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No Guarantees

The Experiences of Women in
Casual Work

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ABSTRACT

Over the last few decades there has been a growing number of casual workers in New Zealand. Many of these workers are not adequately counted in statistics and little is known about the nature of their work or the impact this has on their lives. It is assumed that the majority of these casual workers are women (Davidson and Bray, 1994, Else, 1996, Shirley, 1996)

This thesis examines the experiences of women in casual work. The primary source of data for this thesis is twelve indepth interviews with women involved in casual work. The women were encouraged to tell their own stories and relate their experiences. The thesis examines why these women are in casual work and examines what, if any, choice was available to the women.

The research investigates the working conditions of the women's casual work. It then looks at the impact that casual work has on the women's personal lives. The women relate experiences which show how casual work has affected their finances, their health and their families.

The thesis highlights how the different circumstances of each woman governs the extent to which casual work affects them. The results showed that while casual work was a positive experience for some women, it was a negative experience for others who were more vulnerable to the insecurity casual work can bring. Generally those women who were not reliant on the income from their casual work to provide for the needs of themselves and their family had more power to negotiate better conditions of work than women who relied on the casual work to provide a basic household income. The degree of need was also a predicator of the negative impact casual work had on the personal life of some women.

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DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

A GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THIS RESEARCH

Many of the terms used in this research either possess more than one definition or have not been ascribed a universal definition in the past. To aid clarity of understanding and to prevent misinterpretation I am outlining here the definitions of various terms and phrases that are utilised in this research. Some of these definitions have been sourced from various institutions and organisations while others are my own working definitions. These are not ultimate definitions of the terms or phrases but merely represent the manner in which such terms and phrases are used in this research.

A few of the terms used in this research are too complicated to be sufficiently addressed in table format. These terms are explored first in greater depth. The remainder of the terms follow those of women, work and casualisation.

CONCEPTS

Women

In this research the concept of 'woman' will be interpreted as the sex, in a physical sense only, of woman as opposed to man. This does not entail all the gender roles or characteristics that are attributed to each gender. It is merely a statement of biological sex. The sex of all participants in this research was self defined by the participants as female.

Work

'Work', the noun, should be defined as;

- 1 the application of mental or physical effort to a purpose; the use of energy.
- 2 a task to be undertaken.(Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1992;1412)

However, the concept in general usage today has been altered by the application of a caveat 'for pay or monetary recompense' after such a definition. That is to say that 'work' is often only called 'work' if it is done for pay. So pervasive is this understanding

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of work that the Government of India stated that '[a] man or woman...producing or making something only for the domestic consumption of the household and not for sale....is not a worker' (cited in Waring 1996). This is a deviance from the original meaning of the word.

The result of this has been the emergence of the phrase 'unpaid work' to refer to work which is undertaken without monetary reward. A countermeasure to this need to define work conducted in the home or elsewhere for no pay (the majority of which is carried out by women) as 'unpaid' has been, in turn, to define work done for money as 'paid' work. This places the onus on paid work to define itself as a subset of 'work', rather than allowing it to claim the concept for its exclusive use, therefore undermining other forms of work.

Since this is a feminist piece of research, I view it as necessary to continue this line of action of referring to work undertaken for monetary compensation as 'paid work'. Therefore where work is referred to as simply 'work' it encompasses the full meaning of the concept as paid and unpaid work. However, for the purpose of ease where 'work' is incorporated in a phrase, such as 'casual work', 'part-time work' or 'full-time work', it is allowed to be modified by the preceding word and takes on the contextual meaning of 'paid work'. I recognise that this may in some circumstances lead to slight confusion but I deem it necessary given the theoretical perspective of this research.

Casualisation

The concept of casualisation has arisen from the increasing number of people who are employed in casual work positions. Casual work is defined as paid work which has no set number of hours and which can vary from week to week. Casual work hours are often handed out on a week to week basis where the worker is unsure of which hours they will be expected to work in a fortnight's time. A casual worker may be expected to make themselves available to work whichever hours they are allocated regardless of personal convenience or inconvenience.

The 'casualisation of labour' refers, therefore, to the increasing percentage of the labour force that is employed on such a basis.

On occasions the term 'casualisation of labour' has been used to incorporate the increasing number of people who are employed not only in casual, but also part-time, contract and piecemeal positions. In this research I shall focus on casual work positions but it must be acknowledged that some literature (see Shirley 1996) interprets the concept in a broader context.

DEFINITIONS

These are the definitions of terms used in this thesis. These are not definitive definitions but relate only to the context of terms in this piece of research.

Casual Work	Work which may or may not be ongoing where the number of hours worked (and sometimes the timing of those hours) varies from week to week with little or no guarantee of a maximum or minimum number of hours to be worked each week.
Casualisation of Labour	This term refers to the trend of the increased percentage of jobs in the overall job market which are defined as 'casual work'.
Contract Work	Work where an individual is treated as a company and is contracted to do a certain amount or piece of work for a set price. The contractor is treated as self employed.
Employed	The definition of employed used includes all people aged 15 and over in employment for pay, profit or payment in kind, or those people who worked unpaid in a family business (Statistics New Zealand (SNZ) Website: http://www.stats.govt.nz).
Hours Worked	Hours worked exclude unpaid work other than work performed in a family business and unpaid overtime. Hours worked in all jobs are counted, not just the main job (SNZ).
Household	A household consists of either one person who usually resides alone or two or more people who usually reside together and share facilities (such as eating facilities, cooking facilities, bathroom and toilet facilities, a living area) (SNZ).
Intensification	The shortening of shifts (fewer hours per shift) which allows employees to work harder for a shorter period of time and cuts down on the number of paid work breaks.
Labour force	The labour force consists of people aged 15 years and over who regularly work for one or more hours per week for financial gain, or as an unpaid workers in a family business. Also included are

people who are unemployed, actively seeking and available to work either full-time or part-time work (SNZ, <http://www.stats.govt.nz>).

Labour Force Participation Rate	The labour force participation rate is the percentage of the population aged 15 years or over who were either employed or unemployed and seeking work (SNZ).
Labour Force Status	Labour force status is the position of all people aged 15 and over in relation to the labour market (SNZ).
Overemployment	When a individual is employed to work more hours than they desire or need.
Part-time Work	Regular ongoing employment of 1-29 hours per week where the conditions of permanent work are also met.
Permanent Work	Regular ongoing work with the same employer where the days and hours worked remain the same week to week (or fortnightly or monthly).
Primary Labour Force	Labour force concentrated in the primary labour sector and characterised by what are traditionally viewed as low-skilled and low paid jobs which require relatively little training and offer relatively poor wages and conditions (Marshall 1994).
Secondary Labour Force	Labour force concentrated in the secondary labour sector and characterised by what are traditionally viewed as higher grade, higher status jobs and better paid jobs (compared to those for the primary labour force) with better terms and conditions (ibid).
Underemployment	When a individual is not employed to work as many hours as they desire or need.
Unpaid Work	Unpaid work includes activities which are undertaken either for persons living in the same household as the respondent; or for persons outside of the respondent's household for which the performance of those activities is not paid (SNZ).

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Work Force Includes all those people in the labour force and also all those aged 15 and over who are involved in or seeking unpaid work.

PERSONAL PROFILE

HELLO

Before entering into this research I would like to provide you with a picture of who I am and to situate myself both alongside and in this research. I shall start by giving you my biographical details and then I shall explain my relationship to this particular topic.

I am a young Pakeha women in my mid twenties. I come from a lower middle class, pakeha, nuclear family with two siblings, although at any given time a number of 'extras' are included within the family circle. I spent most of my formative years in a small New Zealand town of about 2,500 inhabitants with a strong Maori population. I am now married and although I live in a city I have come to appreciate the strong sense of community that can be found in small town New Zealand more than I ever did while I lived there.

I studied for my BA in Spanish and political studies at Auckland University. It was during my time at this institution that I became exposed to explicit feminist theoretical teaching. I learnt (although hesitantly at first) from this teaching and consequently adjusted my world view to incorporate my new understanding. In 1996 I embarked on a Master of Arts degree in Social Policy at Massey University. By this stage I had fostered a deep desire for equality and social justice. This arose from both my Christian and my feminist beliefs.

While studying for the first year of this degree I became interested in issues pertaining to women and work and the changing nature of work. I had had personal experience in casual work before I started this thesis and the power imbalance I experienced had frustrated me. However I heard that casual work was supposed to be a positive thing for women. There is a dearth of information on this issue and thus a thesis came to be.

Since embarking on this thesis I have taken up a position of casual employment. I believed that my prior knowledge of the problems that could arise out of such a position would enable me to protect myself. I found that this was not the case. While my knowledge of labour force issues and the rights of a casual employee do probably

PERSONAL PROFILE

clothe me with slightly more power than I may otherwise have possessed, the greater understanding I have of both the assumptions and concepts involved in casual work and the impact that this casual work can have on the rest of my life brings me immense frustration. This demonstrates that research and knowledge alone are impotent unless they are used to educate and promote social change. I pray that in some small way this thesis may work towards this.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade a 'casualisation of labour' is thought to have occurred in the New Zealand labour force (Brosnan 1991, Davidson and Bray 1994, Else 1996, Shirley 1996). This term refers to the increasing trend for employers to fill vacancies with casual¹ rather than permanent workers. Very little quantitative or qualitative study has been done on the casual labour force that has arisen to meet this demand. Statistics New Zealand (SNZ) currently collects no comprehensive data on casual work. It is assumed in New Zealand that as the majority of part-time workers are women, the majority of casual workers will also be women (Davidson and Bray 1994, Else 1996, Shirley 1996).

While many arguments have surfaced expounding why casual work is either beneficial or detrimental to women, to date almost no study has been conducted in New Zealand into the actual experiences of women in casual work. This thesis is a piece of exploratory research aimed at examining the experiences of women in casual work and discovering how their involvement in casual work has impacted on various areas of their lives.

The research has been based on and informed by a feminist theoretical perspective. This perspective has governed the approach to the research, the methods employed in the research and the manner in which relevant issues such as women and work and the changing nature of work have been addressed.

I shall now present an outline of this thesis. Chapter two provides a comprehensive literature review around the topic of women and casual work in New Zealand. The purpose of the literature review is to inform and guide the research. The literature review starts from a broad look at women and work, and then focuses on women's

¹ For the purposes of this study 'casual work' has been defined as work where the number of hours worked varies considerably from week to week with little or no guarantee of a set number of hours to be worked each week.

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participation in the labour force. It then narrows down to look specifically at women and part-time work and then casual work in a New Zealand context.

Chapter three describes the methodology on which this thesis was based and the methods used in the research. The method was informed by both the theoretical perspectives and the literature review. This chapter and the research aim to be as transparent as possible in line with the feminist basis of the research.

The first results of this research are presented in chapter four. In this chapter the participants involved in this research are introduced and a profile is given on each woman. All identifying characteristics have been deleted or altered. This chapter marks the beginning of the findings of the interviews that were conducted as the main source of information for this thesis. In the following three chapters information which was gathered from these interviews is presented. The analysis of this data takes place alongside the presentation of the results.

Chapter five looks at why women work in casual work. The reasons the women gave for entering employment and casual work are investigated. The amount of choice women had in the labour force and their ability to exercise this choice emerge as the key issues of this chapter. The debate around the exercising of choice and the complexities of this issue are highlighted.

The conditions of employment experienced by the women in casual work are examined in chapter six. Three areas are looked at here; the environment in which the women work, both physical and relational, the legal conditions under which the women are employed and the actual conditions in which the women work. One of the key issues of this chapter is the issue of power and how much power the women possess in relation to their employers. The last section on the actual conditions in which the women work portrays this power dynamic particularly well.

Chapter seven is the last chapter containing the presentation and analysis of the results of the interviews conducted for this research. This chapter focuses on the impact that casual work has had on the women's personal lives. This impact is divided into three sections; family, finance and health.

The final chapter, chapter eight, is the conclusion of this thesis and brings together all the information provided in the earlier chapters.

The information presented in this thesis offers a great insight into the experiences of women in casual work. This is an area in which there is little knowledge or information in New Zealand. This thesis is, however, a piece of exploratory research and, rather than offering definitive answers, is designed to provoke thought and to provide a basis for further research.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW

This study will examine the effects that the casualisation of labour has had on women in New Zealand. This literature review briefly explores and discusses the issues surrounding women and casual work in New Zealand. New Zealand literature has been used wherever possible and has been given preference in the later sections that deal specifically with the growth and effect of part-time work in New Zealand.

This has allowed me to build and develop this research on previous research explored. Before focusing directly on the issue of women and casual work it is important to step back further in the literature review and examine the issues of women and work, and women and the labour force in New Zealand. Such an approach will enable us to study the issue of women in casual work in New Zealand within the overall context of women and work. I have also, where appropriate, drawn on basic feminist principles to discuss the issues involved in this research. The structure of the literature review is as follows;

Women and Work

- The public/private divide
- Paid and unpaid work

Women in the Labour Force

- Women's participation in the labour force
- Women's location in the labour force
- Relevant Issues

Part-time Work

Growth in Part-time Work

- Status: which jobs are part-time jobs?

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- Why has this occurred?

Non-standard Work

- Casual work

Who has it Affected?

- Why do women work part-time and in casual work?

What are the Effects?

- Intensification
- Underemployment
- Insecurity of Income

Summary

The first section examining the relationship between women and work follows.

WOMEN AND WORK

The relationship between women and work has been well examined in feminist literature over the last few decades. The purpose of this first section is to summarise some of the main issues and concepts that have arisen from this body of literature. However to fully understand this relationship of women and work it is helpful to firstly examine the issue of the divide between the public life and private life which exists in western culture. It is from this public/private divide that the association of women with unpaid work in the home and men with paid work outside of the home has arisen.

The public/private divide

Life in a western culture has been largely divided into two worlds, those of the public and the private. This division between the public and private life is thought by some to have stemmed from ancient Greek thought (Cox and James 1987). In Greek thought base necessities of life, or those things of the 'flesh' were associated with the household and treated with a certain amount of contempt (Storkey 1995). The usefulness of such mundane and base things was only found in their necessity if a Greek man was to be free in society to pursue greater and higher activities of the 'spirit' (Cox and James 1987, Storkey 1995). Women, suited to procreation, were naturally

part of the private home life, part of the flesh, and were therefore not permitted access to the higher life which was the public.

This public/private divide still has significant meaning in the world today. One way of understanding the nature of this divide is through language. Some words which are portrayed as being associated with the public sphere are; paid, production, manufacture of goods and services, market, masculine, rational and ordered, whereas the private sphere is considered to be for 'family and friends', personal, emotional and a 'feminine domain' (McDowell and Pringle 1994; 122, 131). These two worlds are also often portrayed as a dichotomy. Everything must fit into one or the other, public or private, but there is no accepted overlap. This is emphasised by the division of the world into dualistic categories such as; society/family, work/domesticity, production/reproduction, outer/inner, impersonal/personal, freedom/necessity (Cox and James 1987).

This division has been 'used to justify the sexual division of labour; men work in the outside world and get paid for what they do, whereas women are housewives who don't get paid' (Cox and James 1987, 3). Thus we enter the paid and unpaid work division. The issue of paid and unpaid work will be expanded in the following section.

Paid and unpaid work

As outlined above, the world has been divided into public and private and so also has work taken on two separate identities, those of paid work and unpaid work. One is seen to be done in the home and the other at 'work'. Thus paid work has come to be viewed as part of the 'public' life while unpaid work belongs to the 'private' life. However as the terminology implies, the division encompasses more than just the domain in which work is conducted. One form of work exacts monetary compensation that the other does not.

Feminist literature points out that this dualism between paid and unpaid work and the assumption that unpaid work is done in the home and paid work at 'work' has not always been in place. Prior to the industrial revolution much of what we know as 'paid' work was actually undertaken at home. This included among other things, tending farms and elementary manufacturing. With the transition to 'industrial capitalist production' (McDowell and Pringle 1994) the separation of home and work arose. It was around this time that wage earners or 'workers' became known as 'productive' and

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all others, predominantly women, became known as 'unproductive' (Tong 1994). Marilyn Waring talks about this in her latest book under the heading 'The Rules on Work'. She discusses how those who are considered part of the paid work force are defined as 'producers' and considered 'economically active' (Waring 1996; 48), whereas others, who may do exactly the same work (the example Waring uses is the collecting, processing and applying of dung as a fertiliser) but who are not paid for it are not counted (in the United Nations System of National Accounts (UNSNA), measured or considered to be engaged in productive activity).

This labelling of some work as economically active and other work as inactive has various ramifications in a society which esteems only those things which possess economic value. As Elaine Storkey (1995) comments we can call something ugly, evil or a tragedy but until we call it uneconomic we have not questioned its right to exist (Storkey 1995). Unpaid work therefore becomes considered less valuable and less worthwhile than paid work.

McDowell and Pringle explain how this division between paid (usually situated outside of the home) and unpaid work (generally done at home) can lead to 'home' becoming subordinated to 'work' and how this can have a negative effect on women. Firstly, the division between home and work has led to paid work being accorded a greater value both in status and economic value over unpaid work. The experience of men in the work place has been privileged over that of women in the home (McDowell and Pringle 1994). This has meant that the skills that women have learnt and have utilised in the home have been undervalued, ignored and frequently not recognised in the paid work place. Thus women have been disadvantaged.

Another term which is used by Marxist feminists is the 'trivialisation of women's work' (Tong 1994). This refers to the occurrence where what is thought of as 'women's work' (work done in the home) becomes trivialised and viewed as less important than work which is both paid and done outside of the home.² As more women than men worked at home 'women's work' became subordinated to paid work and the status accorded to such work followed the same path. Work done outside of the home was thought to be

² Although there is paid work which is conducted in the home this is not necessarily considered to be 'women's work' although it may not be accorded the same status as paid work which is conducted outside of the home.

of greater importance and to require more skill than that which was conducted at home in private and for the benefit of the family.

This under-valuing of women's unpaid work has been transferred into the paid workforce, where women consistently earn less than men for jobs of equal value (Tong, 1994). Women predominate in lower paid, but not necessarily low skilled jobs. These jobs are not remunerated on a level equal to those jobs traditionally held by men of a similar skill level (Statistics New Zealand, 1994) because the skills in the jobs often held by women tend to be viewed as 'women's' and are therefore under-valued (Tong, 1994). This gendered job segregation that sees women congregate in low paid jobs is viewed by many as perpetuating the 'feminisation of poverty' (Davidson and Bray 1994, Tong 1994).

There is little argument that the majority of unpaid work in society is undertaken by women (New Zealand Department of Statistics (DOS) 1991, Waring 1996). This continues to be true even with the increased number of women in paid work. While the amount of unpaid work that a woman does tends to decrease slightly when she enters paid work, it does not decrease as much as the paid work increases (DOS 1993b, Else 1996). The deficit is also not generally made up by other members of the family. Such a scenario is justified by the assumption in society that women will be responsible for work done in the home (Cox and James 1987). This assumption is supported by characteristics which are commonly ascribed to women on the basis of their gender. Such characteristics mean that women are ideally suited to domestic tasks such as child rearing and housework (Cox and James 1987). Thus women are often expected to carry out these tasks irregardless of their involvement in the paid work force. This means that the woman is often left still doing the major part of the unpaid work as well as contributing to the financial stability of the household.

McDowell and Pringle (1994) pick up this thread when they tell us that the issue for women is not that they cannot obtain work but that they find themselves with an excess. The traditional working week consists of 37 to 40 hours (Briar 1992b). However, children are only at school 30 hours per week and given that it is illegal to leave a child under the age of 14 at home alone some supervision for the remaining seven to ten hours is required. The average working week is not designed for those who are caregivers for school aged children, but assumes that there is a support

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person to take care of these and other responsibilities, that is to engage in unpaid work (Briar 1992b). The support person is even more necessary in the increasing number of jobs which require the worker to put in more than 40 hours per week. So not only can it be harder for women to enter the workforce because of their unpaid work commitments but this also makes it more difficult for them to work full-time or any overtime (Pearce 1987). The solution is not solely to enable women equal access to paid work but to redistribute the overall work load equally (McDowell and Pringle 1994).

Another issue that arises here is the question of women's economic independence. The undervaluing of women's work and the greater burden of unpaid work that women carry results in women having on average a lower income than men who possess similar qualifications. For example, a woman with a post graduate degree earns, on average, less than a man with an under graduate degree and less than many men with Trade Certificates (SNZ 1994). The wage earner in most households is male and the main source of income in most households comes from the wage earner. In a traditional household this means that the woman is dependent upon the good will of the wage earner for her economic support (Briar 1997). Therefore many women are not economically independent and for some this means a loss of power in the household and in their relationships (Fleming and Easting 1994).

It is also true in society today that 'work is... the means by which people create their social identity' and 'if the work of a group of people is unvalued or undervalued those people are also deprived of status and power' (Briar 1997:3). So not only are many women economically dependent on a man but they also are accorded less status, power and position within society. In many cases this can mean that their voices are ignored.

This is the position of many women in society. This section has discussed how the division between paid and unpaid work has promoted and allowed this undervaluing of women's work and the impact that this has had on women. The following section focuses on women's participation in paid work and the labour force.

WOMEN IN THE LABOUR FORCE

In 1891 women constituted 18% of the labour force in New Zealand (Davies and Jackson 1993). In 1996 women counted for 46% (SNZ census 1996 web page table seven). While this shows a considerable growth, women's participation in the labour force in New Zealand is still less than in countries such as Sweden, France and the United States of America (Davidson, 1993). Nonetheless such figures indicate that there has been considerable change in women's relationship with the labour force and the way the labour force relates to women over the last century. However for reasons of brevity this literature review will focus on the changes that have occurred since the 1980s.

Women's participation in the labour force

Goodger (1993) of the Social Policy Agency, delivered a paper at the gender and ethnicity conference in Wellington titled *Women's Employment in the 1980s: Diversity and Divergence* (1993). In this paper she drew together comprehensive statistics on women's employment in New Zealand between 1981 and 1991. The data she used was sourced from the three censuses taken during this period. In her research Goodger examines two areas, labour force participation and nature of employment. She also looks at the age distribution of women in these two areas. Goodger defines labour force participation as being employed for more than 20 hours per week or unemployed and seeking work, and part-time employment as being employed 1-29 hours per week with 30 or more hours per week defined as full-time (Goodger 1993:218).

In the area of labour force participation Goodger discovered that;

- from 1951 until 1981 there was a 54 percent increase in women's participation in the labour force (ibid:218),
- from 1981 until 1986 this increased a further 17 percent (ibid:218), (during this period the employment participation figures for men increased at a much lower rate (ibid: 223)),
- from 1986 until 1991 there was actually a decrease in the percentage of women in the labour force (Goodger 1993; 218).

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The result of all these changes is that a greater proportion of the labour force is now female. In 1981 women counted for 38 percent of the labour force, and in 1991 the figure was 43 percent. However a breakdown of this last figure shows that only 36 percent of full-time workers were women but 76 percent of part-time workers were. Some women constituted just over a third of the total number of full-time workers and three quarters of all part-time workers.

An analysis of the labour force participation figures for women shows that different trends existed in different age groups. Between 1986 and 1991;

- there was a decrease in participation levels of women in the under 25 age group (ibid:219).
- there was an increase in participation rates for women aged 25-29 and 40-59, although this was at a slower rate than that of the previous ten years (ibid:220).

Goodger puts forth the 'decline in job opportunities for new entrants to the paid workforce and higher participation in education' (Goodger 1993; 219) as possible reasons for this decline in the labour force participation rates for younger women. Unfortunately Goodger does not break down these particular statistics into full-time and part-time employment.

Regarding the nature of women's employment Goodger discovered that;

- while the number of women employed in the part-time labour force increased the proportion of women in the labour force who work part-time stayed reasonably constant at approximately 31 percent between 1981 and 1991 (ibid:225),
- in 1991 women aged from 15 -24 were more likely to be employed part-time rather than full-time than they were in 1981. The reverse was true for women aged 25 and over who were less likely to be employed part-time rather than full-time for the corresponding dates (Goodger 1993; 227).

However, these statistics only say which type of work such women are more likely to be involved in if they are in the labour force and not whether they are more or less likely to actually be in the labour force at all. These statistics also do not tell us whether the majority of women working part-time are between 15 and 24 years old or 25 and over. Other sources do say the majority of part-time workers are married women often with

young children (Briar 1992b). A newer trend is for more older women with no dependent children to enter the part-time labour force (Briar 1992b).

Goodger also took her study further by attempting to identify predictors of part-time work amongst women in the labour force. She discovered that of all women in the labour force those who had a youngest child between the ages of 0-12 and those who had a partner with an income over \$50,000 were more likely to be working part-time than full-time and those with no partner or who identified themselves as Maori or Pacific Islander were more likely to be working full-time than part-time (Goodger 1993; 225). This concurs with Davidson and Bray (1994) who found that the increase in part-time work over full-time has been even more pronounced among married women.

Women's location in the labour force

What the above statistics do not show is that while women's participation in the labour force has increased considerably over the last few decades, women are still greatly over represented in low paid jobs (National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (NACEW) 1990). This is true for women who work both full-time and part-time. This split has been classified in two ways; horizontal gender segregation and vertical gender segregation (NACEW 1990).

Horizontal gender segregation refers to the concentration of women in particular occupations. The main occupations which contain a majority of women (even though there are more men than women in the labour force) are clerical and service occupations (Ministry of Women's Affairs 1997, NACEW 1990). In 1986 70% of the clerical work force in New Zealand was female (NACEW 1990) this encompassed 35% of the total female work force (ibid). Even within occupations there is still a large amount of gender segregation. For example within the professional/technical occupation the 40% of the group which are women are found in either the medical, dental, veterinary (all mainly nurses) or teaching groups (NACEW 1990). It is these occupations which contain a majority of women that have lower pay rates than occupations which are dominated by men. Vertical gender segregation refers to the position of women within industries (e.g. textile weaving, social and related community services). Women are found more often in low paid and low skilled jobs whereas men are more likely to be in supervisory or managerial positions, or in jobs with high pay,

status, or promotional possibilities (NACEW 1990). So both horizontal and vertical gender segregation within the labour force disadvantage women (Davidson 1993).

Relevant issues

An examination of the statistics of women in the labour force is not sufficient for us to understand the complete position of women in the labour force. As Davies and Jackson tell us;

'statistics cannot measure the structural barriers which hinder women's full participation in the paid labour market, nor can they quantify the overt and institutionalised sexism, and for some women racism which many women...encounter on a day to day basis.' (Davies and Jackson 1993, 11).

Davies and Jackson also state that woman's lower participation rates in the labour force and the increasing number of women in part-time work can be attributed to the greater amount of time that women spend in unpaid work compared with men. This higher load of unpaid work can create a conflict for women between their unpaid and paid work. It is thought that this is one of the contributing factors that can lead to women entering into part-time or casual work rather than full-time work (Briar 1992b, Pearce 1987). The increased demand for women in the labour force creates the demand for the two worlds of unpaid and paid work to overlap (Davidson, 1993).

Davies and Jackson (1993) tell us that the main labour force issues for women in 1893 were; improved working conditions, equal pay and community funded child care. (Davies and Jackson, 1993). It seems that while labour force participation has increased dramatically in the century since then, very little has changed. Women still face the same issues as they did over 100 years ago and, as the next section shows, have been confronted with additional issues and problems that may not have been as prominent in the days of their great great grandmothers.

PART-TIME WORK

The previous sections outlined the relations of women and work and the position of women in the labour force. This section narrows the focus to concentrate on part-time work and the participation of women in part-time work. Although this thesis is addressing the issue of women and casual work, part-time work is examined here for

two reasons. Firstly part-time work is the natural progression for this literature review to take as it narrows its focus down to casual work. Secondly, both part-time and casual work tend to be grouped together and information on one is sometimes (justifiably or not) used to draw conclusions on the other (see Davidson and Bray, 1994, Shirley, 1996). There is a dearth of New Zealand research on casual work and therefore research on part-time work is used in its stead. While this research does not promote or recommend this practice it is appropriate to cover material on part-time work in this section.

The criteria that this research is using to differentiate between part-time and casual work are as follows;

- **Part-time Work:** Regular ongoing employment of 1-29 hours per week where the conditions of permanent work are also met.
- **Casual Work:** Work which may or may not be ongoing where the number of hours worked (and sometimes the timing of those hours) varies from week to week with little or no guarantee of a maximum or minimum number of hours to be worked each week.

The key difference between part-time and casual work is not the number of hours worked but the regularity and reliability of those hours.

Definitions of part-time work often differ between institutions and even within institutions over various time frames. It is therefore hard to state unequivocally what is and is not classified as part-time work. Any research into part-time work must be aware that the different definitions used by separate data gathering organisations must be taken into account. This can make comparing data both over time and from different sources a test of skill and patience. I shall outline the definitions of part-time work, both past and current, used in the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, which is the main statistical data source in New Zealand.

In New Zealand it was not until the year 1945 (for non Maori) and 1951 for Maori, that the Census began to differentiate between those who worked full-time and those who worked part-time. After these dates the Census counted those who worked more than 20 hours per week as being part of the labour force. Those working less than 20 hours per week were not considered to be part of the labour force (Davies and Jackson,

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1993). So prior to 1945 there was no distinction between those who worked full-time and those who worked part-time. From 1945-1981 those who worked 20 hours or more per week were considered full-time workers, whereas those who worked 1-19 hours per week were part-time workers. In the 1986 Census these definitions changed and part-time workers became all those who worked from 1-29 hours per week whereas full-time workers were those who worked 30 hours or more per week (Davies and Jackson, 1993). This change makes it difficult to compare figures for people employed part-time and full-time prior to 1981 with those after 1986.

Another problem with the definitions of part-time work is the broadness of such definitions. This works to conceal the variety of hours which are worked by people within the category (Briar 1992b). With the definitions as they are, someone who works one two hour shift every fortnight and maybe two shifts per week during school holidays is classified the same as someone who works four seven hour days every week. In actual fact the situations of these two people are vastly different. The first would be lucky to work 100 hours over the whole year whereas the second would work more than 1500 hours.

Different countries also define part-time and casual work in different ways. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for example defines part-time work as anything less than 35 hours per week and includes casual work, job sharing and anything that is not standard full-time work (New South Wales Women's Advisory Council (NSWWAC)). Care should also be taken then in comparing figures and ratios across countries. On the whole however, part-time work tends to be defined as 'not full-time', or rather full-time work is considered the 'norm' (Briar 1992b).

Part-time work became popular during the second world war. The increase in part-time work over this time has been seen as a compromise between a need for workers, and a desire not to draw women totally away from the home and their domestic work (Briar 1992a). This is referred to as the 'dual role' of women (Briar 1992a). It has also been suggested that temporary work in industries where men predominated began as a way in which a woman could be hired to fill a position without her competing with men and taking their jobs in the long-term (Briar 1992b).

Over the last ten years a small body of literature has surfaced focusing on part-time work in New Zealand. In the section on women in the labour force we also learnt that the overwhelming majority of part-time jobs were filled by women. Davidson and Bray also tell us that the continued increase in part-time work over full-time work has been even more pronounced among married women (Davidson and Bray, 1994).

Opinions on whether part-time work improves or hinders the position of women in the workforce is divided. Those who believe that part-time work has a positive impact on women cite reasons such as allowing women to keep in contact with the workforce and continue with their careers (Davidson and Bray, 1994). Others claim that the limited range of jobs and occupations and the poor pay which is associated with them merely perpetuate the gendered division of labour and provides for women to continue supplying the overwhelming majority of unpaid labour (Davidson and Bray, 1994, Else, 1996³). Unfortunately there are very few studies that have actually examined in great detail the effect that part-time work has had on women.

Such studies that have been conducted on part-time work, have occasionally been used to demonstrate the 'casualisation of labour'. This method of using associated, if not directly applicable, research has been used because of the difficulty involved in measuring the casual (or non permanent) labour force. However, while casual work and part-time work are not mutually exclusive and may indicate a preference for non-standard work, the presence of one does not indicate the presence of another. Research that demonstrates a 'casualisation of labour' by measuring part-time work is erroneously assuming equating part-time work with casual work.

Such an approach, while understandable, has led to a dearth of knowledge about the casualisation of the labour force and the effects that this has had on women. Most knowledge in this area is anecdotal or very particular and either not in accessible form or not conducted with enough scientific rigour to allow any general conclusions to be made from it. In addition to this the main in depth studies that have been carried out were done before the restructuring of the New Zealand economy that occurred between the years 1984 and 1991, a restructuring that is to some extent still continuing.

³ While these arguments were presented by both Davidson and Bray (1994) and Else (1996), these authors did not attribute such arguments to a particular source.

I shall now review the available literature around the casualisation of labour in New Zealand and the effects that this has had on women starting from the broader perspective of part-time work in New Zealand.

GROWTH IN PART-TIME WORK

In April 1986 the New Zealand Planning Council (which no longer exists) published a piece of work by Allison Clark entitled 'Part-time work in New Zealand' (Clark 1986). In this work Clark examines the nature, characteristics and patterns of part-time work, why part-time work has grown and the issues that arise from this.

Clark found that there had been a 'phenomenal growth in part-time work in New Zealand' between 1966 and 1981. The study showed that while the full-time labour force had increased by 26% during these years the growth for part-time work was 198%. Clark also noted that this increase in part-time work was not accompanied by a decrease in unemployment and that part-time work could be growing at the expense of full-time work.

More recent statistics are given in the New Zealand Department of Statistics 1993 volume on Work (New Zealand Department of Statistics (DOS), 1993b). The New Zealand Department of Statistics tells us that in the 30 years between 1961 and 1991 the proportion of people employed on a part-time basis increased from 5% to 18%. While full-time hours fell by 0.8 hours, average part-time employment declined by 3.1 hours and that 'the decline in part-time hours has been reinforced by the steady increase in the proportion of the workforce employed on this basis.' (DOS 1993b). This indicates that the increase in the number of part-time jobs could be partly accounted for by the decrease in the average number of hours worked by part-timers. So overall it is possible that the total number of hours worked on a part-time basis has not significantly increased. A key issue arising from this would be whether those employed on a part-time basis have wanted this decrease in hours or if this has resulted in greater underemployment being experienced by part-time workers.

Davidson and Bray (1994) mention the "rapid increase in 'flexible work'" patterns such as casual or temporary work, but are unable to quantify this increase. Brosnan (1991)

follows the same trend in mapping the increase in the use of part-time and casual labour in the retail industry.

In reference to the casualisation of labour, Anne Else in "False Economy" (1996) states that "Temporary Agency Manpower is now the single largest employer in the US..." and that "over a third of the workforce in EU countries is now non-permanent. In New Zealand ... it's over a quarter." (Else 1996, 63) Casual workers are generally paid less than full-time employees (Else 1996) and, like part-time work, the increase in casual work (as much as is documented) is mainly in the secondary workforce. The areas which have the greatest growth in the number of jobs they provide are the same ones in which the move from full-time to part-time and casual labour is the most pronounced (Else 1996).

Status: which jobs are part-time jobs?

Part-time work is located in both the primary and secondary labour force. Reasons given for the growth in part-time work and the purpose served by its existence differ depending on whether the work is located in the primary or secondary labour force. Part-time work in the primary labour force focuses on retaining skilled and well trained staff who are generally accorded better conditions than their counterparts in the secondary labour force (Davidson and Bray 1994). Part-time work in the secondary labour force has been seen as 'a way of creating the flexibility to respond to uneven or unpredicted business activity' (Davidson and Bray, 1994; 31). This portrays such part-time work as benefiting the employer but paying little regard for the employees needs or wants. Consequently part-time work in the secondary labour force is characterised by comparatively poor rates of pay, poor conditions and little job security (Davidson and Bray 1994).

Sayers tells us that "over the last two decades most of the growth in part-time work has been in the secondary sector - trade services industries such as clerical, sales and service occupations." (Sayers 1992, 8) However, while acknowledging that there has been a growth in part-time work in all three sectors of the economy, Shirley's (1996) research shows that in 1991 the tertiary sector had the greatest number of part-time employees and that most of the increases in part-time work were "occurring in the tertiary industries of finance, electricity and community." This apparent contradiction

could be explained in a number of ways. It could be a difference in definitions, locations and methods of data collection. Neither study is explicit on the source and use of data, so it is therefore difficult to examine just why such a discrepancy in findings occurred. However, Carl Davidson and Marianne Bray, in perhaps the most significant recent piece of research into part-time work in New Zealand, state that "most of the growth in part-time employment has been in the service sector, that is, the "secondary workforce" where women predominate. This also accords with the findings of the Dept. of Statistics. The overwhelming conclusion is that part-time work in New Zealand has increased considerably over the past 30 years and more rapidly in recent years, notably since the marketisation that occurred in the early to mid 1980s. The concentration of this growth has been in the lower paid service sector.

Why has this occurred?

Very little research has been conducted on why a casualisation of labour and increase in part-time work could be occurring. Clark, in her 1986 work, cited a number of possible reasons for the increase in part-time work. These were: changing social attitudes towards women working and a greater need for women to obtain financial independence, the rising costs of living, population growth, technological change and decentralisation. The research undertaken by Clark was carried out in the early days of economic restructuring and before the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act 1991 (ECA).

Research undertaken since 1991 states that the increase in part-time and casual work is "a consequence of the decade of public and private restructuring which began in the 1980's" and that the ECA had "the most significant influence upon part-time work in New Zealand" (Davidson and Bray 1994). The New Zealand Department of Statistics also notes that it has been suggested that the 'prevailing economic conditions' have most likely been a factor in the increase in part-time work (DOS, 1993b). Since the casualisation of labour had started before 1984, the restructuring is probably not the only cause, but it undoubtedly contributed to the increase in rate of growth of part-time and casual work since then. The introduction of the Labour Relations Act 1987 (LRA) and later the ECA effectively replaced the then existing framework with an entirely new industrial relations system (DOS 1993b).

The period after the introduction of the ECA saw “the sharpest increase in the proportion of part-time workers who would prefer longer hours” (ibid.). This shows that the cut in average hours worked by each part-time worker was not because the workers preferred to work less hours but because no more hours were available. The ‘flexible’ employment which followed the Act contained more losses for employees than for employers (Davidson and Bray 1994). Peter Brosnan states that another result of restructuring and a cause of the casualisation of labour and increase in part-time jobs within the retail industry, has been the extended shop trading hours. Indeed it has been the case overseas that longer opening hours increased the proportion of part-time jobs (Beechey and Perkins, cited in Brosnan 1991). Davidson and Bray also reach the same conclusion that “the deregulation of shop trading hours...has driven the changes in part-time work.” They also acknowledged that it has only been since the introduction of the ECA that employers have been able to “maximise the benefits of the extended hours.”

NON-STANDARD WORK

The level of confusion around definitions of work is high. The term non-standard work refers to all forms of work which do not centre around an average working week consisting of approximately 40 hours worked between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday. Such a definition incorporates shift work and flexi-time as well as casual, contingent, part-time or contract work. There has been a definite increase in the number of people employed in non-standard work in New Zealand over the last few years (DOS, 1993b) although the degree of this is hard to measure.

This research aims to focus on the issues of casual work where casual work is defined as work where the number of hours worked varies considerably from week to week with no guarantee of set number of hours to be worked each week. However even such a succinct definition as this can be hard to maintain.

Casual work

In *Changes in New Zealand work Patterns (1996)* Rachel Shirley concentrates on the changes in New Zealand paid work patterns in the 15 years from 1976 to 1991. Her aim is to examine whether there has been a casualisation of the labour force in New Zealand during these years. She defines casualisation as ‘the growing movement of the

labour market into work characterised as casual, contingency or temporary and part-time.' (Shirley 1996, 1) However, because of the difficulty in measuring the casual, contingent and temporary labour force, Shirley bases her research around part-time employment and uses this as a 'proxy' to measure the casualisation of labour.

The use of part-time work to trace or map the increase in casual or temporary work and the casualisation of the labour force appears quite common. This leads to a lack of detailed information on the increase of casual and temporary labour and the effects that this has on workers and on the general population. Data on casual labour tends to be vague. The New Zealand Department of Statistics says that "intermittent, casual and temporary employment, flexitime, shift work, weekend employment and job sharing have all grown in prominence..." but "official statistics on the number of positions utilising non-traditional working time arrangements are currently limited" (DOS 1993b, 28).

WHO HAS IT AFFECTED?

It is widely acknowledged that the majority of part-time workers are women (Else 1996, Goodger 1993, DOS 1993b). Anne Else adds that "more than three quarters of part-time workers are women" (Else 1996, 69). This refers to women in New Zealand but the trend is international and in Australia four fifths of all part-time workers are women (NSWWAC). Women do not necessarily work less than full-time because they want to but more than half of them work part-time because they have no choice (Else 1996). I could not, however, locate any research into the gender of casual temporary workers, although studies such as those conducted by Davidson and Bray, Else and Shirley do appear to assume that the make-up of the casual labour force is similar to that of the part-time labour force. This is definitely an area that would benefit from further research.

Why do women work part-time and in casual work?

There has been much debate recently around the issue of choice and how much choice women are exercising when they take up part-time (or casual) work. Do women choose to work part-time or do they do so because there are a lack of alternatives? The concepts under debate around women, part-time work and choice can be similarly

applied to women and casual work. I shall firstly outline the argument that women do chose to work part-time and follow that with the argument that there are a number of other factors involved which work to limit and constrict women's choice in their involvement in the labour force.

Hakim (1995) argues that 'part-time work is chosen voluntarily by women who prefer to give priority to non-market activities and hence work...part-time' (Hakim, 1995;435). She focuses her argument around women with dependent children and states that the belief that the childcare responsibilities of such women force them to opt for part-time rather than full-time work is a fallacy. Hakim (1995) backs up this claim with the following arguments;

- part-time workers have a higher level of job satisfaction than full-time workers,
- while women with dependent children have the highest rate of part-time work there are many other women who work part-time who do not have dependent children,
- childcare costs have only a limited effect on women's labour force participation rates,
- 'childcare responsibilities are a factor in the rise of part-time work but not the only factor nor necessarily the most important factor' (Hakim 1995; 437),
- reliable birth control methods mean that having children is a lifestyle choice and therefore these women 'chose' to have childcare problems (Hakim, 1995).

Hakim claims that these arguments indicate that women voluntarily chose part-time work.

Hakim's argument is refuted by Arber, Branned, Dale, Dex, Elias, Ginn, Moss, Pahl, Roberts and Rubery (1996) who claim that;

- all major surveys indicate that women with childcare responsibilities are associated with part-time rather that full-time work, and,
- an 'elite minority' of women are able to pay for full-day childcare (Arber et. al. 1996)

Therefore women with childcare responsibilities are not given a free choice between full-time or part-time work. Arber et. al. (1996) also expand their argument beyond women with dependent children and comment that other forms of unpaid work such as

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caring for teenagers or the elderly, also hinder women's involvement in the labour force. These unpaid work responsibilities can reduce the amount of choice on labour force participation that such women are able to exercise.

Bruegel (1996) summarises by saying the argument that women 'chose' part-time work by their choice to have children coupled with a conscious choice on labour force participation 'reads preferences into outcomes without considering how circumstances frame preference' (Bruegel, 1996:177).

The issue of choice is therefore a complex one. There are a number of reasons put forward as to why so many women work part-time and in casual jobs. Some of these are based on empirical evidence, while others are assumptions.

In a New Zealand context an example of this is in *Women and Part-time Work in New Zealand* (Davidson and Bray, 1994) where Davidson and Bray interview both key figures in various industries which employ women to work part-time, and women who work part-time in these industries themselves. Most key informant interviewees stated that they thought that many women wanted part-time work because they had children and part-time work was therefore desirable because it enabled them to balance their commitments. The key informant interviewees also seemed to play down the possibility that many of the women wanted to work more hours or indeed full-time.

However, the focus groups that contained women working in the same industries as the key informant interviewees showed that women who worked part-time fell into two groups. The first of these is those women who worked part-time because it was a conscious choice. For such women part-time work was a lifestyle choice and, while some of these women had children for whom they were responsible for providing care, this was not the case for all women in this group. Women who were financially secure and those who worked in the primary labour market were more likely to fall into this category. The second reason for women to be working part-time was because they had no other alternative. Either they could not find full-time work or other commitments would not permit it. Many of the 'other commitments' were women's involvement in unpaid work. (Davidson and Bray, 1994). It should also be noted that some women say they 'choose' part-time work because if they were to work full-time the cost of child care would be too great. But research overseas shows that where the state provides a

subsidy for childcare women are more inclined to 'choose' longer working hours (Dex and Shaw 1986 in Briar 1992b).

Davidson and Bray (1994) also found that a strong motivator for many women to enter part-time work was money. Again the women could be divided into groups. The first group was women who wanted the money to supplement their disposable income, while the second group encompassed women who wanted some independent income that they earned themselves and which was not derived from their partner. The last group contained over half the women involved in the research. This group needed the money obtained from part-time work to survive. In some cases it was the only family income while in others the women's partners were in either part-time or insecure work. A third group had partners who were employed full-time but in low paid jobs.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS?

As the majority of part-time and casual workers are women, any effects that the casualisation of labour and increase in part-time work have on employees will have a much more significant effect on women than on men. The effects have indeed been numerous. Davidson and Bray, as a result of their study on women and part-time work, stated that along with the increase in part-time work came two other trends; those of intensification and underemployment.

Intensification

Intensification refers to staff 'working harder' rather than 'working smarter'. This means reducing idle time, such as by cutting down breaks, rather than improving skills and processes (Davidson and Bray, 1994). Brosnan (1991) states that such intensification of paid work is closely related to the casualisation of labour (and, in the retail trade, longer shop opening hours). The use of part-timers and casual workers means that they finish their shorter shift before they become fatigued (and therefore work slower), and also before they are entitled to a paid break (Brosnan, 1991). In the short term this benefits employers, but Brosnan (1991) found that some retail managers believed that in the long run such a policy as intensification would prove to be counterproductive.

Underemployment

Figures relating to underemployment vary. Anne Else states that by 1994 one in six women who were employed part-time wanted to work more hours while Davidson and Bray claim that in 1993 the figure was 28% (up from 12% in 1990). They continue to say that this last figure equated to more than 10% of the total female labour force. Of those women wanting to work more hours, 20% desired full-time employment. (Davidson and Bray, 1994). Davies and Jackson cite figures from The New Zealand Department of Statistics which show that in 1990 more men than women experienced underemployment. However this is amended by the statement that 'more recent figures suggest that women are twice as likely as men to be underemployed.' (Davies and Jackson 1993). This shows that either there has been an incredible increase in the number of women who are underemployed, a huge decrease in the number of men in the same position or an inadequacy in the data.

So, despite the different figures cited, it is obvious that the trend of underemployment which runs alongside the casualisation of labour and increase in part-time work has had a negative effect on women. A significant number of women employed in part-time positions are underemployed. This means that these women are not obtaining either the money or the work experience that they either need or want and this is likely to impact on them in a negative manner.

It is also interesting to note that while there are a large number of women working part-time who would like more hours, there is also a trend for the average number of hours per part-time job to decrease (DOS 1993b). Another trend that is seen as a result of underemployment is the increase in the number of people working more than one job. 'Between the 1981 and 1991 censuses the percentage of the employed workforce holding more than one job increased from 4.4 to 6.7 percent, or by 94,100. The largest increase, from 13,600 to 27,900 was among those working more than one part-time job. Over three quarters of workers in this group were women (Davidson and Bray, 1994). There is a lack of in-depth studies tracking the link between these two trends and the effect they have on women although it is clear that this is an important issue for women that should be investigated further.

Insecurity of income

Perhaps one of the worst effects that the casualisation of labour has on women is the insecurity of income that it breeds. Anne Else (1996) quotes an 'Insight' radio documentary as saying 'People are...dependent on the employer providing employment, and yet they can't predict what they're going to get from one week to the next....These aren't workers who've chosen flexibility. They work in a workplace where the employers have chosen to have a flexible work force whether the workers wanted it or not.' (Annie Newman 1996 cited in Else 1996, 67-8) The documentary carries on to say how many workers, especially in the service industry, may not know whether they have work or not till the day in question, or they might think they have a whole days work and turn up to find that they will only be given a few hours instead. The continual impression they receive from management is 'If you don't do what I'm asking you to do, then I'm not going to be happy with you, and if I'm not happy with you your job could be at stake.' (Ibid.)

In their research, Davidson and Bray (1994) found that one of the issues most frequently raised by part-timers in the service and the education sectors with their union representatives, was that of the insecurity of their hours and tenure (Davidson and Bray 1994, 72). This was even with women defined as part-time workers not casual workers. In the same study a principal from a secondary school noted that the main difference between their part-time and casual staff was the constant insecurity felt by casual staff and their anxiety about the continuation of their employment.

Focus group interviews of women in all the sectors studied by Davidson and Bray (retail, service, education, health) showed the amount of, and reasons for, feelings of insecurity differed amongst occupations and between women. Some women felt secure because they believed they were 'indispensable' where others felt that while their job may be secure, they were not confident they would maintain their current hours. However the majority of women lacked a feeling of job security. This was most pronounced among women working in the retail and service sectors. Some of these women felt insecure because of current cutbacks being made in their industries, while others felt that their contracts provided them with little security or little power to negotiate better conditions (Davidson and Bray, 1994).

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As this study shows, many women with permanent part-time work in the secondary labour market (retail and service sectors) experience feelings of insecurity. It seems safe to assume that women in non permanent positions would experience this to an equal or greater degree.

Conditions

The final documented effect that casual and part-time employment has is the conditions that such workers are obliged to accept compared with those offered to full-timers. The results of Davidson and Bray's research into women and part-time work showed that casual and part-time staff are less likely to receive promotions, are accorded a lower status within organisations, are often not as well informed as full-time staff, have to fit their hours around other staff, work anti-social hours, are perceived and treated in a negative manner by full-time staff and managers, give more voluntary hours per hour of paid work and, for all this, are paid less. Other negative conditions that part-time workers may face are fewer responsibilities and failure to be incorporated into the information dissemination network (Hunt and Tangitu, 1992). Even though the statutory minimum employment conditions are the same for full and part-time employees, many women find that in practice these conditions are often not met for part-time work (Davidson and Bray, 1994). This was the case for such entitlements as sick pay (Davidson and Bray, 1994) and separate holiday pay. A summary of the legal rights for casual workers follows.

Legal Rights

While all the legislation pertaining to employees covers casual workers, the manner in which it is applied means that each case is different. The Department of Labour will not offer any assurances of the conditions to which casual workers are entitled. They are only prepared to say that each case has to be treated individually. Every person who has a query about their entitlements has to ring the Department of Labour and explain their individual case before they can be sure of her legal entitlements.

Although the law applies to all, because of various stipulations such as the need to work continuously for the same employer for a period of six months before an employee is entitled to special leave (sickness, bereavement, domestic), some casual

workers find that the law does not provide adequately for their minimum legal needs. Alongside this, because the laws pertaining to minimum employment conditions are not easily and universally applied to all casual workers, such workers do not have easy, clear and readably understandable access to their rights. It is not a matter of picking up a pamphlet and immediately understanding their position. They must actually phone the Department of Labour and explain their position. This knowledge is then not readily transferred to other work mates, friends or acquaintances in similar jobs because, as the Department of Labour says, each case is different and must be dealt with on an individual basis. This greatly hinders the availability and distribution of knowledge.

It is also noteworthy that parental leave is only available to those who have worked at least ten hours per week with the same employer for at least 12 months. Because of the nature of casual work most casual employees would not be eligible for this. It is even possible that a woman may have worked, on average 20 hours a week for two years with the same employer but there may have been a few periods where the work was not available or where she worked less than ten hours per week and thus she would not qualify for maternity or extended leave if she became pregnant or adopted a child. The parental leave policy, by not considering average hours of employment or employment across various employers actively discriminates against casual workers.

However, there are other alternatives. Hunt and Tangitu presented a paper at the *Women and Work Conference: Directions and Strategies of the 1990s*, in which they compared job sharing with part-time work. They contend that job sharing 'can have far more positive features for women than part-time work has done.' (Hunt and Tangitu, 1992, 127). They argued that job sharers are far better off than part-timers because they are accorded the status and conditions of equivalent full-time staff, rather than facing the relative ostracisation often experienced by part-timers.

SUMMARY

Research into women and part-time work has concluded that such women face little job security, possess a feeling that they are inferior to, and worth less than, full-time workers, find union protection difficult to obtain, and are employed under worse

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conditions than full-time workers (Briar 1992b, Davidson and Bray 1994, Else 1996, Sayer 1992, Hunt and Tangitu, 1992).

Thus, from the little work that has been done on the effect that the casualisation of labour in New Zealand has had on women we can make the following conclusions. There has been a definite increase in the amount of part-time work in New Zealand, both in its own right and in relation to full-time work. Most literature agrees that this is also most likely the case for casual work although more study is needed to confirm this. Very little research has been conducted on why this casualisation of labour has occurred, however it is theorised that restructuring of the economy that has taken place in New Zealand since 1984 and the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act (1991) are responsible for recent phenomenal growth. The casualisation of labour affects and concerns women more than men. Some of the major effects that the casualisation of labour has had are the intensification of paid work, underemployment and multiple job holdings, insecurity of income and poorer work conditions. Much of this information comes from studies conducted on part-time work. It is probable that casual work results in equal or worse conditions than part-time work but there is a lack of information available in New Zealand on this topic.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

WHAT, WHY AND HOW IT WAS DONE

This chapter addresses and outlines the design of this research and the justification for this design. Firstly it examines feminist research and what defines research as feminist. Then it discusses in depth the method utilised in this research, the reason for this choice of method and the problems involved in it. This chapter then continues on to outline my application of the method discussed. Finally any issues of ethics and 'politics and power' that have not already been addressed are examined.

FEMINIST RESEARCH

Feminist research has demonstrated clearly the androcentric nature of social science research (Geiger, 1986, Oakley, 1981). Such research has revolved around quantitative research and generally focused on white men and the way that they interact with society. Male experience has been the norm, and men, both in general and by means of a few powerful groups, have controlled knowledge (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, Smith and Nobel-Spruell, 1986). This control has been exercised by the construction of knowledge, and the ownership and control of knowledge being carried out by, and belonging to, men. Feminist Research questions this monopoly of control and ownership of knowledge.

So while sociology, anthropology and social sciences in general, have focused their studies on the participation of men in society until comparatively recently, very little has been known of how women live, learn, and perceive the world. What knowledge exists is that which can be gleaned from the study of their writings in the form of autobiographies, journals and letters. However, considering that 70 percent of the illiterate population is female, there is a large percentage of women who are 'voiceless' in this regard (Geiger, 1986). Women have, in a vast number of societies, remained

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largely invisible. They have been ignored, marginalised and at best, poorly understood. Feminist research has arisen as a reaction to these issues and in an attempt to rectify the situation. In the past some research has been conducted on women but this has been more a case of attempting to 'add women to' rather than aimed at creating a body of knowledge of, about, and for women.

Feminist research aims to provide women who have been marginalised, silenced and ignored with a voice, and to create a knowledge base which is based on and representative of women's experience in society and the world (Kirby and McKenna, 1989). This knowledge should also be constructed and owned by women and used to aid their freedom not increase their oppression.

There are many different strains of feminism (Barrett and Phillips, 1992, Delphy and Leonard, 1992), and much debate around what is and what is not feminist research. Smith and Nobel-Spruell (1986) gathered together what they thought to be the seven main principles that distinguish feminist research from other types of research. The writers from whom they sourced these principles were, Duelli Klein, (1983), Kleiber and Light (1981), Mies (1983), Oakley (1981), Reinhartz (1983), Roberts (1981), Spender (1981), Spender L. (1981) Stanley and Wise (1983) (cited in Smith and Nobel-Spruell, 1986). The seven principles for which Smith and Nobel-Spruell thought feminist research should aim were:

1. Feminist research should be for women, to improve their daily lives;
2. Feminist research should be based on feminist theory;
3. Feminist research is premised on the oppression of women and is committed to changing it;
4. Feminist research emphasises a non-exploitative relationship between researcher and researched which is based on collaboration, co-operation and mutual respect;
5. Feminist research recognises the open presence of the researcher as intrinsic to the process;
6. Feminist research questions the ownership of the research outcome;

7. Feminist research attempts to develop a specific methodology congruent with feminist ideology (Smith and Nobel-Spruell, 1986; 139).

Smith and Nobel-Spruell did not present these as necessarily steadfast principles, they are more an excellent yardstick by which feminist research can be measured. I agree with the concepts outlined in these points and as I am attempting to conduct a piece of feminist research I will endeavour to adhere to these concepts. I shall briefly address how this research aims to fulfil these requirements of feminist research.

Feminist research should be for women, to improve their daily lives.

This research is focused on the daily life experiences of women involved in casual work. These experiences included the way in which the women had to structure or restructure their home life, such as the care of children (both when they are well and sick), maintaining a workable balance of unpaid and paid work, the environment in which they worked and the manner in which they were treated by workmates and employers, experiences which highlighted power issues in the work place, the element of choice that was involved in taking the casual work job, and the effect that these and other issues arising from casual work had on the women. By examining these experiences this research hopes to illuminate the main issues of importance to these women and to assess what made the casual work experience either negative or positive for each participant. This research can make no clear attempt to change or influence the key issues that it identifies as impacting in a positive or negative manner on women involved in casual work. It does not pretend to be able to directly address these issues. However, this research aims to work as a pilot study to guide further research which will be better able to influence appropriate policies aimed at improving the daily life of women involved in casual work.

Feminist research should be based on feminist theory.

This research is based soundly on feminist theory. The topic arose from feminist theory and feminist theory has informed both the methods chosen and the analysis of the data produced. For example, feminist theory on the relationship between paid and unpaid work, as highlighted in the literature review, informs the analysis of the experiences of women in trying to juggle both casual work and unpaid work commitments such as childcare. It is never assumed that such commitments should be subordinated to paid

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work and the question is rather why paid work does not accommodate unpaid work commitments.

Feminist theory dictates both the ownership of this research and its consequent use. It will not be utilised with the authors knowledge for any purpose which is likely to harm rather than aid the women involved in this research and those in similar situations.

Feminist research is premised on the oppression of women and is committed to changing it.

This research is based on the assumption that women involved in casual work are oppressed both as women living within a patriarchal society, and as workers in a capitalist society. This oppression may not always be obvious or recognised but this does not mean that it does not exist.

Feminist research emphasises a non-exploitative relationship between researcher and researched which is based on collaboration, co-operation and mutual respect.

The main method utilised in this research is in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews, when utilised in the feminist manner that this research employs, emphasise an equal and non-exploitative relationship between the interviewer and the participant. Information is not demanded from the participant but requested and the interviewer freely gives information in return.

Feminist research recognises the open presence of the researcher as intrinsic to the process.

The in-depth interviewing method also allows for the open presence of the researcher. This transparency of the researcher will be practiced throughout the interviews and also throughout the writing up and analysis of the research. This involves the researcher declaring her biases and reactions both at the beginning and throughout the research.

Feminist research questions the ownership of the research outcome.

While the legal owner of the completed research will be the researcher, the researcher questions this and passes as much of the research as possible into the hands of women in general. This will be achieved by the dissemination of the findings of the research both during the research period and when it has been completed. The

participants themselves own the information that they have contributed to the research. In this case the transcripts of the interviews belong to the participants. All the information in these transcripts is used only with the permission of the participants and once the research is completed the transcripts are to be returned to the participants or destroyed.

Feminist research attempts to develop a specific methodology congruent with feminist ideology. (Smith and Nobel-Spruell, 1986; 139)

The researcher has attempted to design this research and create a methodology that is congruent with a feminist ideology. This is shown by the emphasis on feminist research and methods that adhere to feminist principles. The approach and execution of the methods to be used was also attempted in a manner which would reflect the feminist ideology on which this research was based.

Many of these principles of feminist research represent good ethical research. In the last few years mainstream research has learnt from feminist research and adapted some of these principles. They are used here, however, primarily as a basis for feminist research as they are based on a feminist ideology and have the purpose of giving voice to, and aiding, women.

While no research can ever achieve all the researcher desires it to, this research defined itself as feminist and attempted to reach such criteria in the manner outlined above. This research also invites critique which will be constructive in refining its feminist basis.

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'[C]hoosing a method for a piece of research is a political choice.' (Kirby and McKenna 1989, 64). The method employed in gathering data for research impacts on the type of data gathered. The casualisation of labour and its effects on women is a feminist issue. For this reason it was important that the methods selected for this research were in accordance with feminist research methods and the particular needs of this research. Not many female voices have been heard on the issue of women and casual work. Therefore, a method which gave voice to women involved in casual work and recognition to that voice as valid was necessary.

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For this reason I have taken care to choose as the main data collection method one which gives voice to women and allows their experiences and feelings to be heard. The core method of data gathering that I chose to use is in-depth interviewing.

The in-depth interviews were conducted with a number of women who, through their paid work careers, had been employed in casual work for a period of at least three months. These interviews concentrated on the women's experiences in paid work. The purpose of the interviews was to assess the effect that casual work has had on various areas of their lives; community, family and paid work.

I have outlined below the basic concepts involved in in-depth interviewing, and the steps involved in the data collection.

In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews are known by many names which include open-ended, intensive, unstructured or semi-structured and in-depth (Reinharz 1992). I have elected to call the interviews used in this research in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews are interviews which focus on the participant. They emphasise what the participant has to say and attempt to elicit information from the participant in their own words with minimum intervention from the researcher. In-depth interviews are generally loosely structured interviews which have the aim of covering certain topics although often in no set order and with no set questions. These topics are usually based on previous research (Kirby and McKenna, 1989), but it is the flow of the conversation itself and the will of the participant that directs how the topics are covered and the information imparted (Reinharz, 1992). The whole purpose of the in-depth interview is to encourage the participant to talk about her experiences, reactions and self (Patton, 1990).

In-depth interviews are not just a method of data collection, they also allow for a 'sharing' of ideas, experience and information between the interviewer and the participant (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, Oakley, 1981). It is this greater depth of data, information that is not just facts but includes feelings and true experiences, that makes in-depth interviews so appealing to feminist researchers.

The decision to use in-depth interviews as the primary data collection method for this research was based on the following reasons.

In-depth Interviewing is a Feminist Method

In-depth interviews as a research method are readily accepted and used by feminist researchers. Such interviews focus on allowing the participant to tell their story and impart information in their own words, language and style (Kirby and McKenna, 1989). They manage to some degree to bring the interviewer into the mind of the participant (Patton, 1980) and therefore provide a viable method of tapping the rich resource of the experiences of the women interviewed. In-depth interviews' focus on individual experiences allows them to see the lives of those who have often been rendered invisible in other research methods. This can in effect be a method of breaking through the 'silence' in which women have lived for years.

In-depth interviews also allow a greater degree of transparency, or 'open presence' of the interviewer, than other methods. When the participant and the researcher are face to face and the researcher has explained the purpose and intention of the research and is prepared to be questioned by, as well as question, the participant then a greater degree of transparency is required. In-depth interviews in a feminist framework also allow time for the education of the participant about the research. The participant should be well informed as to the purpose and method of the study and the subsequent use of the information gathered from the participant (Kirby and McKenna, 1989). In this environment, in-depth interviews allow the intimacy and self disclosure that are considered necessary to feminist research (Oakley, 1981).

Focus on the Participant

In feminist research the participants should be more than just the source of information or data (Oakley, 1981). Participants should to be treated as equals. Therefore in-depth interviewing should be non hierarchical. One implication of this is that both the purpose and method of the research should be explained to the participants at the beginning of the study. By doing this the researcher includes the participant to some degree in the design of the research. The participant is given greater knowledge and therefore greater power within the research process.

In-depth interviews allow for the participant to question the researcher, not only about the researcher but also about the position and experiences of the researcher in the study. The in-depth interview promotes a two way flow of information which is highly

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desirable in feminist research. This two way communication promoted by feminist researchers in the in-depth interview method is invaluable for treating the participants as equals, rather than objects to be examined and catalogued. There is 'no intimacy without reciprocity' (Oakley, 1981; 49). This means that rather than evading questions posed to the interviewer by the participant the interviewer should attempt to answer these to the best of her ability. In this manner the participant becomes more involved in the research and is given more control over the data collection process.

In-depth interviews also provide scope for the participant to influence the direction and manner of the interview. In-depth interviews are only loosely structured and allow for the individual needs and experiences of the participant to direct the interview. However, if very little or no structure is given by the interviewer the participant may wander of the core issue. The interviewer is thus required to trust the participant to focus on the topic of the research (Reinharz, 1992). This also makes it difficult to know how much scope to allow a participant. For example, how much do you leave a participant to relate experiences related to part-time work when the issue at hand is experiences in casual work? Most in-depth interviews possess a combination of both a degree of structure and space for the participant to direct the interview as they desire.

Feminist research should give priority to the voices of the participants over that of the researcher (Kirby and McKenna, 1989). It also requires that the researcher 'believe' the participant (Oakley, 1981). This can also be seen as controversial (Reinharz, 1992) because it places the relevance of a subjective account above the perceived need for an objective truth. However it is also claimed that if an interviewer believes the participant then the participant is more likely to trust the interviewer and therefore 'tell the truth' (Reinharz, 1992). (For a further discussion of the nature of 'truth' see the section on 'subjective and objective truth' later in this chapter).

Another strength of in-depth interviews is that they also allow for the final presentation of the research to contain as many of the direct words of the participants as possible, thus allowing direct access to the views and experiences of women in their own words (Reinharz, 1992). This minimises the amount of information that is filtered through the researcher's interpretation of the data.

Allow a Degree of Structure and Comparability

In-depth interviewing which is semi-structured, allows some degree of comparability between information gathered from different participants. Semi-structured interviews are based around an interview guide. This guide indicates the areas which the interview should cover; however, there is space for questions to be asked in any manner and in the way most appropriate to the participant and the flow of the conversation. It is not important what order the topics are covered in, but their presence means that information will be gathered that can be compared to that of other interviews. This comparison can not be absolute and complete because the elements surrounding it will not be exactly the same in each case (Sarantakos, 1995), but this is the result of a method that values the subjective account of the participant above the objective 'truth'.

Problems

There are also various problems that arise with in-depth interviews. These problems and the manner in which this research dealt with them are outlined below.

Ability of Participant to Verbalise Experiences

It is claimed that in-depth interviews require that the participant has a reasonable ability to verbalise their experiences, views and opinions (Sarantakos, 1995). While this may be true to a degree, verbal communication is generally no harder than written communication, and is more accessible to many people. Given that many of the participants may never have been asked for their experiences and opinions for research reasons before it is better that they have the opportunity to make their voice heard than remain silenced because those who are not able to verbalise their views are not included in, or heard by the research.

Presence of the Researcher

Secondly, it is possible that with the high level of interaction between the interviewer and the participants that is required in in-depth interviews the presence of the researcher impacted on the data (Reinharz, 1992). This is fully acknowledged within this research. This research attempted to minimise the effects of this by ensuring the transparency of the researcher. The researcher's purpose for conducting the research and her stake in it were made explicit at the beginning of the research and throughout

its execution. The researcher also attempted to conduct the interviews in a neutral manner and did not attempt to influence the participants' answers in any way.

Subjective and Objective Truth

Finally, in-depth interviews focus on the individual experiences of the participant as told by the participant. It is easy to question the reliability of research which focuses on the personal account of the participant. Such accounts become entirely 'subjective'. Some argue that this subjectivity can be a strength of in-depth interviews (Oakley, 1981, Reinharz, 1992) and that more 'objective' and 'abstracted' methods that claim to present the 'truth' often represent neither 'truth' nor 'reality' for women (Geiger, 1986). So where Denzin (1970) urges researchers to look for contradictory evidence and assume that the participant is lying, others would claim that the subjective account of a woman's story is the most valuable data if it gives voice to someone who has previously been silenced (Geiger, 1986). Whether or not this represents the 'objective truth' is irrelevant. It represents the truth as the teller sees it.

Another argument is that issues of reliability can also arise in many other forms of research as well. Many forms of qualitative research including more structured methods such as questionnaires are reliant on the subjective replies of the participants. Another example would be participant observation which relies on the recounting of events by the participant. This recounting can, in many ways, be entirely subjective. It could also be noted that such issues of reliability question the 'objectivity' rather than the validity of the experiences and stories recounted by the participants. As I have previously stated, objectivity is not the purpose of feminist research. Thus, a method which accepts the relevance, reliability and validity of the personal subjective perspective is a great asset rather than a hindrance to the accumulation of knowledge.

The information imparted in each interview was accepted as a valid account of the woman's experiences in casual work as she perceived them and desired to have them recorded.

My Application

Before I could begin producing new information I needed to examine what knowledge already existed about women and casual work in New Zealand. I did this by way of the

literature review which appears at the beginning of this thesis. The material for the literature review was obtained mainly from New Zealand sources. However work on a broader, more theoretical level, was sourced from an international level.

This literature review informed the later research. The information provided by the literature review was used as a base for the interview guide which was utilised in the in-depth interviews. The main points and issues which were raised in previous research on part-time and casual workers demonstrated the probable areas of interest and those which needed closer examination in further research. It is such areas that the interview guide I created for this research aimed to illuminate.

Recruitment of Participants

Before beginning the search for participants I submitted an application to the Human Ethics Committee at Massey University, (see **Appendix 1**). Once this had been accepted I began recruiting participants. This was done primarily through articles explaining the research in *The County News* in South Auckland and in various local papers in Wellington, and through A4 sized advertisements (see **Appendix 7**) in kindergartens, shops, supermarkets and malls and resource centres in South Auckland and Wellington. Both the article and the advertisement outlined the nature of the research, and my personal details, although the articles did go into greater detail of the nature and purpose of the research than the advertisements did. They both invited anyone who was interested in participating in the research to contact me at my parents' home in Tuakau (for South Auckland) and at my home in Wellington (for Wellington newspapers). The timing of the articles was staggered so I would be in residence in each respective city at the time of publication.

After interviewing six women I found that four of these women were not reliant on their income to provide for the needs of themselves and their families but rather their income provided for luxuries. All of these four women also mentioned that they realised that they were very fortunate and all four women mentioned that they knew others who were reliant on their income from casual work to provide for their needs. However I did not seem to be finding such results from my research. So I decided that while keeping the first six women in the study I would also attempt to locate the women that my participants had mentioned. I therefore employed the snowball technique and

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requested that if the current participants felt able, they contacted the women they had mentioned who were in different situations to them, and ask if they would be willing to participate in the research. I was concerned that this might impart greater bias into the research, but I felt that the information I would obtain by pursuing this avenue would be worth it. Other participants were also located by word of mouth and networking. Such participants were treated in exactly the same manner as those who had been located through the newspaper articles and advertisements.

Once the first contact with a prospective participant had been made those women who showed interest in the research and wished to pursue the matter were sent an information sheet (see **Appendix 2**) and permission was sought to contact them by phone or mail approximately one week after they had received the information. At this stage confidentiality and anonymity for all women was assured. No attempt was made to persuade anyone to participate. All the women who contacted me at this stage elected to continue if they were suitable participants. There were a couple of women whose work could not be described as casual under the definitions I was using for this research. Any details that had previously been taken from such women were erased or destroyed once it had been determined that their experiences did not fall within the realms of this research. The only details taken from potential participants at this stage in the research were contact details and brief details of their involvement in casual work. Such details were kept confidential.

Once the women had received the information sheet I contacted them to see if they were still interested in participating (which all were) and a suitable time and place was arranged for the interview to take place. Most of the interviews took place at the home of the participant as this was the most convenient for them.

The timing of the interviews was dictated by both the casual work and the unpaid work and family commitments of the participants. The women who were caregivers for school aged children preferred to schedule interviews when the school holidays had finished and their children had returned to school. This was largely because it was more convenient and easier to conduct an interview without the sometimes constant interruptions provided by younger children. However many of the interviews were conducted in the presence of children. One interview had to be postponed when the participant found out a couple of days beforehand that she would be required to work

on the day that the interview was scheduled. Another interview could not be scheduled ahead of time as the participant did not know from day to day whether or not she would be working. She simply had to ring me one morning and say she was available right then. The interview took place an hour later. Other interviews were arranged around children's social commitments (birthday parties of their friends), older children visiting from overseas and sleeping babies.

At the beginning of each interview the participants were given the opportunity to ask any further questions they may have had of the research or the researcher. At this stage they were asked to fill in the consent form (see **Appendix 3**) in which they also indicated whether or not they agreed to having the interview taped. All the women agreed to the interview being recorded on audio tape.

Twelve women were interviewed in total.

Definition

It is very difficult to provide a definition of casual work that works for a given range of people. Casual work is defined in different ways by various organisations and for various reasons. This trend followed through into this research. I found that even though I clearly outlined the definition of casual work that this research would utilise at the beginning of the research this produced a number of women with very different work situations. My original definition was that casual work was 'work where the number of hours worked varies considerably from week to week with no guarantee of a maximum or minimum number of hours to be worked each week'.

However even with this definition outlined to the women I found in the in-depth interviews that some women did not fit into this category. Such women either had a set minimum number of hours they worked each week (which was usually no good indication of the number of hours they would actually work), or generally worked a set number of hours each week. However these hours were not on set days or at set times and neither were the women guaranteed these hours. The situation of these women who were decidedly casual workers but who did not fit into the original definition used by this research caused me to alter slightly the definition of casual work used by this thesis to read; 'work where the number of hours worked varies considerably from week to week with no guarantee of a set number of hours to be worked each week'.

Cultural Concerns

As far as I could ascertain from the available information the majority of women in casual work are Pakeha women. However women from other ethnic groups were not excluded from the research. To exclude all groups other than Pakeha women from the research when to my knowledge no other research of this kind was being carried out by people of their own ethnic group would be to silence them. However, I was unable to obtain participants from any ethnic group other than Pakeha. This could be due to either the method that was used in obtaining participants or the characteristics of the group researched (women in casual work). It would perhaps have been possible to directly search for Maori participants or participants from other ethnic groups. However I felt that given the limited number of participants and that the nature of the research was exploratory rather than exhaustive such actions were not necessary. If this research demonstrates that casual work is an issue for women then future research should take into account the need for the experiences of women from other ethnic groups to be recorded.

It should also be stated that I am a Pakeha women and therefore this research is conducted from a Pakeha view and with a Pakeha understanding of women, work and society. This could cause conflict if women other than Pakeha women took part in this research.

Interview Procedure

Before I conducted any of the interviews with the participants I undertook two practice interviews with friends. This served both to improve my interviewing skills and to assess the suitability of the interview schedule. Once these had been completed a pilot interview was undertaken. The purpose of the pilot interview was again to assess the suitability of the interview schedule and the subjects it covered. At this stage it was still possible to add or delete any areas or issues if this was deemed necessary or appropriate. The participant for the pilot interview was chosen for her suitability to the research, her willingness to comment on the structure and content of the interview afterwards, and her availability for a second interview should the content of the pilot interview change drastically from that of interviews with subsequent participants.

However the pilot interview went very smoothly and discussion with the participant proved that no adjustments were needed.

All participants were involved in one main in-depth interview based on their experiences of and involvement in, casual work. The interview took place in a location acceptable to the participant, which was generally their home, in the kitchen, dining room or lounge. The interviews varied in duration from 45 minutes to approximately 75 minutes (although due to the hospitality of the participants the actual time I spent in their home sometimes extended to two hours). The interviews were loosely structured around an interview guide (see **Appendix 5**) which contained five main areas which I wanted to cover during the course of the interview. These areas were: why the women were involved in casual work and what the main influences in them taking the jobs were; what the conditions under which they were employed were; what the impact of casual work had been on their work lives; what the impact of casual work had been on their personal lives and the overall experience of their involvement in casual work. These five areas were not rigid in form and the order in which they were covered varied in different interviews. The purpose of the guide was to make sure that all the main areas of research were covered. However, due to the in-depth interview method which encouraged the voice of the women to be heard the depth of coverage of each area differed in each interview. While all the interviews started off in the same place the emphasis was on allowing the participants to tell their story and recount their experiences as they wished.

At the beginning of each interview the participants were reminded that they did not have to answer any question that they did not wish to, and that they could stop the interview at any time. All the interviews were taped, as permission was given in each case for this to occur. The tape was stopped on occasion when the participants were needed by their children, but it was never requested that the tape be stopped on any other occasion and no participant ever declined to answer any question.

On a few occasions I was asked questions about the experiences of the women in their work. This was mainly focused around the legal rights of the participants with regard to holiday pay and sick pay. I answered such questions to the best of my knowledge and passed on the 0800 phone number that the Department of Labour has set up to address such queries.

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Once the interviews were completed they were transcribed. Copies of the individual transcriptions were sent to each participant. The participants were asked to change, correct or delete any parts of the transcript that they wished and then were asked to return the transcript to the researcher, they were sent stamps and a recycling envelope sticker for this purpose.

All the women returned the transcripts of the interviews. The number of additions and deletions that had been made to the transcripts varied greatly. Some women returned the transcripts unmarked while others deleted and added whole paragraphs. It was the edited version of the transcript that was used from this point on.

The Interview Experience, the Subjective Nature of the Interviewer, and the Slant of the Data Gathered

The information obtained from these interviews is the main source of data used in this research. All the interviews were conducted by myself. This piece of research is based firmly on feminist principles of research and such principles dictate that the research should be as transparent as possible. For this reason I consider that it is helpful if I highlight here honestly and clearly some of the key issues and relevant experiences of the interviewing process as I found them.

Firstly I noticed that there was a difference in interviews depending on the age and characteristics of the participant. This was something I had expected but not fully investigated. One woman confessed at the beginning of the interview that she was not good at telling stories and the interview with her was much shorter than the other interviews. Her belief that she was not a story teller could indicate that she was self aware and recognised that she communicated in different ways, and thus the in-depth interview technique which contains only very semi structured questions is not the best method to employ for such women. However it could also be that my lack of experience in interviewing meant that I was unable to make the most of the interview and therefore missed out on hearing valuable data.

Conversely, one woman was very adept at storytelling, or at least at providing information unprompted. I found that with this woman I outlined five broad areas I was interested in covering during the course of the interview, and then sat back as she proceeded to relate her experiences in each of these areas with very little further

prompting from me. I found this interview delightful as the participant told her story in her own manner and, I felt, with very little interference from me. However when I thought about this afterward I realised that all the women told their story in their own manner. It was judgmental of me to believe that the information from the participant who was able to recount her experiences in a way which I believed to be more representative of a feminist research method was in any way superior to other data. It was more likely my inexperience as a researcher that had meant that not all women felt able to do this and that prevented me from accepting that stories and the imparting of information took different forms depending on the individual and all of these forms were equally valid. However this conclusion was reached in the end and all the data was given equal status.

The women's attitude to life also seemed to shape the interviews and the way that they progressed. One woman obviously did not like to complain about life, she seem to both accept that life was hard and deal with it without complaining or wishing things were otherwise. She also appeared to feel that complaining was not the thing to do, especially not to a stranger. As she gained confidence throughout the interview and become more relaxed in my company she began to indicate areas where she would prefer things to be different if she was given a choice. However the tone was not one of complaint nor did it indicate that such a position was expected but rather it was the expression of preference and seemed to carry the view that the job containing the conditions most desirable to her was not what she ever expected to achieve, and in fact that she should not expect this.

Most women invited me into their homes and accorded me greater courtesy than would be expected in a stricter interviewer/participant relationship. Nearly all the women offered me at least tea or coffee and biscuits. I was even treated to home made baking by some. In general the women seemed much more interested in helping me out as a researcher (freely giving me all information I needed) than concerned about what would happen to the information once they had placed it in my hands. I often felt that my explanations about confidentiality fell on deaf ears, and most women interrupted saying that they did not care overly. Many women were also ambivalent about choosing or being known under a pseudonym. However, even though I accepted their right to chose in this matter I was reasonably adamant that each participant have a pseudonym as I

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felt that although at this stage the women were not concerned about their anonymity they may not be relating the current face to face interview with me to the final publication of the information they were sharing. It would be easy for them to share experiences with me in this face to face manner that they would not want to be made public under their name. Even though the purpose of the research and use of the data had been fully disclosed to the participants, I believed that I had a greater grasp on the eventual use of the data they were providing me with than they may have had.

I found that I was both somewhat concerned that these women were so trusting of me and grateful that I was committed to a feminist research methodology. I felt that there was at least some accountability within the research because of the aims of feminist research but I was also afraid as it appeared that I was to become accountable to myself to fulfil the requirements and adhere to the principles of feminist research.

Overall I was constantly amazed at the willingness and even eagerness of the participants to open up and recount to me numerous experiences and aspects of their lives. I think some of the interest and enjoyment for the participants stemmed from the fact that someone was interested in their lives, and not just in counting occurrences in their lives but understanding the person and experiences behind those occurrences. One participant commented, after I had thanked her for her time, that it was wonderful for her to sit and talk about herself for an hour. While this was not an overtly political statement and the participant may have been referring not to the political nature of having her voice heard but to the personal interaction of having someone listen to her talk about herself and her experiences, I believe these two to be linked. So this comment to me summed up the importance of allowing women a place to speak and be heard in a society which has silenced and ignored their voices for years.

For a few women the interviews raised issues that they had either not considered or had been putting off considering or acting upon, or that they preferred not to consider. I found these issues centred around either the participants' conditions at work (very broadly), or their long-term career goals, aims and prospects. When the situation arose where I perceived the interview to be following a path which the participant did not seem keen on exploring I did not push the issue. It occurred once or twice that I would ask the participant either a direct question or I would ask them to elaborate on a particular theme that had been introduced and they commented that it was not

something they wanted to consider or dwell on. In such cases I allowed the participant space and redirected the conversation into areas that were not potentially traumatic for the participant. These cases only occurred with issues relating to the career goals, aims and prospects of the participants.

I chose this non intrusive, or 'soft' approach as it seemed more appropriate both to the feminist base of the research and to the topic itself. The women gave their permission to participate in the research knowing it was about the experiences of women in casual work. The cases where women did not appear to feel comfortable talking about certain aspects of this seemed to predominate in areas that they had not previously spent much time considering or assessing and areas which would cause grief or anxiety. For this reason I felt that if the participants wished to pursue this in the interview then I would not interfere but if they were uncomfortable with this more public approach then, in the interests of their well being I would not intrude. I pursued this course even though I felt that if I had continued to ask direct questions in this area, they would have answered. Some participants had already thought through such issues and were not willing to talk about them in depth as this was distressing for them. I also honoured this decision without any comment as I felt they had this right as participants.

Procedures for Handling Information and Material Produced in the Course of the Research

All personal details that might lead to the identification of participants were kept confidential. The participants were asked to choose their own pseudonym at the time of the first interview. It is by this name that they were referred to throughout the interview. The list connecting each participant with their pseudonym was kept secure, separate from the tapes and transcripts of the interviews. The addresses and other personal details of the participants were held in a locked case.

The tapes of the interviews were heard only by myself and the transcriber. The transcriber signed a statement of confidentiality. The transcripts of the interviews were read only by myself, my supervisors and the transcriber who produced them.

None of the final work involving excerpts of the interviews or material gathered from the interviews contained any information which could directly lead to the identification of

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any of the participants. All participants had the right to veto any information about them or from their interviews that was contained in the final report, before it was published.

Six months after the completion of the research all tapes and transcripts will be either returned to the participants or destroyed.

Method of Analysis of Raw Data from Interviews

Once the interviews were transcribed they were then coded. The coding involved reading through the transcripts and dividing them into bibbits of information. A bibbit was a relevant piece of information that ranged in size from between one sentence or phrase to a couple of paragraphs of dialogue. Each bibbit was given a code that related to the pseudonym of the participant, the page number on which it was found in the transcript and the category in which it was placed. This meant that if the meaning of the bibbit was later in doubt or questioned the bibbit could then be placed in the context of the surrounding dialogue. While not capable of completely preventing misinterpretation this did provide some safe guard.

Some bibbits fitted into two or more categories. This occurred when some categories touched on similar material and also because one remark or comment can impact on, and tell a story of several separate events or themes. This was also a form of cross-referencing and provided a means of seeing which categories were linked. When many of the bibbits in one category were seen to all possess a cross reference to the same category then it could be assumed that either the demarcations between the categories were not clear, one category should be a subset of the other or that there was a clear linkage between the main concepts of each category.

The coding was a laborious process. I started with several categories around which I believed the information from the interviews to be centred. These categories were informed by both the interview schedule (which in turn had been informed by the literature review) and my experiences in and memories of, the interviews. As I proceeded with the coding I realised that the interviews were providing relevant information which did not fit into the categories that I already had. I began to create new categories when this occurred. Some of these categories were small and later connections were seen between them and other categories. When this occurred the

smaller group was amalgamated with the larger as long as this did not subtract from the information the bibbits provided.

Once categorised the bibbits in each category were examined for 'internal homogeneity' and 'external heterogeneity' (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). Internal homogeneity refers to the coherence of information within a category, or how well it all fits together (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, Marshall and Rossman, 1995). External heterogeneity refers to the clearness of the distinction between categories (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, Marshall and Rossman, 1995).

This method of coding featured both deductive and inductive aspects. It was deductive in that the interview guide that was used in the interviews arose out of the literature review and therefore most of the information that was then produced in the interviews could be classified along the same five broad categories that were in the guide (sensitising concepts). However as there were other categories that arose out of the interviews the method could also be classified as inductive. These categories (indigenous concepts) came from issues that the women themselves introduced that had not arisen in detail from the literature review (Marshall and Rossman, 1995).

ISSUES

Ethics

The main ethical considerations in this research involved the in-depth interviews. For a detailed review of the ethics involved in this research and the manner in which ethical issues were dealt with see the Ethics Application in **Appendix 1**.

One other issue arose in the research after the approval of the Ethics Committee had been given. This arose in an area which was not covered by the ethics application that was submitted to (and granted by) the ethics committee at Massey University.

The issue to arise involved the recruitment of applicants. The original idea had been to recruit applicants by means of advertisements placed in strategic areas and articles in local newspapers. However I also found that word of mouth meant that some people approached me and said that if I still needed participants that they knew of someone that might be interested in participating. I realised that in such cases an ethical dilemma

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existed. I could either directly approach the prospective participant, or I could enlist the aid of the person who first approached me and request that they contact the prospective participant for me. There were ethical problems with each option. If I chose the first course and directly approached the prospective participant I would be imposing upon them and could possibly coerce them into agreeing to participate in the study when they would have preferred not to. Alternatively if I enlisted the aid of the person who approached me and asked them to contact the prospective participant then they could be seen as endorsing the research. If they were someone who the prospective participant trusted then that trust could be transferred onto the research I was conducting. This could mean that the participant would not examine the research as carefully as they otherwise would have before committing themselves to participate.

Upon consideration I decided that the second option of these two was the safest overall for the participant. The danger of coercion or uninformed consent was higher if I directly approached the participant without their prior consent than it would be if a third party first approached the prospective participant and inquired whether or not they would be interested and sought their permission for me to contact them.

When consent had been sought and given for me to contact such prospective participants I then telephoned them and discussed the research with them. If they were still interested I then mailed the information sheet to them and proceeded as normal from that stage.

Politics and Power

Again, most of the main politics and power issues such as the ownership of the research, the destroying of interview tapes and issues of anonymity and confidentiality have already been discussed in the previous section. There is one more remaining power issue of relevance in this research that needs to be addressed. This also occurred during the in-depth interviews.

I am a 24 year old Masters student who has participated in both the permanent and casual labour force. Many of the participants I interviewed were older than me and of different levels of education.

I found that even though some women were up to 30 or 40 years older than me (while some would have been closer to my age I think only one participant was younger than me) they were never condescending and never seemed to assume a position of power over me. It is possible that because I was a researcher and therefore could be perceived to be there on 'official' business some of the women may have felt obliged to recount experiences that they may not have recounted in other circumstances. However, I do not think this occurred.

Although I cannot vouch for the experience of the participants I felt all interviews were conducted with an assumption of equality on both sides. The very method used, that of in-depth interviews conducted in a feminist manner, allows the participant to direct and therefore control the interview as much as the researcher and should prevent the researcher from exerting power in the interview situation. However I do acknowledge that it is still possible that power was an issue in some of the interviews. Unfortunately, because this is a Masters thesis and I am the sole researcher there is little I can do about this except acknowledge the possibility of power imbalances in the interviews and follow ethical procedures to ensure the safety of participants.

All the transcripts of the interviews were sent back to the women for revision before they were used in the research. Some women deleted a few passages or phrases. Hopefully this option allowed any women who may have felt a lack of power in the interview to review and correct or delete any comments they may not have wished to have recorded.

SUMMARY

As outlined, this research is based on a feminist methodology. It embraces the principles of feminist research and the method chosen reflects this. I have attempted to be transparent in both the design and my application of the research. In the following chapter I will present the results of the research and begin the discussion of the data. The main strength of this is in allowing the voices of the women to be heard.

Chapter Four

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

WHAT WAS SAID AND WHAT IT MEANT

The rest of this chapter and the following chapters are a presentation of the results of the in-depth interviews that were conducted with the 12 participants in this research. These chapters also contain the discussion and analysis of this data.

Quotes from the women and excerpts from the interviews are interposed with additional comments by the researcher. Within the excerpts, portions which are indented further than the rest of the quote indicate a question or comment made by the researcher. These are included for the purpose of coherency. At the end of each section there is some analysis or comment.

Direct quotes from the participants have been included in some of the analysis sections, the summaries of each chapter and in the conclusion of this thesis. This is not common practice but is viewed as helpful and appropriate on this occasion. This is a piece of feminist research and thus to include the words of the participants of the research in the areas of analysis, summary and conclusion is to accord them a voice throughout the whole research process. This research is also exploratory research and as such does not attempt to completely answer questions but to pose other questions that may not have been asked before. It is therefore again consistent with the nature of this research to continue to present the words of the women wherever they have appropriate comments to make.

The results and analysis chapters have been divided up as follows;

- This Chapter, Results and Analysis: the remainder of this particular chapter focuses on the presentation of the participants themselves.
- Chapter Six: Why do Women Work in Casual Work?
- Chapter Seven: Conditions of Work

- Chapter Eight: The Impact of Casual Work on the Women's Personal Lives

The following section introduces the participants involved in this research and presents their profiles.

The participants

The profiles of all the participants can be found later in this chapter. The profiles are given for two reasons. The first of these is to present the participants as women with lives and human experiences. The reader is invited to view the women as neighbours rather than numbers or data. The second purpose of these profiles is to enable readers to put the following results and excerpts from the interviews in context. This aids the transparency of the research and allows others to make their own conclusions, or to question those made here.

The profiles cover the personal statistics of each participant, their household and family compositions, their current work situation, the use of the money that they earn from casual work and the contribution this makes to the household, and a brief outline of the personal situation of each participant as it relates to her casual work. Pseudonyms have been used for all the women, no identifying factors have been included, and some personal details have been altered to protect the identity of participants.

Before continuing with the profiles a brief discussion of the overall makeup of the participants will be given. There were twelve participants in all. Six of these women were from south Auckland (one of who did not live but only worked in this area) and six were from Wellington (although one of these women was located outside of the Wellington city area). All of the participants were involved to some degree in casual work. Some of the participants had multiple employers (up to five) with either one or more of these jobs being defined as casual. For some of the participants this involved as little as 100 hours over a year and for others it took up to 40 hours per week. A couple of the women were currently employed on a contract basis although only one of these had not had previous experience in casual work. The information used in this research relates primarily to the women's involvement and experiences in casual work. However as many of the issues for women in casual work are similar to those of women in part-time or other non standard work the experiences of the participants in

such work was explored where this was thought to be of relevance and interest to the research (by either the participant or the researcher). Comments the women made about other jobs were also included when it was the women's casual work that impacted on their other jobs.

SUE

Family

Sue lives with her partner and her preschool child. Sue's child is her only dependent.

Work

Sue has worked in retail jobs for many years. Both her previous job and her current job are casual. Her current job was originally supposed to be three set days a week of four hours per day. This has now changed and the hours and days Sue works vary from week to week. Sue's job is not a casual job according to the precise definition used by this research as she is currently employed for a minimum of 12 hours a week although this can sometimes go as high as 36 hours.

Sue preferred her job when it was set days and hours per week and would like to return to a permanent part-time job. However apart from the variable nature of her hours Sue is happy in her position and has no desire to change her career. Sue would have a much higher degree of job satisfaction if her job offered her more secure and reliable hours of work.

Money

Sue's income accounts for about 30% of the household income. The remainder of this comes from her partner. The money Sue earns in her casual work goes towards paying for every day living expenses and necessities.

Personal

Sue wanted the position that she is currently in and enjoys the work but she would be much happier if it was permanent part-time. She needs a job which fits in with her unpaid work commitments and the casual nature of her current job makes this very difficult.

Sue had a certain degree of choice in occupations when looking for a job as she also has qualifications in other areas but she did not have the choice of a permanent or casual position in her current job.

Sue's experience in her current position would be much more positive if it were a permanent position with set hours.

ANNE

Family

Anne is between the ages of 50 and 60. She is married and lives with her husband. They have grown children who no longer live at home and who are not dependent on their parents.

Work

Anne has worked in a casual position for a catering firm for the last ten years. She is very happy in her job and finds it very satisfying. The main reason she took the job was for the social contact it provided. Given the choice Anne would prefer a job that had more permanent hours as long as such hours were at a suitable time. She would prefer less weekend work. Recently Anne has been left in charge to manage jobs, along with other workers, on several occasions but this is still on a casual basis.

Money

The money from Anne's casual work provides approximately 10-15% of the total household income. The rest of the money is provided by her husband's job and the family business. Anne's earnings provide for luxuries more than needs. She uses her income to buy such things as presents for her grandchildren. Although such things could probably be provided for otherwise, Anne's income does mean that it is not a stress.

Personal

Anne has a very positive attitude towards work. While she would prefer not to work so many weekends and would like to have a bit more work she does not expect to find what she wants in a job. She is happy to settle with what she has and not complain or expect more. Anne plays sport one day a week and also works in the family business. The family business is also such that she is needed to work solidly in it for a period of a few weeks every year. Her casual work allows her to do this. Anne's 'choice' of job is limited by what is available in the area in which she lives. The number of jobs available are limited.

Anne views her overall experience in casual work as positive. She enjoys the work and the flexibility it allows her.

CATHERINE

Family

Catherine is between the ages of 40 and 50. She is married and lives with her husband and their young preschooler. As well as the preschooler Catherine also has a teenage son for whom she is financially responsible. This son does not live with Catherine.

Work

Catherine has casual work as a market researcher. Some weeks Catherine will work 15 hours and other weeks she will have no work. She also teaches night classes. The night classes are a contract, rather than casual, position. Catherine is happy in her market research job because of the flexibility it allows her. However it is not a career job and she views it as a means to an end. The amount of job satisfaction Catherine receives in her job fluctuates, although this due more to the type of work she is involved in than the casual nature of the job.

Money

Catherine's casual work only provides for about 2% of the household income. The rest is provided for by her husband. Catherine's money is used to provide for particular needs that could be paid for with the money earned by her husband but which she views as her responsibility. Being able to pay for these is important to Catherine.

Personal

Catherine views her casual job as a means to an end. It is useful as it keeps her in the workforce and allows her to earn money. Catherine is studying and aiming towards starting a career in a different field to that of her casual job. She needs a job which allows her time to study and which is also weekend or evening work so she can juggle it around her childcare responsibilities. Catherine applied for the market research job as she felt it was a job she could do. She does not feel that she has a lot of marketable skills and that this and her study and unpaid work commitments limits the amount of jobs available to her. If Catherine did not have a young child to care for she would probably seek a permanent job that had normal work hours.

ELIZABETH

Family

Elizabeth is married and lives with her husband and their three children. Her children are aged between nine and 15 and are her only dependents. Elizabeth herself is between 40 and 50 years old. No-one else shares the home with them.

Work

Elizabeth works as both a relief teacher and as a counsellor. Both these jobs are casual jobs. In relief teaching Elizabeth will be called by 8.00 am any morning if she is wanted for work. She will sometimes be notified earlier than this of work that is available but there is no guarantee that she will have more than an hour's notice of work. The number of days of teaching work that Elizabeth gets each week varies between one to three days. The relief teaching job is Elizabeth's return to the paid labour force. The counselling job is slightly more predictable and is structured around one day a week. However this job is still casual as there is also no guarantee of a day's work as it depends on the amount of work that is available.

Elizabeth has also worked for the census during the last two censuses. This is casual in as much as it is not regular work or hours, however it is also more a contract job as the worker is contracted to do an amount of work and is paid a particular sum to do so. Overall Elizabeth would prefer to have permanent work hours each week as long as she still had the school holidays off.

Elizabeth is a trained teacher so her relief work is in her previous career. However her career goals are now in counselling and she would prefer to train and work in this area. She gets more job satisfaction in her counselling job than she does in her relief teaching. Elizabeth's level of job satisfaction in relief teaching is low.

Money

Elizabeth's income from both her casual jobs provides for less than 20% of the household income. The remainder of the income is provided by her husband's job. The proceeds of Elizabeth's casual jobs goes towards her further training and to household repairs. These could be classified as needs the household and the family could probably survive without this money, although this might provide autonomy problems for Elizabeth.

Personal

As well as Elizabeth's two main casual jobs she also does volunteer counselling work one day a week. This means that she cannot undertake paid work on this day if it is available at her relief teaching job.

Elizabeth is the primary caregiver for her children and her unpaid work commitments to her family hinder her participation in the labour force. She needed a job that would fit into the school holidays and allow her to have time off when her children were not in school. This both limits the number of hours she can work and the type of work available to her. She was however, able to choose for which schools she would provide relief teaching.

Elizabeth sees her overall involvement in casual work as positive because she has been able to 'make them work for me'.

JAN

Family

Jan lives with her partner and their two young children. The two children are her only dependents.

Work

Currently Jan holds two jobs. The first is as a social worker where she currently works approximately 13.5 hours per week (although this does fluctuate slightly). However her position as a casual social worker essentially means that she may be passed around departments as required and there is no guarantee of any set number of hours or any continuity, from one assignment to the next. Jan's other job involves preschool education. She works three to four hours per week in this position although she will soon be giving up this job in order to increase her social work hours. Jan has also had various short term casual jobs that are based around a particular event such as market research or census work. Jan sees her current job as a casual social worker as a means to an end. She finds the casual nature of the job handy when it comes to school holidays. She would probably prefer a permanent part-time job if it were available, not in social work.

Jan is trained in social work. She has over a decade's experience in the field. Her plan is to move into a new career.

Jan has enjoyed some aspects of her social work job but overall has not achieved the level of job satisfaction that she would like.

Money

Jan's income from casual work accounts for between 5-8% of the income for the family. Jan's partner provides for the rest of the income.

The money from Jan's casual work is used to supply her own "extras" and it also provides her with a sense of autonomy as she no longer has to rely on her partner to supply all the household income.

Personal

Jan is just returning to the workforce. She has been the main caregiver for her two children and still fulfils this role. She adjusts her jobs to fit around her family rather than asking her family to fit around her jobs. This limits her 'choice' of jobs. So far Jan has been able to negotiate jobs and dictate the hours that she is available to fit around her unpaid work commitments. She is prepared to look until she finds a job that suits her and that she enjoys. Overall Jan has found her experiences in casual work to be more positive than negative and the negative aspects are not necessarily due to the casual nature of the work.

JAYNE

Family

Jayne is married with her only dependent being her husband who she supports financially. Both Jayne and her husband are in their mid twenties, and Jayne has not been out of university long. They have moved this year out of their own small flat into a larger place which they share with three other flatmates. One of the primary reasons for this move was to enable them to save money.

Work

Jayne worked on a contract basis in a starting out job in the profession in which she has been trained. This was for her a career job. It was not the type of job she wanted - she would have preferred a job which was not contract and which had traditional hours and a traditional payment structure. The nature of this job was such that Jayne did not know how much money she would be able to earn from week to week. Jayne's long-term goals are to find a better job in her profession. She would like a job which pays more and has better work conditions. She had very little job satisfaction in her contract job and left of her own accord, turning down a further job offer from the same company.

Money

Jayne's income from her contract job provided approximately 30% of the income for her and her husband. The remainder of their income came from a government allowance and monetary gifts from parents. Jayne's income went into the general pool to pay for needs such as rent, food and car expenses. Without the income from Jayne's job she and her husband would have been unable to pay for all their needs. Very little of their money was spent on luxuries. Even with Jayne's job she and her husband had to change their living situation to allow them to cope financially.

Personal

Jayne started her contract job with a positive work attitude but this deteriorated over time as she became more agitated at the treatment she received at work. The major influences for Jayne in taking her contract job were the job's ability to advance her career and the amount of money she would be paid. She did have a choice between two jobs. She chose the contract one because at the time it appeared that it would pay more and would have a more positive impact on her career than the other job. However she did not have a choice between the contract job and a permanent job with the same attributes. Whether or not to take a paid job was not an issue for Jayne as she wanted to find work for career as well as monetary reasons. If money had not been necessary then Jayne may have opted for voluntary work which fulfilled her other requirements in a job. Overall Jayne found the contract work to be a negative experience. This was largely due to the way she was treated and the conditions of, the job.

JEAN

Family

Jean is a solo mother aged between 40 and 50. She lives with her teenage son who is her only dependent.

Work

Jean has a casual position as an exam supervisor in the education sector. The job used to provide her with approximately 20 hours of work a week for five weeks of the year. Now Jean may only be given six hours a week for two or three weeks of the year. Jean has been doing this job for ten years. Most of this reduction in hours is due to funding cuts and restructuring in the education sector.

Jean would prefer to have more work than this and ideally would like to find permanent part-time work which is also mentally stimulating and challenging. Nonetheless Jean is generally happy in her job and she believes she enjoys good work conditions.

Money

Jean's casual work provides for approximately 3-5% of her household income. The remainder of the money is supplied by the Domestic Purposes Benefit. The money that Jean earns from her casual work goes to supply needs rather than wants.

Personal

Originally when Jean sought her casual work job she needed a job that fitted in with her childcare commitments and her study. Jean's choice of job was limited because of her other commitments. Even with this job Jean could only work half days as the afternoon shift cut into the time when her son would be home from school. Jean found that there was not much choice of jobs for someone like her returning to the workforce, and with other commitments such as childcare, and jobs that were suitable were not as good quality as those available to others in different situations. Overall Jean seems to view her casual work job as a positive experience.

JENNY

Family

Jenny is aged between 30 and 40. She is married and lives with her husband and their three children. All three children are under the age of ten and the youngest is not yet at school.

Work

Jenny works as a nurse in a casual pool of workers. She works between eight and 28 hours a week. The current arrangement is for her to work eight hours each week although this is not a guaranteed eight hours. This is either in one shift or in two split shifts. She previously worked up to 28 hours per week in the same job but is now only doing around eight hours. This reduction in hours has been Jenny's choice. She would prefer a permanent part-time job if she could find one with appropriate hours and remuneration. Nursing has been Jenny's career, but she is now considering returning to full-time study.

Money

Jenny's casual work provides for approximately 50% of the household income. The remainder is provided by a student allowance. Jenny could possibly earn more but this would mean she and her family were no longer eligible for the student allowance. The money from Jenny's casual work is used to provide for basic needs such as food.

Personal

Jenny has a very positive attitude towards work. She copes well in a stressful working environment and does not let such stress or other potential problems at work affect her work attitude. Jenny has to schedule her work around times when her husband is able to look after their children. This means she works mostly weekends. Jenny felt she had a large element of 'choice' when it came to which job she took. She had choice between various public and private health care facilities but because of the structure of nursing and her need to fit her job around childcare arrangements, the 'choice' was probably not as broad as it could have been.

LUCY

Family

Lucy is a single woman between the ages of 30 and 40. She lives with her sister and her niece in an arrangement akin to flatting. Neither sister supports the other financially. Lucy has no dependents.

Work

Lucy works as a relief teacher. On average she works between three and five days a week. Lucy used to teach full-time but found the stress was too great. She decided to try relief teaching as this would hopefully relieve some of the stress and also give her an opportunity to both study and try teaching in different areas. Unfortunately she has not yet been able to fit study in with her relief teaching commitments. However she has found an area of teaching that she prefers to that which she was previously involved in. Lucy is still unsure whether or not she wants to continue teaching or move into another career. Some of her relief teaching assignments give her greater satisfaction than others. She has recently completed an assignment which lasted a few weeks and from which she gained a lot of job satisfaction. In the long term Lucy would prefer to work permanent full-time hours.

Money

All of Lucy's income is from her relief teaching jobs. It is used to supply both all her needs and any luxuries that she can afford. It is hard for Lucy to budget as she cannot say how much income she will receive from week to week. She has had to renegotiate loan repayments with the bank because of this and feels that her relationship with her bank is deteriorating.

Personal

While Lucy finds full-time teaching stressful she is also beginning to find relief teaching stressful too, although for different reasons. Overall however, Lucy finds the stress of relief teaching more manageable than that of full-time teaching. Having decided not to teach full-time the only choice that Lucy thought she had, given that she wanted to work to pay the rent rather than collect the unemployment benefit, was between relief teaching and retail work. She chose teaching because the hours were preferable and it has far better pay than retail.

Overall, the experience of casual work has been for Lucy more negative than positive. This is largely due to the unreliable nature of the work.

PAT

Family

Pat is aged between 40 and 50. Since her marriage break-up Pat has cared for her four children all of whom are under ten years old and dependent on her.

Work

Pat works as a relief teacher. Her days of work vary from zero to five per week. Pat does not usually know whether she will work each day until 7:30 in the morning of that day. Pat has some formal teacher training but she is not a fully qualified teacher. She would much prefer to have a permanent part-time job than a casual job but was unable to find one. Pat would like the opportunity to train as a teacher or in that area. This would enable her to form a career, however she is currently unable to afford either the time or the money to do so.

Money

Pat's casual work provides for approximately 20% of the household income. The remainder of the money for the household comes from a government benefit. All of the money from Pat's casual work goes to providing needs for the family such as school costs, food and things like bikes for the children. While bikes may not be considered a necessity by some they allow the children to participate in society.

Personal

Pat has a good work attitude. She finds it much easier to cope with the casual nature of her work now than when she first started. However it does get to her sometimes. She has to be ready to work both mentally and physically at 7:30 every weekday morning just in case she is called up and this can be tiresome. Pat needed a job which would fit in with her extensive unpaid work commitments to her four children. Pat did not feel that she had much choice in her job.

PHILLIPA

Family

Phillipa lives with her two dependent children both under the age of ten. She does not live with a partner.

Work

Phillipa works in a variety of data entry, administrative, and project jobs in various government departments. The jobs vary in nature and hours and are worked one at a time. Each job is for an indefinite period of time and concludes when either the work finishes or the department runs out of money. Some of the jobs that Phillipa works have reasonably stable hours of work for their duration and operate in the style of a contract job. Other jobs have hours that fluctuate in the nature of casual work. Sometimes there are breaks of a month between jobs (all of which are for the same two employers) and there is never any guarantee of more work. Some jobs are operated on a week to week or month to month basis where Phillipa only finds out one week if she will have work for the next week.

Phillipa is happy career wise with her current jobs and enjoys a fair amount of job satisfaction.

Money

Phillipa's income from her casual jobs provides for 50% of the household income. The other 50% is provided for by the Domestic Purposes Benefit. The money that Phillipa earns from her paid work pays for both needs and discretionary spending.

Personal

Phillipa has consciously decided against a full-time permanent position as she would be unable to take all the school holidays off and would be too tired to give time to her children. The jobs Phillipa does take generally allow her to take school holidays off and to be there for her children after school. These two factors are important to Phillipa.

Phillipa would prefer to have a permanent part-time job which gave her time off during school holidays but also provided her with regular ongoing employment. Overall Phillipa finds that the benefits that arise out of the flexibility of her casual work outweigh the difficulties caused by the stress and insecure tenure of the work.

SALLY

Family

Sally is married and lives with her husband. They have no dependent children.

Work

Sally has five jobs. Two of these are casual catering jobs, one is service in a different area, one is retail and the other is a casual clerical job which only occurs for a few weeks every three years. The first of the catering jobs provides Sally with approximately three to five days of work per month, the second with only one or two days every three months, the other service job with only four or five days a year and the retail job with at least one day per week. Sally likes the variety of the five jobs and prefers to work on this casual basis although she would be interested in a permanent part-time position if one were available. Sally finds she achieves an acceptable amount of job satisfaction in all her jobs and has no plans to change the setup.

Money

Sally's income for her five jobs (including the one permanent day each week) provides for approximately 15-20% of the household income. It is used to supply mainly luxuries rather than needs.

Personal

Sally is happy with her job situation at the moment and while there are perhaps various aspects that she would like to change she is content to keep things as they are. She plays sport one day a week and none of her jobs interfere with that. The flexibility of the work also allows her to keep in contact with family members. There was not a great deal of choice involved in the jobs as they were offered to Sally without her needing to go looking for work. She would possibly prefer office work but there is none available.

Sally enjoys the autonomy that earning her own money provides her. Overall Sally rates her experience in casual work as a positive one.

Chapter Five

WHY DO WOMEN WORK IN CASUAL WORK?

AN ISSUE OF CHOICE

I needed a job and my husband was ...[not going to be in paid employment]. So I knew that I would need a job to support both of us. So I had applied to other...firms but didn't get any positions, so I took this one. I didn't want the contract [casual] position, I wanted a full-time, I wanted a salary position preferably, but I basically took it because that was it. (Jayne)

This quote from Jayne aptly summarises many of the reasons why women took up the casual jobs. Jayne needed the job because she needed the money, she was unable to obtain a position she wanted and so she had to settle for less. These issues and those outlined in the following paragraph are highlighted in this section.

When questioned on the motives and reasons for taking up employment in casual work the women interviewed supplied a range of answers. The main categories into which the replies fell were; a need for money or social contact, a lack of alternative job offers or lack of choice, the need for any job to fit in with their many other commitments such as family, unpaid work, and recreational activities, a need for a flexible job (timewise), and a conscious desire to be out of full-time permanent work.

Such replies can be divided into two categories: Why the women sought and entered into paid work, and why this paid work was in casual employment. The first of these relates to a need of the woman or her family, the second relates to the situations in which the women find themselves and a limitation on the element of choice. Because of its importance this central issue of choice will be discussed in depth later in this chapter. An outline of what this chapter contains is;

Why enter into paid employment?

WHY DO WOMEN WORK IN CASUAL WORK?

- Money
- Social Contact

Why casual work?

- Flexibility (Family, Other commitments)
- Means to an end
- Nothing else was available

Choice

The issues raised will be discussed at the end of each section. Firstly, I shall look at the issue of why the women took a job in the first place.

WHY ENTER INTO PAID EMPLOYMENT?

Throughout the interviews with the participants in the research it became evident that the reasons why the women were in paid employment had an influence on the women's experiences in casual work. For example the uncertain nature of casual work had a different effect on someone who entered into the paid work force for monetary reasons than it did on someone whose primary reason to seek employment was to get out of the house and add structure to their day. For this reason it became important to include a section on why women entered paid work. This provides the information to allow greater understanding of the different position of the women in this research and the manner in which casual work impacts on their lives.

When questioned about their reasons for taking up paid employment some women had ready answers (usually money or social contact). Other women gave the impression that seeking work was something they had just done. Such women had to spend more time considering what their reasons for such a move had been. Some women offered one reason immediately and then amended this later on in the interview to include other influences. This is understandable given the nature of the interviews. As the emphasis of the conversation changes this can trigger memories or thoughts in the participant.

Again, within the issue of why these women took up jobs in the labour force two main reasons were highlighted. These were the need for money, and the desire for social

contact (or the need to get out of the house and do something). I shall now address each of these areas.

Financial reasons

Some of the women interviewed stated that their primary reason for seeking and taking up paid employment was money. A few others implied that this was the case without explicitly saying so. For other women money was not a major consideration in their decision⁴.

If it hadn't been for the money if you hadn't needed that income would you have still have taken the job, do you think?

Probably not, not yet, not while he is so little. Yes, definitely once he is a bit older, but I didn't intend to, I never intended to work when I had children, it is just being on your own you don't really have a choice, circumstances change. So you have to do it. But otherwise, no, I wouldn't have done it. (Pat)

This quote by Pat also illustrates the dilemma some women find themselves in when the need for money conflicts with their childcare responsibilities. Pat would have preferred to stay at home with her preschooler but instead she had to place him in daycare while she worked. This and other effects that casual work had on women's family lives is dealt with in greater depth in a later chapter.

When you were looking for that job, what were your wants, what did you want in a job?

Money. When I was looking for this job I was in the middle of exams, so it was a really bad to be looking for a job, because I was studying as well. It was a real nightmare actually. It was basically, that I needed to get a job as soon after exams as I

⁴ In the direct quotations the question posed by the interviewer are indented.

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could, that started a week after exams, because we weren't financially that well off. (Jayne)

The incentive for doing that job was much more financial, because of the particular state of our finances at the time. (Jan)

Jan has had a number of casual jobs over the last few years. Some of these she took out of financial necessity and others were influenced by different factors. The need for money was also a strong motivating factor for other women to seek employment.

I'm just starting to pick up now, I'm getting paid for the first two weeks, tomorrow I get paid for that, so I'm hanging out for that and it is spent, it has gone, it is accounted for. That two weeks work all the money there is accounted for already, it's gone, it's already spent on bills and debts and things like that. (Pat)

Working on weekends, is basically working when you can earn the most, is a downer anyway. Working on weekends is a pain, but I've worked on weekends ever since I could work. So it's just status quo, basically....But apart from that it's for the income basically. (Jenny)

The money provided by the casual work that these women undertook was needed to either contribute to the family income or to supply the women with their own personal income, income that had not been derived from their partner or the state.

Out of the twelve women interviewed the money that each earned for their casual work provided for 0-10% of the family income for three women, 10-20% for another four, 30% for two, 50% for two, and 100% of the family income for one woman. Other forms of income for the family centred around a partner's income or income from a social welfare allowance or benefit.

So it can be seen that the casual work provided for a very diverse range of the women's income. Only one woman relied on her work to provide 100% of the income

for her family unit. However these figures refer to the family income and not the personal income of each woman. For a few other women, while their family unit had access to money from other areas, the money that they earned from their casual work was their only source of personal income.

The eventual use of the money earned from casual work and the relative degree of need for this money varied greatly between the women. For some women whether or not they obtained work each week dictated for how much longer they would be able to pay the rent.

[The money from my contract position supplied] certainly most of my direct essentials, rent, food, we're talking basics. (Jayne)

The money that you get from relief teaching, what does that supply? Does that supply needs?

Definitely.

What kind of needs?

Basic needs. I don't pay rent, food definitely because I've got four children, DPB OK what do I get \$360 a week, I get paid fortnightly, which with four children and living and car, and house and all that stuff it just does not stretch far enough. Any extras you need you just can't do it on the DPB alone. Extras I mean not holidays or things like that. Just little things I suppose. Filling the cupboards up once a week, instead of once a fortnight. Not going, no we haven't got that this week, or have to wait till next week or we can't do that. There is always things coming in from school, and always things coming in from everywhere else. So it is nice to be able to say yes, there you go, done....Without thinking, oh no where is that going, where am I going to get that

WHY DO WOMEN WORK IN CASUAL WORK?

from. It puts a lot of stress into the family situation, children as well they pick up they know. (Pat)

While not all women classified their need of money as their ultimate reason for seeking out paid work, some knew of others for whom this was the case.

One of the ladies that worked with me had been there for ten years and when the work was not there and she is not getting paid she becomes quite stressed out, because they really rely on that money. She gets really stressed. (Anne)

But if I were trying to earn enough money to make a real contribution to the family it would be very uncertain. It would be really fraught. I have friends that are in that situation. Many women with professional skills who are going from contract to contract and they have got the uncertainty between contracts. When is the next job coming, and one of them is a solo parent, how do [you] provide for your family in those circumstances?. (Jan)

Both of these comments highlighted the stress that relying on money from casual work to supply needs could place on women. This issue is picked up in a later chapter.

If the money from the casual work was not enough to meet a family's needs, money had to be found from elsewhere. In the case of Jayne this meant a certain amount of independence was lost.

He was just, he used to say to me we're OK, and we were OK. It's not like we were having to beg for food or anything it wasn't desperate. But we were so reliant on Alex's parents giving us money, just so reliant. (Jayne)

The women who relied on their casual work jobs most heavily to supply needs and who cited money as a primary cause for their involvement in the paid work force did not

have a partner who contributed to the family income. These women were all either supplying the entirety of the income for the family unit from their paid work or were supplementing the income that they received from a government benefit.

For other women, all of whom had a partner who was involved in paid work and earned sufficient to pay for the needs of the family, the money that they earned from casual work supplied more luxuries than needs;

So there was no pressing money need?

No, the money is very little in any of those jobs, the pay is very poor really. (Anne)

So it really doesn't make difference to how much I spend at the supermarket, whether I take the kids to the movies, or not, I'd be doing that anyway. (Jan)

Did you see the money that you were earning from those as supplying needs or luxuries?

Luxuries, it was definitely luxuries. My luxuries, to be spent on things I wanted to do, which was nice yes....certainly those amounts of money didn't contribute to the household expenditure, at all. (Jan)

So when it comes along I find that although it is probably not part of my house, household budget, it becomes surplus to that, and buy extra for the grandchildren and all that sort of thing and I find that I've just got that little bit extra to do the things that perhaps I would really love to do and...and that gives me a lot of pleasure it really does....(Anne)

Yes, I would. I don't really have to work, it is just getting out of the house get off the farm, and it is nice for the extra bit of

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money. I can think of spending \$20 or \$30 without blinking.

That's what it amounts to. (Sally)

However even though these women did not need the money from their casual work to provide for needs, they all appreciated the money for the pleasures it gave them on a personal level. The women derived satisfaction either from the knowledge that they had earned the money themselves or from the little extra things that the money enabled them to buy. As Jan says;

I found myself, although my partner's income is very adequate to cover our family needs, I wanted to earn my own money, and I was surprised at how strong that was, because for the previous seven years I had been happily spending his money, but I found that I really wanted to earn money that I could call mine. (Jan)

It could be seen that Jan needed the money that she earned to provide her with a sense of independence and autonomy. Spending her partners money could not supply her with this but earning her 'own' money, even though it would not actually 'buy' needs for herself or her family would. In this case it is not what the money can buy that is necessarily the need, but rather the ownership and origin of the money. Jan has the knowledge that she earned the money directly through her own work, and while she may have worked as hard or harder in non paid work for her partner and thus have fair claim and power over the money his paid work supplies this does not always apply in practice. Jan therefore felt it important to have control over finances that she had earned in the market place. This allowed her autonomy and independent financial control.

Even so, for such women money was not their primary reason for entering the paid workforce. Most of the women in this position choose to find jobs because they wanted the social contact that the labour force offered them, the opportunity to do something different and 'get out of the house', and while they did not need the money supplied by the work to provide for needs they wanted the independent financial control that it could supply them. A more indepth discussion on social contact is taken up on the next page.

The state of people's finances are fluid. This is especially true for those involved in casual work. For Jan this meant that at times she wanted work for financial reasons and the money she earned at such times contributed to the upkeep of the family. At other times the money became her own personal income and was spent on luxuries.

The incentive for doing that job was much more financial, because of the particular state of our finances at the time. (Jan)

Luxuries, it was definitely luxuries. My luxuries, to be spent on things I wanted to do, which was nice yes....certainly those amounts of money didn't contribute to the household expenditure, at all. (Jan)

Both these comments refer to different casual jobs that Jan held at different times. The first was needed for monetary reasons because of the particular state of the family finances at that time. The second quote refers to a separate job the money from which was used to provide Jan with financial independence and was spent on luxuries.

For Anne the insecurity of income from her casual work meant that it was considered outside the family budget and not relied upon for necessities of life.

Because the workload fluctuates so much I can't ever guarantee how much work I'm going to get. (Anne)

The home situation of each individual woman had a large influence on determining why they were employed in casual work and what the money provided. Most of the women whose primary reason for taking their casual work jobs was money did not have an earning partner. Those who did not have an earning partner were on government benefits (either a couple student allowance because their spouse or partner was a student or a Domestic Purposes Benefit). These women also tended to need the money supplied by their work to provide for the basic needs of themselves and their family unit. Thus it can be seen that the government benefits were not adequately providing for them and their families needs. In this manner casual work could be seen as subsidising the benefit.

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Women who have access to an alternative source of income are seen to rely less on the money that they earn from casual work and are able to use it for luxuries rather than needs. Such women were more likely to take a job in the labour force for social rather than financial reasons.

This was the case for more than just Jan. Anne, while saying that the main reason she sought paid work was for the social contact not the money also commented;

[A]nd previous to that I was never paid as such. I was contributing more than being paid. It was rather nice.

To just get the money?

Yes, that was something to do something for myself and to get some money. (Anne)

So while the money was not the reason why Anne took the job and she did not see having the money as a need she did notice how good it felt when she was paid and contributing to the family income.

Social contact

The second reason which women gave for entering the labour force was the desire for social contact or to get out there and do something. Included in this was the desire to start or continue a career or an acknowledgment that the women thought they would feel better about themselves if they were working for money. For two of the women, Anne and Sally, this social contact and 'doing something' was the main reason that they gave for entering and continuing in paid work (although the above section does demonstrate that for Anne at least the money provided by her casual work was beneficial because it enabled her to contribute to the family income). Indeed for Sally, even the casual and uncertain nature of the work was desirable as it gave her variety. Both Sally and Anne live with only their husbands and have children who have grown up and left home.

It did actually, not knowing when I'm going to go to work. That suits me just not knowing, not knowing what the next day is going

to bring. I don't need to be organised that much, I just drop everything and go Just to get out of the house and be in contact with people.

Social type of thing?

Yes. I enjoy people contact.

If the people had been unpleasant in any of those, would you just drop it and leave?

Yes, I would. I don't really have to work, it is just getting out of the house get off the farm, and it is nice for the extra bit of money....

Because not having to go to work is probably a big thing, isn't it, just doing it for fun. And it is fun because when you haven't worked at one of the jobs for a week or a fortnight you've got to catch up with what everyone has been doing in that time when you haven't seen them. None of them I see on a social scale or visit.

It's just at the job.

It is just at the job, so there is a lot of catching up to do when we go back to work, which is great. (Sally)

Well I just feel for me at my stage in life, that it was just so beneficial to get that job socially and having some income There was a big void in my life at that stage, having shifted from being very occupied with my farm work and the children, although they were at university at that stage, they were still a big part of my life. And I did a lot of voluntary work through my

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children and things like that, getting involved with sport and I guess you could say I'm a worker, I like working. I always say to my husband I'm happiest when I'm working. So therefore, it was just that comment really, I'd love to do that. I knew I was capable of doing it, because I had done a lot of it where I'd come from, on a voluntary basis. So your question was why. Well really to fill a void and the social contacts

So there weren't money pressures?

Not at that stage. (Anne)

For most of the women their reasons for seeking paid work were a combination of both the desire to enter the labour force for social contact, daily structure or career reasons and the need for money. Lucy, after commenting that she wanted the security that money can provide, adds that there was more to her desire for paid work than just the money;

Yes, there was more to it. Actually now I think about it, there was more to it. I thought I might feel quite good about doing the job. (Lucy)

Sue comments;

But yes it is good adult company, and you're not stuck at home. I feel human. You go a bit nutty after a while if you don't venture out there. You feel a lot better about yourself, because you get to wear really nice clothes, you dress up, you feel important, and people don't just see you as, oh you're just a mother, you know what I mean. (Sue)

These comments by Sue that she was perceived as 'just a mother' and that she 'felt important' once she was in paid work highlight the societal perception of women and

the devaluing of women and unpaid work. This issue is discussed in greater depth later in this section.

For Jayne it was necessary that she earn money to support both herself and her husband but she had also just finished studying and was therefore anxious to start on her career (although she does comment that if money had not been required then travel would have been an appealing option too). So for most of the women interviewed their reasons for seeking entry into or maintaining their place in the labour force were a mixture of monetary needs or wants and a desire to be involved in the workforce for social contact or some form of social reinforcement (either by being valued by society or themselves because they were in paid work or providing themselves with structure).

There are two issues that should be discussed here. Firstly, concentrating life around unpaid work conducted in the home can be a social trap for women. Once children have left home and the unpaid work and the limited social contact it provided has shrunk, women can find themselves underemployed and socially bereft. The move into the paid work force is therefore an appealing option.

Secondly a couple of the women commented that they would feel good or felt good about themselves when involved in paid work. This links with the findings of the literature review in which the 'trivialisation' of 'women's work' or unpaid work was discussed. Unpaid work has been subordinated to paid work and thus undervalued in society. This can lead to women in turn feeling undervalued because they are not in paid work. This is exactly what has occurred here.

The issue of social reinforcement that this highlights is an interesting one. The current dominant ideology in New Zealand pushes a very strong idea of a 'work ethic'. It promotes the belief that a good 'work ethic' is fostered when a person takes part in regular paid work. This 'work ethic' is considered very beneficial for everyone concerned and those with a good work ethic seemed to be perceived as superior to those without. This concept of a 'work ethic' combined with society's subordination of unpaid work to paid work could possibly have an effect on the 'need' some of these women felt to enter the labour force. It is very difficult to tell if such a concept had any influence on the individual women or not as the question was not raised during the interviews, although comments such as the last quote from Sue do indicate that this is

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the case with some women at least. However, it would be interesting to examine in greater depth both this and other possible reasons why women decide to enter the paid workforce.

WHY CASUAL WORK?

Once it was established why the women had elected to seek jobs in the labour force the next issue was why they 'chose' casual jobs rather than permanent part-time or full-time work⁵. The situation of each woman was different, and each woman had different needs that their paid work had to meet. The main influences on women to take up casual work were; the flexibility it allowed them, the need for work to fit in with family and other commitments, what each woman wanted in a job, and where that particular job would take them in the long run, and the availability of jobs. The women's comments have been placed under these categories and are detailed below.

Flexibility

There was nearly an overwhelming consensus among the women that any job they acquired would have to be flexible. This appeared largely due to the considerable number of commitments which the women possessed other than paid work.

There are drawbacks, but the flexibility is the most important thing. (Elizabeth)

In each of these jobs, if they had not had that flexibility of hours, or that non-permanent style of work, would you have taken them all?

No, I don't think so. (Sally)

That's right. [I took my job] also because of the experience that it would give me that related to my degree, that was why I took the job at..., and because it was quite flexible time-wise, although

⁵ I use the word 'chose' in quotes because for some of the women it was not really a choice at all but a question of necessity. Again, this issue will be picked up in greater detail later in this chapter.

it became a lot less flexible later on. It became quite rigid.

(Jayne)

Catherine took her job as a casual market researcher because it was a job that she could do in the weekends, and Jenny took her job as a casual nurse for the same reasons. While many of the women needed the jobs for money, the jobs were not their first priority and so had to fit around their other commitments. The greatest and probably most inflexible of these commitments was of the women to their families.

Family

Jan, Jenny, Jean, Catherine, Pat, Phillipa, Sue and Elizabeth are all the major caregivers for their children still living at home. So for all of these women one of the major requirements of any job that they accepted in the labour force was that it could fit around these caregiving requirements.

So it had to be something that fitted in with your commitments for care giving?

Absolutely, No. 1 priority. I've never worked while I've had children until now. (Pat)

And, of course, those two jobs were entirely able to fit in with my children, there was no problems with that, so that was fine. (Jan)

I was on my own...it fitted in with childcare and my studies...could only take it because it fitted. (Jean)

When I'm looking in the paper, one of my priorities is can I fit this job round the family, not can the family fit round this job. So that's very important. I hadn't, I would have just, if this...term one job hadn't come up I just would have continued on that line. (Jan)

WHY DO WOMEN WORK IN CASUAL WORK?

If there were preschoolers in the family any job had to fit in when alternative care for the children was available.

Sam, he's studying, so his time is pretty limited, for looking after the kids. Weekends tend to be the best time.

So working weekends works.

Yes, exactly.

So what happens if you are rostered on during the week, or some time when Sam isn't able to look after the children. Do you get child care?

I just don't choose shifts to work that he isn't available. So I make sure it doesn't happen. (Jenny)

Then I would think about what I want to do. So because of the particular stage in my family life that I'm at, at the moment, the casual work suits me. But if I were trying to earn enough money to make a real contribution to the family it would be very uncertain. (Jan)

For those with school aged children fitting around childcare commitments meant that a job had to provide the women with sufficient time off during the school holidays.

In a way the casual work suits me much better than having a permanent job. For example, this eight weeks will take me up to the end of the third term and then I would be quite happy not to work because my children will be on holiday again. (Jan)

A job also had to allow these women to be home when their children came home from school or as soon after this as possible.

Relief teaching basically, pays well, and as a relief teacher I don't have to do preparation or marking and reports. So I can go

in at ten to nine. It is secondary I mostly do, although I do some primary. I leave at half past three, and I've got no work to bring home. When I come to three kids with varying amounts of homework that matters at the moment. (Elizabeth)

No, they're not interested if you're off sick because your kid is sick, or if you're off during the school holidays, or school hours, and you want to be home for your kids when they get home. That is No. 1 priority as far as I'm concerned. You've got to be there for your children first, and your job has got to fit in with that. (Pat)

Elizabeth's caregiving responsibilities prevent her from pursuing the career path that she would prefer as this would not allow her the time flexibility she needs to be home in the afternoons when her children return from school. Nor would it allow her to have time off during the school holidays.

The counselling is more but I have a recognition that I would be likely to lose school holidays, if I was working full-time as a paid counsellor. I'm in no man's land at the moment. I have had a possibility of a regular two days a week to do teaching next term, which may or may not come up, if they haven't found another teacher. So things, I am going to and rethink. At the moment it seems to be the best I can do given I have primary aged children and I am reasonably happy. (Elizabeth)

It is very complicated for some of these women to try and juggle all their commitments and consequently some of them run to a very tight schedule. This is demonstrated in the following section on the women's other commitments.

Other Commitments

Some commitments tend to breed others. That is certainly the case when it comes to childcare. If a child attends a play centre or another form of daycare it can often be expected that the mother or caregiver do a shift every week or so at the kindergarten. Even some primary schools now encourage the caregivers to come in and help out where possible. This kind of commitment is just one other obligation that any paid work has to be able to fit around.

Well all that time as a play centre parent, as any other play centre parent....It would be three to four hours per week voluntary, and that's running the session helping run the session and then because I was treasurer of the Play Centre I did about, it fluctuated but sometimes ten hours a week. (Jan)

Last year it was a bit hard because I had an office position at the play centre, so I was working there quite a lot,... as well as doing a duty day there, and you're involved in so many other things,...and all of these other systems are unaware that you're involved in other things, and that you work part-time as well. So I think there should be a badge, I do this and this and this. (Jenny)

Do you think with the play centre jobs, if you hadn't seen there to be such a need for somebody to be working there, would you have looked for another job maybe in social work or something?

I probably would have, yes. But, I would have looked, but I would have been hesitant, especially that first term when my son was just settling into school and I was doing quite a lot of voluntary work at the school. Our school is very good about parents going in and helping. I was, in fact, both terms I have been going into

her class an hour a week, and I've been trying to get into [my son's] class an hour a week as well, but not always getting there. (Jan)

In this case Jan's commitment to helping out at her children's schools meant that she was unsure about the kind of job that she could find, and about taking a job in her career field that might interfere with such commitments.

Play centres are one type of commitment which caregivers are obliged to take on. Some women also had other paid or unpaid work commitments. One woman managed to hold down and juggle five paid jobs.

Does it ever happen that you can't make the time?

Yes, and you work under those conditions, which if you can't make it you just say, no. So I would say it's a yes no job. If I find that we're shearing, and it's mostly that we get that done when conditions are right and it's time to do it, and I and then they ring and I say no I'm sorry but we're shearing. So that's fine, and that is why I really love the job. I'm not ever going to let anybody down, because of the base of workers that they've got, they can just cover. (Anne)

Other commitments are entered into by choice, whether that be a lifestyle or intellectual choice. For some of the woman a casual job fitted nicely around their recreational activities and sports.

So it wouldn't be easier to have a set one and a half days each week or a set two days each week?

No, because my lifestyle wouldn't fit in with that Sarah. I'm very sport minded and I play a lot of sport. Sometimes I've got to give the sport up for my work, and I'd always do that. My job does come first. But I wouldn't like to think that I would have to give my sport up [totally] to work. (Anne)

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In general are you happy with the total number of hours you work. Would you like more or would you like less?

Yes, I would probably like a few more. It's been very quiet over the winter, but whether it is just the time of the year. But then I play badminton one day a week and it hasn't interfered with that. (Sally)

So you feel quite able to say, sorry not a good day, I'm booked up?

Yes I do. Even if it is just for a lunch or something. (Sally)

So it would be more convenient to have more regular work. But at the same time I can fit study in so much more easily. (Elizabeth)

As highlighted in the literature review, the average paid work job is based on an understanding that the employee will work at least forty hours per week and will do so during normal working hours (between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.). However the average school week for children is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Someone has to look after the children before and after school. So whoever takes up this job will find it hard to also keep another paid work job under normal conditions. Many women who are the main caregivers for children have to mould their lives around their children's and the other commitments that go with this such as stints at kindergartens and after school birthday parties. These are all necessary rather than optional commitments but they do limit the number of paid work options that are available to those women with childcare responsibilities.

This all makes it necessary for such women to look to alternative jobs and alternative job structures. Casual work fits more easily than standard work into time limitations and the other requirements of these women. As these women do not have the option of relinquishing their time commitments to their families they are in essence forced to take on casual rather than permanent work. It may seem that the flexibility that casual work can offer makes such work ideally suited to many women, but there are other issues involved with casual work that must also be taken into account. These issues are explored in the following chapters. It is sufficient at this stage to note that the

commitments in some women's lives which necessitate a paid job with flexible hours of work force them to take on casual rather than permanent work.

Means to an end

Nearly all of the women would have preferred to have permanent rather than casual jobs. Out of the 12 women only Sally and Catherine were happy with the casual nature of their jobs. All the other women would prefer work with permanent hours if they were given the choice. Most of these women saw their present casual work job as a means to an end.

I would be happiest with two or three days permanent work and that would be much better, but this has been really good because it has got me back into the world of work, and back into teaching.
(Elizabeth)

They don't stay in it. The people that I've talked to like that have found a permanent position that suits them, they're just so unhappy [in casual work].

Yes, so it is basically for them a means to an end.

Yes, some people do work casual for a while until they work out which place they want to work in permanently. (Jenny)

So it enables me to earn some income to pay for counselling training....I see them as a temporary state, it is a means to an end, it's on the road to having more permanent employment. It's been a way of getting back into the work-force and earning some money to pay for training, and building my own confidence back up I just see it as a temporary thing. (Elizabeth)

I probably don't take it as seriously as I would if I were permanent part-time. And I am thinking all the time, well what's

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next. I'm not seeing this job as permanent obviously, because it is not, so I am still looking in the paper, I am trying to think ahead as the kids get older and can cope better with me not being around in the holidays, for example. What do I want to be doing. So in a sense I'm looking at this job to see what I can get out of it to lead me into something that is more interesting and more stimulating and more worth while really.

So really you treat it as casual and as a stepping-stone?

As a stepping-stone, yes very much as a stepping-stone. (Jan)

The general consensus with these women is that their casual work jobs are not permanent but are to be used as a means to an end. They enable the women to enter into more study (and to finance this study) or to adjust to the workforce before they find a better job. Catherine, Elizabeth and Jean were all studying while working in their casual jobs. Both Lucy and Pat wanted to study as well but due to the poor pay and the timing of their casual jobs they were unable to do so.

For some women the only reason they took the jobs was in the hope that they would lead to something more promising. Jayne for instance only took her job because she hoped that it would help her career and if it had not been a step along her career path she would have looked for something else.

Helping my career. No, I would have done something else, it was a shocking job. I stuck it out for three years because I was really hoping that it would help my career.

And did it?

I think it probably did. It certainly looks OK on my CV, better than retail. (Jayne)

Jayne's comment that the job, while helping her career, was 'shocking' indicates that she put up with more than she would otherwise have done because the job provided

what was most important to her, it aided her career. It is possible that Jayne is not the only women in this situation and that as casual jobs may be just a means to an end for Jayne and other women like her this could occasionally result in them putting up with 'shocking' jobs that they may otherwise have avoided. Thus calling these jobs a 'means to an end' could promote the false impression that the women are eliciting what they require from the job and gaining more from the transaction than the employer. Jayne's comment indicates that this is not necessarily true as the women may be putting up with much worse conditions than they would normally tolerate.

Although, following on from this it is also interesting to note that while the jobs are not permanent, some of the women know this and treat them accordingly. This is demonstrated in Jan's comment that she probably does not treat the job as seriously as she would if it was permanent part-time rather than just casual. She is also looking out for another job while she is still in her casual position. It is also possible that treating the jobs as transitional makes them easier to cope with on a day to day basis.

Another issue worth commenting on here is the possibility that the casual jobs provide a bridge for women into the labour force. This may be true to a degree as some women took the casual jobs as a means to an end when nothing else was available, but most of the women give no indication that they needed the casual work to act as a bridge or that the current casual job they are in will make finding a permanent position easier.

Nothing else was available

For many of the women the job that they ended up with was not their job of choice. The decision was to some degree made for them. They had to take the jobs that were available regardless of any desires they had for a job in their chosen career line.

What are the reasons that you're not in a job like that now?

Is it because one is not available, or is it because you couldn't get one to fit the right hours?

I can't really think of one that I could do now. I don't think there is one. (Pat)

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[B]ecause there were particular jobs advertised, and I thought well they're not going to come up very often, I'll have a go. I didn't get them. So I wasn't put in the position of having to decide. Whereas the ... job somebody rang me up about a week before term started, and said could you do it please. (Jan)

So the job at...I took because...I needed a job and my husband was ...[not going to be in paid employment]. So I knew that I would need a job to support both of us. So I had applied to other...firms but didn't get any positions, so I took this one. I didn't want the contract position, I wanted a full-time, I wanted a salary position preferably, but I basically took it because that was it. (Jayne)

No, nothing like that, at all. They're all very easy jobs, anyone could do them. No skills attached to any of them.

And that was what you were looking for?

Well yes, I'm an office person really, but none of that involves office work, at all.

Would you have preferred office work?

Yes, I would, because it is more mental. (Sally)

Basically, I didn't want to do housework and I didn't want to look after kids, because I've got enough of that and those were the only two other options open to me. I could either go and clean other people's houses or look after other people's children for \$10 an hour, or \$3 an hour for looking after kids and that just does not appeal to me, because I've got enough of my own to do.

So that was definitely a better option. There was no choice really. (Pat)

This last comment by Pat highlights the key issue here, that of choice. As illustrated some of the women would have preferred jobs in another area or a job that was more permanent but such jobs were not available. This was in part due to the constraints that their other commitments (including childcare) put on their availability and in part to the limited jobs in the market place. This issue of choice is picked up in greater detail in the next section.

As mentioned earlier the general job market is not readily accessible to those with childcare or other unpaid work commitments. This limits the jobs that are available to these women. Jobs that do allow women to incorporate other commitments with their paid work often tend to be 'easy jobs' with 'no skills attached'. Such jobs are poorly paid and offer little chance of advancement. These are the types of jobs that many of the women were forced to take up. Other women also ended up in similar jobs because they had spent a considerable amount of time out of the labour force raising children. It is commonly stated that the majority of such women return to the labour force in a lower paid and lower status position compared to that they were in when they left (Else, 1996, Davies and Jackson, 1993). On their return to the labour force the women find that the skills and knowledge necessary for them to continue in their past career have undergone significant change. The outcome of this is that these women need to either retrain or take work in less skilled, more menial (and lower paid) jobs.

CHOICE

The amount of choice that the women had on whether or not to participate in the labour force and whether to do so in a permanent or casual position arose as a crucial issue. The issue of 'choice' and the amount of 'choice' that was available to the women is very complex as it is influenced and affected by a number of factors such as the women's experience and family situation. Such issues are examined in this section.

When asked how much choice the women thought they had when looking for paid work the answers received varied greatly. Some women maintained that they had had ample choice while others felt that choice had not existed for them.

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Some women felt that there had been no choice at all;

It is difficult for someone who is older....there is not much choice of jobs and they are not as good quality....unless you have a partner in full-time work its hard....For someone like me who is out on her own its much more difficult. (Jean)

So would you go back to doing the day relief?

I have to. I have to go back to doing the day relief. I have to go back to doing that, and it's really now, I'm just going to wait and see what happens. If I get enough work, I might find that this school now that they've had me for this, they might try to get me every day. But it just depends, because each school has a pool of about three to four teachers who have been with the school for a long time, and they get those teachers first every day. I'm hoping that since I've been working there and I know the management a little bit more, that I might be moved up a little notch in their priority to get me. (Lucy)

This last quote from Lucy also highlights one of the problems that surrounds the allocation of hours to employees. Those who delegate what work is available can chose which employee they offer it to. In this case Lucy is limited by such an arrangement. Lucy needs to stay with the schools that she has managed to develop a rapport with in the hope that she will be offered more relief work. She cannot afford to try a different job and sacrifice the relationship with the school that she has worked hard to develop. Such a manner of assigning work impacts on the employees in other ways and this is developed in the following chapter.

Jayne was able to find a job in her chosen field but there was no choice of permanent or casual work. She had to take a contract position which did not guarantee her any set amount of work per week and was paid for work completed rather than an hourly rate. This situation was not her choice.

But certainly I think that I didn't have a lot of choice at the time. Definitely needed the money, definitely needed some kind of...experience, and so was willing to do a lot for very little.

So there wasn't a choice of a contract job or full-time?

That would have been lovely, well what shall I do. It wouldn't have been much of a decision. (Jayne)

If Jayne had not needed the money from the job so badly then she might have been able to hold out for a permanent position in her field.

So you don't have the option of not going back and doing anything and just waiting?

No, on relief teaching, I haven't been able to save anything, because also with the holidays you're meant to put some of your [money] aside. (Lucy)

Money was also an issue for Lucy. Lucy was not able to wait for a better job because her casual work had not enabled her to save sufficient money to cover herself while she looked.

For some women there appeared to be a genuine choice of jobs, both permanent and casual, however it should be noted that both Jenny and Jan said that they could survive without the money that they earned from these jobs;

I think it's beneficial in lots of ways. I choose the days I work and that's it, and if I didn't want to go back to work ever again.

You just wouldn't.

Yes, that's right, it's as simple as that, although I wouldn't. But yes it's as simple as that really. (Jenny)

Did you feel you had much choice between jobs?

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Yes, I did. I've never been turned down for a job. Whenever I apply I get the position. I've got some very good references. I felt that I have had about as much choice as I wanted. (Jenny)

But actually I had a complete choice in whether I chose that, or not. With the relief I did have the choice and I would have been able to get a retail job, but I know, poorly paid long hours. I was actually thinking this time of working in a wine shop or in a video shop, something slightly different to what I had done before, in terms of fabrics and clothes and things. But actually I had a complete choice in whether I chose that, or not. (Lucy)

Yes, a job that I feel is worth while really. I would not go and sell soap products. Again, because of our financial situation I have the luxury of being able to look at jobs that are not particularly well paid, but I feel are worth while and I think that's really what I want to do. I said to my partner, well what would you think if I got a permanent part-time job. He said fine, as long as it excites you. I thought, ah he's put his finger on it, because he knows full well that this job I've been doing hasn't been exciting me and he's absolutely right. There's no point disrupting the family life for a job that may earn me money, but gives me no satisfaction. (Jan)

For others there was a choice within their chosen field;

Yes, there is a large demand. I can choose whatever school I wish to put my name down at. So I just listened around and talked to friends of my children at school, and other teachers. Partly I kept to ones that were close to home, because that was important, so that I reduced my travel costs....two schools [in one

area], and two in [another], so that was four, but then 15 minutes to travel. My children are at [yet another school].... So I actually had a choice of schools, so I thought I had quite a lot of choice. If I didn't like a school I can go somewhere else, so relievers are quite in demand. (Elizabeth)

Some women made a conscious choice to leave permanent full-time employment and to seek casual or non-standard work. This was because they did not enjoy the stressful lifestyle that full-time work had offered them. The three women who fall into this category are all trained and skilled women in stressful professions. One woman, Jenny, is a nurse and the other two, Elizabeth and Lucy, are teachers.

I took the day relief because I found working full-time teaching really stressful. Even though you have the holidays, which are great, I found that I spent at least just over half of all my holidays marking and preparing work. I also found that the job I did almost completely on my own. Because with some schools, even though you're in a department, I was the only teacher in my subject. So I had to prepare all the work and do all the marking and everything. I just found it really stressful. I didn't find it, I also found there wasn't the feedback. There didn't seem to be a lot of feedback, because everyone was so busy that there wasn't a lot of time for staff meetings and feedback. Staff meetings were more have you done this or that, rather than (Lucy)

So would you say that the stress of teaching full-time was the main reason you decided to day relief?

Yes, definitely the main reason. (Lucy)

Both the professions of nursing and teaching have casual work which was readily available to these women. Elizabeth now wants to move out of the teaching profession

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and has transferred from full-time to relief teaching to enable her more time to pursue her main interest of counselling. Lucy also became a relief teacher. She found teaching full-time stressful mainly due to the large amount of preparation that was needed and the lack of support that she was given. This difficulty and the stress that Lucy experienced was augmented by her position as the sole teacher in her subject area. Jenny is part of a casual pool of nurses; however, she is normally assigned the one shift that she requests each week (although the time of this shift varies).

For women such as these three, casual work could be seen as a lifestyle choice. However the issue of choice is very complex. While Jenny, Lucy and Elizabeth all said that they chose to leave permanent full-time work, it does not necessarily follow that they 'chose' casual work. Firstly there were external factors influencing the women to leave their permanent full-time positions and these reasons could inhibit choice and secondly the women were not given the choice of casual work or permanent full-time work. If the women had been given such a choice they may have opted for permanent work.

It is hard to measure the amount of actual 'choice' that the women had when they were deciding on their current jobs. While they may say for instance that they had a choice between retail and relief teaching the choice was still limited. The choice was only between retail or relief teaching because they were the only available options that allowed less than full-time working hours. So in essence the choice may not be between all those occupations for which a person is qualified but between all those which offer hours which accommodate the needs of the person. As outlined in the literature review women with unpaid work commitments such as childcare have less 'choice' in jobs. The debate is around whether women also 'chose' casual work or 'chose' to limit their future job opportunities when they chose to have children.

To better highlight the main issues regarding the aspect of 'choice' I shall follow through with the words of a couple of women and examine these in greater depth.

But then there wasn't a job available in this district?

That's right. (Anne)

and it is not what I would really like to do and I think Sunday is very much a family day. I often play the organ in church on a Sunday, but they are so accommodating that I'll say, well can I come down afterwards, well that's fine. But it is not what I want to do by choice, but I do it. (Anne)

For Anne, while she enjoyed her job and the social contact it gave her and did not need it for money, the timing of her work was not always what she wanted. The weekend work has become more and more frequent over the years and the work during the week less so. (This and similar problems are picked up in greater detail in the next chapter but the current issue of concern is that Anne did not have the ability to work those days most suitable to her.) She did not enjoy working weekends at all, especially Sundays, and if she had the choice she would not do so. But weekend work had become necessary in her job and so she had to comply. However it is also interesting to pick up on the element of power (although minimal) that Anne did possess and exercise when she would still go to church and play the organ and only go to work afterwards. (This issue of power is also addressed in a later chapter.)

OK, if it hadn't been for the money if you hadn't needed that income would you have still have taken the job, do you think?

Probably not, not yet, not while he is so little. Yes, definitely once he is a bit older, but I didn't intend to, I never intended to work when I had children, it is just being on your own you don't really have a choice, circumstances change. So you have to do it. But otherwise, no, I wouldn't have done it.

What about the casual nature of the job. Would you have preferred something that was maybe a set Wednesday Thursday every week?

Reliable income. Yes it would be nice to know you've got that income coming in regularly every week and maybe a bit extra on

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top of that. I've still got to pay for the child care whatever, whether I work, or not, I've still got to pay for that.

So if you had the option between choosing two or three whatever set permanent days per week you would take that?

I would take that, definitely. You know where you are. I can't arrange to do anything, just in case I get a phone call at 7.30 in the morning. I can't plan my day ahead, I'll do this and that tomorrow, it is if I don't work I'll do this and this tomorrow. Otherwise work has got to come first. (Pat)

So it had to be something that fitted in with your commitments for care giving?

Absolutely, No. 1 priority. I've never worked while I've had children until now.

And is there any availability of secretarial work or anything like that, that might have accommodated?

No, because I didn't want to go back into that field anyway, because I'm so far removed from it now, I'd have to retrain....so that wasn't an option either. It just needs me to retrain and I haven't got the time to do it at the moment. (Pat)

What were the main elements why relief teaching appealed to you?

Money, definitely the money, because it is well paid even though I'm what is classed as an unqualified teacher I still get I think it is about \$115 a day gross, which I pay secondary tax on, it is

about \$22 an hour it works out to, it's good, so it is worth my while to do it. (Pat)

Pat had various job options open to her. She could either clean houses, look after children or be a relief teacher. While Pat may have exercised an amount of choice in deciding to take a job relief teaching rather than cleaning houses or minding children, this choice was heavily influenced by the amount of money that relief teaching paid in comparison to the other jobs that she might have found. As seen above, money was the primary reason for Pat to enter the paid workforce and was therefore the primary concern in her 'choice' of job. The choice was also influenced by what Pat wanted to do, she preferred relief teaching over more mundane tasks which she already spent many hours doing as unpaid work. However, if Pat did have complete freedom of choice she would rather have undertaken training, either in her previous field of secretarial work, or in teaching. Formal training in teaching would allow Pat to be paid more as a relief teacher or to seek a permanent teaching job. Neither training nor secretarial work were open as options to Pat. Training was not an option because Pat did not have the time or finances. Secretarial work was not suitable because she would need retraining and also because it was unlikely that Pat would be able to find a job in this area that would accommodate her unpaid work commitments. So while it may seem that Pat had a choice of jobs her choice was severely limited by her situation. The 'choice' was between poorly paid jobs which held absolutely no interest for her or a casual job with no assurances of work but which paid a decent wage. Pat 'chose' the later.

One aspect which is perhaps a bit more intangible than the others relates to general expectations of people and the way in which society values certain jobs. This aspect was brought to my attention by this quote from Lucy and it is perhaps more helpful if I present that quote again now;

But actually I had a complete choice in whether I chose that, or not. With the relief I did have the choice and I would have been able to get a retail job, but I know, poorly paid long hours. I was actually thinking this time of working in a wine shop or in a video

shop, something slightly different to what I had done before, in terms of fabrics and clothes and things. I think part of the reason, I did have a choice, but part of the reason I went was because I thought gosh I've spent a whole year at teachers college, learning how to be a teacher, I've spent a year full-time teaching, it just seems a bit of a shame to give up on it so soon and just head off in a new direction. Even though I know people have done, I just felt that being a little bit older, too, that I couldn't say, as if I was in my twenties, look I've just got to find the right job, because I don't believe there is any more. (Lucy)

Here Lucy says she had a choice about what sort of job to do but then says that she felt that she should go teaching rather than take a retail job. The two reasons that Lucy gives for this are that she has spent a year training for teaching (but as previously discussed, in her first full-time teaching job Lucy found the stress too much which is why she is now reassessing her position in the job market) and that she feels that because she is in her thirties not twenties she should not change careers again or elect to just work in retail. This shows that Lucy feels that retail is not an acceptable career, she should not retrain again, and that she should have a career. All these seem to indicate what Lucy sees that society expects of her. These pressures again work to limit Lucy's 'choice' of job so that it is not a fully free choice.

The amount of actual 'choice' that each women had in both choosing to work and choosing a job seem to have an impact on the level of job satisfaction that each felt. The greater the amount of choice the greater the job satisfaction. Jenny, for example was in a position to say that if she did not want to go back to work she just would not go back. She also enjoyed her work most of the time. Although she chose to move to part-time/ casual work from a full-time position and this transition, while showing that personal happiness was more important than money, also demonstrates that there was a certain amount of choice available to her. Choice in this case appears to promote well-being and happiness.

It also seems that those women who had a partner with a steady income had a greater amount of choice as to both which job they chose and, for some women, which hours they worked. Women in this situation generally did not have such a great need for money and also had someone else with whom they could share childcare responsibilities. Both the women who chose to work casual work as a lifestyle choice were in steady relationships with partners who were able to support them financially.

SUMMARY

This chapter was split into two sections. These were; why the women in this research were in the work force and why they were in casual jobs. The women in this study either entered the labour force for the money it gave them or because they desired the social contact or reinforcement that it would provide. Some women were influenced by a combination of these reasons.

Of the women who entered the labour force primarily for financial reasons those with partners who were also earning tended to use the money provided by the casual work for luxuries (although some women found that earning their own income provided them with greater autonomy) while the women who did not live with partners or whose partners were not earning a stable income relied on the money from casual work to provide for the needs of themselves and their family.

There were various reasons why the participants in this research were employed in casual jobs. The most pronounced of these revolved around the need for many of the women to fit their job around other commitments, many of which involved the women in unpaid work. Two thirds of the women are the primary care givers for children still living at home. This meant that any job they take must accommodate the family commitments that are required of the primary care giver. This, combined with an unavailability of jobs in the market place which fit the criteria required by these women meant that the women took up work in casual jobs largely because there was a real lack of choice. Although this was not the case with all the women, and the issue of choice is very complicated, it was true to varying degrees with the majority of them.

The limitation of choice experienced by the women with regard to casual work is demonstrated by the fact that ten out of the 12 women would have preferred

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permanent rather than casual work as long as it still accommodated their other commitments.

It was also noted that women who had a partner with a steady income did seem to have slightly more choice both in the job they took and the hours they worked. This increased amount of choice also seems to have had an impact on the conditions of work for these women. The following chapter picks up on this and examines the conditions of work experienced by the women in their casual work.

Chapter Six

CONDITIONS OF WORK

AN ISSUE OF POWER?

I just can't plan anything because I don't know where I'm at. I may be doing ten to two one day and then they might say, oh that person is sick, or do you mind working tomorrow and then you've got to sort of work it, you're obliged to. I haven't said no yet, because I've just started, so I don't really want to get on the bad end of the stick sort of thing with my bosses. But you just really can't plan anything and they're not regular. (Sue)

The conditions of work and conditions in the workplace varied from woman to woman and between professions or industries. This section will give an overview of what those conditions were like. One of the key issues to examine when looking at the question of conditions in casual work, is how much of this is attributable to the casual nature of the job and how much would be the same if the job were permanent. It is difficult to identify whether or not some of the conditions would be greatly different if the jobs were permanent.

The conditions of work for the women could be divided into three sections; the environment in which they worked, the legal conditions under which the women are employed, and the form the actual conditions under which this is all carried out took (such as the notice of work).

It became very clear reading through the words of the women that beneath the majority of these conditions lies the issue of power. Who held the power, why did they have this power, how much did they have and how did it effect the women all became questions that needed to be addressed to fully understand the conditions under which the women worked.

CONDITIONS OF WORK

The chapter has been divided into three sections corresponding to the three areas of conditions outlined above. The issue of power and how it impacts on the women in diverse ways within the conditions is highlighted throughout.

An outline of the issues that this chapter is going to address is;

Environment

- Physical environment
- Attitude of Coworkers
- Relationships

Legal Conditions

- Remuneration
- Holiday and Sick Pay
- Union Representation

Actual Conditions

- Costs
- Underemployment
- Awareness of Conditions
- Negotiation of Hours of Work (Variable, Notice of Work, Ability to Say No, Working Your Way In)
- Security

The first area of conditions for the women in their work place to be addressed is the environment.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment in which the women worked is influenced by two main aspects. These are the physical environment and the people that women worked with. Both of these aspects impacted on the women as casual workers.

Physical environment

There was little comment made by the women on any differences in physical environment that may have existed at work between casual and permanent workers. Most seemed to find that there was little difference between the two types of workers. For one woman however this was not the case. She worked with one other contract worker in a firm with other permanent workers.

What was the difference in conditions between the two contract workers and the permanent staff? Were there differences in conditions?

Yes, very much so. We were given a work space, which consisted of two tiny desks in the photocopy room sandwiched between [the] cabinet and the photocopier, which was, in fact, in a hallway, so we were in the middle of a thoroughfare which was very busy and there were people coming in about every three minutes to photocopy documents. Very noisy with the photocopier going all the time. Very hard to get anything done It was awful, really awful. Also you can't call it a room, corner of the world. It was just revolting. So we were squashed into this little space in between [my boss's] secretary. So there was [my boss's] secretary, the litigation secretary in a room there with a door, then the photocopier room which was like a hallway between her room and the corridor and then [my boss's] room was just there. So the secretary used to leave her door closed, but [my boss] had his door open and he smoked. So the smoke just came into our room, and it was like having a smoker in our office. So it was really shocking. Smoke-free work-places were right out the window. I complained once and got a really cold shoulder. But later on we'd been working there for ... I don't know from

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about February for about four months and one of the [other workers] left to go to [another] office and so they let us use her office. That was very squashed as well, because it was two of us in one office, and it was really jammed in. There was two desks in there, but it was just, we were so grateful to be able to close the door on the smoke, that was amazing, it was just heavenly. This little squashed place, was heavenly. So not great conditions, in answer to your question. (Jayne)

The physical work environment that Jayne describes is terrible. This was aggravated by all the interruptions that both she and her coworker endured which would break their concentration. It would therefore take longer than necessary to complete each task. This resulted in less pay for more hours spent working as they were only paid for the time a task was expected to take and not the actual time it took. The conditions in which Jayne worked were undeniably inferior to those of her fellow workers who held permanent positions in the company. Nothing highlights the complete inadequacy of the desk which Jayne was first allocated better than her remark that the consequent office which she was given, a space designed for one but accommodating two, 'this little squashed place, was heavenly.'

This situation clearly outlines some of the problems faced by workers who have less power than desirable in the work place. Jayne had no power to change the physical environment of her work place. As a contract rather than permanent worker she was allocated a work space that was not commensurate with her needs. Jayne had no power to address this. One of the worst features of her environment was the smoke wafting from her boss's office. While Jayne was well aware of her legal rights to a smoke free work place she did not feel capable of asserting them. When she did complain about the smoke she was ignored and no action was taken. This rendered Jayne quite powerless. She had taken this job because there were no other options open to her and therefore she did not want to put her job in jeopardy or make her work place even more unbearable by asserting her legal rights and challenging her boss.

It may not have been a deliberate policy of the company to place contract workers in such a substandard working environment. There are a couple of reasons why this may have occurred. The company may have been short of space and when it hired Jayne and her fellow worker may have had to squash them in where possible. Secondly they could have been seen as temporary workers and because they were either not there full-time or were not expected to be there for more than a few months it could have been seen by the company as redundant or unnecessary to provide them with adequate space and an office of their own. It is also possible that the company knew that a new office would be available presently and thus waited for this. However the new room, while fine for one person, was still too small for both of the contract workers to share. Whatever the reason for the unsatisfactory physical working environment endured by Jayne it showed how the company that she worked for viewed her position. As little effort was made to provide her with a satisfactory working environment this indicates that Jayne was perceived to be of less consequence than the permanent staff. Even when alternate arrangements were made, they were also inadequate.

Attitude of workmates

The fellow employees of the women in this research were reported by the participants as possessing varying attitudes to the women in casual work. Some of the women thought that their workmates had a good attitude towards casual workers, others found that the attitude towards them was generally, although not always, good while still one other woman recounted experiences in which the attitude of her workmates was shown to be less than desirable.

Sally said that she had a good working relationship with her workmates and that there was no discrimination against her because of the casual nature of her job and that casual and permanent workers were afforded equal treatment.

No, they're all very nice to work for, otherwise I still wouldn't be there. To work with people they've got to all be compatible. Otherwise, there's no enjoyment in going to work. (Sally)

[In all of your casual work jobs] do you find you're treated the same as the permanent workers...?

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Yes, I do we're all doing the same work so there can't be any discrimination really.... You go in as an equal, and I think I'm able to hold my place there, and if there was any little bit of something, I'd be able to pick it up and say, well hey we're all doing the same job. And probably being a bit older, too. You don't need to take it. That's what it amounts to. (Sally)

Jan mentioned that she was the only casual worker in her department and that the other social workers (who were all permanent workers) were not thrilled with the concept of a casual social worker. However she maintains that even while her coworkers had a negative attitude towards the concept of a casual social worker they did not let this influence their attitude towards Jan.

Were there any relationship difficulties or frictions or anything between you and the permanent workers, because you were a casual worker?

No, they were very welcoming and friendly. They understood the situation, they felt that the team manager had let them down badly. They felt that their professionalism was being undermined by my appointment I feel. But on a personal level they were very friendly and supportive.

They had strong feelings on professional grounds that casual social work is not acceptable. Nothing to do with me personally, but, how can you get somebody in there, and to me that is to do with their view of what a social worker should do...(Jan)

Other women mentioned that they and other casual workers were treated well by the majority of their workmates with permanent positions but that occasionally they would receive adverse treatment as a result of their position as a casual worker.

When you're working, it's very similar, just part of the team of the day.

So there's no difference in treatment, there's no difference in attitude between permanent and casual workers?

There can be. But I personally have found them absolutely tolerant, but I know there are some staff, I've had one occasion where permanent staff were very rude and abrupt, and it wasn't a problem, I just got on with the job basically, didn't worry about that. Most staff are fine, they really appreciate the help....

Is there a difference of status in the work-place between the casual and permanent workers?

Not that I notice.

You don't notice it.

No, I don't really care. I guess there probably is, when you go into I joke about it really. If there has been something been botched up I just say, I'm a casual nurse, you know, that was a casual nurse. Sometimes I joke about it, because there are some instances where casual staff are not fully aware of the situation, information isn't passed on, or documented well, and situations arise that otherwise wouldn't have arisen....

Does that happen, do people blame casual workers more?

I think sometimes that is done, yes, so perhaps if I joke about it they won't do it. (Jenny)

Jenny's experience was that while most of the permanent nurses that she worked with were very appreciative of her help, there was the odd occasion on which she was

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treated with less courtesy because she was a casual rather than permanent worker. Jenny's comments on jokingly taking blame for mishaps because she was the casual worker demonstrate that such attitudes towards casual workers may be more prevalent than otherwise indicated. Jenny also commented that;

Sometimes if you're particularly tired with the hours you've worked, [I find] that [I] am really feeling a bit tired. low on energy If you're on permanent staff, people understand that you have good days and bad days, but when you're on casual staff you can't afford to have a bad day. (Jenny)

This indicates a different attitude towards casual staff. Casual staff are not expected to have bad days because they may not be at work regularly enough. This issue is picked up again later in this chapter when Jayne talks about the difficulty she encountered in requesting days off.

[G]enerally relief teachers are treated very well. Because a good one, who doesn't have discipline problems is valued. You can cause total mayhem in something like a science lab. (Elizabeth)

I get treated as a professional, competent person in my type of work, and I think that's important. I'm not just a body, who is not required to think. (Elizabeth)

Occasionally there will be some who will put you in, you're just a reliever, and they don't expect much from you or that you can do very much, or that you're actually interested in teaching. They will just think this is what you do and sit down in the class and ignore the kids but that's not so common as the other. (Elizabeth)

Elizabeth found that as a relief teacher she was generally treated very well by all the other staff and it was only occasionally that she was disparaged by permanent co-teachers. Given the scope of this research it is impossible to conclude whether this

disparagement would also have occurred if Elizabeth held permanent part-time position.

Lucy's experience as a relief teacher was slightly different from that of Elizabeth. Lucy found that the majority of permanent teachers had a different attitude towards her as a relief teacher.

You're treated quite differently from the rest of the staff....The full-time teachers tend to see you as someone who has not accepted the profession on some level, or has turned their back on the profession, or you're not, you don't have that level of social conscience that they have, because you're not willing to make the commitment of full-time.

Because you've chosen, for whatever reason, to do relief teaching, rather than full-time teaching?

Yes, I think it's not a critical thing. I think everyone has been really nice, but it's you've made a different decision to them about the job. They might feel they're putting up with the extra work that they do in the holidays, and they're putting up with having to go in to all the meetings after school, and they're putting up with doing co-curriculum taking sport and doing lunchtime duty. But you've said no I'm not prepared to do that, and you're doing relief teaching, so they see you arriving and not having to do anything before school, leaving at the dot of quarter past three, when they've got all these other responsibilities.

(Lucy)

Lucy found that she was sometimes treated as either inferior or recalcitrant by other teachers because she was perceived either as being less committed to the profession of teaching, or not possessing a social conscience. These moral judgments were made on the basis of the casual nature of Lucy's job. Lucy also indicates that she is treated

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differently from permanent teachers because she does not participate in the extra curricular activities that they do. However, Lucy does comment that 'everyone has been really nice' and therefore while the attitude of other teachers towards Lucy as a relief teacher is influenced by the casual nature of her work this does not mean that she is treated in an unkind manner. So the structural differences that exist between casual and permanent workers meant that Lucy was treated as inferior by some workmates, but this was not always transferred on to Lucy's contact with her workmates on a personal level. Again, given the complexity of the issue it is not possible to determine whether the attitude experienced by Lucy as a relief teacher would have been consistent if she held a permanent part-time position.

Conversely Jayne found that the attitude of her immediate superior towards her and her contract position within the firm to be quite intolerable. Following are two comments from Jayne which denote this attitude.

I would have thought that it would have been a lot easier to just take a day off, but actually it was a lot harder. Bruce made me feel real bad if I ever wanted to stay off, except for a funeral. He made me feel guilty about taking ... or certainly feeling guilty was my reaction to his attitude.

So it was his attitude?

His attitude was really negative towards me taking the time off, and the problem was if you're in a salaried position you've got a certain amount of holidays and you can just book in a holiday, so it's sort of a lot less personal. I really felt I had to explain myself to him, every time I wanted a day off, even if it was something really personal. It was like, hey I shouldn't have to explain myself to you. (Jayne)

Jayne believed that as she did not work set hours each day but only undertook what work was available that it would not be too difficult for her to take a day off when there was no urgent work waiting for her. This was not the case and she found that although

she had no set hours of work her superior made it very difficult to arrange a day off and that she had to justify herself to him. Jayne notes that this justification of a holiday is not expected from permanent staff.

He was in such a bad temper, on that last day, [he] was just in this really bad mood. He said to me, this is interesting. I had tallied up all my final invoices and it was quite a big amount, because basically I had worked my backside off for the last two weeks I had worked like the devil, if the devil works. Actually I have it here, it is really interesting. This is a range of my hours, 24 hours, 19 hours, 13 hours billable hours per week. For the last two weeks there is 28.83 hours and 32.92 hours. Like 32 hours it's a wicked week, I was probably there about 60. Either that or I was just working like a dog, I can't remember which. But I had been working like an absolute mental thing, for the last two weeks, presented my cheques to him and here is my last two weeks. He was just going, wow this is a huge amount of money. I said well I've been working like a dog. He said, what was it, he said, well it is amazing what you can actually get when you put your arse into gear isn't it, I was just speechless. I thought, you bastard, how dare you,

So he was implying that you hadn't been working hard enough, and that your lack of stable income had been...

[My boss insinuated that] it was to do with me not working hard enough, which was absolute crap. It was to do with the [amount of available] work So that was really interesting. I was furious, I was so wild. Then when he asked me for a cup of coffee I just about poured it over his head....It is unreal that he

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had that attitude that I wasn't working hard. I wasn't earning enough because I wasn't working hard enough. (Jayne)

Jayne's boss' attitude was that her weekly income was dependent on how hard she worked whereas in fact Jayne's hours were reliant on there being work available and that work being given to her. If the work was not available then Jayne could not do it. The attitude of Jayne's boss ignored this and implied that Jayne herself, rather than the casual nature of her work, was responsible for the insecure and unreliable income Jayne endured.

Smoke-free work-places were right out the window. I complained once and got a reallyCold shoulder, really immature treatment from a solicitor.

But if you had been a full-time non-contract person there and you had complained about the smoke, do you think the reaction would have been the same?

Interestingly enough his secretary made a complaint about the smoke and something was done about it. Yes, [he] promised to get an extraction fan out of his window, I don't know if but he did make a real concerted effort to close the door.

But it was a positive response?

Yes, I don't know why that is actually.

Possibly that she was a permanent worker and you weren't, a different relationship.

I don't know. Possibly, she's a lot older than me, so maybe that's got something to do with it. I don't know. (Jayne)

I actually had keys and I came in on one statutory day because Bruce asked me to. That was another thing he asked me to come

in on a stat day, normal pay, and he didn't even turn up. He asked me to come in and help him with some filing and he didn't even turn up. I was so wild. (Jayne)

The attitude of Jayne's boss towards her as a contract worker was unprofessional and quite intolerable. However it is hard to determine how much of this can be attributed to Jayne's position as a casual worker rather than as a permanent employee of the firm. Her boss's expectation that she should justify any holiday she wished to take when this is not required of permanent staff demonstrates that Jayne was being treated, in this instance at least, in a manner inconsistent with the permanent staff. His comments about Jayne's income being dependent on her 'putting her arse into gear' rather than on the amount of billable work that she was given when permanent workers were on a stable salary regardless of the number of billable hours they achieved each week⁶ also indicates that Jayne's boss's attitude towards her was disparate with his attitude towards permanent staff.

These excerpts demonstrate the wide range of experiences that the women in this research had with the attitudes of their coworkers. Some of the women were fortunate and were not treated differently from their permanent coworkers. It is interesting to note too that Jan found the critical attitude that her coworkers held towards the concept of a casual worker in her position did not impact on the way they treated Jan herself. Jenny, Elizabeth, Lucy and Jayne, did report that on occasions they experienced a negative attitude from coworkers that was provoked by the women's position as casual workers. The degree and nature of this varied between women. For some it was very minor while for others it was more pronounced. Fortunately for most of these women this negative attitude was the exception rather than the rule. Although the negative attitude and difference in treatment that some of the women experienced was not frequent or (with the exception of Jayne) extreme in nature it did exist and therefore deserves further discussion.

All the women that experienced this difference in attitude were in 'professional' jobs. This attitude manifested itself in remarks questioning the dedication, ability and

⁶ Although all permanent staff had billable targets that they had to reach each month they received bonus' if they went over target rather than having their weekly income cut.

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professionalism of the women in casual work. This suggests that casual workers are (occasionally) considered inferior to permanent workers solely because of the casual nature of their employment. This is an unfair value and professional judgement of the women in casual work particularly when it is considered that some of the women are not in casual work by choice and others hold casual positions in the same profession in which they have previously held full-time permanent positions. Such an attitude demonstrates two issues worth discussing further.

Firstly this attitude illuminates possible societal expectations that to succeed or do well in a profession a person must dedicate their life to the profession and be working a full forty hour week or at least regular hours. The failure to do this appears to be rewarded on occasion with the assumption by coworkers that the casual worker is not dedicated to their work and also not as capable of carrying out the required tasks. Such an attitude ignores completely the past experience of these women, the considerable unpaid work commitments which many of them possess, and the lack of choice which some of the women experienced in their search for paid work.

Secondly this attitude can have a detrimental affect on the women. Jayne for example found it difficult to take holidays and worked in a generally unpleasant environment which she felt powerless to change. It is quite possible that the other women found such an attitude disheartening as well and this can all impact on their enjoyment of work. These issues and more are all picked up in much greater depth in the chapters on the impact that casual work has had on the women's personal and work lives.

The attitude of fellow employees to the women in this research also impacted on the relationships that the women formed in the workplace. These relationships form part of the conditions of work for the women. The following section examines the relationships that the women formed in their workplace.

Relationships

Some of the women found that as a casual rather than permanent worker it was much more difficult to establish relationships with others at work. The three women who had moved from full-time permanent work into casual work in the same profession all remarked on the difficulty in establishing and cultivating relationships with coworkers.

I do feel marginal in the ward. I have to explain myself. I am here part-time and I'm not sure how long I will be here. Now I'm saying I'm here part-time and I'm only here this week and then I'm going. That is, in terms of building up relationships with other professional people that you have to deal with in your work, it makes life difficult, yes. (Jan)

Well you don't, when you go into a school, you don't know anyone at the school. Occasionally, there is one person I may have known, sort of vaguely, they were at training school at the same time I was, but basically you don't know anyone. You're treated quite differently from the rest of the staff.

How is that?

Well if you go as a full-time teacher, then you go in with other teachers that are new to the school, at that time, so you have that little bit of a bond. But as a relief teacher really you've got to try to find the other relief teachers to kind of have that, oh you're a relief teacher, too, and how long have you been doing it for and that sort of thing. (Lucy)

Pat, also a relief teacher, made a similar comment.

[Y]ou're very much on the outside to start with, generally speaking, they've all been working there for hundreds of years and they all know each other and they know each other inside out. You're definitely on the outside for a while. But once your face gets known a bit better they acknowledge you, give you a smile, if you're lucky and make an effort to find out what your name is and things like that. So I suppose it is the same as

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anywhere really. But they're really a little bit sort of closed. I don't know what they think of relief teachers really. (Pat)

The lack of solid relationships with other staff impacts on the workers in diverse ways. For Jenny this meant that she did not enjoy the same level of support through informal debriefings and sharing of stress that the permanent workers did.

There are benefits of working permanently. You don't get the same support if you're working casually. You basically go home with whatever you've worked with, you might have a patient die, or something, a very stressful shift, and there's no debriefing and you just go home and go to bed and go to sleep, or go home and cook dinner or whatever and just carry on, ho hum, too bad. So there aren't really those sort of support systems. (Jenny)

For women such as Jenny, Pat, Lucy and Jan who all work in bigger institutions it can be very difficult for them as casual workers to establish good relationships with other staff. Each time they go to work they can come into contact with people whom they have never met before. This makes life difficult as not only do they not have the support that most people receive from fellow workmates, but they are hindered in developing relationships with other professionals who may be able to offer advice or with whom they may have to work. It can be difficult to form even a comfortable working or professional relationship with someone whom you only see once every few weeks or months. This could also impact on the women's long-term career prospects as they are unable to form relationships which may allow them to hear of training or career advancement opportunities and benefit them in the future.

Catherine is in a different position as the nature of her work as a market researcher does not provide her with contact with other workers. Thus while she would prefer to be able to build relationships at work this is not possible and would not be so even if her work were permanent.

Other women such as Anne, Jayne and Sally work in the same place alongside the same people each time and are therefore able to build relationships with these coworkers. As Sally says;

And it is fun because when you haven't worked at one of the jobs for a week or a fortnight you've got to catch up with what everyone has been doing in that time when you haven't seen them (Sally).

Sally's job allows her to build relationships with the other people she works with and thus fulfils her desire for a job which provides her with social contact. Anne and Jayne experience similar work conditions and this allows them to have more continuity and stability in their work place. Both Anne and Sally are in jobs in which the majority of workers are casual workers. This probably makes it slightly easier for them to form relationships with their coworkers as they are part of the usual group of workers. This is not the case for Jenny and some of the other women quoted above who are more likely to be considered outside of the core group of permanent workers.

LEGAL CONDITIONS

The second section of this chapter deals with the legal conditions of employment of the women. Most of the women did not have contracts with their employer and so the conditions outlined here refer to the conditions under which the women worked rather than specific contracted conditions.

Remuneration

Most of the women felt that they did probably not receive adequate financial remuneration for their paid work. This was either because their base pay was low or because they did not receive other benefits such as holiday pay or regular pay rises.

Yes, it is, he's kept us on our original [pay scale].Still not enough really. It never is, is it.

Do you get regular pay rises like every year for inflation?

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No, we don't. (Sally)

So if you've got someone who can dash here and dash there and do this and do something else and it is all done, you must be worth more. (Anne)

Neither Anne nor Sally had regular pay reviews and while each had been working in their casual jobs for years neither of them had ever had a pay rise. So they were in fact losing money each year with inflation. Some women faced changes in the work place that were in fact pay cuts and one woman was even given a pay cut.

Then they said we can't afford to pay you what we're paying you now, so I had to take a decrease, so then it was like, oh this is great. So ever since then I was always on the outlook for a new job. (Sue)

Two women, Pat and Phillipa did feel that they were paid an adequate hourly rate for the work they did although both women still bemoaned the lack of sick and holiday pay. Phillipa says;

Yes, I think given what I'm asked to do it's quite a reasonable rate of pay. As I say the problem is that you don't get paid for the holidays, which is a bit of a pain. Just because your service is broken up into these funny blocks of periods. (Phillipa)

Sometimes the hours that were actually worked in casual work were different from the hours that were paid. Jan for example generally worked more hours in the play centre than she was paid for.

Well with the play centre job I knew I would be paid \$12 an hour, I knew that [they were] planning to pay me \$360 for the term, which meant ten weeks they were going to pay me for three hours, whereas in fact, mostly I would be there for four

hours, and I accepted that, really because of my commitment to play centre. I thought, so what. (Jan)

The situation for Jan did change later so that she was only working about three and a half hours each week instead of four.

One of the main financial disadvantages for the professional women working in casual positions was that any experience they were gaining or years of work that they were adding to their experience in their profession while working in a casual position was not officially recognised. This meant that they did not advance up the pay scale.

Plus if you're working casual, your casual work is not part of your work experience, so you don't [gain] experience as such, being more qualified as far as pay goes, you're on a set pay rate. (Jenny)

It will be like this where I just become the teacher, and I do all the planning and the marking.

But you're still?

I'm a relief teacher, yes.

So you're still not given the training, you're still not going up the pay scale, you're not heading anywhere?

No. (Lucy)

Lucy and Jenny's time as casual workers in their profession was not added to their overall time in that profession when it came to calculating their pay scale. Neither as casual workers were they given the same training or other advancement possibilities that were available to permanent staff. Lucy's comment sums the situation up nicely.

No, the one [difference between casual and permanent employees] that I think is most important is that if you are doing temporary or relief work for one company a lot. Say for this

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school, if they employed me in total maybe almost six months in a year, then I think that they should have to provide some training, some professional development for me to be a better relief teacher. I also think that they should have to pay, I think the union has to look at the pay, because the scale at the moment ends at \$37,000, but I can never reach that because I've only taught for a year and a term. So I could be a relief teacher for this school for five years if I wanted to be, they could get me in every day if they wanted to and I would always remain on \$34,000 with no money during the holidays and no professional training, at all. (Lucy)

Some of the women felt unable to formally request pay rises because as casual workers they possessed little job security and felt that to request a pay rise may put their jobs in jeopardy.

We sometimes jokingly say, it's time we had a pay rise. No, they can't afford a wage rise. You sort of think, well perhaps they can't, but then when you look at what other people are getting for the same type of work I wouldn't say [they are]... well paid, but I would never want to put myself in the position where they would say well we will just get somebody else. (Anne)

Yes, we have [asked for a pay rise]. There's a few of us that have. But, it's so nice working there, and to jeopardise your job for another 50c an hour, or \$1 an hour, is it worth it, when there is not a lot of work there anyway. Just keep doing it. But every now and then when they have a really good day, we sort of say there might be another dollar in our pay packets next week to the boss, but it hasn't worked. (Sally)

Both Sally and Anne felt that they deserved a pay rise but were not able to formally ask for one because they felt that this might put their jobs in jeopardy. Neither had a formal agreement to work a particular number of hours per week and therefore they felt that if they were to rock the boat too much that they would lose what work they had.

This demonstrates the power imbalance that exists between women in casual work and their employers. Such women are disadvantaged because they do not have a permanent position and therefore they are reliant on the goodwill of their employer for work. This power imbalance is particularly evident in the negotiation of conditions of work. The Employment Contracts Act of 1991 assumes that employers and employees possess equal power when it comes to the negotiation of the conditions of a contract. The above quotes demonstrate that this is obviously not the case as these women are unable to request a pay rise for fear that they will no longer be given work. The lack of assurance of hours or work means that these women are rendered relatively powerless.

Most of the women felt that they were underpaid for the work that they did. It is difficult to determine in all cases whether the women are paid less as casual workers or whether their pay would be on a similar scale if they held a permanent position. However, the lack of regular pay reviews for some women and the practice of casual work not contributing towards experience in professions indicates that perhaps in some of these situations the remuneration that the women receive has been negatively impacted by the casual nature of their work.

The other issue that has been introduced here, that of payment for holiday and sick days is addressed in the following section.

Holidays and sick pay

Full-time workers are guaranteed a certain number of holidays and sick days each year (Employment Contracts Act 1991). Theoretically casual workers are covered by law to a similar degree. Many of the women said that they received neither sick pay nor holiday pay although some later amended this to say that they did periodically receive six percent of their pay to date or that this six percent was incorporated into their hourly wage.

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Do you get any holiday pay or anything like that?

No, no work no pay.

Do you get like the six percent at the end of the financial year?

No, it is all in there.

It is in the hourly wage?

Yes. (Pat)

Yes, I'm missing out on that holiday pay. So even though I worked full-time for five weeks and did all the planning and all of that sort of thing, I don't get holiday pay, because I was a relief teacher. (Lucy)

That is one thing you don't get with relief teaching or my counselling is holiday pay. (Elizabeth)

I don't think there is any. That's quite common for casual work in teaching. If you're a teacher's aid or if you're ... not so much for office staff. Office staff up until recently ... were not paid in the holidays. So the school secretary might have come in part-time for a few mornings a week and the board would pay her a retainer to keep her over the summer holiday, but she didn't actually get any pay, and that was quite normal. So I would say no I don't get holiday pay, and that is quite normal in schools for holidays... (Elizabeth)

The relief teachers especially noticed the lack of holiday pay. While they may get the six percent that they are legally entitled to this is not as much as they would receive were they still full-time teachers.

None of the women received any kind of extra payment for working Sundays or public holidays and while some women were not able to work public holidays because the company or institution was closed they were also not compensated for this loss of income. To repeat Jayne's comment;

I actually had keys and I came in on one statutory day because Bruce asked me to. That was another thing he asked me to come in on a stat day, normal pay, and he didn't even turn up. He asked me to come in and help him with some filing and he didn't even turn up. I was so wild.

So were you paid, compensated for that?

No, didn't get anything. (Jayne)

...or we've got something on a Monday and we've got Sunday to prepare and things like that I think with catering that's how it is. Even the likes of New Year's Day and days like that we have to work. But it's just I'll always work.

But it is not necessarily what you would have chosen to do if the choice was there?

No.

Do you get paid extra for public holidays?

No, just the same. (Anne)

Do you ever have counselling calls on a public holiday?

Then it wouldn't, I'd have the day off. But I don't get any money.

So you don't get paid.

For public holidays, no. (Elizabeth)

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Lack of extra payment for working Sundays can also be an issue for permanent workers. However most permanent wage earners are entitled to a paid day in lieu if they work on a statutory holiday. Casual workers are not automatically entitled to the same level of compensation, or indeed, any form or compensation at all.

Out of the twelve women interviewed only one was ever paid for a statutory holiday that she did not work. Phillipa had worked every weekday for the previous few weeks and was paid when a statutory holiday fell on a weekday while she was still working a five day week. None of the other women were paid for statutory holidays even on the odd occasion when they were in similar situations to Phillipa. Most of the women were not even paid extra or given a day in lieu when they did work on a statutory holiday. This is discriminatory against them as casual workers because even part-time workers are provided with a day in lieu if they work a statutory day. As Lucy says

[Y]ou can be employed to do as much work [as a permanent member of staff], which I was in this job, for five weeks, but you won't get the recognition of the work in terms of holiday pay, because of the title that you're employed under. (Lucy)

It is the title under which the women are employed that can mean the women are not entitled to some employment benefits.

Casual workers are generally not entitled to sick pay and this was perhaps the most significant cause of strife for the women with regard to the legal conditions of their work. Many of the women felt that they could not afford to be sick because they were not able to forego any work that was offered as they did not receive sick pay. This impacted on the women in other ways as well and these are picked up in a later chapter on the impact that casual work had on the women's personal lives.

So there is no holiday pay or sick pay for what you're doing?

No, that's a real drawback. Just as well I'm fit and healthy.
(Elizabeth)

I didn't get any sick pay so that's six days a [year]. The actual [firm] is closed for three weeks over Christmas, so I physically

couldn't work, but I'm not paid for any holidays. So you don't get those three weeks paid, don't get any statutory days paid, although can't work those days either. So there are huge disadvantages, which the other workers all get. (Jayne)

They're all much the same, they're all very fair. You get paid when you're there, and if you're not there you don't get paid.

So there is no sick pay or holiday pay?

No. ...I think you get, you must get holiday pay, don't take holidays, we just get six percent at the end of the financial year. (Sally)

But there's no accommodation for sick pay or bereavement.

If you can't work because you're sick that's it, you don't go in?

No, that's right. If they rung and said there's work tomorrow and I say I'm sorry I'm just not feeling well enough. That would be just it. (Anne)

All of that is totally different, so if I'm sick or away from school, then I don't get any pay. So I do worry about getting sick. (Lucy)

While the official legal situation theoretically supplies casual workers with coverage akin to that of permanent workers this is obviously not the case in practice. None of the women were paid if they unable to go into work because they (or their family) were sick. This was the case even when women had been working close to 40 hours a week for several weeks running.

The result of the absence of sick pay is that some women went to work when they were sick and would have benefited from staying at home and recuperating. Lucy comments;

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[I]f I'm sick or away from school, then I don't get any pay. So I do worry about getting sick. I'm not neurotic, but I have gone to work when I would have normally taken a day off. (Lucy)

Most women in this situation went to work because they could not afford to miss the pay especially as they may not be offered work the next day. One woman, however, went to work when she was sick out of stubbornness and the knowledge that there were tasks at work which needed to be completed.

It is clear that the issues surrounding sick pay that the participants have highlighted are a direct result of the casual nature of the women's work. If the women were permanent part-time workers then they would be entitled to sick pay the equivalent of one week of their normal work hours. There are two problems that arise because the women were not entitled to, or given, sick pay. Firstly, for whatever reason (although mainly financial) it has been shown that the women do go to work when they are sick. This can result in the exposure of other workers to the sickness and these workers can become infected and need time off (with or without pay). Secondly, it is also unlikely that a sick employee would be able to perform their job nearly as well as normal. This can result in both long-term and short-term damage to the employer and the business. Finally going to work while they are sick can have a detrimental effect on the health of the women and on that of their families. This last issue is picked up in the next chapter on how casual work impacts on women's personal lives.

Union involvement and representation

Some women did not have access to, or were not members of, a union. The main reasons for not being in a union seemed to be that the women were only casual workers and thought that this was reason enough not to bother, or the cost for a casual worker in relation to their earnings was too high.

I'm not in a union. I used to be when I was working full-time, but no I haven't been. (Elizabeth)

So are you a member of the Nurses Association?

Not at present, no.

Why is that?

Because of the cost of joining....

If you were full-time would you be a member?

Yes. (Jenny)

For those women who were involved in a union their experience as casual workers with their particular unions was varied. Some women had good experiences with their union.

Yes, I found I could join the PSA, and I joined the PSA straight off. But I have yet to apply to the NZASW, the professional association. And I think when I start this eight weeks I will actually send off the form. I was a bit shocked to discover how much it costs nowadays.

Is it the same cost for a casual as a permanent?

I haven't really explored that, I need to explore that and find out. (Jan)

Well I was surprised at how easy it was to join. I think the PSA are very keen to have members. I messed up my application form, for example, and I got a very friendly phone call from the union person who suggested a different way of doing it and got it all sorted out. (Jan)

Jan had had only good experiences with her union but she had not explored whether or not they represented casual employees as well as permanent ones and neither did she know whether the cost of joining was the same for both types of workers.

Conversely Lucy's experience with her union had been less than satisfactory.

Yes, I belong to the PPTA, but it's really difficult because when they have meetings it's always linked to schools and so it is if I

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happen to be at a school, when they're having their meeting, then I could go along to the meeting. But it's quite difficult, because when there have been meetings I've not had work, it's just worked out I haven't had work that day, or something like that has happened. I'm actually thinking of withdrawing from the PPTA because if I'm going to get anything in terms of extras it's going to have to be me working on the people who can actually give me those extras, rather than anything the PPTA says. I feel totally isolated from the PPTA. I don't have anyone I could contact really. There is someone who is involved with the relief teaching who deals with relief teaching, but it's not the same as going to the representative at your school and saying look. I'm actually meaning to ring them up these holidays and talk to them about it. Might be on holiday. But it is quite difficult, it's not the same as when you're a full-time teacher. and I don't think you're so important to them either. So I've just got to think on that one. (Lucy)

Lucy's comments highlight a number of issues for casual workers. Firstly she was unable to make it to meetings as they were often scheduled when she did not have work and was therefore not at school. This is largely unavoidable as she is never assured of work ahead of time on any set day, however it could be possible for alternative arrangements to be made. The second concern that Lucy's words bring to our attention relates to representation. Lucy found that it was difficult for her to contact her representative, a representative who was not based at the school in which she worked. This resulted in Lucy feeling isolated and contemplating withdrawing from the union. Finally Lucy felt that as a casual work the PPTA actually had very little to offer her. She thought that she would do better to negotiate extras herself and that the union would actually do very little to improve or aid her position.

Overall only a small number of the women were in contact with their unions. It is difficult to determine whether this was mainly because of the casual nature of the women's work, the number of hours they worked, (as was the case with Jenny), or the lack of support the women felt they would receive from the union.

It is not within the scope of this research to be able to determine whether the experiences or lack of experiences that these women had with their unions are consistent with those of permanent workers. It would be interesting to make a comparison of union coverage between permanent and casual workers. None of the women said that the unions had a policy that particularly helped them as casual workers. This does not mean that such policies are not in place, but if they are they are not reaching all those in need. This is an issue that the unions might like to investigate further.

This section has addressed the legal conditions of work experienced by the women. The next section examines what the actual work conditions were for the women.

ACTUAL CONDITIONS OF WORK

The section addresses the actual conditions of work that the women experienced. This includes; the hidden costs that many women incurred as a result of the casual nature of their work, underemployment, the awareness that the women had of their conditions, the negotiation of hours of work and the level of job security experienced by the women.

The introduction to this chapter mentioned that one of the underlying themes of this chapter was that of power. Who held the power and how did this effect the women and their conditions of work? This section clearly brings this issue of power to the fore.

Costs incurred in casual work

One of the hidden factors in the work conditions of the women was the extra costs that the women endured. These costs revolved around either the direct costs of implements the women needed to complete their work, registration or other professional costs and costs associated with going to or from work or for other necessities such as childcare for their children while the women were at work.

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Schools don't supply you with anything, so I need to have paper, I need to have white-board markers, they don't supply relief teachers with white-board markers, but they supply those free to the staff. There's lots of little things like that you don't get supplied with pens, erasers. So you've got to be really careful, if you loan a student a pencil, like I'll have a little stock of things, you've got to make sure you get them back, otherwise that's just gone out of your pocket. (Lucy)

If you were in an agency, or working full-time, would they provide all those, or would you still be providing them?

I would expect them to provide them. There is not that many agencies work with children. I think if you are doing counselling with children equipment is needed. I think a lot of agencies will provide a reasonable amount of equipment. Many would say if you work in a particular way, you will need some equipment. (Elizabeth)

Relief teaching, I've bought the odd book that I've photocopied bits to have some of my own material. (Elizabeth)

Elizabeth and Lucy both found that as a casual worker they had to supply their own materials. These were materials which were necessary for them to adequately complete their job and if the women were permanent workers they could reasonably expect such materials to be provided by their employer. This is an example of direct costs which the employees have to pick up. The women receive no extra money either incorporated into their hourly wage or as a named expense to reimburse them for such costs.

Professional costs such as registration for a profession or supervision can also fall more heavily on casual workers than on permanent or full-time workers. This is not because the amount that casual workers have to pay is greater than the amount for

permanent workers, but because casual workers are generally earning less the cost works out as a higher proportion of their wages.

There are also other hidden costs which impacted on the women in this study more than would be expected if they were employed in permanent positions.

Well, for me, I had to buy clothes to go to work. That's after just having worn extremely casual clothes for the last seven years. The other costs are just what everybody faces in driving to and from work and struggling with car parking and all of that sort of thing. (Jan)

So the percentage of money you were spending on travel expenses was greater than for full days?

Yes, like on the Monday, for example, I said I could come in at 12.30 and I'd stay there for the meeting, which goes from 1.30 to 2.30 and then I wanted to be home for the kids at three. But some weeks it made no sense at all just to go in for the meeting. So I arranged for other people to pick up my children so I could stay until four o'clock or so. But then I was in the situation of paying for child care because of the time of the day the meeting was held, basically. (Jan)

I've still got to pay for the child care whatever, whether I work, or not, I've still got to pay for that. (Pat)

...but you've got to be rostered rotating. So that's always looking at child care, unless you've got a partner who is very very flexible, or someone with child care who is very flexible with their time, otherwise you have to get somebody who is paid and very flexible, and then you have to earn enough to pay to look after three children, that's just impossible really. (Jenny)

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The last three quotes here demonstrate the added expense that women who are caregivers face. Childcare can be expensive and it must be arranged in advance. Jan does not work full days and this means that when there is an afternoon meeting at work she has to either cut short her shift or arrange and pay for someone to pick her children up after school. Pat had to have her children in childcare to enable her to work but even on the days that she didn't work she still had to pay for the childcare. This would mean that some days she would be paying for childcare but would not be earning money herself. This increases the amount of childcare that has to come out of her pay on the days that she does work. Thus it can be seen that childcare can be a disproportionate cost for women in casual work.

None of these costs, apart from the cost of implements which would ordinarily be provided by the employer, are any greater as a base figure for casual workers than they are for permanent workers. There are two major differences however. The first is that most casual workers work fewer hours than permanent workers do and they therefore have to pay out a greater percentage of their wage in costs. The petrol costs to and from work are the same regardless of the number of hours worked. None of the casual workers were adequately compensated for this.

Secondly the casual workers are not generally given much notice of work and therefore they are unable to prepare for costs in advance. For example the women with childcare responsibilities do not know in advance which days each week that they will work. This means that they are unable to book their children into childcare on the appropriate days. The solution is either to book the children in in advance for all possible days or to try and place them in childcare on the day or pay more to do so. This can also result in children being placed in childcare for a full day when only half a day was worked by the caregiver and the caregiver thus has to pay for the full day when only a half day was required.

The result of all this is that the women subsidise their employers. The women, rather than the employers, pay for many of the extra costs associated with casual work while the employer benefits from the convenience of having a worker available when necessary. It can actually result in being cheaper for the employer to employ a casual worker because the worker will pay for many of the materials needed and other associated costs and the employer will save additional money because they also need

not provide the casual employee with the same benefits that they provide for their permanent workers.

Underemployment

One of the main issues in the literature review regarding casual work was the underemployment of many people in casual work. Many of the women who took part in this research were in a position of underemployment.

In general are you happy with the total number of hours you work. Would you like more or would you like less?

Yes, I would probably like a few more. It's been very quiet over the winter, but whether it is just the time of the year. (Sally)

So would you prefer to work more hours there now?

Yes. (Jan)

You take it on knowing that and, of course, there are probably some times when you would like there to be more work there, but what can you do. That's just how it is, and you just realise that and you just get on with your life. (Anne)

So the hours you get, you say it varies from one to two days a week, you're happy with the amount of hours you do?

Yes, I suppose I would like it to be steadier, a regular one or two days a week, would be much better financially planning. For example, at the beginning of this year [one school] had, in fact, ended up with slightly more teachers than it was allowed, ... so they couldn't actually use relievers, so I didn't get any calls for the first term, except for the last two weeks and they explained why this happened. (Elizabeth)

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The hours you had there, did you want more or less?

I wanted more billable ones. (Jayne)

All of these women would have preferred to work more hours (or in Jayne's case be paid for more of the hours she actually worked) than they currently did. Some of the women even had multiple jobs and were still not working as many hours as they wanted. The women were either not in a position to ask for more hours or the work was just not there. In Elizabeth's case the hours were not available to her because they had been given to permanent full-time workers.

It is difficult to ascertain whether the underemployment experienced by these women is due to the casual nature of their work or if it is indicative of the current employment environment. However, most of these women are not assured of a set minimum number of hours per week and none are guaranteed as much work as they need. As most of the employers do not have to provide the women with a particular number of hours work each week because they are casual workers then it is most likely that when the amount of available work shrinks it is the casual workers who will find their hours reduced. Any woman who has come to expect that they will be given a certain number of hours per week is likely find herself underemployed in such a scenario. Women in this position are also powerless to demand more hours. The employer has no legal requirement to give them these hours and may find it easier to suspend the hours of such an employee altogether.

Awareness of conditions

All the women are entitled to a minimum set of conditions such as holiday pay which are outlined under the above section on legal conditions. Not all of the women were fully aware of their legal entitlements. When the women were questioned about holiday pay, expense payments and other conditions some of them were unsure of their conditions of work and did not know whether or not they received holiday pay or thought they did not when later it was found that they did.

Elizabeth said that;

I don't think there is any [holiday pay]. That's quite common for casual work in teaching. (Elizabeth)

However all the other relief teachers in the study were paid six percent holiday pay and so Elizabeth said that she would check up on this situation and later added;

I think you've raised some [issues] for me on the holiday and sick pay and just general safeguards that I ought to check out. (Elizabeth)

Jean also thought that she was a percentage of her wages as sick pay, but when she checked on her payslip she realised that this was holiday pay not sick pay.

I'm not very clued up on it, because there is two different types of schools, and I'm not quite sure how that effects my relief work. The bulk funded schools have different philosophies to the schools that aren't bulk funded. (Lucy)

Lucy found that with the two different operating styles of schools she became confused about what her conditions of work were when she was hired by each type of school. Some schools paid her travel expenses while others did not. The same occurred with free periods, sometimes she was given them and sometimes she was not.

Only a small amount of data from the interviews was collected on this issue. It appeared that overall some of the women were aware of their conditions of employment and legal rights while others were not as clear about what they received and where they stood legally. The women were not closely questioned in this area and thus the issue warrants further exploration. It would also be interesting to examine whether or not the level of awareness of conditions is the same for permanent workers as it is for casual workers.

Negotiation of work hours

Perhaps one of the biggest issues for many of the women revolved around the negotiation of their hours of work. This section will address such issues as, the variable hours women worked, the amount of notice they were given of work, their ability to say

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yes or no when they were offered work, and the need for some women 'to work their way in' or the allocation of hours.

Variable Hours of Work

For most of the women the hours they worked in their casual jobs varied greatly from week to week. Of all the women only Sue was guaranteed a set minimum of hours of work each week. Jenny was generally confident that she would be allocated at least eight hours of work a week but her employers were under no obligation to provide her with this.

So at the beginning of each week you just choose which eight hours you'll work.

Yes, it's wonderful. Very very infrequently do I not get the work. Having said that, it's anywhere in the hospital. So ... I don't mind where I work. There are other staff who are very choosy about where they work, so that they don't as often get the work that they would like. So if there is a shortage in say a special unit, or something, I'll just go wherever they send me, it doesn't worry me....it's one day a week I do a full shift or else I do two six to 11 shifts. But I do tend to work weekends, because of the penal rates....But ... the shifts are all over the show and you don't always get what you request... (Jenny)

One of Elizabeth's jobs is a set day each week but not a set number of hours, her other job varies considerably from term to term and from week to week.

Well I would have from week to week, so at the end of one Thursday I will look and a lot of clients would have been booked in for the next week, and perhaps there is a new client coming. So when I leave on one Thursday I know at that point how many

hours I'll have the following [Thursday]. In the meantime so I know from week to week. (Elizabeth)

[A]t the beginning of this year [one school] had, in fact, ended up with slightly more teachers than it was allowed, so they had one to one and a half teachers too many for the number of children, so they couldn't actually use relievers, so I didn't get any calls for the first term, except for the last two weeks and they explained why this happened. This term I have had a lot more work and I expect a reasonable amount next term. (Elizabeth)

[S]ome weeks I'll do three days in a week and most weeks I do, at least one day, it is really variable. (Elizabeth)

Even when assurances of work hours were given these were not always adhered to. Sue gives this example.

She did say to me that I would only have to work a Sunday once a month.

And is that still happening.

No. It was at first, but not now, it is just all over the place. (Sue)

Most of the women commented on the variable hours of their work.

Yes, it was a bit of an emotional roller-coaster, but it averaged four days a week I would get. So one week I would get five days, the next week three days and the next week four days. I've got them all on the calendar actually. (Lucy)

I started at Wellington Hospital I had no idea how long it would be, and they didn't have any idea. That was quite disconcerting. (Jan)

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Yes, I would say so [five days a month], when it's a good month.

A good month, but always five days a month?

No, couldn't guarantee it. (Sally)

This is a range of my hours, 24 hours, 19 hours, 13 hours billable hours per week. For the last two weeks there is 28.83 hours and 32.92 hours. Like 32 hours it's a wicked week, I was probably there about 60. (Jayne)

The next quote from Sue shows that in this particular job her hours of work fluctuated to accommodate the current employment status of the store owners daughter.

Basically, it was just whenever they couldn't be bothered working in the store. So it was a mother daughter only thing, and it was a family owned business and then there was another daughter who lost her job so my hours decreased, and then she got a job, so my hours went up. (Sue)

Anne says that;

The workload fluctuates so much I can't ever guarantee how much work I'm going to get. (Anne)

And;

I'll have three days next week and after that I don't know what we've got. But the average would be about two days a week lately. (Anne)

When asked how long she sometimes goes without work Anne comments that;

Well it can be a month. It's a little bit slack at the moment...
(Anne)

Finally Sue records the attitude of her boss;

[My boss] said look retail is seven days a week love, you've got a decision to make you'd better make it now. Because I said, oh I play netball and I'm on the committee and that. So I had to give up netball to do that. (Sue)

This quote from Sue aptly summarises the variable nature of the work many of these women were involved in and the need for them to be available when the work was there. At the stage of the interview, Sue was being employed to work a minimum of 12 hours per week and this eventuated as being on no set days. So, in effect, Sue's employers were paying her to work 12 hours per week but she had to keep the other 50 plus hours that the shop was open free of other commitments. Sue was expected to make her 12 hour a week job the number one priority of her waking hours each week and had to be prepared to subordinate everything else to this job, whether or not she was working on a given day. This demonstrates unreasonable expectations on the part of the employer.

The hours of the women's work vary greatly and to such an extent that some of them are unable to plan ahead with any regularity (this and other effects on the women of the variable nature of their work are discussed further in the next chapter). The women's hours of work vary for a number of reasons. Some of the fluctuation of hours is due to the availability of work. This is true for those women involved in catering and for Jayne's contract work. Some of the women are reliant on other people being sick or indisposed to provide the women with work. Jan and Phillipa, and to some extent Jenny, are the only women who are able to rely to a very limited extent on there being a semblance of reliability on hours of work from week to week. For Phillipa this only happens in some of her jobs but not in others and for all of the women there is no guarantee how long the work will last.

Whatever the reason, those women with variable and unreliable hours of work are placed at a disadvantage in the work place. They are reliant for work, to a much greater degree than permanent workers, on events out of their control. This places them in a powerless position as it is not in their power to ensure that they have the work that they require or desire, or even to predict what work they will be given.

Notice of Work

Tied in with the variable nature of the women's work was the amount of notice they were given of work. Some women knew month to month what work they would have. These women were the minority. Most of the participants only found out each week what their work would be for the following week and some women did not know until any given morning whether or not they would have work that day.

Occasionally I would know on Sunday night, someone would phone and say look we need you tomorrow morning, or we need you Monday and Wednesday. I would say, great yes. But most of the time I would get the call at quarter to seven, seven o'clock in the morning saying are you available today. Come 7.30 if I hadn't heard the phone ring, I would be, oh my God I'm not going to have work today and dear dear. Then I would get that call with someone apologising for calling late, and I'd go no that's fine, yes I'm available, I'll work. (Lucy)

So for that you'd be called up in the morning?

Yes, or the night before if they know someone is going to be away, a funeral or something like that, so they know, otherwise the morning of, yes, or at lunchtime, I'll come and do the late shift. (Sally)

I just wait for them to ring me up and say come to work. (Sally)

[U]sually I find out what my next week will be on a Sunday. Sunday you go into work, if I'm working, and you look up and you see what your next week will be. Then I've got to work around that basically. (Sue)

When Anne first started at her job she did not know in advance what her hours of work would be. She would just wait for a phone call telling her that there would be work in a

day or a week. After a few years Anne became more comfortable in her position and felt able to ask when the next work would be.

You were saying that you know now generally when the [work is going to be there], and you think, OK I know I'm going to be working these days. When you first started did you have that knowledge?

No, I don't feel I did. No, it was more just the phone going and there would be work. But I think as time goes by you feel more comfortable with the situation and you can just say now when is the next work. But I wouldn't have done that in the early days. I would just wait for the phone call. (Anne)

This indicates that there is an added power dynamic operating. When Anne first started this job she lacked the sense of security that, once gained, allowed her to ask in advance when the next job would be. Anne now gets earlier notification of work. Thus Anne's boss could have given Anne notice of work earlier in her first years of work but did not. There could be a number of reasons for this all of which may not necessarily relate to the casual nature of Anne's work. However this situation would not arise if Anne had permanent hours of work and the result of this was that Anne would have to wait for the phone to ring and tell her she had work.

Other women were not in the same position as Anne and did not feel able to push for earlier notification of work. Anne was not reliant on her casual work to support her on a week to week basis as other women were and this does give her more power. However Anne's ability to inquire after the next available work was probably due more to her length of service in her job rather than her need of the work. This is reinforced by Lucy's situation. Lucy commented earlier that she had difficulty building up a rapport with her employers as the person in charge of relief teachers would change from term to term. She now says that;

I think some of the schools they could ring in advance but they don't. Also they could, there was something else, what was it, it

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is only a simple thing, but they could tell me what classes I've got, what classes they've given me. (Lucy)

Lucy was generally rung at about seven o'clock in the morning and asked to work that day. The above quote indicates that the schools know that a relief teacher will be needed before this time and could therefore give Lucy more warning of work. Lucy also comments that she is not always given the information about the days work that she would like. Both this postponing of notification of work and withholding of information place Lucy at a disadvantage and emphasise her powerless position. If Lucy had more power in her work environment and was not reliant on the goodwill of her employer (this is picked up in a later section) then she would be in a better position to ask for the schools to give her more notice of work when this was available and provide her with more information. It is also possible that if Lucy could develop and maintain a rapport with her employer over time as Anne has been able to she would then be in a position to ask for earlier notification of work when it was available.

Elizabeth's experience with schools is slightly different;

Usually the school asks how late do you need to know about a day's work so that you can plan for that. So while quite often they will let me know on the day that I'm on, to come in tomorrow again. Or else she'll ring me up in the afternoon and say come in tomorrow. I'm still if they phone up to half past seven. So more often that is what happens. Someone will ring in sick in the morning, and she can ring me and I can make arrangements. And that way I can get more work, because I'm willing to take fairly short notice, with a same day call. (Elizabeth)

Elizabeth is often given more notice of work than Lucy but she also is rung at 7:30 am and asked to work that day. Elizabeth says that the school asks how much notice she needs and she takes calls on the morning of the day in which work is required so that

she can 'get more work'. Elizabeth accepts greater inconvenience because she needs the work.

Both Sue and Phillipa would generally know in advance what their hours of work would be on a given day, but this was subject to change at short notice.

[B]ecause even though my days when I was employed was Monday, Friday, and Saturday, ten to two, she can ask me at two o'clock, can you work until 5.30. So at the drop of a hat, I have to say yes anyway because that's my job and that's what I'm there for. (Sue)

I could go in for an hour and it could be two hours, it could be three hours before I walked out of the building. (Phillipa)

I've had to ring up the school and say can you get messages to my children to tell them to go to after-school care today please, because I'm going to be late at work. (Phillipa)

The notification that the women are given of work varies considerably, but many of the women are prepared to either extend their work hours on a particular day or receive only a few hours notification of work. This is either because they need or want the work, or they 'don't really want to get on the bad end of the stick' with their boss.

Ability to Say No

The nature of casual work is theoretically that the work is offered when it is available and the worker either accepts or rejects the work depending on their availability. The busy and complex nature of our lives means that not everyone is able to take the work when it is offered. Prior commitments are sometimes not able to be changed and as the work is inconsistent it cannot always be planned out in advance.

It was mentioned earlier that Sue, who was reliant on the income from her casual work to buy necessities, was required to keep her life free of other commitments so that she could work on demand. This section on 'ability to say no' demonstrates the difference in

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power between the women who were reliant financially on their casual work and those who were not.

One of the women in this study called her casual work her 'yes/no job'. This was because when she was offered work she would either say yes she could take it or if she had a prior commitment of greater importance to her than the work, then she would turn down the work. Two of the women said that they were in this position and that they felt quite able and happy to either accept or refuse work as it was offered.

Yes, and you work under those conditions, which if you can't make it you just say, no. So I would say it's a yes/no job. There is never any problem with them. (Anne)

They don't [mind when] you can't work?

No, I think if you're honest and straight and they know why. Sometimes I might just have this great urge to go over to ... to see my family over there and I just say to them, no. But at the same time I feel very loyal to them, and if they have given me dates I will work.... as I said before I just call it my yes/no job. Rarely do I say, no, but you know you are able to. I enjoy the work so much that I don't want to say, no. (Anne)

When that suits it's good, if it doesn't suit, well it doesn't matter. (Sally)

Yes. But if I had something else on that day, I would have said look I'm sorry I can't come in and that suits, they'd find someone else.

So you feel quite able to say, sorry not a good day, I'm booked up?

Yes, I do. Even if it is just for a lunch or something. (Sally)

Both Sally and Anne said that they felt quite able to say no to work when it was inconvenient for them to work. However neither of these women relied on their casual work to provide money to supply for the needs of their households. This places both of these women in a more powerful position than the other women who are reliant on their casual work to provide for the necessities of life. If the work should abate for Anne or Sally as a result of their disinclination or inability to work some days it would not leave them in dire financial need.

However these women's ability to turn down work is perhaps not quite as clear cut as it seems. As well as the comments above Anne also said earlier that she would prefer not to work Sundays but that more and more of the work was on the weekends and so she now works more weekends than she would like to. This suggests that in order to keep her job Anne must sometimes work the weekends when she would prefer not to and so although she says that she feels quite capable of saying no to work this does not mean that she only works the days that she wants to. It is quite possible that she wants to work but different days to those which are offered. The result of this is that she works on days that she would not chose to work if the choice was there. So despite Anne's comments that her work is a yes/no job she still has to work when the work is available.

Other women commented that they did not feel so able to refuse work when it was offered to them.

I haven't said no yet, because I've just started, so I don't really want to get on the bad end of the stick sort of thing with my bosses. But you just really can't plan anything and they're not regular. (Sue)

[Y]ou've got to sort of work it, you're obliged to. (Sue)

Well yes and no. It's like he would say I would really like for you to come in tomorrow, are you able to. Not would you like to come in tomorrow or something like that. And if you say no, it's just a feeling.

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So you didn't feel you could say no?

In theory I could ... but in reality I didn't, no. I felt like if I wanted to stay in then I needed to say yes....[If I said no, there would be] negative repercussions. (Jayne)

So when you get rung up, if you're not feeling well, or one of the kids is not feeling well, do you still go because you don't want to lose that day's work or is it more you could maybe cope without that day's work, but are too scared because of the ramifications, that you might lose more than just that day's work?

Yes, or if I'm there today, then I might get asked to do tomorrow and the next day, and if I'm not there today, then I might not. (Pat)

I don't like actually saying no when he rings me up, because I think if I say no, then he might not ring me again. If I say no a few times then he is not going to be as keen to ring me the next time. (Pat)

Some of the women felt that they could not say no when they were offered work or asked to work. All of these women were reliant on the income from their casual work to pay for their needs and those of their family. As Pat says,

Yes, you've just got to be flexible I suppose. You can always say no, you can't do it, if you've got a commitment or something. I suppose people in different situations where they're not reliant on the income so much are in a position to do that more. If you're in a position like I am where every cent helps, I'm not saying most people aren't like that, most people are, but they've

perhaps got a partner or a husband or someone who has got their primary income and it is just like a bit of pocket money for them, so it is different. It is different. (Pat)

The main reason the women gave for this inability to turn down work was that they felt that this would have negative repercussions. Such an impression is validated by this comment Sue made earlier when she mentioned that she had to give up netball as it was during retail hours and she might be required to work. Sue's boss gave Sue the impression that turning down work because of other commitments would not be tolerated. Some women seemed to fear that refusing or turning down work would lead to not 'staying in' with the boss. To risk this could jeopardise future work possibilities especially considering that most of the women were not guaranteed any set amount of work. This idea of and need to stay in with the boss and be on their right side is elaborated in the following section. For now it is sufficient to highlight the powerless situation of some of the women. They are classified as casual workers and in theory it is part of the flexible nature of their work that they are just as able to say no to work on a particular day as the boss is able to offer the work to them. However in practice this is not the case as there are many mitigating factors that must be taken into account. The particular one that is demonstrated here is that not all of the women feel capable of saying no to work when they are offered it or it is requested of them. The women do not always possess the power to say no to the work when it is inconvenient for them to work as they have no guarantee that they will ever be offered work again. Ongoing work is especially vital to those women who rely on their income for casual work to pay for necessities such as food and rent. They are therefore loath to do anything, such as get on the wrong side of the boss by refusing work, that may jeopardise their future work.

These issues continue to be examined in the following segment on being 'dependent on the goodwill of the boss'.

Dependent on the Goodwill of the Boss

Some of the women commented that they had to 'work their way in'. That is, when they first started work they did not know when the next work would be and they were not at the top of the list of people to be asked. As they spent more time in the job and got to

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know the bosses or those who allocated work better than they could be more sure of ongoing work.

In the earlier days when you didn't know when the next work was, how many days notice were you given. Were you rung the day before, or the week before?

Possibly earlier in the week for the weekend. But in those days there was a lot more work. [The boss], at the time, did all his own baking and everything, and we used to make pies and things like that. So once you'd been there a little while and you'd worked a little bit more, you had to work your way in really. (Anne)

Not really, no, because first of all they don't know you very well. The way relief teaching works is that every term a different person is in charge of relief teaching.... You just build up that rapport with someone and you know that if they were doing it this term you'd be very high up on their list. It's like you've got to build up that reputation all over again. (Lucy)

So by and large I get the work that I'm wanting to do. I have a good relationship with the nursing supervisors, which also assists. A couple I trained with so that is very helpful, as well. (Jenny)

If you were in another environment where you maybe didn't get along so well with the supervisors or whatever, would that be an issue?

Yes, I know there are, this sounds terrible, there are lots of other staff on the casual resource team who don't get work, they don't get it when they want it, and I'm sure that's got a lot to do with, well my level of experience and also some people

aren't as adaptable to different working environments.... So that if you've worked in a place, and they've really enjoyed having you, and they see that you've done everything fairly well, they'll ask you back, so that happens with a large number. They'll say oh that's Jenny, is she willing to do an extra shift, can we have the same one as we have yesterday. So they hear that all the time, so they'll obviously choose you. That's the way it works. But I know there are others which is fair enough, too. (Jenny)

I wanted to have next Monday off Friday and Saturday and I've already told her about it and she sort of went yes, OK, then I heard her say to someone else, look I'll just be able to give you days off when I've gone through the schedule I don't know yet. So it is just if she is having a good day or a bad day. You need to work that out before you speak to her. (Sue)

This also demonstrates the extent to which many of the women were reliant on their boss's decision to ring them up and offer them work. As they had no guarantees of work they could not expect that they would be given any work that was available by right and they would have no legal comeback if they were never given any more work. The women in this position had to ensure that they remained on the right side of the boss so that they were 'invited' back to do more work. The women who had a good relationship with their supervisor were less likely to find that they were underemployed in contrast to those who perhaps did not have such a good rapport with their bosses. Indeed Jenny tells us that she has other casual coworkers who do not get given the hours they want. She comments that she never has any problems in being allocated the hours she requests. Jenny is undoubtedly an experienced, very flexible and adaptable worker but she also went through training with a couple of her supervisors and has a good relationship with them and she does admit that the situation might have been slightly different for her if this were not the case.

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Lucy highlights the problem that exists in relief teaching where a different teacher is in charge of assigning the relief teachers each term. She comments that she just built up a good rapport with the previous teacher and then the next term another teacher was allocated the task and Lucy was faced with the job of developing that rapport all over again.

So it is unfortunate but true that the relationship and degree of rapport between an employer and their casual employee can impact significantly on the amount of work that the employee is offered. Such a situation places the women in a position where they are reliant on relational issues, rather than just their professional abilities, to secure work. This again subordinates the women to a position of less power where they, in effect, are confronted with the need to 'suck up' to their boss or supervisor so that they have enough work to support themselves. The women who do not need the money to provide for the immediate sustenance needs of themselves or their family may be in a slightly better position, but they still have to toe the line if they wish to keep their job.

Security

All of these issues around the negotiation of hours for women - the variable hours, the reliance on the mercy and goodwill of the boss and the inability of some of the women to say no to work because this may jeopardise future hours contribute to an environment of insecurity for many of the women. This section highlights the lack of legal and actual job security experienced by the women in this research.

The main fear for the women stems from the knowledge that their employer could just stop ringing them for any reason at all and the women would have little or no comeback.

[My boss] might say, oh well see you later. There are other people out there that will have your job. (Sue)

[Y]ou don't have work guarantees, so even for me, this whole structure could change at any time, and then I would be, unemployed. I wouldn't have a job at all. Whereas, obviously if

you're in a permanent position then you have a lot more [security]. (Jean)

I don't like actually saying no when he rings me up, because I think if I say no, then he might not ring me again. (Pat)

If you don't pull your weight or if you're not getting on with the rest of the staff well I guess they just don't ring you up....If the phone didn't ring that would be it. (Anne)

I'm totally at the mercy of someone ringing me in the morning. (Lucy)

I just think each week, get it while I can, get it while I can, because next week, hey it might not be there. (Sue)

As these quotes demonstrate many of the women had no job security at all. They were completely reliant on the next phone call offering them work.

So what happens if everyone suddenly gets nice and healthy at school?

That's what I'm dreading.

So you just pray.

I just pray, literally, I do literally pray every night. Pat

It's supposed to be an eight-week stint ... I've got no guarantees of employment after that. (Jan)

There were never any guarantees of employment and, as the next set of quotes demonstrates the women wanted jobs that could offer them greater job security than they were currently getting.

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When people ask me why I want these [permanent jobs I am applying for] and I basically say security of income. That's the major thing, and also the security of a job. (Jayne)

I need permanent work. Permanent, secure, full-time, well-paid work, so although I enjoy doing this really it's not enough. (Jean)

I'd like to feel more secure. And simply not knowing if you've got work from one day to the next, or how much you'll be earning in a year, and not getting paid over the holidays it is too much. (Lucy)

That was my aim, my goal was to get permanent hours and permanent days, which I did have but now I don't. (Sue)

Sue was particularly frustrated with the insecurity that her job offered as when she first applied for and was given the job it had permanent hours and days of work. Overall the women were conscious of the insecure nature of their casual work (the various ways in which this impacted on the women's personal lives is examined in the next chapter) and many of them wanted work which could offer them greater security. It is this insecurity of work which can have a negative impact on the amount of power that the women hold in the work place. The actions that they can take are severely limited as the women are very aware that their employers could simply stop ringing them at any time.

Summary of the power dynamic

Despite some differences, the fundamental issue beneath all the women's experiences and conditions of work is one of power. In general the women do not have a large amount of power because they are either viewed as transient or impermanent and some women's need of the work is such that they are not willing to jeopardise their jobs to fight for better conditions.

Some women commented directly on their lack of power and linked this to the casual nature of their work:

[I]f it was permanent shifts [we] would have more power. Because you are a coherent group, you are more able to organise, perhaps they valued you more [if you were permanent]. (Jean)

Do you feel you have much voice ... much power to negotiate conditions...?

None at all. Its very competitive and more and more people are wanting to do relief teaching. (Lucy)

How much power to you feel you have?

I've got no power whatsoever, none.

Would that be different if you were a permanent teacher?

I think so, yes....(Pat)

And you didn't feel that you had any power?

No power at all. That was probably the biggest downfall of it. You felt really powerless, because they put you in this position of being self-employed quote unquote and so you were meant, this was meant to be a great thing for you. Whenever you talked about it, it was always this great thing for you. But it's really not. You're really quite powerless and you're also quite disadvantaged. There is no job security, and you really get the feeling they can get rid of you in an instant if you're not coming up to scratch. (Jayne)

There seemed to be two determinants of the amount of power that the women had in their jobs and therefore their ability to influence to some extent the conditions of their work. The first of these is length of time in a job. One woman who had been in a job for a number of years found that after a while she was more able to influence her

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conditions of work. Anne said that she was able to ensure earlier notification of work after she had been in her job for a few years. She also comments that;

A few of us ... have been there for ten years and I think we probably do [have the ability to comment on conditions] We would just say ... how about we do this. (Anne)

Unfortunately it is not in the nature of most casual work for women to be in one job for a period as long as ten years. The second determinant of the power the women possessed was their economic reliance on the work. Those who needed the money they earned from their casual work for needs possessed less power and ability to negotiate conditions of work than those who were not financially reliant on the income from their casual work.

Under the ECA (Employment Contracts Act) 1991 employees have fewer rights than they possessed prior to the Act and they are to a large degree at the mercy of their employer. Many of these women do not have a contract and have absolutely no guarantee that they will ever be given work by their current employer again. Under their conditions of work they are beholden to their employer because if the employer was to decide that s/he does not wish to have a particular employee work for them ever again they could just not ring that employee ever again and the employee would have no recompense. This places the employees in an incredibly powerless position. For some of the women the amount of work that they will be given is not held over their head on a day to day basis but they are still aware that their employer is under no obligation to supply them with such work. This becomes evident when they contemplate asking for a pay rise or some other change in conditions. They enter into any such negotiations in a powerless position fully aware that it would be easy for the employer to hire someone else in their stead without even the hassle of firing the previous employee. Employees in this situation are so utterly reliant on the goodwill of their employer that they are effectively powerless in all other areas. The fear of losing work paralyses their ability to negotiate other conditions of work.

SUMMARY

This chapter examined the conditions of work experienced by the participants in this research. The conditions were split into three areas; environment, legal conditions and the actual working conditions of the women.

The women's environment was split up into three areas; physical environment, attitude of workmates towards the women and relationships that were built at work. Only one woman said that there was a physical difference in her work environment between her and the permanent workers. As a casual worker she experienced a substandard work environment that other, permanent, workers did not. All of the other women worked in a similar physical environment to that of their coworkers.

Some of the women found that some of their coworkers treated or thought of them differently because of the casual nature of their work. This manifested itself primarily in employers and coworkers assuming casual workers were not as committed to their work, in making it harder on the women if they wanted a day off, a holiday or were just having an off day. This difference in attitude towards the casual workers was negative although in all cases but one it was neither extreme nor frequent. It was however a discrimination against the women because of the casual nature of their work.

Some of the women found it harder to establish good relationships with other staff. These women were primarily the ones who worked in bigger institutions. This situation would probably be alleviated if the women held permanent jobs with regular hours. Other women who had more continuous contact with the same coworkers did not have this problem.

The section on the legal conditions of the women's work dealt with remuneration, holidays and sick pay and union involvement and representation. Most of the women felt that they probably did not receive adequate financial remuneration for their paid work. This was because their base pay was low, they were not given regular pay reviews, or they did not receive other benefits such as holiday pay or regular pay rises. It was hard to determine whether or not this was due to the casual nature of the women's work, but the lack of regular pay reviews for some women and the practice of casual work not contributing towards experience in professions indicates that perhaps this was the case in some situations.

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Not all of the women were members of their unions. The experiences of those who were were varied. There was not enough information to determine how much of the women's experience was affected by the casual nature of their employment.

The actual conditions that the women faced in their jobs included costs incurred in casual work, underemployment, their awareness of conditions, negotiation of hours and security of employment. Some of the women faced costs as casual workers extra to those they would have faced as permanent workers. It was the women who bore this cost rather than their employers, thus they could be seen to subsidise their employers in this manner. Most of the women would have preferred to work more hours than they currently did but it is difficult to ascertain whether or not this would be different if the women had permanent work. Some of the women were not fully aware of their conditions of work, with holiday pay causing the most problems. Again there was not enough information to determine whether the casual nature of the women's work meant that they were more or less aware of their conditions of work than permanent workers would have been.

It was in the area of negotiation of hours of work that the power imbalance was evident for most women. Most of the women had extremely variable hours of work. They could be given anything from a month to less than an hours notice of work. Some of the women felt able to negotiate their hours of work and the amount of notice they were given of work. These were the same women who also felt able to turn down work when they had other plans. Such women tended to have no dependents and not be financially reliant on their income from casual work. The rest of the women were very dependent on the good will of their employer to provide them with work. They had no job security and knew that their employer could stop offering them work at any time. This led to some women feeling like they had to ensure they stayed on the right side of the boss. This demonstrated the utter lack of power that many of the women possessed in the workplace.

Overall some of the women experienced conditions of work that were not overly dissimilar to what would be expected for permanent workers. Others however experienced conditions that demonstrated discrimination against them because of the casual nature of their work. Most of the women were also in relatively powerless positions as a direct result of the casual nature of their work.

Chapter Seven

THE IMPACT OF CASUAL WORK ON THE WOMEN'S PERSONAL LIVES

WHAT CASUAL WORK HAS MEANT FOR THE WOMEN

I felt like I'd been cut off from people that I would see each day, say like at Takapuna. I felt quite isolated at first, and it felt quite strange continually going into schools where I knew no one. There wasn't that emotional support. (Lucy)

Well I do, I have to be ready [every morning]. I have to get everything ready for the kids to ready psychologically, what I'm going to wear because that could take quite a while if I haven't got that sorted out, not that I've got that much choice, it's just that I've got to know, so I get the kids' clothes, lunches made, my clothes, up as close to 6.30 as I can, have a shower, get ready, get the kids ready, and hope like hell the phone goes. Then if it doesn't... (Pat)

The previous chapter examined the conditions experienced by women in casual work. This chapter looks at how these conditions and the casual nature of the women's work impacted on the women's personal lives. The women experienced this impact in a number of ways.

Firstly the women experienced great difficulty in planning activities with their children, friends or even a trip to the dentist. Secondly, the casual nature of their work and the conditions that went with this affected the women's family and their family life. This was particularly evident when they had sick children. Thirdly, some of the women found that their casual work affected their finances, their ability to budget and even their

relationship with their bank. Fourthly some of the women found that their health was adversely affected by their casual work.

An outline of the issues addressed in this chapter is as follows;

Planning

Family

- Insecurity
- Sick Children

Finance

- Budgeting
- Bank

Health

- Insecure and variable nature of work leads to stress
- Stress aggravates other illnesses
- Going to work when sick
- Positive

One of the challenges was to identify which of the findings on the impact that the women reported casual work to have on their personal lives would be similar for women in part-time work and which were unique to women in casual work. This issue is addressed and discussed as necessary throughout the chapter.

PLANNING

One of the most obvious impacts that casual work had on the women's personal lives was that it made it difficult for most of the women to plan their time. Here, the women fell into two main categories. The first consists of those women for whom work was the priority and who, if offered work, would cancel almost all other plans, and the second of women who were happy to refuse offered work if it did not fit in with their plans. A couple of the women did not easily fit into either of these groups but most of them fell predominantly into one or the other.

Women in the first group experienced a range of difficulties in planning their time. Most of the women in this group agreed that casual work affected their social lives and relationships with friends as they were often unable to make definite plans to see them. All arrangements were subject to change if the women were given work. These women tended to be those who needed the job for financial reasons and were those women who felt less able to decline work when it was offered.

I can't arrange to do anything, just in case I get a phone call at 7.30 in the morning. I can't plan my day ahead, I'll do this and that tomorrow, it is if I don't work I'll do this and this tomorrow. Otherwise work has got to come first....As a rule he will ring say about 7.30, which means I have to be out just after eight. So I've really got to be ready to go whether he rings or not because I've got four children to organise. So yes I've got to be mentally prepared and physically prepared to go, and I've still got to get up early. (Pat)

The other thing is I can't say to a friend definitely in this three days let's go and do that, or come over and help me, or we'll go out for lunch or anything. It is always yes, that would be great, I'll ring you in the morning and tell you whether the school has rung up. (Elizabeth)

If I want to plan something or go somewhere I can't, because I've got coffee mornings to go to, or friends to visit, or if I want to go to the movies with someone I just can't plan anything because I don't know where I'm at. I may be doing ten to two one day and then they might say, oh that person is sick, or do you mind working tomorrow and then you've got to sort of work it, you're obliged to. I haven't said no yet, because I've just started, so I don't really want to get on the bad end of the stick

sort of thing with my bosses. But you just really can't plan anything and they're not regular. (Sue)

This last comment by Sue demonstrates not only the difficulty she faced in planning anything but (as seen in the last chapter) also her fear of alienating her bosses in some way and thus jeopardising her work prospects. It is this fear, a product of the casual nature of Sue's work which hinders Sue's ability to plan and organise her time.

While arranging meetings with friends, appointments with the doctor or dentist and other necessary occurrences in everyday life was not easy for the women, the greatest difficulty was experienced by women with children for whom childcare had to be organised. Childcare for preschoolers and after school care for school aged children had to be either arranged in advance on the off chance that work would be available, or it had to be arranged at short notice once work was offered.

But, given the state of child care and the lack of it out here. I rely on friends and neighbours. School finishes at 3.30 and I have my children picked up at three from the local school, and cared for until about four, And if I stay until five on a Thursday, so I have to have a relationship with a neighbour or a friend that I can ring up and say, the school has rung me, can you pick up [my children] for me this afternoon. (Elizabeth)

[S]he can ask me at two o'clock, can you work until 5.30. So at the drop of a hat, I have to say yes ... if he's at kindy, and only goes until quarter past three, sort of thing Basically, I've got a girlfriend who works there, which is really handy. She'll have him, or otherwise I just ring up other girlfriends, I've got three or four other girlfriends who have got children who I usually swap with, if anything ever happens. I've got a close girlfriend close to the kindy, and I've got another girlfriend who I swap with alternatively week to week. She has my one once and I have

her two, just for half a day, and that sort of thing. So I can always call on her as back up, or otherwise get him dropped off at my Mum's and there is another girlfriend as well. So there is alternatives, but it is just whether or not they're home it is like here we go. A lot of stress involved in organising. Even sometimes my partner has had time off work if I have to work if I can't get anybody, which is really helpful. (Sue)

Like even though I've been called up in the job I'm in now at five o'clock in the evening, oh come and work tomorrow at nine, sort of thing, and I'm going oh, course I can. You get off the phone going, Mum can you have him tomorrow...(Sue)

I've had to ring up the school and say can you get messages to my children to tell them to go to after-school care today please, because I'm going to be staying late at work. Then I've also got to ring up the after-school care number and book them in... (Phillipa)

Most of the women with children found arranging childcare at the short notice they were given of work extremely difficult at times and the management skills of these women are remarkable. The women had to rely heavily on friends and relations to provide quality childcare and transportation at short notice. Sue's comments that she will ring a friend and ask them to drop her child off at her mother's and ring her mother to arrange this highlight the precarious nature of the situation. Such people were not always able to be contacted or available. Elizabeth also commented that the neighbour who helps her out on short notice is possibly entering full time work shortly and this will create difficulties for Elizabeth. None of the arrangements offer permanent solutions to the problem. A permanent part-time job would however enable the women to develop a schedule and plan childcare in advance.

These types of situations occurred when the women had either no time at all or only a few hours warning of work. There were similar problems involved for the women when

they had a week's warning. The women would still have to book their children into kindergarten, after school care or some other form of childcare and some places prefer permanent bookings to those organised on a weekly basis. If work did not eventuate on the days that children were booked into professional childcare or if it only lasted half a day when the child was booked in for the whole day the women would still be expected to pay for that care whether or not they took advantage of it. This meant that some of the women would sometimes end up paying for more childcare than necessary because they could not adequately plan with the variable nature of their work.

The planning problems that the women faced as a consequence of their casual work also meant that the women were not able to arrange to do things with their children. The following comments from the women highlight this problem.

[my son] has things to go to like gymnastics, swimming, and I have to work around those. It is quite good because the ladies are really neat and they say just bring him in whenever you can. Like if I have to work on a Tuesday I just take him to gym on a Wednesday or vice versa, so that works out really good. It is just that if I have to work both of those days, I have to get someone else to do it, which is challenge and sometimes he misses out. So that annoys me. Now I'm working more I don't get to do my things, like go the gym, I find that difficult, because I could only go to the gym when I booked him into kindy. Like sometimes there wouldn't be any kindy because of the wrong time of the day, so I couldn't go, so that frustrates me a bit, too.

Where if it was permanent hours you could work out a schedule and it would be the same every week and you could make it work.

Yes, exactly, that's right. (Sue)

They don't know what they're doing, either. They say can we do this and that and the other, I don't know because I don't know if I'm working, or not. Can we go to so and so's place after school. I don't know whether I can pick them up or not or whether to go back to the friend's place, just things like that, I don't know until I know whether I'm working or not whether they can do various things after school.

So do you think it would be more positive for your children if this work was permanent?

If it was regular, yes definitely, we'd all know where we stood.

Easier to coordinate the whole problem?

Yes, just easier to plan and say, OK you can do this tomorrow, you can do that tomorrow. (Pat)

Yes, are there any other commitments that are impacted by the fact that your work is casual?

Things like probably doing mother help, helping out at school, helping out if there is a trip on, or something on that they need parent help, I can't commit myself to that. I was mother help at the preschool, just things like that really. I can't do anything on a regular basis. I'd really like to go in the classroom and do mother help on a regular basis, but I can't do that.

Does that frustrate you?

No, not now, because I know that the money is more important. even though I'd really like to do that with my children. I try not to think about things like that. (Pat)

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As these quotes show both Pat and Sue are in a position where they cannot plan to do things, ranging from helping out at school and with school events to taking their children to after school activities or birthday parties, with their children as they do not know whether or not they will be required to work.

There was always the possibility that the women would be given work at short notice and this work would have to take priority over previously arranged outings or visitations. This meant, for example, that they were unable to arrange to take their children to other children's birthday parties after school and that they were also unable to help out at school as they could not commit themselves to a particular day or time. This situation shows that the women's casual work has the ability to prevent the women from participating in key aspects of their children's development and upbringing. It also forces them to choose between either ensuring they are available for paid work whenever it may be offered or becoming involved in voluntary work which benefits the community as a whole. This demonstrates how casual work can limit, restrict and dictate women's choice rather than enhance it.

Not all women found the variable nature of the work hours to be a hassle for planning. One woman who did not like to plan ahead even appreciated it. These women had no dependents and also felt more able to turn down work if they didn't want to work one day.

Has there ever been times when you really really wish it was a more permanent arrangement that they've rung up the day before and you've just thought that it's too much?

No, really I don't. Because I suppose in a way I'm a very organised person and really nothing ever gets me harassed So they could ring me this morning and say... (Anne)

A final comment on the issue of planning is made by Sue;

Yes, I do enjoy going to work, but having the set times and that would be a lot better, definitely overall, because otherwise all

you feel like you're doing is working working. Not having any time for yourself as such.

yes, because it is not planned time.

Yes, that's right. (Sue)

This comment by Sue highlights the impact that not being able to plan can have on a person. Sue cannot plan free time in advance as she does not know when her free time will be. This results in her feeling as though all she does is work. Such an impression is most likely caused by the fact that she has to constantly reorganise her life and cancel appointments or activities to fit in with whichever days or hours she is needed at work. A permanent schedule would enable Sue to make better use of her free time and thus enjoy her life outside of work.

This problem with planning also relates back to the impact that casual work had on the women's families when the women related that they were unable to perform activities such as teacher's help at school because they could not commit themselves to a particular day or time.

FAMILY

The main manner in which casual work impacted on the women's families concerned the uncertainty of the work and trying to juggle casual work with sick children. The impact which casual work had on each woman and her family differed depending on the family situation of the woman. Those women who had children living at home found that their casual work affected their family more than those who had no children at home. I have divided this section on the impact that casual work had on the women's families into two categories. These are how the uncertainty of the work affected the women's families, and the problems caused by the combination of sick children and casual work.

Insecurity of work

As noted earlier, most of the women did not have any regular hours of work and sometimes worked at more than one job. This affected the women and their families in a variety of ways. Jan relates that,

Particularly, this last term with having two jobs, I said to [my daughter] the other day I'm going to work, and when I came home she said, where were you working. She hasn't got it clear in her mind, where I'm going to be. So I think if I had a permanent part-time job it would be much easier to explain myself to the family and to friends. (Jan)

Jan found that her casual work combined with the fact that she held more than one job meant that her children were on occasion confused and did not know exactly where their mother was. Jan's opinion was that if her job was permanent part-time then this problem would not arise or at least would be alleviated.

What affect has that had on the kids, the fact that your work is casual work and you never know?

If they're not organised in themselves and you get just about to school and one of them says, I've forgotten da da, I get very angry, because I'm running to that time. They get upset, I get upset, I don't know whether they have a bad day, but I usually have a bad day, if I've got to leave them in that. If I've got to come back, pick up whatever they've left up, take them back to school, then drop my son off at the day care and then get to work. I'd rather be ten minutes early than five minutes late. I'm just that way. I don't like being late. Yes, it really upsets me. It upsets them at the time, I don't know whether it carries on for them though, but it does for me, if we get off to a bad start.

Would that be the same if it was permanent work, do you think?

They might be more in tune if it is permanent. (Pat)

Pat provides us with a good example of how the insecure hours of casual work can effect a woman with children. Pat would often only be notified of work at 7:30 in the morning of the day that she was wanted to work. Pat found it difficult to operate with this short notice especially as she held the entire responsibility for ensuring that her four pre-teen children were ready for school or daycare. This short notice of work and Pat's family situation meant that sometimes Pat and her family would be running late. This would put pressure on Pat and her children and sometimes resulted in everyone becoming upset. The key issue here that differentiates Pat's situation from that of many others in similar circumstances but in permanent work is that Pat's work is variable and insecure and thus neither she nor her children can establish a routine. Pat comments that permanent part-time work would make it much easier to establish a routine and eliminate problems such as the one she outlines above.

While this situation could possibly also occur should the women have permanent part-time instead of casual jobs, the situation would most likely be slightly improved by this difference in the nature of their jobs. The women would then know for certain which hours they were working and could either arrange alternative times at which they would be available to help out at school or transport their children to activities. If this was not possible the women would at least be aware of this in advance and have sufficient time to make alternative arrangements.

Not all of the women faced such problems as these. Those women who did not have children at home for whom they were responsible did not have to attempt to juggle their childcare commitments with the casual nature of their work. Such women also tended to say that the money they earned from their part-time jobs was used to provide luxuries rather than needs. This meant that they also had less difficulty in turning down work if they had other plans.

Coping with sick children

Caring and arranging care for sick children is always a problem for households in which both parents are working outside of the home. This problem was exacerbated for the women in the research by the casual nature of their work.

So that half hour between seven and half past when the phone call could come in [asking me to work] is a bit pressurised, and I've felt really bad once or twice when I've said yes [to work] and have them say, I really don't feel well. (Elizabeth)

[my son] might get up and say, I feel sick I don't know and I am really having to put a bit of pressure on him, make a decision, how do you really feel, because if the phone rings I'm going to have say yes or no. I'll stay home with you, but you need to know whether you're sick, so there is a bit of pressure on them. (Elizabeth)

Again it is the added pressures such as insecurity of work tenure and income, and the fear of losing work that arise out of the casual nature of Elizabeth's work which makes her situation worse than that of a women with similar responsibilities who has a permanent part-time position.

No, only if it is something, if the children are sick or something like that and I have to stay home, that would be the only thing that would stop me. Even then I try to get out of it I try very hard to say, no you're not really sick are you, you'd better go to school and if you're that sick you can give me a ring and I'll come and get you. But yes I do try, I don't like actually saying no when he rings me up, because I think if I say no, then he might not ring me again. If I say no a few times then he is not going to be as keen to ring me the next time. (Pat)

Pat says here that she sent her children to school or questioned how sick they were when she would normally have let the children stay home. This was not an isolated event. The casual nature of the women's work meant that if they were offered work on a particular day they wanted to take the work as they did not know when more work would be offered. It could be that any offer of work may be the only one to come that week. Some women needed the money from their casual work to supply the needs of their family and therefore if they turned down work because they had to stay at home with a sick child they may then not earn enough money to cover their family's needs for that week.

The choice is literally between providing for their children by being able to feed them and send them on school trips and send them to school when their health would perhaps benefit from a day at home, or having them stay home and perhaps not being able to provide for their other needs.

For some women one day's work could lead to two or three and thus it was not just the loss of one day's income that they were facing but the loss of possibly three days income. There was also the fear that by turning down work for whatever reason the women may jeopardise their future possibilities of work. All this created a pressure for the women which saw some of them send their children to school when they would otherwise have kept them home.

Some of the pressures on the women are probably not such a result of the casual nature of the women's work but more a result of the primary caregiver for the children being involved in paid work. None of the women were entitled to paid sick days when either they or their children were ill. This increases the pressure on women with financial needs to go to work if it is at all possible. The casual nature of the women's work also means that they have no security of income or work and they therefore cannot count on the income from subsequent days of work to cover for any sick days. Women in permanent part-time work also have greater job security and therefore are not faced with the real possibility that if they refuse work they may never be offered work again.

This section demonstrates how the casual nature of the women's work has ramifications not just for the women and their lives but also for their family. The effects

of casual work extend beyond those directly involved and have wider implications for the families of the women.

FINANCE

Many of the women were dependent on the income from their casual work jobs for money to supply the needs of themselves and their family. Because this was casual work there was no guarantee for most of the women that money would come in each week and if it did the amount could vary greatly. This led to the women facing various financial pressures mainly, a great difficulty in budgeting, an inability to take out hire purchase agreements or other credit based on their income from casual work and, in one case difficulties with the bank.

Budgeting

The insecure income generated by the women's casual work made budgeting extremely difficult for many of the women interviewed.

Elizabeth states the following problems that result from the unreliable nature of her income;

So yes, it's not very reliable if you want to make plans. If we say had a serious renovation to do, or if something really went wrong One car was quite unroadworthy and it was costing more than the car was worth to actually get a warrant Basically, my income isn't nearly sufficient to buy a car and it is not reliable to make payments on, either. So you can't sort of take a hire purchase agreement on account of it, unless it is very small, because you may have, like I had at the beginning of the year, seven weeks with no work in teaching. So you haven't got any income coming in to make payments and things like that.... Yes, the ability to budget is a real problem with this sort of work.
(Elizabeth)

The women devised various methods of coping with budgeting problems that arose out of their casual work and insecure income. Jenny stated that she and her family never bought anything other than the bare essentials and that that was therefore their way of budgeting.

Well the way that we have budgeted in the past is that we only buy that we need, and that's basically still the way we live, do we really need it, that's the way we work anyway, rather than [can we] afford it, we just buy exactly what we need. So we don't really have a budget as such... (Jenny)

Anne's income was never included in the household budget and this meant that when she did have work and received her pay cheque this income was additional to the household budget and could therefore be spent on luxuries and gifts for the grandchildren.

Because the workload fluctuates so much I can't ever guarantee how much work I'm going to get so therefore I never really put it in my budget and say well I'm going to earn X amount a week or a fortnight, because it may not be that..... So when it comes along I find that although it is probably not part of my household budget, it becomes surplus to that, and I can buy extra for the grandchildren and all that sort of thing and I find that I've just got that little bit extra to do the things that perhaps I would really love to do and and that gives me a lot of pleasure it really does... (Anne)

Anne was not reliant on her income to provide for needs and was therefore able to arrange her finances in this manner. This meant that for Anne the casual nature of her work actually worked in a positive way for her financial arrangements. However this was not the case for most of the women.

So how does it effect your budgeting?

It's very difficult because I find it impossible to survive just on the DPB. If they gave me a week what they give me a fortnight I'd be OK. Usually that second week I've got nothing at all left. It is all accounted for, it's gone, I've got overdrafts and stuff and it just gets sucked into that and it has gone before you get it. As soon as you get it, it disappears....I just pray, literally, I do literally pray every night.(Pat)

Well in terms of budgeting really [it was] difficult, almost impossible. I find it hard enough to budget, as it is, but my pay is consistently fluctuating and then Multiserve who are the people who pay me, sometimes the schools aren't sending the forms in on the right dates, or something has happened, so one week I get quite a small pay and the next week is much larger.... Budgeting is really difficult, because you just don't know what the next week is going to be like. So I do a bit of splurge spending. (Lucy)

In general the women just muddled through as best as they could. Budgeting, which is promoted as the manner in which people on low incomes can survive, is extremely difficult for these women who cannot predict with any amount of certainty what their income will be, or if there will be any income at all.

Bank

Lucy found that as a casual worker she was unable to take out a mortgage or even be issued with a credit card as she could not say for certain what her income was each month. Lucy also had to reduce her loan repayments and was experiencing problems with her bank as a result of this.

Because [my income] has been less I have had to reduce all my loan payments. So the bank I've said to them, just doing relief for a little while until I find a job I'm happier with. Of course,

thinking to myself, gosh it might end up to the end of the year, so I've reduced my car loan which was \$80 or something a week to \$50, and of course the bank is not so happy about that. But they've said OK, just for a limited time. Budgeting is really difficult, because you just don't know what the next week is going to be like. So I do a bit of splurge spending....but now I feel that with the financial side that just brings a stress of its own, and we've had it with the flat that the rent has been consistently going up. Our landlord can put the rent up at any time that he feels like it, basically. So I'm thinking I've really got to look towards at some stage getting a mortgage out on a house, and I can't do that unless I'm in full-time employment. There is no way the bank, even if I was earning an OK amount relief teaching I think they would only be satisfied with a job that had permanency about it. So that is something I have to face....Even getting a Visa card. When I went to get a Visa card, it is really difficult on temporary temp work, because the moment you can't put your employer down, and your employer's phone number where they can contact you, and they find that you're like a temp, it is like you don't have the security of should you get sick, or should an accident happen, at work.... So it has definitely affected my relationship with the bank. (Lucy)

If the women were employed in permanent part-time work the security of income they would experience would be much greater. While they might not earn any more money on an annual basis it would be regular income and the women would therefore be able to budget accordingly.

All the quotes in this section demonstrate how the unreliable income that the women receive from their casual work impacts on their financial state in a variety of ways.

Some of the women are unable to budget, they are unable to count on their income from casual work to pay for a hire purchase agreement or support any other form of credit, and in this last case, face a deteriorating relationship with their bank. The position of women who relied on their income to buy necessities and who did not have an earning partner were financially vulnerable and much more likely to face all or any of these problems. All of these things place the women at a disadvantage in a society that revolves around money. If money translates to power these women are powerless or at the most have an insecure hold on any form of financial power.

HEALTH

Perhaps the biggest impact that casual work had on the personal lives of the women was on their health. This section covers how the women's health was affected by the nature of their work. The insecurity of the casual work both in and of itself and the insecurity of income that arose from this (not all women relied on the money from their casual work to supply needs but many did) led to an increase in stress levels for quite a few of the women. This, in turn, aggravated other problems. Some of the women also went to work when they were sick. However, one of the women did say that casual work was beneficial to her health.

Insecure and variable nature of casual work leads to stress

Some women clearly stated that the casual nature of their work was extremely stressful. Jayne reported that it was a weekly stress for her wondering if she would earn enough money to pay the rent.

At the moment its a weekly pressure. How much money have I made this week? (Jayne)

The following statements from the women indicate the level of stress that is produced by the casual nature of their work;

One of the ladies that worked with me had been there for ten years and when the workload is not there and she is not getting

paid she becomes quite stressed out, because they really rely on that money. She gets really stressed. (Anne)

It's probably, it is stressful. As I say not knowing what you're going to be doing the next day, not knowing and not being able to plan. Like I really need to go the dentist but I can't make appointments for the dentist, things like that. But you've got to balance that up with the stress of no money, that's far worse, it's far worse. (Pat)

Other than that I will have to move out of teaching, because I realise now it is actually really stressful. At first it was a novelty the day relief. But now I realise that I'm totally at the mercy of someone ringing me in the morning. (Lucy)

Yes, it was a bit of an emotional roller-coaster, but it averaged four days a week I would get. So one week I would get five days, the next week three days and the next week four days. I've got them all on the calendar actually. But yes, it was getting a little bit stressful...(Lucy)

So that lack of security of income made for quite a pressured work-life, it was quite stressful, especially if I was sick or something like that and missed two days in a week because I had the flu or something and I would be struggling to make up the rent. It would be really worrying, so there was that. (Jayne)

Some of the women did not find that their casual work led to stress. These women were the same women who were not reliant on their work for income and felt capable of turning down work. It therefore seems probable that that it is the financial reliance on unreliable work that causes the increase in stress.

Stress aggravated other health problems

In some instances this level of stress caused or aggravated other health problems. Lucy reported that she had experienced more migraines than usual since she started in casual work. She also said that she would sometimes wake up at night worrying about whether or not she would get enough work.

Yes, that has, one thing is I have had a couple more migraines than I would normally have. That is one thing. I feel I wake up a little bit more in the night worried about work, just not all the time, but just enough that I've noticed it. (Lucy)

Jayne began to suffer from depression because the insecure nature of her income caused her to feel that she was not a good breadwinner and this had a very negative impact on her self esteem. The stress that this and the pressure to earn sufficient money in her casual work each week to pay the rent caused also contributed greatly to Jayne becoming depressed and developing occupational overuse syndrome (OOS) of which stress is known to be one of the major causes. The symptoms of Jayne's OOS disappeared the moment she left her casual job and secured a steadier form of income.

I started feeling really depressed because I felt like I wasn't being a good breadwinner, and I wasn't bringing in the money.... That was purely my feeling. I talked to [my husband] about it and he just went, don't be so stupid, don't be so silly, always really supportive, very lucky in that respect.... I had a really bad patch there for quite a while actually. I was feeling really stink about myself and not knowing what to do and not knowing how to get out of it. But I was also quite depressed about the work, I was feeling really stressed and I started getting OOS, because of the stress of the job, the stress of having to earn enough money and not being able to earn enough money in my job and that all just manifested itself into this great big knot in the middle of my shoulders, so I started suffering from OOS at work. It got

to the stage where I couldn't lift a textbook off the desk, it was just really bad. It was amazing because [after] I left ... it was gone, I was fine, it was unbelievable. (Jayne)

It was not just the women with children who found that their casual work significantly increased their stress levels and had a negative impact on their health. The women who had no dependents or who were supporting partners were affected in the same manner. It is clearly the casual and insecure nature of the work and income that had this stress inducing effect and while a permanent part-time job may still mean that money was tight as mentioned in the previous sections permanent part-time work would allow the women to budget and would reduce the stress that arises from not being able to predict when the next day of work will be.

Going to work when sick

The insecure and unreliable nature of the women's work influenced some of the women to go to work when they were sick and would otherwise have stayed at home.

[If I'm sick] I still go, because I'm supposed to be filling in for people who are sick, so I'm not really allowed to get sick you see. Like I had flu at one stage and fortunately it was the weekend, it was really bad, but the following week it wasn't right, and I still went. I wasn't dead. I could still function, get myself up and there and die when I get home.

What affect do you think that has on you in general?

In the long term it is all right, in the short term it's quite stressful... (Pat)

An earlier comment by Lucy is elaborated on;

[I]f I'm sick or away from school, then I don't get any pay. So I do worry about getting sick. I'm not neurotic, but I have gone to work when I would have normally taken a day off. So like for the

last term I haven't had a single day off, but I did have quite a bad cold. If I was under normal conditions, I definitely would have taken the day off. I probably would have taken two off.

(Lucy)

Yes, I've gone in [to work] when I've felt like death, and still gone in. How effective, well I suppose I've done things that I've had to do. Usually bad migraines are the worst thing. As long as I can drive the car I'll go, but sometimes they are that bad that I can't actually drive the car, and then I have to stay home.

So what is it that's driving you to go. Is it the money or is it something else?

Yes, well I guess the money is one thing, stubbornness is another, refusing to give in. A bit of pride I suppose must be in there, as well. ... Yes, [and] not letting people down really. (Phillipa)

For Phillipa however money is just one of the factors motivating her to go to work when she is sick. It is not just the casual nature of Phillipa's work that influences her and she would probably still drive herself to go to work when she was sick if her job was permanent rather than casual.

As seen in the last chapter, the women are not entitled to any sick pay so if they are sick and do not go to work then they are not paid. When the work is variable in nature and there is no guarantee that there will be any more work forthcoming that week or in some cases month, then this puts undue pressure on the women to go to work when they are sick. This again would have a negative impact on the women's health.

Positive effects

Not all the women found that casual nature of their work had a negative impact on their health. Jenny for example said that if the work was too stressful or unpleasant then she would just leave. Such women generally used the income from their casual work to buy

luxury items rather than necessary goods and also tended to live with an earning partner.

What about your health, physical and mental, does the fact that your work is casual affect that at all?

I think it's beneficial in lots of ways. I choose the days I work and that's it, if I'm sick I just stay home....You think, oh no we really need that money, but you just have to eat out of the cupboards that week, I suppose.(Jenny)

Jenny's situation was slightly different. Jenny and her family did rely to a certain degree on her income to supply their needs but if for some reason she can not work then she does not and the family survives without for that week. Jenny's work was also of a less variable nature than that of the other women. She was reasonably sure that she would be given approximately eight hours of work each week although this was not guaranteed and the time varied from week to week. This meant that Jenny's income was probably more secure and dependable than that of many of the other women and this would make it easier for her to feel capable of taking a day off if she was sick.

Overall many of the women found that the insecure and variable nature of their work lead to stress. For some women the increase in stress levels aggravated other health problems namely depression, OOS and migraines. Other women said the lack of sick pay for casual work influenced them to go to work when sick while one reported casual work had no negative effects on her health.

SUMMARY

The impact which casual work has on the personal lives of women involved in such work in this study depended to a large degree on the family and financial situation of the women. Women with children living at home and those who are dependent on the income from their casual work are in a vulnerable position. The insecurity of both hours of work and income that is inherent in casual work can cause a great amount of strife for such women. Managing a family with dependent children (whether or not there is a partner present) can become a juggling act and can result in women having to chose

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between sending a sick child to school or buying food for the cupboards. Budgeting and applying for credit on an insecure income were almost impossible for all the women but this caused strife mainly for those women who needed the money from casual work to provide for needs. It was also these women who said that casual work had the greatest impact on their stress levels and, for some, caused ill health. Some women who were not dependent on casual work for income found that the casual nature of their work made it easier for them to pursue other activities.

Most of the women said that casual work had various positive and negative effects on their personal lives although some women did report that the impact was wholly positive or negative. Overall casual work had more of a negative than positive impact on the personal lives of women who either had dependent children or who relied on the income from this work to pay for the necessities of life.

Chapter Eight

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the experiences of women in casual work through indepth interviews with 12 women who have been involved in casual work. It has looked at why these women entered casual work, the conditions of work that they experienced as casual workers and how casual work has impacted on their personal lives. This conclusion presents the findings of the thesis in the following order. Firstly it presents the core findings of the thesis relating to the experiences of the women involved. It then addresses the method used in this research. Finally the conclusion discusses the of the literature review and their implications.

THE CORE OF THE THESIS

The women involved in this research gave various reasons for their involvement in casual work. Some of the women decided to enter, or were in, the paid workforce for monetary reasons and other women were influenced more by the desire for social contact. Those women who cited monetary reasons could also be divided into women who needed the money to provide the necessities of life for themselves and their families and those women who used the money from casual work on what they described as luxuries. This was an important distinction and many of the other issues that arose as a result of the casual nature of the women's employment impacted in a diverse manner or to a different degree on the two groups of women.

The issue of the amount of choice women had when entering casual work is a complex one. The women cited many reasons for 'choosing' casual work. These consisted of; the flexibility it offered them, the need to fit work in with family commitments, using casual work as a means to an end and the lack of alternative choices. This last aspect of lack of alternative choices is the key issue. Some of the women had unpaid work commitments that meant that they were restricted in the type of job that they could apply for. Their choice was severely limited and for some women there was no choice

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at all. Some of the women saw their decision to have and care for children as the choice which now governed their 'choice' of jobs. Other women said they consciously chose work which was not full-time but this does not mean that they 'chose' casual work and the conditions that go with it.

The conditions of work experienced by the women were markedly different to those experienced by permanent workers in some areas, while little difference was noted in other areas. Most of the women found that their working environment was relatively similar to what would be expected for a permanent employee. However, some of the women did experience a negative attitude from both co-workers and employers that was directly related to the casual nature of their work.

Legally the women were not entitled to either sick pay or extra payment for any statutory holidays worked. Many of the women found this to be a great inconvenience. Finally with regard to conditions the women had no guarantee of hours of work. Some women had a minimum number of hours which they could work each week and others had an offer of particular hours for short periods of time. This was the most security of employment that any of the women possessed. The vast majority were reliant on the phone to ring and their employer to offer them hours of work. This led to a great power imbalance as many of the women, notably those most reliant on the money from their casual work, felt that they had to maintain the goodwill of their employer to keep their jobs. The majority of the women did not feel as if they had the power to negotiate or renegotiate their conditions of employment. The women who did feel able to do this were those who were not financially reliant on the income from the casual work and could therefore afford to risk the goodwill of their boss. Thus the assumption in the ECA (1991) that employers and employees enter contract negotiations with equal power proves untrue for most of these women. They are therefore in a disadvantaged position in the labour force.

Casual work impacted on the personal lives of the women involved in this research in a number of ways. Some of the women found that their casual work did not impact on their personal lives to a large degree. Again, such women tended to not have dependent children or be financially reliant on the income from their casual work. Other women found casual work to have various ramifications on their personal lives. These included; difficulty in planning their lives and maintaining contact with friends, supplying

support for their family through spending time in various activities with their children and caring for children when they were sick, arranging and maintaining good financial control and financial relationships, and negative impacts on their health. Many of these negative effects of casual work could have been alleviated or removed if the women had permanent work.

METHOD

The method of indepth interviews that was used in this thesis proved to be invaluable. The depth and richness of the information that was gathered is indicative of this method and would probably not have been achieved if an alternative method had been utilised. The form of data which was gathered had both strengths and weaknesses. The great strengths of the data were its incredible richness, the amount of data that was gathered around topics that had not been raised in the literature review such as the impact of casual work on the women's health, and the focus that the data had on the women involved, their experiences and the issues that they felt were important.

The indepth interview method also has inherent weaknesses which were demonstrated in this thesis. The first of these was the sheer volume of data which was produced. Twelve interviews each providing on average 25 pages of data meant that not all of the information that was gathered and that was pertinent to the research could be used. While I did not regret the depth and spread of data that was gathered, deciding not to use certain groups of data was difficult. The second weakness of the indepth interview method is a result of the differences in the flow of the interviews which arose from the different individuals who were interviewed. This led to some interviews providing more information and focusing on different issues to others. While this is a weakness to a degree it is also necessary as part of allowing the women to speak for themselves which is in line with the feminist focus of this research. This is also true of the subjective nature of the data gathered. However as set out in the research method this thesis did not aim to provide objective and impersonal data.

In retrospect I would probably attempt to limit the coverage of the interviews slightly to decrease the amount of data produced. Overall the method of data collection and the

CONCLUSION

analysis of this was successful and I believe it achieved the purpose of allowing women to express and share their experiences in casual work.

LITERATURE

The literature review at the beginning of this thesis demonstrated how women's unpaid work has been subordinated to and devalued by paid work. This led to paid work which utilised skills women learnt in the unpaid work arena also being devalued. Women who did enter the paid labour force were found to predominate in lower paid, but not necessarily low skilled jobs and, on average, earned less than men. The jobs in which women are concentrated are not remunerated on a level equal to those jobs traditionally held by men of a similar skill level (Statistics New Zealand, 1994). Women were more likely to be in part-time or nonstandard work than men. Many women were also found to be underemployed. On the whole women were disadvantaged over men in the labour force.

This research shows that this situation is perpetuated by women's involvement in casual work. While there are no official statistics on the gender split of people employed in casual work it is fair to assume, given the evidence presented in the literature review, that the majority of those in casual work are women. For many of the women in this research their casual work was not their preferred manner of involvement in the labour force. Almost all of the women wanted permanent part-time work rather than casual work. They wanted regular hours of work and many wanted more work. Some of the women wanted work in other areas of the labour force and some women found that their casual work prevented growth in their professional careers. Some women also subsidised their employers by bearing greater employment related costs than their permanent coworkers.

All of these aspects of casual work served to further disadvantage women in the workforce. They ensure continued lower real wages for women in casual work, continued underemployment for women and to hinder their professional development. The findings of this research give substance to the literature which identifies the disadvantages to women that exist in the labour force and extends theories as to how casual work can effect women.

A BRIEF FINAL COMMENT

Overall this research has shown that the experiences of women in casual work vary depending on the situation of the individual women. There are two main predictors of women's experiences in casual work and the way that casual work affects their personal lives. The first of these is dependent children. Women with dependent children for whom they provide the majority of care are affected by casual work in a different manner to those women who have no dependent children. The second predictor of the type of experiences that a women will have in casual work is financial reliance. Women who are reliant on casual work to provide for the needs of themselves and their family tend to have a different experience of casual work than those women who are not financially reliant on their income from casual work.

This thesis concludes that casual work can be reasonably beneficial, or at least not detrimental for some women, but that it does create hardship for many others. It is hard to envisage any changes that could be made to the structure of casual work which would help these women. Improved services such as affordable, good quality childcare, would certainly help but would not attack the root of the problem which is the casual nature of the work itself. A more beneficial approach may be to aid those women who wish for more permanent part-time work to find such positions and to encourage employers to employ permanent part-time, rather than casual, workers when possible.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

ETHICS APPLICATION

1. Description

1.1 Justification

In recent years there has been a documented casualisation of the labour force. (Department of Statistics 1993a, NACEW 1990) It has also been found that the majority of those who have taken up casual work are women. (Ibid.) Very little comprehensive research has been done on the effect that this casualisation of labour has had on women in a New Zealand context.

All indications are that the percentage of casual jobs in the labour force is likely to continue to increase and that women will also continue to fill the majority of these jobs. Given this considerable change to the make-up of the labour force in New Zealand and its potentially huge effect on women, research aimed at discovering the nature of this effect is vital. Without such research there are no clear indicators to guide further policy directions.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this research are;

- to examine what effect the casualisation of labour has had on women through such categories and statistics as; labour force status, number of women in jobs - full-time, part-time and casual -, average pay and weekly income.
- To understand how women working in the casual labour force perceive this to have affected their lives (both job, career and work lives and personal lives) and to what extent it has done so.
- to determine whether the overall effect that the casualisation of labour has had on the lives of women is positive, negative or a combination of both.

1.3 Procedures for recruiting participants and obtaining Informed Consent

After obtaining Ethics Committee approval I shall recruit participants through advertisements placed both in the local newspapers in South Auckland, and in various kindergartens, shops, supermarkets and malls . The advertisement will outline the nature of the research, its purpose and my personal details. It will invite anyone who is interested in participation in the research to contact me at my parents home in Tuakau (where I will be staying at the time)

At this stage those women who show interest in the research and wish to pursue the matter will be sent an information sheet and permission will be sought to contact them by phone or mail approximately one week after they have received the information. At this stage confidentiality for all women will be assured. Only details of women who wish to pursue the matter will be kept and the only details kept at this stage will be contact details. Such details will be accessible only by myself. If the women agree to participate then a suitable time and place will be arranged to conduct an interview. At the beginning of the interview the participants will be given the opportunity to ask any further questions they have of the research or the researcher. At this stage they will be asked to fill in the consent form.

1.4 Procedure in which research participants will be involved

Participants will be involved in one main in-depth interview based on their life history of involvement in casual work. The interview will take place in a location acceptable to the participant. If the participant elects to have the interview conducted at their own home they will have the right to change the location at any time and they will be assured that the knowledge of their address will be used only to contact them for the interview. The interview will last approximately 60 mins (with a maximum allowed time of 90 mins). In this interview the participant will be loosely guided by the interviewer (myself) through a recounting of their experiences in both personal and work life relating to involvement in casual work.

These interviews will be taped where the participant has given permission for this to occur. The tape will be stopped if the participant should at any time request this.

Once the interviews have been completed they will be transcribed. Copies of the individual transcriptions will be sent to each participant. The participants will be given the option of changing, correcting or deleting any parts of the transcript that they wish and then returning it to the researcher. If clarification of any important points is necessary then a further interview may be arranged with the consent of the participant.

1.5 Procedures for handling information and material produced in the course of the research including raw data and final research report(s)

All personal details that may lead to the identification of participants will be kept confidential. The participants will be given the option of choosing their own pseudonym at the time of the first interview, or having one assigned to them. It is by this name that they will be referred to throughout the interview. The list connecting each participant with their pseudonym will be kept secure, separate from the tapes and transcripts of the interviews.

The addresses and other personal details of the participants will be held in a locked case except on the occasion of the researcher conducting an interview at the house of a participant. On each such occasion a copy of the address and

name of the participant will be placed in a secure place known by one other person. This person will access the information only if it should become necessary for the safety of the researcher.

The tapes of the interviews will be heard only by myself and the transcriber. The transcriber will sign a statement of anonymity and confidentiality before they are given the tapes to transcribe. The transcripts of the interviews will be read only by myself, my supervisors and the transcriber who produced them. If it becomes necessary for anyone other such people to view the transcripts this will only be done with the written permission of the participant. If such an instant should arise the third person will be asked to sign a confidentiality statement before they are shown the transcription.

Both the tapes and the transcripts will be kept in a locked case and copies of the transcripts will also be kept securely locked at another location.

None of the final work involving excerpts of the interviews or material gathered from the interviews will contain any information which can directly lead to the identification of any of the participants. All participants will have the right to veto any information about them or from their interviews, that is contained in the final report, before it is published.

Six months after the completion of the research all tapes and transcripts will be either returned to the participants or destroyed. The participants will be asked to chose which of these options they prefer at the end of their interview.

2. Ethical Concerns

2.1 Access to participants

My first contact with the participants will be at their initiation, so until they offer their contact details to me I will not be able to contact them. All contact details of the participants will be in a locked case to which no-one else will have access. Once the participants have agreed to take part in the research I will have the name, address and telephone number details of, and thus access to, participants. Those participants who do not wish to provide me with such personal details may nominate another location at which they can be contacted. No-one else apart from myself will have access to the participants. The only contact I will make with the participants will be directly related to the research. All information regarding the participants, except for that which is contained within the thesis, and including all information that allows access to the participants, will be destroyed or returned to the participants six months after the completion of the study.

2.2 Informed Consent

Before consenting to participate in the research prospective participants will have been given a copy of the information sheet and had the time to read this at their leisure. They will also have the opportunity to ask any questions of both the

research and the researcher and, if they desire, may request a complete verbal explanation of the information sheet. The participants will have been informed of their rights as participants and will be aware that they are able to withdraw from the research at any time.

2.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

All participants will be anonymous except to myself. They will be given the opportunity to select their own pseudonym at the time of the interview and before the tape starts recording, thus all information given at the interview will remain anonymous to any one else. Once the interviews have been transcribed each participant will be asked to read through their own interview and remove, correct or change anything that they wish. All the remaining information may be used in the research and in the final writing up of the thesis and any further publications or addresses that arise from this. However, this information will not be presented to outside parties in any way which may allow the identity of participants to be established. Any direct quotes from participants that are included in the final research to be published will be approved by the given participant. The final research will state that all names and dates and other identifying factors of the participants have been changed.

If at any time prior to the submission of the thesis the participants wish to withdraw any statements or comments then they may do so. They may also request that certain statements or comments are not reproduced in the final presentation.

2.4 Potential Harm to Participants

The participants are entrusting personal details into the care of the researcher. This does mean that the opportunity is there for the researcher to abuse such information. In the cases where interviews are conducted at the home of the participant there is also the potential for an invasion of privacy to take place either at the time of the interview or at a later date.

It is possible that during the course of the research, and especially during the interviews, questions may arise concerning the legal rights of the participant in their casual work experiences. In such a case the researcher is unqualified to offer legal advice. However, lack of action in this situation could cause the participant undue stress. Therefore, if appropriate the researcher shall endeavour to supply the participant with the contact details of the appropriate union or other group or groups which will be in a position to offer the participant an appropriate form of aid.

The researcher undertakes to not knowingly perform any action which will bring harm to the participants.

2.5 Potential Harm to Researcher

The only information which participants will have about the researcher will be the information disclosed at the beginning of the research which can be found in the information sheet and any further information which the researcher wishes to disclose to individual participants. This later information could possibly be used in a manner harmful to the researcher as the participants are not under any obligation of anonymity or confidentiality to the researcher.

It is also possible that the researcher could be placed in a harmful situation if any interviews are conducted at the house of a participant. This is an unknown situation for the researcher to enter into and therefore precautions will be taken. The location details and the name of the interviewee of each interview shall be left in confidence with a third party when the researcher leaves for each interview. If the researcher does not return within a specified time or any untoward experiences occur then the third party will access the details of the interview and take any necessary action.

2.6 Potential Harm to University

The only potential harm to the university is if the researcher conducts herself in a manner which is unethical and not of a standard expected of a masters student. The researcher will at all times endeavour to conduct herself in a manner fitting of her status in the university and abide by all university regulations and guidelines.

2.7 Participant's right to decline to take part

Participants will not be approached directly and asked to participate. They will be invited to contact the researcher if they are interested in participating. Once they have expressed interest in the research they will be advised that they have the right to decline to take part. If they agree to take part they will also be informed that they have the right to withdraw at any time.

2.8 Uses of the information

The information gained in this research will be used to write a thesis in fulfilment of the requirements of a MA in Social Policy. It may also be used to produce other material which may or may not be published. All of this material will abide by the ethical guidelines set out in this publication and will not contravene the anonymity that is given to the participants. The researcher will endeavour to only use the information in a manner which will advantage, or at least not disadvantage the participants. Once any material is published the researcher will have no control over the manner in which other people or organisations use the material.

2.9 Conflict of Interest/Conflict of Roles

The only conflict of interest is that the completion of the research is important to the researcher not only for the research itself but also as part of the

requirements of her MA. The researcher will put the well-being of the participants before the need to complete the research.

2.10 Other ethical concerns

There are no other ethical concerns apart from those which will be discussed under section 4.

3. Legal Concerns

3.1 Legislation

3.1.1 Intellectual Property legislation

3.1.2 Human Rights Act 1993

3.1.3 Privacy Act 1993

3.1.4 Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992

3.1.5 Accident and Rehabilitation Compensation Insurance Act 1992

3.1.6 Employment Contracts Act 1991

None of the above legislation is relevant to this of this research.

3.2 Other Legal Issues

There are no other legal issues that are relevant to this research.

4. Cultural Concerns

Cultural concerns - Treaty of Waitangi

While the researcher is pakeha and therefore the most culturally safe option would be to not include Maori, Pacific Islanders or other ethnic groups (I have included Pacific Islanders and other nationalities in this section along with Maori because this seems the most appropriate place to deal with issues of ethnicity) in this research, such an approach is not appropriate because of the lack of research that is being done on this issue. To exclude all but pakeha from participating in this research when no other research of this kind is being done by people of their own ethnic group is to, in effect, silence them. This is not acceptable.

The majority of women in casual work are pakeha women and so it is anticipated that the majority of participants will be pakeha also. However women from other ethnic groups will not be excluded from the research should they wish

APPENDIX 1

to participate. If any of the participants are women from an ethnic group other than that to which the researcher belongs, the researcher will endeavour to contact a spokeswoman for that group who can educate the researcher on any issues relating to the topic and method of research that will increase the cultural safety of the researcher both during the interview and during the analysis and write up of the research.

With particular regard to cultural safety with Maori women the researcher spent most of her formative years living and attending school in Tuakau. Tuakau is a small town with a large Maori population. Both the Primary and High school in Tuakau have compulsory classes in Maori culture (including Te Reo) up till form four. This upbringing, along with various lectures on Maori culture at university and a recent two day workshop on Treaty of Waitangi issues given by Project Waitangi have combined to provide the researcher with her knowledge of Maori culture. Such knowledge is not sufficient to comprehend all the issues involved for Maori, however the methodology of this research is one that does not attempt to speak for and interpret people, but one which asks them to speak for themselves. In this way the research honours the sovereignty that Te Tiriti affords Maori. The research does not assume to speak for Maori but will give those who participate voice to speak for themselves.

The research will honour the Treaty of Waitangi to the greatest extent possible for the researcher.

APPENDIX 2

MASSEY
UNIVERSITY

A L B A N Y

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY & SOCIAL WORK

INFORMATION SHEET

I am Sarah Dowdeswell. I am conducting a piece of research on how the increase in casual work has affected women in South Auckland. Casual work is work where the employee has no set maximum or minimum hours per week, or where there is no guarantee of how much work there will be each week or if there will be any.

This research be used for a thesis for my Master of Arts degree in Social Policy.

I chose to do this topic because:

- There has been a huge increase in casual work
- Casual work is mostly done by women
- Some people say this is a good thing for women
- Other people say that it disadvantages women.

No research has been done yet to examine what the effects of this increase in casual work have been for women.

My supervisor for this research is Mike O'Brien. My contact Ph number is (09)23 68475. Mike's contact number at Massey University is (09)443 9768

I am looking for women participants who have been in casual work for at least a year, preferably longer.

If you agree to take part, I will interview you at a place where you feel comfortable. The interviews will last approximately 1 hour (and will not be allowed to go over 90 mins). The interviews will be taped (audio) but you will be asked to choose an assumed name before the interview. To protect your privacy no one but myself will know your real name. During the interview you will be asked to recount your experiences in casual work and how this has affected both your work and personal lives.

The interview will then be typed up. The typist will not know your real name and will have signed an agreement not to repeat anything said in the interview. The typed copy of the interview will be sent to you and you can change or remove anything you have said. Because you own the tape and the typed copy of the interview, they will be returned to you

once the research has been completed as will a summary of the research findings.

All data and information that could lead to your identification (tapes and transcripts of interviews, contact details etc) will be kept in a locked case or cabinet to which only I will have the key.

All information will be confidential and will be used only in the research and publications arising from it. The information will not be used in any way which may lead to the identification of any of the participants.

You have the right to decline to take part in this research. If you agree to take part in this research you have the following rights;

- To refuse to answer any particular questions.
- To withdraw from the study at any time.
- To ask any questions about the study at any time during participation.
- To provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give me permission.
- To have the tape stopped at any time during the interview.
- To be given access to a summary of the findings of the study when it is concluded.

If you wish to take part in this research or you have any questions about it then please call me on (09) 23 68475. If you live in the Franklin district then you do not need to dial the (09). If you live outside of this district the call will cost you at the most 12 cents/minute from a residential phone. I will be happy to reimburse you this cost and call you straight back so any further charges are met by myself.

Thank you's for your time.

Private Bag 102 904, North Shore NSC, Auckland, New Zealand
Tel: phone +64-9-443 9765 Facsimile +64 9 443 9767

APPENDIX 3

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I agree to keep all the information given to me by Sarah Dowdeswell that pertains to her research completely confidential. This includes the content of, and matters relating to, the audio tapes of interviews which I have transcribed or have been asked to transcribe for her. I shall in no way seek to identify or contact the participants who have appeared on the tapes given to me by Sarah for the purpose of transcription.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

APPENDIX 4



MASSEY
UNIVERSITY

A L B A N Y

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY & SOCIAL WORK

WOMEN AND THE CASUALISATION OF LABOUR

CONSENT FORM

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time and to decline to answer any particular question.

I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that my name will not be used without my permission.

(The information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project).

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I also understand that I have the right to ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

APPENDIX 5

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Can you outline your history in work?

For example; which jobs; part-time, full-time, permanent, casual

Working backwards from current to past drawing graph on a large piece of paper.

Why did you take these jobs?

What combination of factors existed

Was anyone of these of greater influence? Why? If that hadn't existed? Expand on this--if money was a reason is the family dependent on this income? Was it needed for luxuries or necessities [define luxuries or necessities].

What choice did you feel you had; either to get a job or what kind of job

What did you want in a job, were these wants fulfilled? For example permanent/casual, pay, status, type, conditions, No. Of hours, times, days.

Tell me about your casual work jobs.

Number of women/men,

hours--do you want more or less (under/over employment)

Number of permanent workers--difference of treatment

Workplace/environment/conditions

Facilities

Growth/turnover

Differences between jobs both casual and permanent [relate back to written herstory]

As a casual worker how are you treated?

Compared to permanent workers

Status, legal, do you know your rights

Conditions, breaks, options for hours,

How much voice to you have in the workplace, ability negotiate pay/conditions

Pay/hours. Worked ratio—Training, meetings

How much notice given for work--do you ever not have work?

How does this effect you?(Your work life)

Work attitude, career, goals/visions for future, stress levels, health--physical/mental, job satisfaction, ability to budget.

Both negative and positive effects.

How does this effect your personal life, your partner, family, those you live with.

Relationships, security, stress, insecurity.

Both negative and positive effects.

Compare to earlier periods of life and the jobs you had then.

Try and identify if they think these would these different if work was permanent

Overall is the outcome negative or positive?--Expand--

If you had a choice would you leave? Why? Why not?

Would you want another casual or permanent job? Why? Why not?

Are there any other issues of importance, not already discussed, that you would like to raise here?

APPENDIX 7

Can You Help Me?

***My name is
Sarah Dowdeswell***

I am a Masters Student at Massey University and I am
conducting research into the experiences of
women in casual work*.

***Have you been in casual work
for a year or longer?
May I interview you?***

All details will be confidential

**For further information
Call me on
04 478 9809**

* Casual work is work where the worker has no set maximum or minimum hours work per week or
where there is no guarantee how much work there will be if any

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