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WOMEN JUST WANT A JOB, NOT A CAREER

A Study of the Relationship Between Women's Domestic Role
and Their Participation in the Labour Force

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Judith Ann Owen

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ABSTRACT

During the twentieth century, the number of women in the labour force has risen dramatically. Since World War II the increase in labour force participation among married women has been particularly noticeable. However the participation of married women has fluctuated at times over the century as a result of national crises such as the World Wars and economic booms and recessions.

Two labour market theories have been used to analyse women's labour force participation. The reserve army of labour theory as developed by Marx, is based on the idea that a flexible and disposable labour force is required by capital for capital accumulation. Although Marx did not specifically describe women as a reserve labour force, recent theorists have applied his theory to women in wage labour. The dual labour market theory likewise was not developed with women in mind but has since been used to analyse their labour force participation. It has been shown that women as a group of workers display similar characteristics to those attributed to secondary sector workers in the dual labour market, such as low wages and insecure, unstable positions and poor working conditions.

Neither of the labour market theories questions why women as a group of workers comprise part of a reserve army of labour or the

secondary sector of the labour market. In particular, these theories take no account of women's domestic responsibilities which considerably limit women's labour force participation. Feminist theorists however maintain that a theory of women's wage labour must include women's domestic role.

This thesis examines how the labour market theories have been used to analyse women's participation in the labour market and reviews feminist theories which have linked women's domestic role with their position in the labour force. Employers hold a key position in the entry of women to the labour market. A survey of employers in the Manufacturing, Insurance, Finance and Business Services industrial groups in Palmerston North was undertaken to investigate employers' perceptions of the place of women in the labour force. Evidence from the study indicates that employers prefer women in positions which have traditionally been "women's work" and are reluctant to promote women because employers think the women's domestic responsibilities will preclude them from adequately carrying out their labour market obligations.

In conclusion, it is apparent that employers do not perceive women as being career oriented because they believe women's domestic responsibilities will take priority in their lives. This belief effectively limits women's participation in the labour force and contributes to the continuation of sexual divisions in the labour market.

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ABBREVIATIONS

OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SROW	Society for Research on Women
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
UE	University Entrance
AJHR	Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives

INTRODUCTION

"It is more desirable for girls leaving school to have jobs than it is for married women to be working." (1) This statement epitomises a widely held view in New Zealand about the right of women to work. However, in reality there has been a considerable increase in the labour force participation of women since World War I. The increase among married women in employment after World War II has been particularly marked. Women now make up 34% of the total full-time workforce. Married women comprise 53% of the total female workforce, an increase of 45% since World War I. In 1981, 46% of all women were in paid work, both full-time and part-time. Over one third of these women were working full-time (New Zealand Census, 1981).

Although there has been a general increase, there have been fluctuations in women's labour force participation rate since World War I which have largely been caused by national crises, such as the wars and changes in economic growth. During the depression of the 1930's, women who were working were often pressured into leaving their jobs because many men were unemployed. The onset of World War II however, saw many women drawn into the labour force as they had been during the First World War when men departed for the war. Following World War II the economic expansion which continued through the 1960's and the early 1970's created a high demand for labour

which was largely filled by women, particularly married women with children. The rate of economic expansion has slowed down since the energy crisis in the early 1970's. Lower productivity, rising inflation and high levels of unemployment are factors associated with the downturn in the economy.

The right of women to work in the face of rising unemployment was challenged in the the 1930's and again during the current economic recession. This time that challenge has had far wider implications for women as there is now a much higher proportion of married women in employment. The 1936 census showed that only 8.3% of married women were working while in 1981 over 50% of married women were in the labour force.

However the idea of married women in employment is in conflict with the traditional role of women as financially dependent wife and mother. Therefore married women are more likely to confront criticism from a variety of sources during periods of high unemployment because it is argued that their husband provides an alternative means of support (West, 1982:4). Thompson (1981), an economist, has suggested that married women who are working are "job stealers". Support for his argument has come independently from Apthorp (1981) who called for taxation disincentives for two-income families. These attitudes have been endorsed in a continuing debate in the newspapers. Prominent public figures have contributed to the debate from time to time (2). This argument assumes a certain family structure - the nuclear family - which has been said to be the

"cornerstone of New Zealand society" (Webster and Williams, 1977:87; Koopman-Boyden, 1978:ix). The nuclear family consists of a male breadwinner and a dependent wife who will bear and care for their children. The woman thus has responsibility for the organisation of the home and family. The importance of motherhood in New Zealand infers that the domestic role is a woman's primary role (Olssen, 1980:175). Because of this primary role, it is argued that married women do not need to work and so should leave the workforce to make way for the unemployed.

The argument not only ignores the right of women to work, but also assumes that married women are in jobs which unemployed people could and would do. In fact many married women are in part-time positions and make up over 80% of the part-time workers. Unemployed men and single women are more likely to seek full-time positions (OECD, 1980:36). Moreover men and women tend not to work in the same occupations. Women are more often found working in areas which are similar to domestic labour. The majority of women work in clerical, manufacturing (particularly food and clothing), teaching, nursing and service work. Men predominate in manufacturing, labouring and as transport equipment operators (Department of Labour, 1980:21-22). Further, men tend to be in positions of more authority and therefore higher status in the labour force even in areas where there is a larger number of women working, e.g., teaching, managerial and administrative positions. Because women work in a different labour market from men, it is therefore unlikely that if all married women

left the labour force unemployed men and single women would move into their jobs (Mabbett, 1981).

This thesis aims to:

1. critically examine the labour market theories which have been used to analyse women's labour force participation;
2. develop a theory which will provide a more adequate analysis of women's labour force participation;
3. examine the attitudes of employers towards the participation of women in the labour force today and
4. examine the issues concerning the right of women to work.

Chapter One describes the reserve army of labour theory and examines the extent to which women make up part of a reserve army of labour in the New Zealand labour force. The subject of Chapter Two will be the dual labour market theory which has also been used to investigate the situation of women in the labour force. Marx developed the reserve army of labour as a tool to examine the position of the poor members of the proletariat who were employed or discarded from work according to the needs of capitalism. The dual labour market theory was developed around the experiences of black workers in the United States of America, who it was found, were in low paid, unstable, insecure positions in the labour force. Statistics have shown that women tend to occupy a similar position to those men.

Both these theories were developed to analyse the employment patterns of men. Neither can therefore adequately explain women's labour force participation because they do not take into account the domestic role of women. Feminist theorists maintain that because the domestic role is the primary role for women it is crucial to any consideration of women's position in the labour force (Beechey, 1978; Bland et al, 1978; Barrett, 1980; Freeman, 1982). Chapter Three will examine this theoretical position.

Although there are a number of legal and structural barriers to women's unemployment, the role of employers in determining women's position in the labour force is crucial. In 1969 a survey by the Society for Research on Women examined employers' attitudes towards the employment of women (SROW, 1973). This study was undertaken after a lengthy period of full employment and a considerable increase in the numbers of women in employment. The findings of this study indicated that employers were prepared to make flexible arrangements so that married women with children could be accommodated. However it was clear that employers would have preferred not to consider women's domestic role but that they needed women's labour.

After a decade during which the economic situation deteriorated, I surveyed a group of employers in Palmerston North to see how the economic situation had affected the employment of married women. I was interested in such areas as recruitment, promotion and redundancy policies, as well as the attitudes of employers towards women with dependent children. Their attitudes concerning legislative changes

such as equal pay and maternity leave were also investigated. Chapter Four will analyse the results of this survey and make relevant comparisons with previous studies which disclose the effect of economic fluctuations on women's employment patterns. The conclusions of this study will be discussed in Chapter Five.

NOTES

1. Hon. R.D. Muldoon, reported in The Dominion, 12 December, 1983.
2. Bruce Beetham MP, A survey conducted by the Women's Electoral Lobby (Palmerston North branch), November 1981.

R Bell MP, The Dominion, 23 April, 1983.

Letters to the Editor, Evening Standard, 9 October, 1981; 19 January, 1984; 24 January, 1984.

Letters to the Editor, The Dominion, 30 April, 1983.

Letters to the Editor, Listener, 1 August, 1981; 15 August, 1981.

CHAPTER ONE

WOMEN AND THE RESERVE ARMY OF LABOUR

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the reserve army of labour theory as outlined by Marx and to examine the application of this theory to women's wage labour. The use of women workers as a reserve army of labour has become a feature of the labour market in many western societies. Statistics and research findings which demonstrate this labour market feature in New Zealand are described.

Marx and the Reserve Army of Labour

The concept of a reserve army of labour was developed by Marx in the course of his inquiry into the process of capital accumulation. Marx did not complete his theory and his argument is not always clear (1). Nevertheless, Marx was concerned at the influence of the growth of capital on the position of the working class (Marx, 1906:671). He used the term reserve army of labour, or surplus labour population, to describe those workers who were thrown out of work during the process of capital accumulation. Marx observed the increase in the number of paupers (the poorer members of the proletariat) during periods of economic crisis and noted how these numbers diminished when trade revived again (ibid:706). Marx contended that a reserve

of labour was an inevitable outcome of the process of capital accumulation. He was aware that capital accumulation occurred as a "progressive qualitative change" in the composition of capital (ibid:690).

Marx noted that these fluctuations could occur in different areas of production simultaneously. Firstly, a change in the composition of capital could occur in one sphere without an increase in "absolute magnitude" (ibid:691). In another sphere, the absolute growth of capital was related to the reduction of the labour power absorbed by capital. In yet other spheres, capital might continue to grow for a time and attract extra labour power in proportion to its increase.

"The increase of the variable part of capital and therefore of the number of labourers employed by it, is always connected with violent fluctuations and transitory production of surplus population" (Marx, 1906:691).

Marx maintained that the presence of such a reserve would act as a lever of capital accumulation and it would become more important in periods of economic decline. During such a period of decline, a reserve army of labour could retain profitability for capital by keeping down the wages of those in the active labour force. The pool of unemployed would be a competitive force within the working class, according to Marx, and its presence would prevent those who were employed from agitating for higher wages.

Marx described the reserve army of labour in two different ways: firstly, as a reserve of labour required for capital accumulation which would include floating workers who move from job to job as labour is used and discarded, and latent workers who could be drawn into employment when an absolute increase in the size of the workforce is required for expanding or new industry. In the second place, Marx saw the reserve army as a form of labour that was generated, that is, made unemployed by the process of capital accumulation. In this sense, three groups were identified by Marx. The first was a floating reserve created in urban industrial areas when technological development replaced human labour. The second group was a latent reserve resulting from the introduction of capital technology into agricultural production in rural areas. This would produce unemployed workers who could not immediately be absorbed into capital production. Thirdly, there would be a stagnant reserve army comprising those who became unemployed for long periods and were generated by the periodic long term tendency for the rate of profit to fall. These workers would have no bargaining power.

While the uneven accumulation is narrowly confined within particular firms or even particular industries, but not the whole economy, unemployed workers will only become latent or stagnant if the market is inflexible and workers need special skills or training for specific jobs.

A reserve army of labour ensures a continuing supply of floating, latent and stagnant workers who will be needed at different

stages of the accumulation process by capitalist enterprises. Where other firms are still taking on new staff, the workers laid off from one firm will soon find work with another. Greater problems arise during a downturn across the whole economy when a large number of industries are forced to reduce their staffing levels in order to maintain profit margins. In this situation the number of latent or stagnant reserve workers will increase (Hill, 1979).

Marx did not consider women workers when he developed the concept of a reserve army of labour. However Bland et al. have suggested that although Marx's categories are probably historically specific, they do help to conceptualise women as a reserve army. In their description of the categories, they show how particular groups of women workers can be fitted into the categories described by Marx.

Women as a Reserve Army of Labour in New Zealand

There have been a number of instances in New Zealand in the twentieth century where a female reserve army of labour has been used in the process of capital accumulation. These situations have arisen out of national crises, namely, the two world wars and economic fluctuations.

The first major documented example occurred during World War I. Prior to the war, only a small proportion of women, married or single, were in paid employment outside the home. There was therefore a large pool of valuable untapped female labour. A growing

shortage of labour brought about by more men departing for war service after compulsory conscription was introduced, meant that women were increasingly employed in positions previously occupied by men (AJHR, 1916:H-11). There was a greater number of women employed in clerical work during the war (Olssen, 1980:165; McLeod, 1978:87). In 1911 2.68% of the total female population was involved in commercial work while in 1916, this percentage had increased to 3.05%. In the same period the proportion of men in the labour force fell from 9.97% to 8.97% (New Zealand Census 1911, 1916). In its Annual Report to Parliament in 1916 (AJHR, 1916:H-11), the Department of Labour noted that an unusual feature of employment was the "extensive employment of girls" instead of men in various occupations. The following year it was noted that this trend continued but that only in isolated instances had women taken on jobs "hitherto performed exclusively by men" (AJHR, 1917:H-11).

The precise effect of the war on the employment of women is difficult to determine. Prior to 1916 there had been no breakdown of census data by employment and marital status. How the end of the war in 1918 affected female employment patterns cannot be accurately ascertained either as the five yearly interval between each census meant that the next census was not taken until 1921.

However available census data shows that in 1916 married women made up 12.6% of the total female labour force. Of all married women in 1916, 6.14% were employed. The total female participation rate in the labour force was 18.3% (New Zealand Census, 1916). From 1917

there were more women working in factories and retailing, mostly in areas of light work and at lower levels of the labour force hierarchy. There is evidence to suggest that this increase is at the expense of women in domestic service (Olssen, 1980:162; AJHR, 1918: H-11; AJHR, 1919: H-11). The 1921 census showed a 3% increase of women in employment but fewer married women were employed.

During the war the press had glorified the patriotism shown by women who took up positions vacated by men who had gone to war (McLeod, 1978:114). When the war was over, although there was no official government policy regarding women's position, in the labour force, the press again urged women to show their patriotism, this time by returning to their homes to make way in the labour force for ex-servicemen. McLeod (1978) cites newspaper articles and a journal of the Returned Servicemen's Association which promoted this view. The notion that work was a right and duty for men but a privilege for women was publicised to encourage private employers to re-employ returned servicemen in their previous positions (McLeod, 1978:115).

In the post-war years the promotion of the "cult of domesticity"(2) which had been current prior to the war (Olssen, 1980:175) also put pressure on working women. During the 1925 election campaign, both the main political parties emphasised women's domestic role with such slogans as "Women of New Zealand, safeguard your hearths and homes" (Newman, 1969:30,38). A very low birthrate(3) and a post-war economic slump increased the power of

this cult over women. Nevertheless in 1921 there was an increased proportion of women working, though this has been attributed to a shortage of males due to war deaths (McLeod, 1978:113; Olssen, 1980:161).

In spite of the promotion of the cult of domesticity and encouragement from the newspapers for women to leave the workforce and return home, the economic climate after the war was actually more favourable towards single women working. The maturing sex ratio⁽⁴⁾ and the death of many potentially eligible husbands in the war coincided with such factors as a larger bureaucracy and increased industrialisation which meant there were more clerical and factory jobs available for women (Olssen, 1981:251). The necessity for more workers meant that paid work became more acceptable for middle class single women prior to marriage. It is unlikely that many daughters of working class families would have ever experienced the luxury of being kept by their families in the years between leaving school and marriage. For them paid work was part of their lives before and after marriage.

The average age of women at marriage had been steadily rising during the first two decades of the century. Many women, (presumably middle class) undertook longer education programmes. Olssen (1980:167) noted that the better educated women remained in the labour force longer and some continued to work after marriage.

However in spite of a relatively stable labour situation during the mid-1920's it was still not considered appropriate for married women to work (Olssen, 1981:260).

By the end of the 1920's an economic depression severely affected the western world. New Zealand was no exception and the government and employers had to grapple with export problems and rising unemployment. The depression changed the labour force participation of women and also their expectations of employment. In general unskilled workers and women were the first to be laid off work. Even in professional occupations such as teaching, women were pressured into giving up their jobs to men (ibid.:275; Campbell, 1926:330). However in spite of such measures, in 1936 married women made up 8.5% of the labour force, an increase of 0.3% since 1926. As the proportion of all women in the total workforce decreased from 24% to 21% between 1926 and 1936 (New Zealand Census, 1926; 1936), the increase among married women is actually more significant than it appears. This increase is surprising in view of the evidence that married women were fired from their jobs if their husbands were in employment. One possible explanation is that a significant number of married women obtained jobs while their husbands were unemployed. Women's wages were lower than men's which would have benefited employers, especially those experiencing financial difficulties.

However many people believed that women who held jobs were causing unemployment (Robertson, 1978:296; AJHR, 1929:H-11) and it

was unjust for women to work while married men were unemployed. Chambers of Commerce claimed that girls had only been employed because of the war and should now resign and let boys into their jobs (Robertson, 1978:296). In 1933 the Auckland City Council refused to employ women whose husbands had full-time employment, while in Wellington in the same year the YMCA noted that employers viewed the employment of males as a higher priority than the employment of females (ibid).

Unemployed women often had no other means of support except their families but many families were not in a position to support unemployed, unmarried daughters (see for example, Findlay, 1974). Few people were exempted from paying the unemployment taxes (AJHR, 1930 Unemployment Report) so that almost all those who earned an income, whether male or female, had to contribute to the tax. However unemployed women were not eligible for any of the benefits that unemployed men received, the injustice of which was noted by Hunter (1934). Although working women had to pay the tax, only men were of concern to those collecting statistics and organising relief work (AJHR, 1930:H-11). In 1933 the preoccupation with male unemployment was confirmed by the Secretary of Labour who reported:

"Since the establishment of the unemployment fund and the setting up of the Unemployment Board, the activities of this Department, so far as unemployment is mainly concerned, is restricted to the registration of unemployed men and the placing of such men in employment ..."
(AJHR, 1933,H-11).

By this time, the numbers of unemployed men were causing considerable concern among politicians and government officials. All available resources were channelled into schemes for the relief of unemployed men (Belshaw, 1933:66-75).

In spite of the preoccupation of the Department of Labour with male unemployment, the Unemployment Board (which was set up to administer the Unemployment Act 1930) did show some concern for the plight of unemployed women. However the concern was not really demonstrated in practical terms. In 1932 the Board felt that "it is practically impossible to subsidise female employment without in some way prejudicing normal employment." (AJHR, 1933:H-11) Implicit in this statement is the idea that female employment is abnormal. Provision of relief for unemployed women was certainly very different from that provided for men. A grant of five hundred pounds was made to voluntary organisations in a "concrete expression of sympathy" (ibid.) to unemployed women. Relief for unemployed men was funded and organised directly by the government.

There is in fact very little documentation of women and unemployment during this period. Many women would not have registered as unemployed. They received no benefits or relief and there was a stigma attached to the label "unemployed" which has lasted until the present day. (Women apparently still prefer to describe their occupation as "housewife" or "household duties, unpaid" rather than "unemployed" - Shipley, 1982:3).

World War II brought a new era of economic independence for women (Sutch, 1972). In contrast to the depression years many women were directed into employment during the war, especially into essential services. Manpower controls which operated during the war gave the Government power to direct any workers into certain essential areas as and when required. The only able-bodied adults who were not directed at all were widows of ex-servicemen (AJHR, 1946:H-11). Thus women went into farming and engineering, they drove buses and acted as bus conductors and train porters. The proportion of women employed in the Public Service increased dramatically (Sutch, 1972:124). As a result of women undertaking jobs previously done by men a shortage of female employees arose in clothing factories (AJHR, 1946:H-11).

When the war in Europe ended and the manpower controls were relaxed the first workers to be released were wives of returned servicemen and married women forty years and over. Not only were these two groups of workers free to terminate employment in essential areas but they were "in all cases where they desired to do so ... free to take up home duties" (AJHR, 1946:H-11A). Those workers under nineteen years old were also released from essential work at this time. When the news of the surrender of Japan came, "all married women irrespective of age" were released from work in essential areas. The release of married women so early in the relaxation of war-time manpower controls clearly indicates the government stance on married women and employment, that is, their place was not in the labour force when men need employment. Here is a very clear example of how women have been used as a reserve army of labour.

However removal of manpower controls did not mean that married women automatically left the workforce and returned to their homes. The war was followed by a long period of prosperity accompanied by full employment. A number of married women were still employed where there was a shortfall of male labour. By 1951 married women made up 24.4% of the full-time female labour force (5). This proportion has continued to rise steadily in the ensuing years, to 37.6% in 1961, 49.9% in 1971 and 57% in 1981 (New Zealand Census, 1951-1981) (6). Most women married but improved contraception methods helped couples to restrict the size of their families, though parenthood was still important and children usually followed soon after marriage (Dunstall, 1981:400). Moreover on average, women were younger at marriage so that they were also younger, on average, when they completed their families and therefore were freed from the responsibilities of child-rearing at an earlier age. This left them with a longer period of their lives for other activities, including paid employment (Hyman, 1978; Dunstall, 1981:400). It was important for employers to have a readily available source of labour at this time when there was a shortage of labour, especially in the cities. Married women fulfilled the requirements for such a labour source (ibid.:427) and the participation rate of married women increased at a greater rate than the overall female participation rate.

By 1981 the female proportion of the labour force had increased to 34% and the full-time participation rate of married women had risen to 36%. However the proportion of the female labour force which is married had dropped from 57.6% in 1976 to 52.6%. These statistics do

not include the part-time labour force figures, an important part of an analysis of women's labour force participation, especially as married women make up 82.6% of the part-time workers. Inclusion of these figures raises the proportion of married women in the labour force to 46%. Further analysis of data on women's labour force participation shows that exclusion of part-time workers lowers the rate of activity for married women aged 25-44 years. This age group coincides with the predominant child-bearing and child-rearing years for women (New Zealand Census, 1981).

Hyman (1978; 1981) has analysed post-war census data and set out the situation regarding women's participation. She suggests that women are in the labour force to stay and warns that they should not be regarded as a reserve pool of labour. She notes the reserve army of labour concept as a tool of analysis but does not use it in her own analysis. Rather Hyman views it as an unreasonable basis around which to make labour force policies because many women are working to support themselves (43% of the female labour force in 1976 were not currently married). Therefore Hyman maintains:

It is quite clear that a large number of women need financially to work, quite apart from the question of the right to do so" (Hyman, 1981:15).

Other researchers have also investigated aspects of female employment and unemployment which show how women are used as a reserve army of labour although they do not explicitly use the model as a tool of analysis (SROW, 1976; McLeod, 1978; Robertson, 1978).

All such work joins that carried out by Department of Labour and Department of Statistics staff who have analysed statistics showing the participation rate of all women, of working mothers and of women's unemployment. However none of this work makes any attempt to explain the special features of women's employment and unemployment.

The most important piece of research into women's labour force participation based on the reserve army of labour is that of Hill (1979). Hill set out to show how the capitalist labour process is able to determine the organisation of work and the demand for labour. The effect on women of this regulation of labour and production was based on the reserve army of labour theory using data and interviews from a section of the clothing trade in Christchurch to develop her argument.

Hill examined the reasons why women worked in the clothing industry in insecure jobs with poor working conditions. She found that socialisation of males and females into distinctive sex roles in which girls would learn that their primary adult role was to revolve round children and associated household activities, played an important part in understanding the reasons for women forming a floating reserve army of labour. The sexual division of labour in the family held the key, according to Hill, to explaining why women were an ideal group to act as a reserve army of labour.

Hancock (1981) has reported on women's experiences as a reserve army of labour in New Zealand. This study investigated the plight of

women in Dunedin in 1980 following the closure of the Mosgiel Woollen Mills. Hancock conducted in-depth interviews with twenty-five of the seventy-five women who had been employed in the Melville Street Division of Mosgiel Ltd prior to the collapse of the company. Although Hancock's study was not specifically based on the reserve army of labour theory, her findings clearly indicate aspects of the women's situation which show how they were used as a flexible and disposable labour force. For example, although the proportion of male and female workers was approximately equal, 63% of the workers who lost their jobs were women. Many of these women had difficulty finding alternative work in an economic climate where numbers of unemployed people were rising almost daily. These women then can be said to constitute a stagnant reserve army of labour in Marx's terms.

Comparative material provides further insights into the labour force participation of women. There is a considerable amount of information about women's labour force participation in Britain (West, 1982; Bland et al, 1979; Whitelegg et al, 1982; Fonda and Moss, 1980) but as in New Zealand there is comparatively little research using the concept of the reserve army of labour as a tool of analysis. The official data and research that has been carried out certainly shows that women do form a reserve army of labour. The experiences of women in varying economic situations and national crises clearly follow the reserve army of labour theory. However the failure of that theory to allow for the sexual division of labour is not fully explored. Braybon (1982) has investigated the increased participation of women who, during World War I, worked in areas where men had

customarily been employed. She suggests that married women comprised up to 40% of the working women in Britain at the time. More recent experiences of women's labour force participation in Britain have been reviewed by Bruegel who cites instances where redundancy procedures have affected women more than men (Bruegel, 1981:13). Bruegel also notes that married women may voluntarily leave their jobs in the face of attacks about their right to work when there are many unemployed people among other groups of workers (ibid:14).

While the reserve army of labour theory gives certain insights into women's labour force experience such as their participation rates and unemployment patterns, it is inadequate in some important aspects. Women's different life experiences and the notion that women's place is in the home cannot be fully explained by a labour market theory which was developed to describe the position of certain groups of male workers in the labour force. The exclusion of factors relating to the sexual division of labour which so crucially affects women's labour force participation clearly limits the application of this theory to women. These issues are examined in Chapter Three.

NOTES

1. After Marx's death, Engels published the remaining volumes of Capital from manuscripts left by Marx, some of which were incomplete (Aron, 1977:127).
2. The "cult of domesticity" refers to the role of motherhood and domestic work in the home for women. The importance of this role for

women has been highly exalted, especially when the birthrate is declining (Olssen, 1980:177).

3. The birthrate declined during the war as might be expected with so many men away on war service. However when the birthrate continued to decline after the war there was considerable concern among economists, politicians and pro-family people, who felt that the New Zealand population should be increased, preferably by natural means. In spite of expressed concern and the cult of domesticity, the birthrate in fact continued to decline until after the Second World War.

4. The sex ratio is the term used to describe the proportion of men to women in the population. While there were fewer women than men, most women could expect to marry and have a family so that middle class women did not have to work. However as the proportion of men to women changed, before and during World War I the question of what to do with unmarried daughters became a problem for middle class families (Olssen, 1980:160).

5. The definition of full-time employment used by the Department of Statistics is 20 hours or more per week. However it should be noted that the Department of Labour defines full-time employment as 30 hours or more per week.

6. It should be noted that from 1951, statistics for the Maori population were included in the main census data. In some analyses of census data the inclusion of those figures could make a noticeable difference in time series analyses. However had there been any significant difference between pre-1951 and post-1951 figures in the area of female employment presumably this would have been noted by other researchers in the area, e.g., Hyman, (1978; 1981).

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN AND THE DUAL LABOUR MARKET

In this chapter the origins and features of the dual labour market theory are outlined, followed by a discussion on statistics and research showing how the position of women in the labour force in New Zealand is related to the dual labour market theory.

The Dual Labour Market Theory

The dual labour market theory was developed in the 1960's as a critique of orthodox economic theories which linked occupational positions to educational background and qualifications. The model of a segmented labour market arose from research and community work in black ghettos in certain parts of the USA (Harrison and Sum, 1979:689). According to the model, the labour market is composed of two distinct segments in a hierarchical relationship with mobility of labour greater within than between the segments. These two segments of the dual labour market are known as the primary and secondary sectors.

The primary sector, which forms the core of the labour market, consists of jobs which carry high wages, good working conditions,

employment stability, job security and good opportunities for advancement. There is a well defined career ladder for promotion which contributes greatly to labour force stability in the sector.

The secondary sector is characterised by jobs which are less attractive than those in the primary sector due to low wages, poor working conditions and little chance of advancement. Little on-the-job training is provided so that workers will tend to remain unskilled. These factors are consistent with job instability and high labour turnover which are also features of the secondary sector. (It is significant that the sectors are labelled primary and secondary. This terminology immediately denotes the ranking and inequalities implicit in the model.)

Although it would be easy to draw a distinction between the two sectors by dividing them into white collar workers (primary sector) and blue collar workers (secondary sector), the sectors cannot be so clearly demarcated. Piore (1975) suggests that the primary market consists of an upper tier of white collar workers and a lower tier of well paid blue collar workers, e.g., supervisors and foremen. Harrison and Sum (1979) note that there are certain ascriptive requirements such as age, race or sex which form the basis for entry into one or other segment of the labour market. The entry screens which operate on these criteria help to create an uneven distribution of workers with specific traits in each sector.

Wachter (1974:662) links such factors as socio-economic background, family size and racial background with educational achievement. He notes that discrimination is a major institutional barrier between the two sectors because employers believe that white males will produce the best job records. This belief is held on the basis of the high average educational achievements of white males (ibid:664). While such beliefs are held by employers, workers without the necessary ascriptive characteristics for primary sector employment, e.g., blacks, women or unskilled workers, are therefore disadvantaged and are unlikely to have the opportunity for achievement that white male workers have.

Those workers who enter the secondary sector will often find it difficult to move out because mobility between the two sectors is minimal. One reason for this relative immobility is the difference in opportunities for training. There is little or no specific training, including on-the-job training for secondary sector workers. Hence an employer has little investment in those workers and therefore less effort is likely to be made to keep or promote them.

The segregation which occurs between the two sectors arises from the internal labour markets which are at the base of the structure of firms in the primary sector (ibid.:642). Wachter defines an internal labour market as consisting of:

"a set of structured employment relationships within a firm, embodying a set of rules, formal or informal, that govern each job and their relationships."

The rules may cover job content, wage rates, opportunities for promotion and grievance procedures. This complex relationship between employer and employee has developed through the specificity of the jobs and the training involved. Wachter notes that the internal labour markets of the primary sector ensure that upward mobility occurs by internal promotion rather than by changing firms. Once a worker has gained enough knowledge to begin moving up the internal promotion ladder, moving to another firm will be costly because most firms hire new staff for the primary sector at the entry rung of the career ladder (ibid.:647).

The secondary labour market will therefore be disproportionately filled with unskilled workers in the areas within industries which have relatively undeveloped internal labour markets. These workers are likely to be found where there are many entry points and infrequent promotion from within, such as the manufacturing industry. Because the employer has little investment in these workers, they can more readily be made redundant in adverse economic conditions.

It has been suggested that workers in the secondary sector show a greater rate of turnover, lateness and absenteeism than workers in the primary sector. Wachter (ibid.:651) notes that "high levels of turnover and frictional unemployment may be taken as the salient characteristics of the secondary market."

However the possibility that high turnover and absenteeism are factors relating to the job itself, not the workers doing the job has not been fully explored. Often jobs in the secondary sector are monotonous and provide little incentive for better performance. Workers in such jobs may be more inclined to absenteeism and lateness and may tend to move from job to job, or from firm to firm in an effort to reduce the monotony in their lives.

Turnover rate is also closely linked with productivity and training. If employers provide training for their workers, they can expect to benefit from higher productivity as a result. Employers will obviously want to be assured of a stable labour force before they provide the training. Unless incentives are provided for the employees, such as prospects of increased wages or promotion, it is unlikely there will be a stable labour force from which employers may draw to provide training.

As this theory is based in segregation in the labour market, it provides a useful opportunity for analysing gender discrimination in the labour force. The reserve army of labour cannot analyse such discrimination because it does not take into account any segregation in the labour market.

Women and the Dual Labour Market in New Zealand

An analysis of published material about women in the New Zealand labour force indicates that women are often found in positions which correspond to the secondary sector of the dual labour market. Statistics show that women have been and still are concentrated in a narrow range of occupations and earn less than men on average (Department of Labour, 1980; Gillespie, 1980; Place, 1981; Novitz, 1982). Other labour market factors such as high labour turnover and lack of trade union activity among women workers have also been noted (Department of Labour, 1980; Geare et al, 1979). Much of the published data originates from the Department of Labour and the Department of Statistics, specifically from the official statistics collected by these departments from employment surveys and national censuses (1).

Labour force participation by women in New Zealand is by no means new. Early in the twentieth century the trend emerged of women working in clerical or service occupations. Until 1900 most of women's work was in paid domestic service but there was a growing number of teachers and nurses; also many women were working in the newly established industries (Olssen, 1980:161). Clerical work had previously been a male domain, but the pattern of women moving into the area continued during the war. By 1926 15% of the total female labour force was in the clerical sector (New Zealand Census, 1926). In 1976 this proportion had increased to 33.4% (Department of Labour, 1980). In two major occupational groups, clerical and service, more

than 50% of the workers are women; 70% in the clerical sector and 53% in the service sector (2). In spite of the high proportion of women in these two occupational groups there is little opportunity for women to move into senior positions in these areas. In 1981 only 8% of managers were women (New Zealand Census, 1981).

The concentration of women in a narrow range of occupations is apparent in a comparison with the range of male occupations. In 1976 for instance, 57% of female workers worked in only seven occupations: clerical, retailing, teaching, medical (and related), bookkeeping, clothing manufacturing and domestic work. However 57% of male workers are spread over thirteen occupations which include architects, engineers and managers (Department of Labour, 1980), occupations which offer higher incomes and stability and are therefore classed as primary sector jobs in the dual labour market.

Prior to World War Two the average weekly income of women was less than 50% that of men (3). The 1926 census figures for workers 21 years and over, indicate that the female average wage was 48% of the male average wage. In 1936 the female proportion was 44% (1936 Census). The differential in this ten year period is likely to be due to the depression and the hardening of attitudes towards women working. Although the post war years saw a phenomenal increase in the numbers of women in the labour force, the income differential had changed little. By 1966 the median income for women was 51.9% that of men.

In 1972 the Equal Pay Act was passed. This Act was designed to provide for "the removal and prevention of discrimination, based on the sex of the employees, in the rates of remuneration of men and women in paid employment and for matters incidental thereto" (Equal Pay Act, 1972) (4). Full implementation of the Act was to be completed by April 1977. In 1975 a committee set up by the Government to review progress noted that there was:

"quite considerable evidence that in many industries and occupations, equal pay is being implemented satisfactorily at the mid point of the programme."

The female average weekly income had reached 71.5% that of males, an increase of 4.5% since the introduction of equal pay in October 1973. One member of that committee was concerned that the recommendations would not achieve equal pay for women by the deadline of April 1977 (5). Those reservations appear to have been justified. The average weekly income for women was only 75.6% that of men in April 1977 and has remained at much the same level since then. Recent figures released from the Department of Labour show that the figure is now 76.2% (Department of Labour Quarterly Employment Survey, April 1984). The committee, reconvened in 1978 to report on the final implementation of the Act, considered that any further increases would be dependent on vigorous promotion of equal opportunity so that women would achieve levels of skill and responsibility in the labour force (Report of the Committee appointed by the Minister of Labour, 1979:17). It was felt that the Human Rights Commission Act (1977) should be able to improve opportunities for women by removal of

formal barriers and by encouraging women workers to avail themselves of opportunities for training and career promotion. However Gillespie (1980:106) notes that:

"though the Act prohibits discrimination in women's employment it does not protect employment during pregnancy or confinement, nor does it prohibit discrimination on the grounds of maternity or responsibility for dependent children." (6)

The Department of Labour (1980) noted that continuing differences in the average incomes of women and men are partly attributable to different characteristics of the female and male labour force.

Opportunities for advanced education or vocational training which would improve women's employment prospects are still limited, although there has been some improvement since the early part of this century. Accounts by Olssen (1980) and Hughes (1980) indicate that prior to World War I it was not considered acceptable for women to engage in higher education or training with ideas for continuing employment after or instead of marriage. In fact it was a common belief that women were biologically and mentally inferior and only fit for domestic duties (Hughes, 1980:135).

Within the formal education system, males and females are present in equal numbers - 49% females and 51% males in 1981 - up to fifth form level (Department of Education, 1982). Beyond that level the percentage of females decreases progressively with women concentrated in traditionally female areas, e.g., arts, social

sciences in the universities, as preparation for teaching, librarianships, social work. This trend is changing however, particularly in business courses where the proportion of women completing first degree courses doubled from 14% in 1974 to 28% in 1982 (New Zealand Educational Statistics, 1975; 1983).

An important aspect of vocational training for males has been the apprenticeship system. For many years this avenue was closed to women. In 1964 only 29 female apprenticeship contracts were signed (this number constituted 0.13% of the total contracts signed in 1964), with all but four being in men's hairdressing and pastrycooking (Department of Labour, 1980). By contrast, there were over 22,000 male apprentices in 1964. After the first contracts for apprenticeships in ladies' hairdressing in 1967, the total number of contracts for women rose dramatically to 1213 in 1974. Of these contracts, 1181 were in ladies' hairdressing. It is clear then that women are taking up apprenticeships in what have been viewed as traditional women's areas. A positive action programme has recently been set up by the Department of Labour to encourage young women and employers alike that women are able to work in areas other than hairdressing and food preparation (Department of Labour, 1983).

Just as advanced education and vocational training (except in domestic skills) attracted little interest earlier this century, female labour turnover was not considered to be an issue either, possibly because the proportion of women working was so small (23% in 1926). By 1966 employment of women had increased to 36% and turnover

rates for women were noted. The emerging trend has shown that turnover rates are higher for women than for men in all industry groups. The higher turnover rate among women is attributed by the Department of Labour (1980) to "unavoidable factors" such as advanced pregnancy, or relocation due to a spouse's change of occupation. Women also tend to have a shorter period of service with a given employer and are often engaged in jobs which require lower levels of skill, both of which are factors associated with high labour turnover, regardless of sex. These factors are also closely associated with women's family related activities, such as leaving their job when their husband is transferred, or for childbearing and rearing.

The position of women in the unskilled and lower levels of the labour force makes them more vulnerable as economic conditions deteriorate. Employers have a lower investment in workers in these areas. Part-time workers, 80% of whom are women, are often the first to lose their jobs in uncertain economic times. Another feature of redundancy is the policy of "last hired, first fired", which affects women more due to their mobility in and out of the labour force for family related reasons.

Studies of redundancies during the current economic recession (Hill, 1978; Hancock, 1981) indicate that women are made redundant when profits fall in certain industries, e.g., the clothing industry, where restructuring of the labour force has been an early feature of recent economic pressures. These studies showed that women who lost

their jobs in such an exercise have found it difficult to find new jobs which use their old skills. Leeming (1970) noted that a number of women in her study were able to find new positions fairly readily. The economic situation was more favourable then than it was at the end of that decade. In spite of the difficulties women in the later studies had in finding another job, there has been little retraining available to help unemployed women to develop new skills (7).

An area of some importance in the labour force which has received little attention is trade union activity among women. A study on women's participation in trade unions (Geare, et al, 1979) aimed to provide some basic background data on the New Zealand situation. The study set out to ascertain what barriers to women's increased participation existed, either at home, at work or in the union, and the importance of the different categories of perceived barriers.

The conclusions drawn were that while the total level of participation in unions is low, the participation of women is lower than that of men and that women are under-represented in leadership of unions. However although the study attempted to weight and rank the various barriers to participation, no conclusion was reached as to where changes should occur in order to encourage greater participation.

The authors admitted that it was not clear how far structural and procedural changes in the unions would actually improve female

participation. Evidence from the study indicated that efforts to do so had not been particularly successful. This view is supported by Porzsolt (1981) who indicated the difficulties for individual women to break into the male dominated trade union movement.

These examples of official statistics and research on women's labour force participation have been used to show how women constitute a secondary labour force in the dual labour market in New Zealand. The picture is similar to that shown by British statistics on women in the labour force there (Barron and Norris, 1976).

What remains hidden in a statistical approach however, are the beliefs about women's place in capitalist society. That women's structural position in the family affects their labour force participation is unquestionably important. It affects the level of responsibility they can reach and also the areas of the labour force in which they work. The idea that the primary role for women is in the family is held not only by employers and policy makers but also by many women themselves. They have, outwardly at least, appeared content to remain in non-managerial, low responsibility, part-time positions in spite of the insecurity surrounding them during an economic recession.

NOTES

1. Statistical information on women's employment is based on data collected from regular employment surveys conducted by the Department

of Labour, and the New Zealand five yearly Census. Although these surveys cover the total labour force a breakdown of the statistics by marital status and sex is available.

2. The occupational group, service workers, includes armed forces which are predominantly male. Other areas of the service sector such as housekeepers, waitresses are predominantly female. The female percentage would thus be considerably increased if the armed forces figures were omitted.

3. The average weekly income is based on ordinary time weekly earnings.

4. The 1972 Act covered the private sector. The Government Service Equal Pay Act, 1960 provided for equal pay for employees in the public sector.

5. Mrs S. Davies' report in areas in which she did not concur with the rest of the committee was included in Part 9 of the main report.

6. The Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Act, 1980 covered part of the issue raised by Gillespie. This Act allows for maternity leave which protects employment for a period of up to twelve months after childbirth.

7. There are some courses organised by Polytechnic and Technical Institutes which offer retraining in clerical and typing skills and are aimed at women wanting to return to office work.

CHAPTER THREE

DEVELOPING A FEMINIST THEORY OF WOMEN'S WAGE LABOUR

Two labour market theories have been discussed so far and the way in which they have been used to describe women's position in the labour force have been analysed.

In Chapter One a discussion on the reserve army of labour theory described how women are brought into the labour force when extra labour is needed in times of full employment or during a war, and discarded when sufficient male labour is available to fill the labour force. This situation is likely to occur during an economic recession or after a war. It was demonstrated that married women form a useful reserve army of labour because they tend to return to their homes when their labour is no longer needed rather than merely drop out of the labour force and thus raise the levels of unemployment.

The dual labour market model formed the basis of analysis in Chapter Two. This model segregates the labour market into two distinct sectors, primary and secondary. The primary sector is characterised by stable, well-paid jobs with good opportunities for promotion, while the secondary sector contains jobs which are noted

for low wages, poor conditions of employment, instability and little job security. It has been suggested that women as a group of workers comprise a section of the secondary sector (Barron and Norris, 1976). Statistics have been used to demonstrate that women are concentrated in areas of the labour market where jobs carry the characteristics of the secondary sector of the labour market.

Although these theories have proved to be useful in describing the position of women in the labour force, they do not attempt to analyse why women as a social group are confined to these aspects of wage labour, why women are concentrated in jobs in the secondary sector of the dual labour market or why they are used as a reserve army of labour. In other words, questions relating to the significance of gender in the market place are ignored.

Barrett notes the need for a reserve army of labour in capitalism but disputes that the model adequately explains the characteristics of women's work. According to Barrett, the reserve army of labour can partially explain women's participation rates and women's unemployment but does not explain women's lower pay nor the job segregation in the labour force (Barrett, 1980:159). Other feminist sociologists such as Beechey (1978), Bland et al (1979) and Mackintosh (1981) have argued that it is insufficient to show that women as a group of workers fulfil the functions of a reserve army of labour without explaining why. These writers maintain that the idea of women as a reserve of workers arose from the sexual division of

labour in society, or more specifically in the family. It has been suggested that:

"women form a specific element of the industrial reserve army by virtue of the sexual division of labour which consigns them to the family and inscribes a set of assumptions about women's roles" (Beechey, 1978:191).

Women have the major responsibility for housework and child care in the home. This limits their participation in the labour force because the domestic role takes priority over any other role, including paid work. For this reason, married women move in and out of the labour force at different stages of the family life cycle according to the demands of childrearing.

Barrett suggests that the family structure in capitalist societies where a man has responsibility for supporting a dependent wife and their children is in conflict with the right of women to work. She notes that this right is often challenged especially in times of economic stringency. While the question of the right of women to work continues to be challenged, women will lose confidence in their right to hold a job, the rate of redundancy among women (both voluntary and involuntary) will rise and management and unions will continue discriminatory practices against women (Bruegel, 1982:108). Bruegel maintains that a redundancy policy of "last in, first out" discriminates against those women who move in and out of the labour force for family reasons. Because the domestic role takes priority for women, employers have less conscience about sacking a woman if redundancies are necessary (ibid.:107). Bruegel argues that

if women lose confidence in their right to work they may voluntarily give up their jobs believing that there are unemployed workers who are more deserving of jobs.

The application of the reserve army of labour theory to women shows how the sexual division of labour in the home limits women's participation in the labour force, specifically how married women are members of a latent part of the reserve army of labour. However this theory pays no heed to the extension of the household sexual division of labour into the labour force and hence the sexual segregation of jobs in the labour force. The dual labour market theoretical model as it is applied to women does consider the extension of the sexual division of labour in society into the labour market.

Barron and Norris, who have undertaken a theoretical study of the dual labour market observed sexual divisions in the labour market which are emphasised by the over-representation of female nurses, secretaries, hairdressers and shop assistants and under-representation of women in high paying occupational groups and many professions. Although they note that "it is necessary to consider the sexual norms which define the place of men and women in the household and out of it", Barron and Norris explicitly relegate the household sexual division of labour "to the status of an explanatory factor which contributes to but does not of itself determine" (Barron and Norris, 1976:47) the differentiation between the sexes in their work roles. Instead they emphasise the significance of the structure of the labour market and the forces which allocate labour force

positions to women. However the following analysis of Barron and Norris's argument will show that their claim to explain women's labour force participation through market factors is not borne out. In fact they resort to non-market explanations in almost all instances.

Barron and Norris argue that for a social group to become a source of secondary workers, that group should have the following attributes: dispensability, clearly visible social differences, little interest in acquiring training, low "economism" (ie, the workers do not place high value on monetary rewards) and lack of solidarity. The main theme of their discussion revolves around these attributes.

Barron and Norris view dispensability in two different ways; voluntary turnover and involuntary separation. The authors argue that male voluntary turnover is usually work related while female voluntary turnover is not only higher but tends to be non-work related. Voluntary turnover among women workers is more likely to be related to the family circumstances of the worker, especially for married women.

Involuntary separation where women are forced out of the labour force by market factors (having been fired or made redundant) is, according to Barron and Norris largely dependent on social factors. They suggest that some groups of workers have a lower claim on jobs than others. In times of full employment this is not a problem as

there will be job opportunities for all groups of workers. However when unemployment rises, Barron and Norris submit that those groups with weak claims to jobs are expected to make way for workers with stronger claims.

Women are among those with a weak claim to jobs because, Barron and Norris suggest, many people believe that a woman's place is in the home. This belief is based on strong family values held in society which also imply that women have an alternative means of economic support, namely their husband's income. Such beliefs do not take into account those women who must work to supplement a husband's low income; nor those women who are the sole income earners in cases where the husband is unemployed or a woman is on her own supporting her children (Rowbotham, 1981:183). Many women themselves believe they have a low claim on jobs, according to Barron and Norris, especially in times of economic recession.

Barron and Norris maintain that employers prefer secondary sector workers to display some "conventional social difference" which will clearly demarcate them from workers in the primary sector. The sexual difference which sets women apart as a group of workers is a useful visible difference because it builds on deep-seated social divisions between men and women (Barron and Norris, 1976:58). Barron and Norris suggest that:

"the separate nature of men's and women's lives outside the workplace facilitates the maintenance of similar divisions within it" (ibid:59).

A sexual division reduces the chance of an identity of interests developing between workers in the two sectors because workers have, or believe they have, different work aspirations. If secondary workers feel they are in an inferior position in the labour force they are likely to limit demands on employers for improvements in the secondary sector and are therefore unlikely to come into conflict with the claims of workers in the primary sector. Particularly where women are employed in the secondary labour market, the probability of an identity of interests developing between workers in the two sectors is remote because women's labour force role is seen as secondary to their domestic role (ibid.).

Another attribute which Barron and Norris consider characterises secondary labour market workers, i.e., lack of solidarity, can also be applied to women. Barron and Norris maintain that in the past women have had little success in organising themselves industrially. This has reduced their negotiating power with employers to improve wages and conditions of work. Employers will, Barron and Norris assert, "prefer a secondary workforce which is difficult to organise in this way, or which is believed to be difficult to organise" (Barron and Norris's emphasis - ibid:63).

Beechey (1978) notes that Barron and Norris tend to focus on employer strategies as being responsible for the labour market segregation, with little recognition of other labour market constraints such as trade union intervention. Beechey argues that in fact the trade union movement has played an important part in

dividing the working class (Beechey, 1978:178). Barrett elaborates on this argument maintaining that the use of trade union resources to build up the bargaining power of certain groups of workers has "reproduced and reinforced the vulnerable position of women workers" (Barrett, 1980:170). Barron and Norris however, argue that though there is a numerical dominance of men in the trade union movement women are not very interested in careers or high wages so that any perception of the need for solidarity among women in the labour force is lessened. The question of solidarity among women workers is by Barron and Norris's own admission, "unlike the other characteristics [they consider], a characteristic which is not determined to any extent by forces outside the labour market itself" (Barron and Norris, 1976:63). This is the only attribute discussed by Barron and Norris which is largely determined by labour market factors.

Barrett however believes that it is vital to explore the labour market reasons for the lack of solidarity among women. She looks beyond the division of labour between men and women and seeks an explanation in the differentiation in the labour force by the level of skills which divide the working class (Barrett, 1980:165). Barrett notes the procedures such as control of recruitment and training which serve to exclude certain groups of workers from acquiring skills which play an important part in wage negotiations and promotions. She maintains that women are unaware of the skills they require and suggests that the labour movement has failed to secure the interests of women workers (ibid:162-170).

Women's lack of awareness of the need for skills is also relevant to another feature of the secondary labour market examined by Barron and Norris, that is, a lack of interest in training. Barron and Norris suggest that it is commonly believed that women are not interested in investing time in training as paid work has been viewed as a transition between school and marriage rather than as a career. This belief has a significant effect on attitudes towards training for labour force participation for women and may account for the under-representation of women in areas of higher education and occupational training schemes.

Another attribute Barron and Norris apply to secondary workers, i.e., low "economism", is also relevant to women in the secondary sector. The idea that women do not place a high value on monetary rewards is based on the fact that many women are secondary income earners and are therefore perceived as having less need to seek monetary rewards than men (Barron and Norris, 1976:62). It is still commonly believed that women should be financially dependent on a man (Gillespie, 1980:106). This belief is upheld by the support of the institution of the nuclear family by the state in which the husband is the breadwinner with a financially dependent wife.

The 1982 Budget exemplifies state support for the single income family. Taxes on low incomes were increased and a tax rebate was provided for primary low-income earners which was not available to secondary income earners. Both these provisions affected women

because their earning capacity is lower than men's and many women work part-time.

That a theory which links the organisation of the labour process to the sexual division of labour in the home is crucial in an analysis of the participation of women in the labour force has been noted by feminist theorists (Beechey, 1978; Barrett, 1980; Mackintosh, 1981). Mackintosh clearly makes the distinction between the biological construction of sex and the social construction of gender (Mackintosh, 1981:2). This distinction is important in the analysis of the way in which women's reproductive role in childbirth has been extended to the social role of childrearing. Whereas biological reproduction affects women's labour force activity for a very short period, the social aspect of childrearing and its associated domestic activities tends to restrict women's productive activity over a number of years. With the separation of home and work under the capitalist mode of production, the responsibility of women for domestic labour has limited their participation in the labour force. Eisenstein (1979) has summed up the argument as follows:

"Within a capitalist patriarchal economy ... the sexual division of labour in the family and society serves a specific purpose. It stabilises the society through the family while it organises a realm of work, domestic labour, for which there is no pay (housewives), or limited pay (paid house workers), or unequal pay (in the paid labour force) ... Their [women's] position as a paid worker is defined in terms of being a woman which is a direct reflection of the hierarchical sexual divisions in a society organised by the profit motive" (Eisenstein, 1979:30).

The belief that women's role is to marry and raise a family, is closely related to the idea that paid work is only a transition period for women between school and marriage (Pollert, 1981; Sutch, 1972; Olssen, 1980; Place, 1981). It should also be noted that the idea of women's work as transitional affects all women regardless of marital and familial status, so that they will all be treated as if they are mothers and face the same discrimination in the workplace (Freeman, 1982:136). This factor is very important in analysing why women are seen as a dispensable reserve army of labour and are concentrated in the lower levels of the labour force on low incomes.

In spite of legislation for equal pay in many western nations, women still continue to earn less than men on average (2). Although in theory equal work demands equal pay, in practice women do not reach the high level positions which command high wages, therefore women's average weekly wage will be lower than that of men. However the responsibility they have in the home may effectively debar many women from the more responsible, highly paid jobs in the paid workforce. It has been well documented that many women carry a double burden if they undertake paid employment as well as their role in the home (Freeman, 1982:139; Barrett, 1980:208). This factor has an important bearing on the type of positions women will take up in the paid workforce.

Barron and Norris claimed that their analysis would emphasise labour market factors in determining women's position in the labour force, but in fact four out of the five attributes they evaluate

reveal the priority women's role in the family has over labour market factors. Beechey (1978:180) suggests this is a clear indication of the significance of gender in any analysis of women's position in the labour force.

Freeman (1982) has noted how employers use existing antagonistic relations between men and women to encourage divisions among workers. She suggests that even if men and women are treated equally in the workplace if they come to it with similar things to offer, they will still not be able to participate on an equal basis because women have extra responsibilities as parents. She emphasises the need for widely available child care in an effort to overcome the barrier of domestic responsibilities which so restrict women's participation in the labour force (Freeman, 1982:153).

Although Barrett agrees that freedom from child care is crucial if women are to attain equality in the labour force, she maintains that the problem is far deeper than the question of child care. Barrett's argument rests on the male dominated gender relations in society which have been reproduced and strengthened in capitalism. The organisation of production in capitalist societies has taken over the pre-existing sexual division of labour. This is now so entrenched that Barrett sees little hope for equality for women through freedom from domestic labour of which child care is an integral part (Barrett, 1980:226).

Clearly the issues associated with women's participation in the labour force are closely related to women's role in the family. In capitalist societies women have primary responsibility for the organisation of the home and family in a family structure headed by a male breadwinner. This responsibility restricts women's participation in paid work in two ways: firstly, by the concentration of women in areas of the labour force which correspond to women's domestic labour; and secondly, by keeping women out of the higher levels of the labour force on the grounds that their labour market activity is of secondary importance to them. The primary role of women in the family is a major factor in the issue of the right of women to work. This issue frequently arises during a downturn in the economy which puts men out of work. At such times it is argued that women are working in jobs which men could be doing. These issues will be considered in the following study which examines the positions occupied by women and the limitations they face in the labour force in Palmerston North.

NOTES

1. Statistics provided by the Department of Labour (1980) indicate a significant decrease in the numbers of women in the labour force between the ages of 25 - 35 years.
2. See Chapter Three for New Zealand statistics.

CHAPTER FOUR

EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT

In the earlier chapters, the theoretical issues which relate to the participation of women in the labour force have been discussed. A review of official statistics and existing research was undertaken in an attempt to link these theories with women's participation patterns. It has been shown in Chapter Three that women's work experiences are different from those of men because women's primary social role is in the family not in the labour force. This role is reinforced by beliefs which affect women's actual responsibilities and places major limitations on women's ability to participate equally in the labour force with men. Therefore labour market theories which are based on men's experiences cannot adequately explain women's labour force participation.

Having demonstrated that women's labour force participation is limited by their domestic responsibilities it is nevertheless important to note that labour market factors, government policy, union attitudes and employers' policies and attitudes also contribute to maintaining unequal opportunities for women in the labour force. Many of these policies are based on the assumption that women should be responsible for the domestic sphere but that assumption is not questioned. Recent

legislation has gone some distance in overcoming structural barriers for women in New Zealand. The Equal Pay Act (1972), the Human Rights Commission Act (1977) and the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Act (1980) are particularly relevant to promoting equal labour market opportunities for women. However legislation alone is insufficient to remove discrimination which prevents the equal participation of men and women in the labour force.

Background to the Study

The idea for this study originated in an article which suggested that married women were "job stealers"; that they were in jobs which could be held by unemployed men and school leavers (Thompson, 1981). This article initiated a continuing public debate (1).

In researching the background to the debate I found that during the depression of the 1930's, similar attitudes were held. It was considered unjust for married women to work when men were unemployed (Robertson, 1978). McLeod (1978) reports that it was the right and duty of men to work, but for women work was a privilege. However at that time only 3.7% of the labour force (New Zealand Census, 1936) was comprised of married women, compared to 32.6% fifty years later (New Zealand Census, 1976). However the major common factor in the two periods is a poor economic situation.

In a buoyant economic climate the Society for Research on Women (1973) found that in New Zealand in 1969 when their survey was

undertaken, opportunities were good for women, especially in traditional female occupations. Responses from employers generally indicated support for the right of mothers to work, provided children were well cared for. The level of support was lower for mothers of pre-school children especially from male respondents (90% of the respondents were male).

Many opinions expressed in this study confirmed the traditional view that the man is the worker in spite of the participation in the workforce of many women with or without dependent children. Nevertheless an increase in the need for labour supercedes traditional attitudes towards women as demonstrated during the two world wars and in times of full employment. The SROW (1973) study examined employers' attitudes in depth towards the end of a twenty year period of full employment but before an economic recession had really begun to affect the labour market. Therefore it can be assumed that employers' attitudes would have been affected by the buoyant labour market conditions at the time. Employers needed female labour but Klein (1968) noted that in Britain few employers accepted married women workers as a permanent part of the labour force. She felt they were still seen as "a necessary expedient" during a period of labour shortage and that a much longer period of full employment was needed before married women were accepted as part of "normal personnel". Moreover SROW noted that the opinions expressed by employers indicated social attitudes relating to the right of women to work rather than commitments to "a policy of concession to the special needs of mothers at work" (SROW, 1973:108).

Recent studies have indicated that discrimination against women tends to increase in an economic recession (Hill, 1979; Hancock, 1981). Freeman (1982:143) cites employers' attitudes and the economic situation as important factors in the level and type of discrimination faced by married women. She builds on Klein's findings (1968:133-5) that married women are discriminated against on the grounds of high labour turnover but notes that during a labour shortage women are only used as a last resort by employers (Freeman, 1982:144). Thus the changes in women's labour force participation since World War One can be closely linked to national crises such the wars and economic fluctuations. Studies by Hill (1978), Hancock (1981), and Shipley (1982), have investigated the situation from the employees' viewpoint, not that of the employers. However they clearly show the effects of employers' attitudes and policies towards the employment of women. As the current economic recession has deteriorated during the past decade, discrimination against women has increased in spite of legislation which should have reduced discriminatory practices against women at work.

I undertook a survey of employers after a period of economic recession to see how they viewed employment of women in an insecure economic climate. Did they see women's employment as peripheral and therefore less important than men's? Did they take into account women's family responsibilities when making recruitment or promotion decisions? Did they view certain areas of the labour force as women's work and thus effectively restrict the scope of women's participation?

Survey Procedure(2)

The survey was conducted in Palmerston North in 1983 from a sample of employers from the Insurance, Finance and Business Services, and the Manufacturing industrial groups. Out of forty employers approached about the survey, 26 agreed to take part. The survey procedure consisted of two parts. Firstly a personal interview was arranged with the person in each sampled organisation who was responsible for employment of staff (This person was selected by each individual organisation in response to the instructions in my introductory letter - see Appendix 2). A semi-structured schedule was the basis for each interview. In order to minimise any misrepresentation of the respondents' comments, each interview was tape recorded. No respondent refused to have the interview recorded.

A statistical sheet was left with each respondent to be filled in and returned by post. This sheet provided basic data on all the employees in the firm. An eighty percent response rate was achieved in this section of the survey although not all the sheets were fully completed. In retrospect, in this way I could have gained further detailed information on incomes, comparative breakdown on marital status and ages of dependent children and age and marital status by sex of managers. However at the time I was aware that I was dealing with a potentially sensitive area of employment. I did not want to antagonise the people I wanted information from; nor did I want to take up too much of their time. Most organisations had the information I required on their records. I am satisfied with the result of this part of the

survey even though it was not completely returned. Had I asked for more details I may have had fewer sheets returned.

The analysis of the survey will be divided into two broad areas covering general labour force information and issues specifically related to women with children. The analysis will begin with recruitment policy, opportunities and training for promotion, incomes of employees and redundancy policy. Analysis of information relating to married women with children will cover maternity leave, retraining, reliability and stability of female employees and the employment of mothers. The analysis will conclude with a discussion of the sexual division of labour in the labour market. An overview of the characteristics of the organisations and the respondents will introduce the analysis.

Characteristics of Respondent Organisations

As a result of a larger number of refusals than expected, particularly from the smaller firms, only twenty-six interviews were conducted, four short of my goal of thirty interviews.

In the Insurance, Finance and Business Services industry group, five different types of business were included: six insurance companies, three banks, three accounting and two legal firms and one regional computing centre. One major occupational group from this industrial group, real estate, was not drawn in the sample.

Table 1. Size of Firm by Occupational Group

Occupational Group	Size Group		
	11-20	21-50	51+
Insurance	5		1
Accountant	1	2	
Bank	1	2	
Computing Centre	1		
Lawyer	1	1	
Manufacturer		4	6
Printer	1		
TOTAL	10	9	7

In the manufacturing sector which had been stratified to exclude those occupational groups where women were unlikely to be employed, interviews were held with four food manufacturers, two clothing manufacturers, two pharmaceutical manufacturers, one each of outdoor accessories and electrical manufacturers and a printing firm.

Table 1 shows that five out of the six insurance companies were in the smallest size group (up to twenty employees) while the other firms in the same industry group were predominantly in the twentyone to fifty size group. Two thirds of the manufacturers were in the largest size group (fiftyone plus) with the numbers of employees ranging up 210.

Male and female employees were present in almost equal numbers, 741 women and 697 men. This equality was not consistent across all the firms. Only one third of them had approximately equal numbers of men and women. Approximately 90% of the employees worked full-time. Of the part-time workers 80% were women which is a similar proportion to the national figures for part-time workers.

Of the twenty-six respondents, twenty-two were men. The four women were in lower to middle level management; three were in factories and one was the accountant in a legal firm who was responsible for employing all the staff except the lawyers. Most of the men were middle management with some responsible for only one section of the organisation so that their responses often related specifically to that section. One example of this was in an insurance

company where I interviewed the office manager who had responsibility over clerical workers only, most of whom were women.

Recruitment Policy

Seventeen of the firms involved in the study were branches of a larger organisation. Of the other nine, two were part of a larger group of companies and one was independently operated in relevant areas of my survey but was in fact part of a national partnership.

Recruitment policy was however predominantly made at the local (Palmerston North) level. For the purposes of recruiting staff a variety of criteria was used depending on the type of firm involved and jobs for which staff were required. In the manufacturing industry qualifications were not important for factory work though three out of twelve manufacturing firms stipulated a minimum of School Certificate. Another three recruited graduates for specific jobs, e.g., accountants, production team. Experience was apparently not very important to manufacturers either; only three wanted persons with experience in specific areas, e.g., machinists.

The legal and accountancy firms wanted graduates for their specialist positions but were not concerned about qualifications for their clerical staff. Experience was more relevant to these positions with the lawyers seeking experienced staff more often than the accountants. Recruits to the banks needed University Entrance while in the insurance industry there was a range from UE to "qualifications not

important". Previous experience was not considered important in either of these industries with the banks preferring school leavers:

"so they haven't had any past work experience which can interrupt our own training."

Qualifications and experience are closely linked with the preferred age of recruits. For thirteen of the firms age was not important; another six firms recruited school leavers while the others specified people in their twenties (accountants and two manufacturers) or thirties (one manufacturer). Two respondents felt that maturity was a more appropriate asset than age.

The questions on marital status and sex of recruits brought a high proportion of "no, not important" responses. However, there were a number of riders attached to these responses:

Sex:

"no, but we generally find males are here for life - its traditional" (bank).

"open - women take to most factory jobs better" (manufacturer).

"depends on the position but some positions are such that we would feel only girls are qualified" (lawyer).

The positions referred to by the lawyer were reception and secretarial which he stated explicitly later in the interview.

Marital Status:

"as long as they meet the requirements of shift work, it's up to them to decide" (manufacturer).

"no, with the proviso that if they have young children we don't really like people having school holidays off" (manufacturer).

One employer preferred school leavers on account of the current job situation. He said he appreciated that older women wanted to get back into the labour force but felt that they had had their turn and was obliged to give younger people a job. This respondent was also concerned that he had to pay higher wages to older women.

On a more positive note an insurance company manager had had good experience with married women as they were "steady and reliable", and one manufacturer who preferred part-time married women workers to full-time single women workers. These women were however limited in the scope of their jobs and in the responsibility they were given.

The issue of suitability for a vacant position brought a variety of responses such as personal qualities and image of applicant, career aspirations and stability:

"they must be career oriented" (bank).

"image of a person, stability, clean" (food manufacturer).

"personal qualities - integrity, personality" (accountant).

Two respondents gave a rather nebulous response of wanting the "the right person to fit the vacancy" without elaborating any further.

In general very little active advertising was done to recruit staff. There was a good deal of internal promotion or transfer with only junior staff being sought outside the firm. The overall employment situation affected this method of selection. Where new staff were required, some employers preferred to recruit from personal recommendation or knowledge of prospective staff, or use an employment file collated from phone calls from people looking for work. One employer explained that he preferred this method because:

"I'd be inundated with replies [to advertisements]. Even at this time I have ten people ringing me a week" (bank).

Another employer had previously advertised in the newspaper but found it chaotic with up to one hundred applications. This legal firm now prefers to recruit through the Labour Department.

Opportunities and Training for Promotion

Internal promotion through a hierarchy of jobs is a characteristic of the primary labour market. It was noted in Chapter Two that internal labour markets within the primary sector increase the opportunities for certain workers to move upward through the career structure by internal promotion. This career structure is largely responsible for the lack of mobility between the primary and secondary sectors of the dual labour market. The promotion policy of each organisation is crucial to an examination of the opportunities for promotion. Analysis of the information collected indicates that the criteria for promotion strongly favour workers who have experience and

grading, factors which are closely linked to length of service. Fourteen respondents, mainly in the insurance and banking industries saw these criteria as an important part of the promotion policy. Another nine, mostly manufacturers, lawyers and accountants felt ability and merit were important, though in several instances these factors were linked to experience within the firm also. All promotion was from within the company where possible. In the case of branches, as so many of these firms were, people were transferred within the same company from other centres to fill specific positions.

The amount of internal promotion was highlighted in this study by the reluctance of employers to advertise outside the firm to fill vacancies at senior levels. Only two respondents suggested they might advertise outside the company to fill a senior position but only if there was no-one anywhere in the company who could move into that position:

"always the intention to promote from within if possible but sometimes that's just not possible so we just have to go out and advertise" (manufacturer).

"If we have a promotion vacancy within the company we ask the Department Head involved who he or she would recommend for that particular vacancy in the first instance" (manufacturer).

"Grade 4 is the level which our inspectors operate at so there's a definite split there. At this stage only men have been considered for inspectors... at management level it's almost exclusively on the basis if you've had general experience of all aspects of the group's operations... so you could say that with the present policies it's very difficult for a woman to get to that position" (insurance).

This response clearly demonstrates the existence of the dual labour market in this company. Because women are not considered for jobs as inspectors, they cannot gain the general experience across the industry which is necessary for promotion to senior positions. Therefore they are effectively precluded from management. Until women are appointed as inspectors they cannot move from the secondary sector.

The majority of the firms in the study had some form of training for senior staff. Eighteen respondents indicated that staff training programmes or courses were available within their national organisation, within their industry, eg., Apparel Industry Training Board, or through Polytechnics and Technical Institutes. The type and extent of the training ranged from the basic and informal to more formal courses intergated into the job:

"everyone must read the office manual"
(manufacturer).

"we operate management development courses at various levels and once they're in a management position they continue with them" (accountant).

Many respondents admitted that women were not in management positions in their companies, and in fact according to one respondent, were unlikely to be while present policies were continued. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents replied "yes" there were opportunities for women to move towards management though some were honest enough to admit that in reality this was not happening:

"Yes I believe so but when I stand back and look at it, we're only just getting our first woman partner" (accountant) (3).

"there are certainly the same opportunities but probably harder to realise those opportunities because of prejudices (towards women)...more in the case of the older partners probably" (accountant).

"yes, unfortunately insurance is male dominated but it is becoming less so and very soon we'll have a woman in management but they don't have - I'm not sexist - but they don't have the fortitude to carry it through" (insurance).

This last comment continued along rather vague lines but it was intimated that a single woman could get married soon which would "spoil it for her if she wanted to go on." Another respondent personally felt there were opportunities for women but that the official policy in his organisation was not necessarily the same as his personal opinion.

Of the five respondents who admitted there were no opportunities for women, two felt that women were still hampered by attitudes on the part of employers which indicated that women's family responsibilities would preclude them from consideration for senior positions. One said "no, unless the woman had the main career position in the family".

That women's family circumstances negatively affected promotion prospects became obvious when respondents were asked:

"In the case of a woman applying for promotion, do you consider any criteria that you do not consider for a man?"

Although twenty-one respondents had just indicated that women had the same opportunity to move up the hierarchy, nine now suggested that

domestic circumstances would be an important consideration. Fourteen of the respondents maintained they would not consider any different criteria for women but five of those same respondents indicated that women's family circumstances would be questioned. Thirteen of these respondents had previously indicated that the opportunities were there for women to move through the hierarchy. Five who qualified their negative reply on the question of family circumstances had also qualified their reply to the previous question "yes [women do have the opportunity to move up] but..." Three respondents would not commit themselves on this issue; two of them maintained it was a head office decision while one said the situation had not arisen because his organisation was not a big one. Respondents from the banks claimed mobility was the most important reason given for ease of progress through the career hierarchy in the banks. Women were assumed to be immobile because of their family responsibilities so that they were unable to progress. Neale (1984:24) found that men were more likely to be offered transfers than women.

In 1974 it was predicted that it would only be a matter of time until "women became managing directors and board chairmen of important New Zealand companies" (Hines, 1974). In Palmerston North there are branches of some major New Zealand companies but in 1983 there was little sign of women working in the higher levels of management within those branches. Only nine of the twenty-six organisations in this study had women in managerial or supervisory positions. In all there were fifteen women in management positions. As there were 741 women employed in the organisations in the study this proportion is 2%, which

Table 2. Number of managers by age group by sex,
by marital status.

Age Group	Married		Single		Separated	
	male	female	male	female	male	female
20-29	2		1	1	1	
30-39	21	5		1		
40-49	47	2		1		
50-59	36	1				
60+	14					
TOTAL	120	8	1	3	1	

Unspecified age or marital status: 4 female

Total male: 122

Total female: 15

is less than the national average of 7% (New Zealand Census, 1981). Table 2 shows the number and ages of men and women in management in this study. Although they were on the career ladder, none of these women were in the top level of management even within their branch. All were therefore responsible to male managers or partners who took decisions to a higher level for decisions on implementation:

"they are involved in decision making through me. I would ask their advice and we would decide between us. They obviously know more about sewing than I do" (Factory manager, manufacturer).

"None are in the executive group, possibly the ones who you could say would make the decisions, but running their own departments they make all the decisions" (manufacturer, his emphasis).

Of the fifteen firms with no women in management positions, nine suggested that the reasons for their absence lay in traditional attitudes towards women, a lack of suitable applicants or a combination of both factors. Women's domestic responsibility was specifically cited in only two instances; once because women were often precluded due to lack of mobility as a result of a spouse's job and in the other instance it was stated that women were likely to leave to have a family:

"I can think of my years in the company there were times when there were girls that we used to think they'd go right to the top but of course they'd leave to have a family" (manufacturer).

Three other respondents implied that family reasons were responsible for women not staying long enough to be considered. Some respondents added that no women had indicated any interest in managerial positions.

The titles given to women in managerial or supervisory positions reflect the lower levels of management in which they are found. Nineteen of the twenty-eight women are officers, supervisors, assistants or in one case "Head Lady". In the higher levels of management the incumbents are usually entitled managers or directors. Place has also found that the small number of women managers are often in low status positions and that their titles indicate that status. She notes too that titles given to women imply that there is little chance of future promotion to higher levels. However where men are employed in the same position, their titles often indicate further advancement in the future (Place, 1981:41) (4).

The respondents can be divided into two distinct groups over the issue of women in management. There is a still a group which has not thought about the issue at all and when they were faced with it, passed off the lack of women as "traditional" or "historical". In the group where women were employed in managerial positions it was clear that they had some responsibility for decision making at their level but have little input above that level. Only one woman in the survey seemed to have a greater say in decision making. She was the factory manager with responsibility for all major decisions affecting the factory including staff.

Incomes

Respondents appeared to be very conscious of the provisions of the Equal Pay Act when discussing income levels of males and females. In all except one firm men and women were doing similar jobs and all respondents were adamant that the same wages were paid for the same job. However in some cases a subjective proviso was added:

"gradings according to ability and skill; same ability, same skills means the same wages" (manufacturer).

This respondent did not indicate how the ability and skills were measured or compared. In an insurance company:

"It doesn't matter what their sex is if they're in the same grade they get the same pay. They have the same opportunities to move up the grades subject to management prejudices".

The company referred to here appeared in general to be very conservative. Men and women were sharply segregated into different areas of work and there were no women in management because of "traditional attitudes".

The most common criteria given by twenty-two respondents, for deciding on levels of income were the awards. In a number of cases, length of service and previous experience were benchmarks for grading purposes. This would disadvantage women who have not been with the same firm for long because of a break for family commitments. Some firms gave extra allowances for employees' qualifications. Ability was

recognised by two respondents as an important attribute to be rewarded, though one man felt there were possible difficulties for employers:

"service doesn't impress me a bit. A person's individual ability I pay attention to but you've got to watch the anomaly situation" (manufacturer).

The anomaly referred to by this respondent was likely to arise where one really able employee might be paid at a higher rate than a less able but longer serving employee. He was concerned that this situation might cause tension among the employees. However another respondent took quite a different view:

"Ability is not involved. There is an automatic increase every six months to the top of the grade. If someone does three times the output of someone else, I can't pay them even twice as much" (bank).

In the case of the five accounting and legal firms, the incomes of the partners (all male) were not included in the information provided as these positions are considered to be "employers" and therefore above management. There was a reluctance to explain how the incomes for management and partners were determined although the observation was made by several respondents that these positions were above grading and award levels.

Analysis of incomes from the information provided by thirteen of the respondent organisations, shows that women on average earned 78% of the average male income. This percentage compares with the national average income figures provided by the Department of Labour as indicated in Chapter Two. However this proportion is higher than it

would be if the incomes of partners in the legal and accounting firms had been included for analysis.

The Equal Pay Act, (1972) had no effect on the number of women employed in twenty of the firms surveyed nor on their policy of employment of women. Clothing manufacturers noted the effect of the Act on costs and prices to consumers as the women's wages increased in the ensuing five years until the full implementation of the Act in October 1977. A few responses indicated some effects on the employment of women such as preference for employing younger women who could be paid less than older women but in general respondents did not seem to feel the Act had affected female staffing levels or positions. Only one respondent suggested that there were fewer women employed now because of equal pay. He maintained that married women had priced themselves off the market in relation to the skills they brought to the job.

Redundancy

Although the problem of redundancies among women workers has led to several studies in New Zealand recently (Hill, 1979; Hancock, 1981), in this study redundancy did not appear to be an issue. Three men but no women had been made redundant since the beginning of 1982. Almost half of the respondents in this survey either had no policy on redundancy, or in the case of some branches, did not know what the company policy was. Of the remainder, nine would follow the "last hired, first fired" policy.

Because redundancy was not an problem for these employers, the question "Does the situation where there is another breadwinner in the family affect your decision (on redundancy)? If so, in what way?" was not really relevant. However six respondents who said they would consider the family income, felt quite strongly about the issue. One manufacturer who implied throughout the interview that married women should not be working wanted to see taxation measures introduced to make it uneconomical for women to work when their husbands had a job:

"I would like to have seen the tax structure changed to be the family income which would have given incentive for a lot of two income families to say 'what's the point?' and switch to being a one income family" (manufacturer).

Another manufacturer who had not previously thought about the issue suggested that he would consider the family income in the case of a female employee but a male employee would not be considered for redundancy just because his wife worked. Only one respondent answered that he looked at the individual as a productive unit (accountant).

Maternity Leave

The second part of this analysis of women's labour force participation in Palmerston North begins with a section on maternity leave. The question of maternity leave was something of a thorny problem for many of the respondents. All except one (a lawyer) were aware that there was legislation containing provisions for maternity leave and would comply with the regulations if faced with the issue.

The details of the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Act (1980) or relevant award were accessible as necessary to the employers and to the employees in a number of firms. In some firms up to twelve months leave was available after the birth of the baby. The general feeling I got was that the whole issue was a bit of a nuisance:

"absolutely impractical for us" (accountant).

"restrictive" (manufacturer).

"the inconvenience, in fact a blessed nuisance" (manufacturer).

"it would be awkward" (manufacturer).

In fact no organisations had actually had to face the situation of women taking leave and then returning. Therefore the responses were largely related to hypothetical situations. A common response was that jobs could not be held open for a woman while she took maternity leave. Smaller firms foresaw difficulties in coping with one less staff member and those who considered replacing a pregnant employee did not see an easy way out if that woman chose to return when the leave was up; either the firm would have to sack the replacement person or continue with one extra staff member. The question of appointing a temporary replacement on a clear understanding of the conditions of employment did not appear to have been considered. Only one respondent compared the situation to that of employees taking several months leave for an overseas trip which he felt was a valid comparison. However he had not given any thought to it prior to the interview.

The suggestion that there might be advantages for the employers took many respondents by surprise:

"Good heavens, I'll hedge on that - there could be"
(manufacturer - female respondent).

"Who said there were advantages?" (bank.)

The banker followed his exclamation with the response that the skills and experience held by that worker were retained if she returned. Other respondents made similar comments and in all, fourteen saw this as a real advantage:

"They would get favourable reconsideration for re-employment; we know them and their strengths"
(bank).

"You know you won't lose a skilled worker from your workforce" (manufacturer).

"They're good girls and 90% of them would get their jobs back over and above other people, knowing the ones I've got" (insurance).

One factory manager felt that maternity leave provisions usurped the employer's right because there was no obligation on the employee. He was one of several respondents who was prepared to be selective in terms of whose attention he would bring to the provisions. In this way he felt he could use it to his own advantage by encouraging good workers to return and "forget" to ask the not so good workers.

The question of placement of a worker on her return from maternity leave was hypothetical for all respondents. Although in some firms women had taken maternity leave, none of the women had elected to

return to work. Therefore no respondent was able to say exactly what would happen in that situation. However in reply to a question on the effect of maternity leave on a woman's position and income, fifteen respondents said the maternity leave would not affect her position. Seven indicated they would try to let her have the same or similar position but could not guarantee it, so that she might have to wait for a vacancy. Four respondents would not comment as they felt it was not applicable to them. Of those who said a woman would return to her previous position, only two specifically noted that maternity leave would have no effect on grading or service allowances:

"No effect. Also maintenance of continuity of service with the company for holiday or sick pay and length of service" (manufacturer).

"back to same grading and same service allowances" (insurance).

In fact, these conditions constitute part of the Act which prescribes minimum requirements for maternity leave and protects the rights of female employees during pregnancy and the maternity leave (5).

The question of income was again hypothetical but was closely related to the position the woman would return to. Several respondents noted here that maternity leave was not considered as broken service so that her salary could not be affected. Some responses indicated that the income would depend on the job the woman would be doing. This response was from respondents who could not promise the same job back:

"She picks up where she left off, in theory she hasn't left" (bank).

"If we reinstated her in the same job we would pay her the same salary as previously" (insurance).

It is fairly clear that on the issue of maternity leave, employers in this study are reluctant to make any concessions to women on the grounds that they have responsibility for childbearing. The employers I interviewed accepted the Act rather ungraciously and most would rather not have had to tolerate it. Responses suggesting the women were often tied to family responsibilities or were the "guardians of the children" indicate employers' attitudes that women should personally care for their young children and not return to work while their children are young.

Retraining

In this survey, respondents did not consider that it was important for women to undertake retraining before returning to work if they had been out of the workforce for a number of years for family reasons. Many responses indicated that there was sufficient opportunity for retraining within the firm once a woman had obtained a position:

"any retraining they might be able to take on would not necessarily be available without getting back into the industry" (bank).

"retraining necessary when they come back, not before" (manufacturer).

"no, we accommodate them while they are getting reappraised and reoriented really" (manufacturer).

Some of the training envisaged was "on-the-job".

"Everyone is working side by side so I suppose we are training them all the time...we have no organised courses" (manufacturer).

Those organisations which were involved with regional or national training schemes, such as banks and accountants, generally tried to slot a woman returning to the workforce into an appropriate training course for the position she had taken. Mostly these courses were part of the routine training programme:

"Yes, they'd automatically go to retraining here. We'd look at the courses we've got and put them through if they needed it. Not especially retraining, just normal training programme" (bank).

"continual process of in-branch training of courses and seminars" (accountant).

Some respondents did not see the need for any retraining. They noted that the sort of jobs women do are easily picked up again when they return. Their comments pointed to the routine and monotony of the jobs women tend to undertake:

"we run them through our own training system... it's incredible how they pick it up again" (manufacturer).

"no need seen. They can still type" (lawyer).

One respondent was rather casual in his attitude which reflected his view of women returning to work:

"They probably aren't back for a career, just for a job. They can go on continuing training if they like" (bank).

The impact of technology over a period of several years was noticeable from some responses. An accountant was aware that women returning to work would have to contend with computers but did not foresee any problems. In an insurance company, it was noted that someone returning to work in the industry now (at the time of the interview) after five years away would find that some jobs had disappeared, from the Branch Manager down:

"The way things are changing their old jobs are not their old jobs" (insurance).

Mechanisation was given as one reason for changes in and disappearance of some jobs in the insurance industry. The increase of computers for mundane jobs prompted an insurance company manager to reflect on the need to introduce off-the-job training schemes so that people could be employed at a higher level but still have some knowledge which they would have previously gained from experience in the industry. Only one other respondent, a clothing manufacturer, commented on the impact of technology in the industry:

"Yes, in that sort of length of time (five years) there are tremendous technological changes in this industry" (clothing manufacturer).

He did not elaborate any further on this comment.

It appears from these responses that many firms prefer employees to undertake training programmes which they know are relevant to the jobs within their firm. There would apparently be no advantage for a woman to pursue a training course at Polytechnic, to become familiar with word processors, for instance. It is possible though that completion of such a course would benefit a woman by increasing her confidence which would assist her in getting a job. The impact of new technology may have an effect on the attitudes of employers towards training of new or returning employees as indicated by an insurance company manager (see above).

Reliability and Stability of Female Employees

To establish how employers viewed their female employees for reliability and stability, I asked employers to compare married women employees with single women or men for regular attendance and labour turnover.

On regular attendance, thirteen respondents gave an unqualified answer that married women were as good as any other group of employees. A further six felt that married women had better attendance records than any other group. Only one respondent (manufacturer) felt married women were less reliable in attendance than their colleagues and he confined his comments to married women with young children. Five respondents considered married women were as good or better than single women while three of those ranked married women lower than men for attendance. One respondent who said that married women were better

than single women considered them to be as good as married men. Another who noted that married women were more regularly at work than single women had never thought to compare them to men in terms of attendance.

Although a few commented that women, especially married women with young children, had time off more often than men, two respondents noted that men might:

"go for years and then have a heart attack and have
2 - 3 months off" (insurance).

This respondent had previously noted that a married woman with children might have a few days off here and there which could add up to two to three months over a period of years and in fact he felt the time they had off work was not so different from his example of a man who had a heart attack. Some employers noted that married women had important financial commitments to work which increased their reliability in comparison to single women:

"married women have an object, either building a
home or buying a fridge" (manufacturer).

Labour turnover among women is noted by the Department of Labour to be higher than for other groups of workers (6). However respondents in this survey did not indicate that married women had higher turnover rates than other workers. same trend. Sixteen responses showed that turnover among married women was "as high" as other groups of workers while a further eight respondents found that married women had a lower

Table 3. Number of employees who left in past twelve months by reasons for leaving, by sex.

Reasons	Male	Female
Another job in same town	22	41
Another job in another area	22	13
Family related reasons - pregnancy	4	28
marital breakup		10
transfer of spouse		1
Ill health		1
Retired/deceased	10	
Overseas Travel		1
Further study	8	
Internal transfer	7	2
Fired	5	1
Unspecified	18	51
TOTAL	96	149

turnover rate than other workers. One employer found that young women moved around in jobs more than young men and one felt the question did not apply as turnover had been virtually non-existent in recent years.

In Table 3 the numbers of men and women who left their jobs within a year of the survey are given, along with their reasons for leaving. These figures do not include those workers who were made redundant nor is there a breakdown by marital status. Forty-one women left for another job in Palmerston North compared to twenty-two men; another twenty-two men left Palmerston North to take up another position while only thirteen women left for the same reason. Only four men left their job for family reasons (marital breakdown) compared to twenty-eight women (four due to marital breakdown but twenty-four because they were pregnant); another ten left because their spouses were transferred. Men featured more than women in the other non-work related reasons such as further study (eight men, no women), internal transfer (seven men, two women), retired/ deceased/illhealth (ten men, one women) and fired (five men, one women). Sixty-nine employees (eighteen, fifty-one women) had left but no reasons were given. Most of these (fourteen men, forty-seven women) were from two manufacturing firms in the largest group (51+). When I checked with the respondents I was told they did not keep records of why people on the factory floor left.

In spite of the respondents' views that labour turnover among women was no higher than that of other groups of workers, the figures they provided in fact show that more women than men had left - 149 (60%) women compared to 96 (40%) men. If family related reasons (four

men, thirty-eight women) are left out of the analysis however, the female turnover rate drops to 54%. The indication from this study is that family related reasons do affect the high rate of turnover among women.

The employers in this study accepted that married women would leave for family related reasons such as pregnancy or moving with a transferred spouse. Some employers specifically commented that unless their husbands were transferred, married women were more stable than other employees:

"married women more stable due to mortgages etc"
(manufacturer).

"very dependable and reliable" (manufacturer).

"married women (in typing jobs) have been here for
years" (accountant).

However high turnover rates are generally associated with an unstable labour force. No other groups of workers are likely to move in and out of the labour force for family reasons. The awareness and acceptance of women labour turnover by employers in this study is however, somewhat contradictory to commonly held beliefs about labour turnover. However this acceptance may be associated with the view of employers that married women are part of a flexible labour force.

Employment of Mothers

The section of the interview schedule which dealt with policy on employment of women with dependent children met with a number of noncommittal replies. The respondents were clearly aware of the Human Rights Commission Act, (1977) which precludes them from discriminating in employment by sex or marital status so that only one actually stated that as a policy matter they were looking for women without families, specifically "young girls". (This respondent had previously indicated that married women had had their turn at work and he aimed to employ school leavers.) However many replies indicated that family commitments were considered:

"only that we wish them to work school holidays"
(manufacturer).

"if she's a solo parent or a mother with children,
because our experience has been they're less
reliable simply because if the kid has a runny nose
that comes first" (manufacturer).

Eight respondents did not ask directly if their applicant had dependent children. Some of them were concerned that such questions might contravene the Human Rights Commission Act (1977) (7). However often the information was drawn out of the applicant in the course of the interview:

"no, we have to be careful what we ask and have to
find out in whatever way we can" (manufacturer).

Of the other seventeen respondents, the question of dependent children was a standard question to all prospective employees in many firms, often incorporated on an application form. However the mere fact that men were asked as well in no way denies that the employer is probably more concerned with the situation if a woman is applying for a job. This was especially so when the question of child care arose. Only a minority did not ask directly what arrangements would be made, with one respondent saying "I'd rather it came out in the conversation." Care of preschool children and school holidays care were the chief areas of concern to the respondents. They considered it was the mother's responsibility but wanted to know about the arrangements in order to ensure smooth organisation in the workplace. Several respondents would not consider women with children and obviously felt they had the option in the current employment situation. One sought to ease his conscience by looking to school leavers:

"the way things are, we're looking to employ young school leavers rather than older women" (computer centre).

Provision of child care facilities by the firm was not viewed at all favourably by the respondents. No facilities were provided and few respondents were sympathetic to the idea:

"I think we'd probably employ a man. We don't have to go to all this trouble" (insurance).

"There are too many creches around to worry about setting up one of our own" (manufacturer).

"depends on the availability of staff. If we found we couldn't get workers it would have to be considered" (insurance).

"We're running a bank not a child care centre"
(bank).

"only if there was an upturn in the economy and
through necessity having to employ a large number
of married ladies with kiddies we might..."
(manufacturer).

The attitudes evident in these responses have important implications for women with children. The idea of women as a flexible and disposable labour force is discernible here in the comments which indicate that the provision of child care might be considered if there was difficulty in getting staff. Many of the respondents however had to think about the issue. It was apparent from many responses that mothers were expected to make satisfactory arrangements so that their work was not affected by concern for their children. However one respondent (a woman) said that if an employee came to her and said she had a childcare problem she (the respondent) would consult with management and try to find a solution. Her reasoning was that a staff member would not be able to work satisfactorily if she was concerned about her children. A few respondents were aware that some organisations in parts of New Zealand and overseas did provide child care facilities for children of their staff members, but did not see that as a course of action for their firm.

The issue of child care is often overcome by employing married women on a part-time basis. As married women have primary responsibility for child care it is often more convenient for them to work part-time. A number of respondents noted that "married women wanted part-time work", or were "more suited to part-time work" thus

indicating their awareness of women's domestic role and the limitations that role placed on women. Over 80% of the part-time workers in this study were married women.

However married women were restricted from employment in certain jobs, although marital status was not necessarily the reason for the restrictions, according to some respondents. For example, in the insurance industry "lack of experience" was given for the lack of any women in senior positions, not specifically married women.

There was little flexibility in leave provisions for women with children. Twelve of the respondents indicated no special leave concession to these women. Among the remaining fourteen, the only concessions in four firms was that annual leave could be taken during school holidays. Three indicated they had flexible arrangements to accommodate women with children which included longer hours worked during school terms so that time could be taken off in the school holidays. Personal sick leave was expected to be used for care of sick children with one firm allowing sick pay:

"only if the spouse is sick or she is a solo parent, but not for married women with a well husband" (manufacturer).

Only one company employed students in school holidays so that mothers could take leave. In general however, child care for school age children was not an important consideration.

Previous studies (Klein, 1968; SROW, 1973) indicated that employers often had flexible arrangements such as school holidays off and flexible working hours which enabled many mothers to work. However in this study there was little sign of such flexibility.

However, in spite of recent changes in the economic conditions in New Zealand and lack of flexibility in working conditions, responses in this study indicated few changes in the number of married women employed in the last five years. Sixteen noted no changes, six noted an increase, while in only four firms had the number of married women decreased. No figures are available to indicate if the proportion of married women in these firms has changed over the same period.

Of those few firms where the number of married women had decreased, natural attrition and a changed employment situation due to a higher number of unemployed men and single women, were cited as reasons for the reduction:

"as the employment situation has changed. A lot of married women were employed in the early 70's. Then they were the easiest to recruit. Now they're competing with everybody else" (insurance).

The competitive employment climate has led to more frequent calls to married women to return home. However these calls have apparently had little significant effect on the employment of married women during the economic downturn. The OECD has reported that women's participation has tended to continue in spite of a period of slower economic growth (OECD, 1980). The report notes the influence of improved educational

opportunities for girls, smaller families, and an increase in the number of female-headed single parent families (ibid.,69). However in certain areas of industry, women are still in more vulnerable positions in the labour force in periods of economic decline (Hancock, 1981).

Freeman has described similar attitudes of employers towards married women with children. She found that discrimination against women had increased since Klein's study in 1960 and the discrimination disproportionately affected married women with children. Few concessions for mothers were available and employers in Freeman's study did not favour the provision of child care facilities (Freeman, 1982:143).

The difficulties posed by the relationship between women's domestic labour and their paid work is highlighted in this discussion. The inflexibility of leave provisions makes it difficult for mothers to work, especially as employers apparently see no need for extra child care facilities in Palmerston North. If women with dependent children are employed, they are expected to make adequate child care arrangements so that their domestic responsibilities do not affect their performance at work. It would appear that employers expect working women to separate out the two parts of their lives. However that attitude takes no account of the responsibility women have at home.

Table 4. Job Category by Sex of Employee

	males		females	
	part-time	full-time	part-time	full-time
Production - outdoor gear		2	6	22
- food	12	41	20	33
- clothing		25	2	120
Production and marketing				
- pharmaceuticals	4	102	1	52
Printing	3	14	10	2
Stores, deliveries, distribution	2	22		1
Laboratory technicians	1	12	2	10
Engineers		20		
Banking		25	6	19
Clerical, typing, reception, data processing, secretarial	3	42	22	128
Sales, underwriting		301	10	47
Legal		3		2
Accounting		32	5	13
Administrative		25		201
Tea person, canteen			2	
Cleaning	1		3	
Study		5	1	1
TOTAL	26	671	90	651

Sexual Divisions in the Labour Market

An important element of any analysis of women's position in the labour force is the sexual division of labour in the labour market. There are indications from this study that respondents held strong beliefs that the sexual divisions in the labour market should continue. Segregation of this nature has become so entrenched that certain jobs are strictly viewed as men's work or women's work. Respondents were asked:

"Do you have any jobs for which you would prefer male/female staff? If yes to either, what are those jobs? What are the reasons for such preferences?"

A breakdown of the occupations of men and women by hours worked (part-time or full-time) is provided in Table 4. Only three employers had no jobs for which they preferred males and three others had no preference for females. Men were preferred for sales, underwriting, inspectors, supervisors and managers in the insurance industry mainly due to tradition and perceived career aspirations:

"We're employing long term career bankers...women tend to go through the family marriage area..." (bank).

"women do not have such a fixed mind of a career as men do" (bank).

These comments imply that women's family responsibilities preclude them from being career oriented (8).

Perceived clients' attitudes towards women were an important consideration in the insurance companies in this study:

"conservative management...think their clients won't buy insurance from women."

"clients tend to relate more easily to males."

"it is considered without any scientific reasons at all that men are better at slogging through knee deep mud to get to farmers to talk about insurance."

The importance of male contact with clients was highlighted by one respondent who noted the effect of the Accident Compensation Act, 1973 on work in insurance companies. Prior to the passing of that Act, claims assessors:

"had to go out and see people. The investigative side of the work has largely disappeared."

This respondent also noted that work in the claims area is now more routine and is done by women. However much of this work is becoming computerised with the subsequent loss of jobs for women. Men are apparently seen as having a greater ability than women to deal with investigative work directly involved with clients.

Customer preference was also of concern to a respondent in a bank, who noted that men tended to be employed in positions involved with lending which he implied was not bank policy but:

"In the lending areas... the customers - this is not our fault - the customers prefer a male person maybe just tradition."

In the accounting profession, auditors have traditionally been men, according to the respondents in this study. In the banking, insurance and accounting industries, it is evident that men are in positions of authority where decision making is necessary, particularly in financial dealings where money will be paid out by the bank or insurance company. The position of auditor also carries considerable responsibility in the business community (9).

In the manufacturing industry men were preferred for work involving heavy lifting. This preference indicates how the respective strengths of men and women are perceived. It also indicates the association of "masculinity" with manual work:

"storemen are always employed because of the lifting."

"I think there are limits to what women can do."

Women were preferred for jobs such as typists, telephonists, secretaries and receptionists ("traditionally I feel it's a lot nicer to have a female voice answering the phone"). In the three banks in the survey women were preferred for typing and machining positions because:

"women are better keyboard operators"

"women are quicker with their hands"

The implication is that women possess these skills naturally. In the manufacturing areas a number of the reasons given for employing women in certain positions also indicated "natural" qualities attributed to women:

"The methods we use are best carried out by our ladies. They've been good at it for centuries" (food manufacturer).

"women are far quicker at collating" (manufacturer - printing).

"In assembly work women proved to be better...One man reckoned it was women's work" (manufacturer).

These responses indicate the servile nature of women's work. In the food industry women finish and pack the "man-made" products and other routine jobs on the factory floor. Female bank employees make permanent records of transactions for the men to analyse before dealing with customers. Accountants employ women for accounting work which is routine and demands attention to detail.

The sexual divisions in the labour market are being broken by those women who have crossed the barriers into traditionally male areas. In my survey I was told of some women becoming auditors. In a manufacturing firm two women had tried spray painting of appliances which was usually considered men's work. Claims staff in the insurance industry have previously been males but now more women are doing that job, though it was noted that the nature of claims work had changed.

The responses in this study do not indicate the same level of movement of men into jobs usually considered women's work:

"No men have wanted to become typists" (insurance; accountant).

Tradition is still very strong and it appears that there is considerable reluctance to admit women to male areas of the labour force. The responses in this study indicate there is some movement of women into jobs which have traditionally been done by men but in general women tend to be working in routine jobs in areas commonly seen as "women's work".

Notes

1. For details of the debate, see Page 2.
2. See Appendix One for details of the study.
3. Not in Palmerston North but in another branch of the same firm.
4. Place noted that a female buyer would be entitled "Senior Sales" whereas a male in the same position would be called "Assistant Buyer", or "Trainee Buyer". These examples are from the distribution industry but could equally apply to the industries in this survey.
5. Under the Act a female employee is entitled to take 26 weeks maternity leave without pay provided she has worked for the same employer for 18 months immediately prior to the birth or adoption of the baby. The employer must keep her position open for her unless it proves to be impossible, in which case the employee has six months preference over any other applicants for any similar vacancy in the

same firm.

6. The Department of Labour includes all movement in the labour force as labour turnover including those women who move for family related reasons. Such reasons are noted as contributing factors to the high turnover rate among women.

7. In fact the Human Rights Commission Act only covers areas of sex, race and marital status in employment.

8. The idea that women are interested in a career or in other male dominated areas was not discernible among employers in this study. Their reaction to my survey was indicative of their view of women's place in the labour force. My specification that I was interested in employment policies in general did not affect their decision to direct me to the person in their organisation who was responsible for employing women. Thus I was restricted to some extent in my ability to compare the positions of men and women in some firms. However this does not significantly affect my findings that gender divisions are still very obvious in the labour market.

9. The role of an auditor is to examine the account and records of public companies and to report on the state of the accounts to the shareholders.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The theme of this study is the relationship between women's domestic role and their labour force participation. It sets out to analyse aspects of women's wage labour and to examine how the attitudes of employers affect women's participation in the labour force. The issue of the right of women to work is closely linked to the relationship between women's domestic role and their work in the labour force. Feminist theorists maintain that women's domestic responsibilities are of crucial importance in any analysis of women's labour force participation (Beechey, 1978; Barrett, 1980; Freeman, 1982). The double burden of domestic responsibility and paid employment plays an important part in the limitations many women face in the labour market. The domestic role limits not only married women with children but also young single women who are treated by employers as potential wives and mothers. It is a commonly held belief that the domestic role is of primary importance to all women.

This study found that a number of employers believe that women's domestic responsibilities take priority in their lives and therefore they do not expect women to remain at work for long. Sometimes individual employers hold these beliefs, but policies of some of the

organisations surveyed can also limit women's progress through the career structure. Across the industries surveyed, women's domestic responsibilities affected consideration of them for promotion or, in some instances, recruitment decisions. Employers thought women would either leave to have children or, in the case of those who were already mothers, their children would come before work responsibilities. The priority of women's family obligations was seen by employers as problematic during school holiday periods and when children are ill. In a more buoyant economic period, employers may make concessions for women with children, such as allowing them to have school holidays off (SROW 1973). However such concessions were less apparent in this survey which was conducted during a much less favourable economic climate.

Women are effectively limited by their domestic role to positions in the labour force which correspond to the secondary sector of the dual labour market. Women's domestic role also enables employers to employ mothers only if other labour is not available. The employers in this study view women as a flexible and disposable labour force.

In spite of the effect of women's domestic responsibilities on their labour force participation, some employers in this study believe that married women are more reliable in their work than young single women. Reliability and stability are characteristics which benefit employers to such an extent that the higher rate of turnover among married women due to family obligations is sometimes ignored. This high turnover rate can be dismissed as inevitable because employers

expect that a woman will get pregnant or will leave if her husband is transferred. This expectation supports the commonly held view that the woman's family role is of primary importance with paid work playing a lesser role.

However reliability and stability on the part of female employees does not necessarily mean that employers view women as being career oriented. Some employers feel women just want a job not a career. Others suggest that women do not stay long enough to be considered for career positions.

Often women are not encouraged to undertake training nor considered for promotion to responsible positions in the labour market. Lack of training is a major barrier faced by secondary sector workers, and may effectively keep them out of the primary sector. The policy of regular transfers is a means to promotion for bank employees in particular. If women are perceived to be immobile for family related reasons, this policy excludes women from the higher grades which lead into managerial positions. In some insurance companies surveyed, women face a barrier at the grade at which inspectors are appointed; present policies do not allow for women to be appointed as inspectors. Women therefore are unable to progress to managerial positions because they cannot get the prerequisite experience as inspectors.

Internal promotion according to grading, length of service and experience restricts women who take a break from the labour market for childrearing. Such a break impedes their progress towards a career.

Women lag behind men of a similar age and with similar qualifications. Further, employers are likely to assume that women's domestic responsibilities will henceforth come first and therefore it is not worth considering those women for training or promotion. The opportunities for women to move out of the secondary sector are therefore minimal.

Employers' perceptions of different levels of career interest among men and women contribute to sexual divisions in the labour market. Evidence from this study indicates that employers may encourage men but not women to undertake training or accept transfers in preparation for appointment to more senior positions. In other studies there have been similar findings. For instance, Neale found that significantly fewer women than men had been offered transfers (Neale, 1984:24). Not only is the perceived level of an employee's interest in a career important, but perceived attitudes of clients towards women are also considered by employers in determining to which positions women will be recruited. In the insurance companies surveyed, women are not employed as inspectors because those in top level management do not think their clients will talk about insurance with a woman.

More men than women are managers, often because the decision makers hold traditional attitudes towards the employment of women, so that they do not perceive women as potential managers. These attitudes continue to restrict women's opportunities in the labour market in spite of the provisions of the Human Rights Commission Act (1977) which

do not allow discrimination in employment on the grounds of sex. A number of employers in this study maintain that sex is not a factor which limits the opportunities for women. They cited mobility, women's own wishes or their domestic responsibilities (not covered by the Act) as reasons for the lack of women in management or in certain areas of production. However because these factors predominantly concern women, sex is a crucial factor which affects attitudes of employers towards women in the labour market.

The titles given to women in management positions can also indicate labour force sexual divisions. For instance, the title "Head Lady" usually relates to a woman in charge of an office and [female] clerical staff. It is not considered part of the career structure. Therefore even if the incumbent of that position is entitled "Office Manager", she cannot progress to the higher levels of management.

Jobs which involve heavy lifting are filled by men because employers are concerned that women lack the necessary strength. This attitude in the labour market reinforces a strong masculine image and an image of women as physically weak. Women are preferred for positions where they have been traditionally been employed, such as telephonists or receptionists. Many employers in the study recruit women to these positions where a favourable impression of the business is desirable for initial contact with the customer or client, either in person or by telephone. Routine clerical jobs, typing and accounting are usually done by women while men are employed in those jobs where important decision making is necessary. By undertaking such routine

work women provide a service for men so that they can deal with the more important aspects of the work such as discussion and decision making with clients. The concentration of women in jobs of a routine nature is based on the belief by a number of employers in the study that women are "naturally" good at them. The content of many of these jobs is often related to women's domestic labour where women provide services for men (Barrett, 1980:208). Thus the household sexual division of labour is reinforced in the labour market.

While women are concentrated in the secondary sector of the labour market, they are in a weak position should there be a change in the employment situation. Although in this survey redundancy was not a problem for women workers, other recent studies have found that women in the secondary sector face greater problems than men with changes in the economic situation (Hancock, 1981). Therefore women are likely to form a latent group of reserve workers which is called upon when there is a shortage of male workers and discarded when no longer needed.

This study has considered the relationship between women's domestic role and their labour force participation from the employers' viewpoint. It has shown how employers' perception of women's domestic responsibilities help to maintain sexual divisions in the labour market by keeping women in less responsible positions and in areas which have been traditionally seen as women's work. Employers hold a key position to the entry of women to the labour market. It should be noted that employers per se did not develop this belief but that it is an integral part of social organisation in the wider society. For instance, state

policies about the role of the family in society uphold the belief that women's role is in the home (Wilson, 1977; McIntosh, 1978).

Moreover, women themselves have been conditioned into believing that their domestic role takes priority over other aspects of their lives including their ability to undertake paid work. The way female employees view their position was not investigated in this study. Other studies have examined the attitudes of mothers to find out how they view the relationship between their domestic role and their labour force participation (Freeman, 1982; SROW, 1976). It has been found that many women believe that they are only capable of doing routine work which does not require mental ability (Rowbotham, 1981:84; Freeman, 1982:150).

In spite of the close relationship between women's domestic role and their labour force participation, labour market theories which have been used to analyse women's position in the labour force do not consider the way in which their family obligations limit their participation in the labour force. Therefore, these theories can only partially explain the nature of women's paid work. They cannot show why women as a group are segregated into certain sectors of the labour market, nor why they are viewed as a flexible and disposable source of labour. A theoretical approach which adequately explains women's labour force participation must consider the household sexual division of labour as well as the structure of the labour market.

The importance of such a theoretical approach is highlighted in this study, in which it has been shown that employers consider how women's domestic role will affect their work performance when they recruit women and make their decisions on promotion. Many women believe that their domestic role should take priority and accept the limitations which restrict their ability to participate in the labour force. While the belief in the priority of women's domestic role continues to be widely held, the position of women in the labour market will continue to fluctuate according to labour market conditions and women will continue to be concentrated in the lower levels of the labour market. Moreover, the right of women to work will continue to be the subject of debate. Before women's labour force position can change however, changes in attitudes towards women in the workplace will be necessary. Furthermore, the household sexual division of labour will need to be altered so that women are released from the principal responsibility of domestic labour. Women might then be freer to participate on the labour market on more equal terms with men.

APPENDIX ONE: RESEARCH METHODS

This appendix provides details of the methodology used in the survey of employers in Palmerston North, the results of which were described in Chapter Four. This appendix contains a description of the population from which the sampling frame was drawn up, the sampling procedure, brief details of the interview schedule and the interview procedure.

Population

The population for this survey was based on businesses listed in the Department of Labour industrial divisions used for their analyses of labour market factors. I felt that the use of these divisions was appropriate because they provided an accurate and up to date list of firms. Moreover I had used Department of Labour statistics to demonstrate how the labour market theories have been used to describe women's participation in the labour force.

The Department of Labour breaks down the workforce into nine industrial divisions or groups:

Forestry and Logging
 Mining and Quarrying
 Manufacturing
 Electricity, Gas and Water
 Construction
 Wholesale, Retail and Restaurants
 Transport and Communication
 Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services
 Community and Personal Services

This survey was limited to the industry groups which contained large numbers of women in certain areas within those industries. This limitation was in line with the aim of this thesis to examine the position of women in the labour force.

The survey was restricted to the Palmerston North urban district for practical research purposes, namely, time and cost. In this district women are concentrated in five of the Department of Labour industrial groups.

	males	females	% females
Community and personal services	5075	6082	54%
Wholesale, retail, restaurants	2898	2742	48%
Manufacturing	4335	1747	28.7%
Transport and communication	1710	1037	37.7%
Finance, insurance, business services	818	895	52%

(Labour Department Quarterly Employment Survey for the
 Palmerston North Employment District, February 1983)

Only two of these industry groups were included in this survey: manufacturing; finance, insurance, etc. The reasons for excluding the other three groups were firstly because, in view of the large number of different types of businesses in the district, a more satisfactory and thorough study could be achieved by narrowing the variety of jobs covered by the survey. Secondly the survey was limited to the private sector, also to narrow the scope of the survey. These limitations effectively removed three industry groups from the survey: community and personal services; transport and communication; wholesale, retail and restaurants. Although there are large numbers of women in these groups, jobs in the first two groups are predominantly in the public sector - teachers, nurses, telephone operators. In the wholesale, retail and restaurant trades there are a number of different types of business each employing a small number of employees in many small firms which are unlikely to have an explicit employment policy.

At an early stage in this project the Research and Planning Division of the Department of Labour was approached for help with access to the businesses in the two chosen groups in the Palmerston North employment district. After establishing that the project was in the public interest, the Department allowed confidential access to their Central Register of Business Establishments (CARB). The computer list from this register yielded the information required with the name and postal address of each firm in the two industrial groups sought, the number of full-time and part-time employees and industry description. This list was divided into five size groups

ranging from 1 to 51+ employees. Breakdown of the number of employees by sex was not possible. The Labour Department employment district (Palmerston North urban) figures used earlier to decide which industry codes to use, were again used, this time to ascertain which of the chosen codes were unlikely to employ women, e.g., engineers, concrete product manufacturing. Firms fitting these industry descriptions were then excluded from the study.

A selection process to take account of the sexual segregation of the labour market was applied only to the manufacturing industrial code and the type of firms selected included such areas of manufacturing as food, clothing, printing and plastics. All the businesses under the finance, insurance etc industrial code were included in the sampling frame. This group covered lawyers, accountants, real estate firms, banks and insurance companies. In line with the decision to exclude retail/restaurant trades for reasons of size, the two smallest size groups (1 and 2-10) on the CARB register were excluded.

Although it would have been interesting to have surveyed industries where women do not usually work, this is another research topic. The sexual division of labour is demonstrated in the segregation of the labour market into "men's jobs" and "women's jobs". The unexamined assumptions of the sexual division of labour in the labour force were highlighted in the course of my survey. One refusal was on the grounds that the firm had no women working there. It was therefore assumed that their firm would be of no use to my

study. In two other instances, my introductory letter was given to the persons (one male, one female) who were responsible for employing clerical and typing staff. In both these cases the male staff were therefore excluded from the survey. These examples could be an indication I might have got a poor response if I had not made the decision to survey industries where I could expect a significant number of women to be employed.

In summary then the sampling frame consisted of businesses in two industrial groups:

1. Finance, insurance, real estate, business services,
2. Manufacturing.

The latter group was stratified to include only those firms where women were likely to be employed. Three size groups were used in both industrial groups:

11-20	36 units of analysis
21-50	22 units of analysis
51+	16 units of analysis
Total	74 units of analysis

Sampling Procedure

Time limitations precluded a survey of all seventy-four firms in the sampling frame which would have given a more valid representation of the views of employers in the industrial areas chosen for this research. I decided to conduct 30 interviews and draw the sample in the same proportion from each of the three size groups. Fifty-five per cent of the sampling frame gave a sample of 41 proportionately across the three size groups, which allowed for some extra units in

each group to cover non-respondents and still retain the required number of interviews.

Size Group	Total	No. Req'd for Sample	Total No. Sampled	Oversampling No.
11-20	36	14	20	6
21-50	22	9	12	3
51+	16	7	9	2
Total	74	30	41	11

The firms included in the sampling frame were listed and numbered in the order in which they appeared on the CARB register. The sample was drawn from the three lists using a table of random numbers. The last numbers drawn comprised the oversample.

For the pilot study, the table of random numbers was used to select four firms from the main sample, two from the size group with the largest number of firms, 11-20, and one each from the 21-50 and 51+ size groups. This number was in approximate proportion to the number in the total sample. Drawing a sample instead of surveying the whole industrial group in Palmerston North meant that one major occupational group, real estate, was excluded as no real estate firms were drawn in the sample. Building societies were also excluded by the decision to survey only the firms in the 11 - 20 size groups and larger. All the building societies had a staff ten or less.

Interview Schedule

The interview schedule used in this study was designed to discover the factors which affect the employment of women in:

1. the secondary sector of the labour market;
2. a narrow range of occupations within that sector.

Although many of the questions sought information about general employment patterns, there was an emphasis on information about married women. Ideas came from two previous studies of employers' attitudes towards married women, one in New Zealand in 1971 (SROW - Why Employ Women) and one in Britain in 1968 (Klein - Britain's Married Women Workers). Both these studies were carried out in times of full employment. As I was planning to undertake a study at a time of considerable unemployment for people in many sectors of the New Zealand workforce, the interview schedule had to address the problem somewhat differently. The effect, if any, on women's labour force participation of recent legislation, such as the Equal Pay Act (1972) and the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Act (1980), also had to be considered. A discussions of conclusions reached is contained in Chapter Five.

A copy of the interview schedule is included in Appendix Two.

Interview Procedure

An initial letter (See Appendix Two) explaining the purpose and the procedure of the study was sent to the four employers sampled for

the pilot study. Each of these employers responded favourably to the request, though it took time to arrange a mutually suitable time for interviewing the respondents. These interviews took around 45 minutes each to conduct. As a result of the pilot interviews, some alterations were made to the schedule. Questions on retirement were eliminated as the information gained did not seem to add to the purpose of the survey. Other questions were repositioned or reworded in order to make the interview flow more smoothly. After the pilot interviews were conducted, the remaining 26 letters were sent out. The response rate was good in the two largest size groups - 100% in the 51+ group and 75% in the 21- 50 size group. In the 51+ group the oversample was not used. In the 21-50 group the three firms in the oversample were used to reach the required number of interviews. One respondent from the main sample replied too late (three months after the initial letter was sent out) to be included. Several respondents needed a reminder, first by letter and some later by telephone, to obtain a response.

The response rate in the 11-20 size group was low and tended to validate the rationale for excluding firms with a small number of employees. Of the 14 interviews hoped for from this group, only 10 were conducted after approaching 19 firms, a 53% response rate. One problem arose with a firm which had several branches in Palmerston North. Their employment procedure was conducted on a regional basis, not by each individual branch. These branches could not therefore be easily included in the survey. Two branches of this firm were included in the oversample of the 11-20 size group but were not

included in the interviews. This could have an effect on the results of the survey as the firm is a large employer in the Palmerston North district. Negative responses were returned with either no reasons given or such reasons as:

- pressure of business
- manager overseas (2 responses)
- survey not really applicable to the type of business (1 response)

This last response has been discussed earlier in this Appendix in respect of the unexamined assumptions of the sexual division of labour. The respondent felt that the staffing position in his firm was not relevant to my survey because there were no women working there. In a follow-up phone call I had no success in encouraging those who replied negatively to change their minds and take part.

Although six months had elapsed from the time the CARB register was reproduced to the time the study was carried out, all firms approached were still in existence and were at the same address. Soon after positive responses were received, a telephone call was made to the person to be interviewed to arrange a time for the interview (the introductory letter stipulated the person responsible for employment of staff). Because of delays due to slow responses, sending of follow-up letters and then initial letters to the firms in the oversample, the interviewing was spread over three months from April to June 1983.

The actual interview was soon streamlined after the pilots and took on average 30 minutes. The interview schedule was semi-structured but to save time and for accuracy, a tape recorder was taken along to each interview and used so that not all the answers were written down word for word. The respondents were first asked if they minded the use of the tape recorder. One or two were dubious but after assurance that it would save their time, would lead to more accurate results and the tapes would be wiped as soon as the study was over, all agreed to have the interview recorded. Most respondents seemed to forget or ignore the presence of the recorder. Only one person made some frank comments immediately the recorder was turned off (these comments were noted as soon as practicable), and one person suggested it be turned off while he looked up some points in the employment manual.

The tapes were not totally transcribed afterwards but all relevant information was noted accurately. The intonation of the voice of the respondent was noted if it held some interest. The combination of a structured interview schedule and tape recorder was a technique which worked well in this situation. The saving in time was important for the respondents who were mostly very busy business people, while the information on the tape proved valuable to the researcher even if somewhat time consuming to "transcribe".

Analysis of the interview material took the form of a discussion of the findings as they related to the reserve army of labour theory and the dual labour market theory theories. Quotations from the

respondents were used to illustrate how the theories were relevant to women's labour force participation.

A statistical sheet was left with each respondent to be posted back when completed. Out of the 26 interviews conducted, 21 respondents completed the statistical sheets and returned them. This was a 81% response rate. Almost all the answers were in usable form. Respondents were asked to provide information relating to the employees in their firm. Information sought included the number of employees by sex, marital status, occupations, incomes and length of employment. The information obtained from this sheet was analysed using SPSS and Minitab packages. The results of the statistical analysis were incorporated in the discussion in Chapter Four.

Two weeks after the interviews took place, a letter of thanks was sent to the respondents. A postscript was added to the letters as a reminder to those respondents who had not returned the statistical sheet.

Evaluation of the Methodology

Information on the respondents' attitudes and beliefs was sought by way of open-ended questions, which gave the respondents the opportunity to discuss their attitudes as fully as they wanted to. Some researchers attempt to measure attitudes on scales which cannot really give any depth of meaning to qualitative concerns. A quantitative method was used for the selection method and for

background information. It is unlikely that the businessmen and women I sought to interview would have agreed to participate in a survey where respondents were selected in a random manner. This was highlighted by the number of respondents who asked how they had been selected, sometimes before they agreed to take part.

It was also more appropriate to collect the statistical data about employees by a quantitative method. Only five respondents failed to return the statistical sheets which were to provide this data.

There was one major disadvantage with this survey in that I only gained one side of the picture. Ideally interviews with a selection of female employees in the sampled firms could be expected to provide extremely valuable information to compare with the views given by management. Such an investigation was beyond the scope of this study. Another disadvantage was highlighted in the sampling method. Drawing a sample meant that one occupational group was excluded, a deficiency which would not have existed had all the firms in the sampling frame been surveyed. Time was the factor responsible for this deficiency.

In surveying such a small number of firms (twenty-six), from several different categories, it was difficult to draw conclusions satisfactorily. All I could do was discuss findings in relation to official statistics and existing research.

On the positive side however, I was able to confirm official statistics on women's position in the labour force. I was also able to examine the reasons why women are still predominantly in a narrow range of low paid occupations in spite of legislative changes which provide greater opportunities for them to participate in the labour force equally with men. The taped interviews were very useful in providing an accurate record of the interviews. From the tapes I was able to gain valuable information on the attitudes of employers towards their female employees and how they saw the relationship between women's paid work and their domestic responsibilities.

APPENDIX TWO

A. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

This survey is part of a wider survey of the participation of women in the workforce in New Zealand since the First World War. As the main feature in recent years has been the increased participation of married women, the study will focus on that group within the workforce. This survey however involves questions about a variety of aspects of the current labour force, with some questions specifically about married women.

Not all the questions will necessarily be relevant to your firm, but in the interests of an unbiased survey, I will ask you all the questions.

First of all I would like some general information about this firm.

1 Name

2 Name of respondent

3 Your position in the firm is?

4 Do you have responsibility for recruiting staff? yes/no.

5 What is the main area of business that the firm is involved in?

6 In broad categories, could you give me an idea of the different types of work your employees are concerned with?

a) breakdown by department, divisions or sections

b) chain or hierarchy of responsibility in management

7 Are you an independent organisation or a branch of a larger organisation?

Independent/branch

(IF BRANCH) Where is your head office?

Is your employment policy decided

locally

regionally

nationally

other

8 Regardless of the level at which policy is made, could you briefly explain your recruitment policy? (PROMPT) eg, qualifications

preferred age

experience

sex

Do you ask about marital status?

suitability for the particular job being applied for

8(a) How do you determine suitability?

9 If a vacancy occurs, do you automatically advertise outside the firm for a replacement or do you consider your present staff first?

9(a) If your decision depends on the particular situation, in what situations would you advertise outside?

in what situations would you consider staff first?

10 Do you have any jobs for which you would prefer
male staff? yes/no.
female staff? yes/no.

11 (IF YES TO EITHER) What are those jobs?

12 What are the reasons for such preferences?

13 Are there any jobs which have previously been considered male jobs and which are now done by females? Yes/no.

(IF YES) Could you give me some examples?

14 What about the opposite situation - that of men doing jobs previously done by women? Yes/no.

(IF YES) Could you give me some examples?

15 Are there any women in management positions in this firm? Yes/No.

(IF YES) (a) how many?

(b) what are their positions or titles?

(IF NO) (c) what do you see as the reasons for this situation?

eg, -no applicants

-policy of firm

-lack of suitable applicants

-other

16 What, if any, is their involvement in decision making?

17 Could you explain your policy regarding promotion within the organisation? eg, What criteria do you use when deciding on promotions?

18 Do you have any special training for personnel moving into senior positions? Yes/no.

18(a) (IF YES) Could you explain what is involved?

18(b) (IF NO) How then do people know what is involved in senior or management positions?

19 Do you think women have the same opportunity as men to reach such positions in this firm? Yes/No.

(PROMPT) officially?

in reality?

Any other comments?

20 In the case of a woman applying for promotion, do you consider any criteria that you do not consider for a man? Yes/no.

20(a) (IF YES) What?

20(b) (IF NO) PROMPT. Not even family commitments? Yes/No.

Any other comments?

21 Do you have any policy in respect of employing women with dependent children, ie, children under 16 years? Yes/no.

21(a) (IF YES) Could you tell me about that policy?

21(b) (IF NO) So women having dependents is not a factor taken into account in recruiting decisions?

22 When interviewing married women do you ask them if they have any dependent children? Yes/No.

(a) if they have, do you ask about their child care arrangements? Yes/no.

(b) Is your firm concerned about preschool care? Yes/no.
after school care? Yes/no.
school holidays? Yes/no.

23 Has this firm ever provided child care facilities for employees' children? Yes/No.

23(a) (IF YES) Is it still operative? Yes/no.

23(b) (IF NO) Are there any circumstances under which your firm would consider setting up a child care centre to help provide for adequate child care at or near your business?

eg, recruitment of staff?

in times of full employment?

24 What happens to her job when a female employee leaves during pregnancy?

25 If she wishes to return after her baby is born, what provisions if any, do you have for maternity leave?

25(a) (IF YES) Are they in line with the relevant award? Yes/no.

25(b) (IF YES) How many women have taken advantage of the maternity leave provisions

-since 1980?

-prior to 1980? (if there were any in force then).

25(c) (IF NO PROVISIONS) Are you aware of the legal position re maternity leave?

26 What do you think are the advantages of maternity leave for the employer?

-Disadvantages?

27 If there are no maternity leave provisions, how does a woman who wants to keep her job, manage to do that?

(PROMPT) sick leave?

annual leave?

28 If a woman takes maternity leave, how is her income affected on her return to work?

-how is her position in the firm affected?

29 If women have been out of the workforce for some time, say 5 years, do you encourage them to undertake retraining before returning, even to their old job? yes/no.

(IF YES) (a) Does this apply across the board? yes/no

or just to specific jobs? yes/no

(IF YES) Please specify what jobs and reason for encouraging retraining for them.

30 Do you organise any retraining courses/seminars within the firm? Yes/no.

30(a) (IF YES) could you briefly describe the course organisation and content?

30(b) (IF NO) In what ways then does your firm suggest that women undertake the retraining that is necessary?

31 Do you have any jobs of a similar nature which are done by men and women? yes/no.

(IF YES) How do their salary levels compare?

32 Could you give me an indication of the criteria you use when deciding on the level of income for employees?

(PROMPT) eg, length of service

previous experience

other

33 Are these criteria applied to women and men in the same way, or are there some differences? Please comment.

34 Are you aware of any noticeable differences within your firm since the Equal Pay Act was passed in 1972? Eg, in what ways has it affected

1) staff-employee recruitment?

2) prices/costs to consumers?

3) level of production (if applicable)

35 Has this firm had to lay off any employees since the beginning of 1982? Yes/no.

35(a) (IF YES) What criteria did your firm use when faced with making staff redundant?

35 (b) (IF NO) What criteria would your firm use if faced with making staff redundant?

(IF NOT PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED)) - 36 Does the situation where there is another breadwinner in the family affect your decision? Yes/no.

(IF YES) in what way?

I would now like to ask some questions about married women in particular.

37 In general, how do married women compare with unmarried women or men:

1) for regular attendance - better
- as good
-not as good

2) for labour turnover - higher
- as high
- lower

Have you any further comments to make on this subject?

38 Does the treatment of married women employed by your firm differ from that of unmarried women in your employment in any of the following ways?

- shift work

- part-time work

- full-time work

- promotion

- conditions of service (leave etc) (INCLUDE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS, WHAT HAPPENS WHEN FAMILY MEMBERS ARE SICK ETC)

- restriction to certain jobs

39 Has there been any significant change in the number of married women your firm has employed in the last 5 years? Yes/no.

(IF YES) (a) What are these changes?

(b) Why have these changes occurred?

40 Finally could you tell me what you think are the main issues facing employers today, particularly relating to employment and unemployment?

STATISTICAL SHEET

Please complete as fully as your records will allow.

Name of firm: _____

Number of employees: Males _____
Females _____
Total _____

Number of full time employees: Males _____
Females _____
Total _____

Number of part time employees: Males _____
Females _____
Total _____

How many people work in the main area of business and how many are involved in back up services, eg, clerical?

	Males		Females	
	part time	full time	part time	full time
Main area				
Back up services, 1 _____				
2 _____				
3 _____				
4 _____				

Approximate age of employees:

	under 20	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60+
Males part time						
full time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Females part time						
full time						

Marital status of employees:

	Males	Females
single		
married/de facto		
widowed/separated/divorced		

Number of employees with dependent children:

	pre-school	primary school age	secondary school age
male part time			
full time			
female part time			
full time			

Note: Age of youngest child counts.

Number of personnel in management positions: Males _____
Females _____

Age and marital status of personnel in management:

Age Group	<u>Males</u>			<u>Females</u>		
	single	married	separated etc	single	married	separated etc
20 - 29						
30 - 39						
40 - 49						
50 - 59						
60+						

How many of your present staff have had:

	Males	Females
less than one year's service		
over one but less than two years		
over two but less than five years		
over five years		

How many of your staff have left their jobs in the last twelve months? (Do not include those who have been made redundant.)

Males _____

Females _____

Could you give the number and their reasons for leaving.

	males	females
Reasons		
another job in the same town		
another job in another area		
family related reasons eg, pregnancy, marital breakup.		
transfer of spouse		
other work related, give details, _____		
other _____		

How many staff members have been made redundant since 1982?

Males _____

Females _____

Annual Absenteeism Figures by marital status and sex.

	number and %	unmarried women	married women	unmarried men	married men
1980					
1981					
1982					

Salaries: % \$ to males _____

% \$ to females _____

Average weekly hours - males _____

Average weekly hours - females _____

Massey University

PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND

TELEPHONES, 69-079, 69-089, 69-099.

In reply please quote:

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Your organisation has been selected to take part in a survey of employment patterns in Palmerston North. The emphasis of this study is on the participation of married women in the labour force.

I am undertaking this project as a graduate student and staff member at Massey University. In addition to allowing me to complete my degree, the data that is collected should provide employers with useful information about the employment situation in Palmerston North. Such information is of particular value in a time of changing employment patterns and new technology.

Selection of the sample has been by random statistical methods and your participation will help to ensure a high response rate and a fair representation of the views of all employers.

Information will be collected via an interview with the person in your organisation who is responsible for the employment of staff. The interview should take between one-half and three-quarters of an hour. Interviews will take place during

Any information concerning your organisation will be treated in complete confidence and will be used for academic study only. Your organisation, or any members of it, will not be in any way identifiable in the written report of this study. A summary of the report will be made available to your organisation.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please complete and return the enclosed form by This will enable me to make an appointment for
an interview with a minimum disruption to your organisation.

If you require any further information about this project, please do not hesitate to contact me at - 69-099 ext 2357 (work)
- 76-125 (home)

I look forward to your participation in this study. Your co-operation will help to ensure its success.

Survey on Participation of Married Women in the Labour Force.

Response Sheet

We agree to participate: Yes/No.

We are unable to participate because _____

Name of Firm _____

For Firms Taking Part in the Survey.

Name of person to be contacted (person responsible for employment of staff):

Position held in the firm: _____

Business telephone: _____

Location(if different from postal address): _____

Please return this form by _____ in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope.
Thank you.

Massey University

PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND

TELEPHONES, 69-079, 69-089, 69-099.

In reply please quote:

Dear Sir/Madam,

Survey on Participation of Married Women in the Labour Force

Recently I wrote to you requesting your co-operation in this survey. So far there has been a gratifying response to the survey and I have already successfully conducted many of the interviews, which are completed within half an hour. To ensure a high degree of validity and reliability however, I would very much appreciate your participation. I realise that you are already very busy and that other pressing matters may have meant that you have overlooked returning the response sheet. I would like you to return this sheet indicating whether or not you agree to participate in the survey. Your participation will help to make this study truly representative.

I have enclosed a copy of the original letter, a response sheet, supporting letter from Professor Fraser, and a stamped addressed return envelope in case they have been lost in the mail. Please be assured that the information you give will be kept strictly confidential.

Should you have any questions regarding this survey please do not hesitate to contact me at

69099 ext. 2357 (work)
76125 (home)

I am looking forward to your favourable response.

Massey University

PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND

TELEPHONES, 69-079, 69-089, 69-099.

In reply please quote:

Thank you for your co-operation in my recent survey. I am at present collating the information collected and hope to have a report completed later this year from which I will make a summary to send to you.

Thanks to the co-operation of you and a number of other employers in Palmerston North, the survey has been very successful and I hope the results will prove informative to you as well as to me for my thesis.

Thank you very much.

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