184	4.2
No Response	15	2.7		
Total	549	99.9	51,941	100.0

Age	1962 Sample		1960 Census	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
20-29	143	26.1	10,271	21.5
30-39	185	33.7	10,734	22.5
40-49	127	23.1	10,489	22.0
50-59	58	10.6	8,311	17.4
60-69	24	4.4	4,957	10.4
70 +	10	1.8	2,970	6.2
No Response	2	.4		
Total	549	100.1	47,732	100.0

son shows that persons with income under \$3,000 a year are underrepresented. Possible effects of this "middle-income bias" will be noted in the analysis.

METHOD OF SCALE CONSTRUCTION

A composite measure of the degree of help which was perceived as coming from each of these agencies was computed in the following manner:

There are four response categories for each agency, plus a residual "Don't

know" category. Weights were assigned these categories for the purpose of computing the scores, a weight of 5 being given to "a lot," a weight of 2 to "some," and a weight of 1 to "a little." The categories, "none," and "no response" or "not known" were not weighted. These weights were multiplied by the percentage of subjects responding in each category for each organization to give the composite score. Thus, for example, the composite score for the NAACP represents the sum of 5 times the percent who thought it was doing a lot, plus 2 times the percent who thought it was doing some, plus 1 times the percent who thought it was doing a little. These were added and multiplied by 100.

This method permitted equalization of the distribution on 100 and at the same time gave weight to the varying degrees of importance. It is obvious that the maximum scale of 500 could be derived if 100 percent of the respondents indicated that an organization was doing "a lot." A minimum of 0 could be derived if no answers were tabulated in the categories "a lot," "some," or "a little".

TABLE 2
RANKING OF SIXTEEN ORGANIZATIONS BY ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS SCORE

Organization	Score	Rank
NAACP	364	1
Democratic Party	214	2
Federal Government	208	3
Urban League	202	4
Negro Churches	198	5
Labor Unions	184	6
State Government	156	7
Negro Business	153	8
City Government	138	9
Council on Human Relations	133	10
C.O.R.E.	124	11
Chamber of Commerce	113	12
White Business	92	13
Republican Party	81	14
White Churches	56	15
Black Muslims	25	16

EVALUATION OF ORGANIZATIONS

The ranking of the sixteen organizations or groups attained by this method, with their scores, is shown in Table 2. For this sample the well established symbol of the Negro protest, the NAACP, still ranks first by a wide margin, despite challenges to its leadership by direct action organizations. Ranking second and third are two organizations which are neither predominantly Negro in composition nor primarily concerned with the Negro's status, but are at the same time often identified with the sort of public assistance to which Silberman refers, the federal government and the Democratic Party. Ranking close behind them is another predominantly Negro voluntary association, the Urban League. Despite their differences, these organizations share the characteristics of being national in scope, with the centers of policy-making located outside the South. Next, and not far below the Urban League are the Negro churches. While not having the national base which characterizes the four higher ranking agencies, the Negro churches are the most exclusively Negro of all of the top-ranking agencies and, as has been pointed out, have been traditionally the central institution of the Negro community. In this particular city the Negro churches have not been prominently identified with protest activities as has been the case in some other Southern cities. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, to find that they rank as close as they do to the organizations which have had a more definite relationship to protest activities in support of civil rights. But the only organization which does place primary emphasis on direct action, CORE, ranks eleventh, below such agencies as The Council on Human Relations and city and state governments.

We can only speculate as to why,

in this sample, the top ranking organizations achieved their standing. It is the central thesis of Lomax's book, *The Negro Revolt*, that Negroes have lost faith in their traditional leadership organizations, especially the NAACP. This study suggests that the loss has not occurred in this southern city. This may reflect, in part, the breadth of the activities of the local NAACP chapter as well as the broadening of the program of the national organization. In the past two years the latter has begun to place more emphasis on voter registration, expanding job opportunities and improving housing conditions, even while retaining its characteristically legalistic approach. The local chapter, through its youth council, has taken the lead in direct action campaigns such as those usually sponsored by CORE and has virtually kept CORE out of the local arena. This is the most likely explanation of the low ranking which CORE received from this sample.

It is generally recognized that Negroes have benefited ever since the days of the New Deal from the welfare programs sponsored by the Democratic Party and perpetuated by the federal government even during a Republican administration. More important, it is from the federal government level that Negroes have received their most significant governmental support in local struggles. Lomax quotes a Negro woman of Montgomery as saying, after the U. S. Supreme Court had ruled favorably in the municipal bus case, "Praise the Lord—God has spoke from Washington, D. C."⁹

Despite its long-standing reputation as a conservative organization, the Urban League has an equally long-standing concern for a problem which looms even larger in the minds of Negroes—job opportunities. An active chapter and an effective executive secretary seem to have succeeded in de-

veloping a favorable image of the League in this community.

At the other end of the rank order, ranking twelfth through sixteenth consecutively, are the Chamber of Commerce, white business men, the Republican Party, white churches, and the Black Muslims. It appears that, in spite of its national base and its attempt to match the Democratic Party's protestations of concern for civil rights and equal opportunity, the Republican Party has not convinced these Negroes that it is one of their champions. To an even lesser extent have the resolutions and statements of principles of the white churches created the impression that they are really contributing to the Negroes' struggle. The Black Muslims rank very low despite the fact that there is a small but active congregation of Muslims in this city, with a full-time missionary working to spread their appeal. The underrepresentation of the Negroes in the lowest income and educational classes may contribute to this low ranking.

Examination of the distribution of responses contributing to the scores on which the rank order was based sharpens the picture of the evaluation of the effectiveness of these various associations. The distribution is shown in Table 3.

That the ranking of the NAACP reflects a strongly positive evaluation of its efforts is shown by the fact that nearly two-thirds of the sample responded that they felt it had done "a lot" for people like themselves. Looking at the "none" column, it may be seen that a definitely negative evaluation contributed relatively strongly to the low score of the Republican Party, white businesses, the Black Muslims, and, in particular, the white churches. The white churches represented the only group which over half of the sample said was doing nothing in the interest of people like themselves.

It immediately becomes evident that

⁹ Lomax, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

TABLE 3
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR EACH ORGANIZATION

Organization	Response					Total
	A Lot	Some	Little	None	Don't Know	
NAACP	59.4	31.5	4.4	1.1	3.6	100%
Democratic Party	21.7	43.0	20.0	4.2	11.1	100
Federal Government	19.1	43.5	25.1	3.3	8.9	100
Urban League	18.0	48.3	15.1	2.4	16.2	100
Negro Churches	12.9	52.6	28.1	4.0	2.4	100
Labor Unions	14.9	42.6	23.9	7.3	11.3	100
State Government	8.2	41.5	32.2	7.7	10.4	100
Negro Business	5.8	45.0	34.1	10.2	4.9	100
City Government	5.6	36.6	37.3	10.4	10.0	100
Council on Human Relations	10.2	25.5	31.0	6.2	27.1	100
C.O.R.E.	7.3	34.6	18.2	7.3	32.6	100
Chamber of Commerce	4.4	28.4	34.4	11.1	21.7	100
White Business	2.9	17.1	43.0	29.1	7.8	100
Republican Party	2.4	15.1	39.2	27.1	16.2	100
White Churches	2.6	12.4	18.2	53.0	13.8	100
Black Muslims	.5	5.5	11.1	37.0	45.9	100

low ranking may be based either on a negative evaluation, as in the case of the white churches, or on a lack of knowledge of what the organization had done. The percentages of those responding "don't know" for any particular organization, or giving no response, may be regarded as an "index of unawareness." A low percentage of "don't know" or "no response" answers indicates high awareness and a high percentage represents low awareness. The index shows that certain organizations which might have been expected to rank higher because of their direct concern for the Negro community ranked low primarily because of a lack of awareness of what they were doing. This is particularly true in the case of the Black Muslims who, in spite of their local activity and the national publicity they have received, are still unknown to almost half of this sample. Similarly, CORE is unknown to almost a third, and the Council on Human Relations to slightly over a quarter. The significance of the index of unawareness does not lie, of course, in the fact that if the activities of an organization were bet-

ter known, its effectiveness would be more highly evaluated. It lies, rather, in the fact that greater latitude for gaining acceptance exists for the organization that ranks low but also has a high index of unawareness than for the organization which ranks low even though it is relatively well known. For example, it might be said that the white churches have already been "weighed and found wanting." The Black Muslims, CORE, and the Council on Human Relations, on the other hand, have a greater opportunity to improve their image as agencies working effectively in behalf of Negroes. The relatively higher percentage of "none" responses which contributed to the low ranking of the Black Muslims suggests, however, that this organization will still have a difficult time converting neutrals into admirers. Again it should be noted that the most depressed class of Negroes, allegedly the class for which the Muslims have the greatest appeal, is underrepresented in this sample.

DISCUSSION

The rankings of organizational effectiveness found in this study are con-

gruent with expectations based on a previous study of the Negro's rank order of preference for change and on knowledge of the forces for Negro progress which have operated in the past twenty years.

The findings are also congruent with the results of a poll of a national sample of Negroes conducted by Louis Harris in 1963. According to *Newsweek* magazine, Harris found that among "rank and file" Negroes the NAACP towers above all other organizations, receiving a 91 percent favorable response.¹⁰ The Black Muslims were rejected by better than 8 to 1, and 41 percent of Harris' sample did not recognize this organization by name (Index of unawareness in this study = 45.9). Harris did find that CORE was rated favorably by a larger proportion of his sample (59%) than was the Urban League (54%). The higher ranking of the Urban League and the lower ranking of CORE in this study is easily explained, however, by the peculiarities of the local situation. Finally, Harris found the same strong support for the Democratic Party that was revealed here.

The Negroes in the present sample look outside the South and outside the local community to predominantly Negro organizations with broad programs of reform for their help. They seem to expect little aid to come from local white agencies such as the white churches, white businessmen and the Chamber of Commerce. Even local associations such as the city government and state government, which Negroes

may feel they can influence through their votes, rank higher than these voluntary associations of the white community. But the Democratic Party and the federal government, political agencies which, because of their national base, have shown themselves to be responsive to the demands of Negro voters, not only in the South but all over the nation, rank high along with the leading national Negro organizations. It may be that it is the extra-community orientation and the welfare emphasis of the labor unions which causes them to rank moderately high in spite of the persistence of discriminatory practices in the unions and the recent attacks on them by Negro leaders. It is also evident that, despite the conservative posture of its southern wing, the Democratic Party still retains in the eyes of Negroes the image of the friend of the underprivileged.

Ironically, four of the organizations ranked highest by this Negro sample, the NAACP, the Democratic Party, the federal government, and labor unions, are the very agencies which are so often attacked by conservative white political and business leaders in the South as constituting threats to "the southern way of life." In spite of the traditional assertion that the southern white man is the southern Negro's best friend, these Negroes see their help coming from their own predominantly Negro organizations and from allies beyond the control of the local community. At the same time, they perceive as helping them most those organizations which attack inequality at many levels and with a variety of techniques.

¹⁰ *Newsweek*, July 29, 1963, p. 30.