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**WHAT WORKS, WHAT DOESN'T:
EMPLOYMENT EQUITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

ABSTRACT

There is a frustrating gap between public sector EEO (Equal Employment Opportunities) policies on one hand, and EEO implementation and outcomes on the other. Although EEO policies have existed on paper for about two decades, they have not had a consistent life in the day to day practices of the public sector. This paper draws on research undertaken for the Pay and Employment Equity Taskforce to consider which practices and policies have, and have not, been effective in improving employment equity for women. Within the wider context of changes that have occurred in the last two decades, we are particularly interested in human resources practices at an organisational level.

We set the scene by reviewing the secondary data across the health, education and public service areas of the sector, as well as the key legislative and policy shifts over that time. We then go on to discuss the case of the education sector in more detail. We argue that women in this sector are in general in a relatively strong position: they are more highly qualified than most women workers as a group, as well as being located in a female-dominated sector that is strongly unionised and has a coherent professional identity. 'On paper', Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) policies have long been part of educational institutions. However we find that these factors do not guarantee employment equity. We describe fieldwork research on human resources practices in schools, and their effect on employment equity outcomes. These findings are integrated with some focused secondary research in the tertiary sector. We finish the paper with our conclusions about which practices and policies have and have not been effective in improving employment equity for women, and their implications beyond the education sector. We present some recommendations for change and further research.

Introduction

There is a frustrating gap between public sector EEO (Equal Employment Opportunities) policies on one hand, and EEO implementation and outcomes on the other. Although EEO policies have existed on paper for about two decades, they have not had a consistent life in the day to day practices of the public sector. And as the recent *Framework for the Future* report released by the Human Rights Commission indicates workplace outcomes for the four EEO groups discussed, including women, "have changed far too little" (Mintrom and True, 2004a, p. 13.)

This paper draws on research undertaken for the Pay and Employment Equity Taskforce (the Taskforce) to consider which practices and policies *have*, and *have not*, been effective in improving employment equity (Project 1; Project 2; Project 10)¹. When we set out on these research projects, we had a reasonable idea of what we might find. Many of our findings - that there has been progress for women, but that employment equity has not yet arrived; that excellent EEO practices can and do make a difference - was not new to us and will not be new to many readers who have followed the progress of employment equity in this country. What we have become convinced of is the value of qualitative fieldwork in exploring some of the complexities of the public sector situation where there is a sense that EEO has 'been done', yet there are still many barriers to equity. Change programmes that address employment equity must work at various levels: organisational (e.g., EEO programmes); the labour market level (e.g., pay parity adjustments); and the social (e.g., women's 'choices' about education and occupation). Most of the Taskforce projects have operated on the macro, labour market level, where big policy changes dwell and legislative programmes are created. These projects tend to address employment equity from the point of view of labour market economics and interventions derived from them. While we have done some contextual work on the broader brush level, our main interest is in change at the organisational level - in the HR practices that shape EEO and in the particular issues faced by women in specific occupations and sectors. We focus on how HR practices can make a difference to employment equity. We have found that even the relatively quick and superficial qualitative research we are able to do in the scope of the Taskforce projects provided unexpectedly rich results leading to further important questions. As result of our experience we have developed further ideas of how qualitative research might address the kinds of often-invisible barriers we have identified. At the end of our presentation we want to ask you for your ideas on the kinds of EEO issues that you think could be addressed in this

Our main interest is in which employment equity policies and practices do, and do not, work in creating employment equity for women. However, a number of the issues we raise are relevant to EEO in relation to the whole range of possible designated groups within organisations - women, Maori, Pacific Island and other ethnic minorities, people with disabilities. Many women, of course, belong to more than one of these groups. We use the definition of employment equity used by the Taskforce: "The elimination of barriers to equality for women in employment. It involves implementing gender neutral policies and practices in access to employment opportunities, and in terms and conditions of employment, including pay" (PETF, 2004, p. 11).

¹ These reports are referred to in the text of this paper by number for convenience. Full details are given above the references list at the end of this paper.

We first briefly outline the three reports for the Taskforce (Projects 1, 2 and 10) that we draw on for this paper. We go on to sketch a brief picture of employment equity in the public sector now, outlining the three subsectors, the relevant employment equity legislation, and some key EEO data. We then talk about 'what's worked and what hasn't' across the public sector as a whole, and then with a specific focus on human resources (HR) policies and practices and job requirements in the public education sector. Finally we have some recommendations for changes that we believe would have to be made before employment equity can be achieved in the public sector.

The Taskforce reports

All of the Taskforce reports we were involved in were relatively 'quick and dirty', completed within tight timeframes. Both Project 1 and Project 2 were undertaken to develop a snapshot of what currently existed and what was known in respect of pay and employment equity issues early on in the Taskforce's work

Project 1: Literature and data search and high level analysis.

Both Project 1 and Project 2 were undertaken to develop a snapshot of what currently existed and what was known in respect of pay and employment equity issues early on in the Taskforce's work. Project 1 set out to very broadly identify and review what was known about pay and employment equity across the public sector, principally drawing on existing published sources. The central focus was the issue of gender - the gender pay gap and also a wide range of associated employment equity issues. The project was based on a list of data sets specified by the Taskforce. This list had a strong emphasis on remuneration data over a period of two decades, taking into account multiple criteria such as age, occupation, ethnicity and disability as well as gender. Other data requested relates to key factors shaping women's employment experiences, such as childbearing and child caring responsibilities, educational qualifications, and various kinds of employment relationships including part-time work, contract work, and work that has been outsourced from the public sector. Two sections - a chronology of the recent New Zealand history of pay and employment equity milestones, plus a review of the international material - provided context for the Taskforce's work programme.

The report found that remuneration data sets were mostly *not* available in the specific longitudinal formats specified by the Taskforce, but that there *was* a range of data available on the complex relationships between gender and other factors such as occupation and seniority in the sectors. This included data which is not specific to the public sector, but which is still indicative of what we might expect to find there. This current data shows broad and persistent patterns of occupational segregation, and women are generally still lower-paid and lower in the relevant hierarchies than men. However there is no single data set which allows meaningful comparisons of key indicators across the subsectors, as data available varies so much from one occupational group to another.

Project 2 EEO research across sectors report

This report was again intended to provide general indicative information. By contrast with Project 1, this project took a sampling of richer primary data. It provided indicative information on current EEO activities in the Public Service, the Public Health sector, and Public Education sector. In broad terms it reported on the questions: What EEO issues in relation to women have been identified, and how? What is being done about them? And how successful are these initiatives? What was sought in this

project was information about what is really happening out in organisations in terms of identifying the issues affecting women's employment and progression and the EEO policies and practices being used to address them. Although this project was small in scope, key findings were borne out by the more detailed education sector research that we discuss later.

During the project, structured interviews were conducted with between three and five employers in each sector, and a focus group held with union representatives in each sector. The findings identified the most frequently mentioned EEO issues for women across all sectors, and described the initiatives currently being undertaken in the university and Public Service department with an explicit focus on EEO issues for women. It described key conditions for EEO activity and suggested why there was generally a low level of EEO activity in the organisations covered.

In general, EEO was 'off the radar' or covered by minimal policies. The most frequently mentioned EEO issues for women across all sectors included: work/life balance issues (e.g., heavy workloads and long working hours; inflexible work arrangements such as the requirement to work full-time, shift work); gender-based expectations of leadership and management style; a ceiling on career progression opportunities and lack of a career path; and aspects of organisational culture - inappropriate attitudes and behaviours of male staff. Some of the detailed findings of Project 2 are used later when we discuss HR practices the education sector in more detail.

Project 10: The impact of Human Resources policies and practices and job requirements on entry and promotion in the Public Education sector.

Project 10 had a tighter focus than Project 2, and was able to go a bit more deeply into qualitative data. The objective of our research in the education sector was to explore the issues that impact on the progression of women to middle management, senior teacher and senior academic positions across the public education sector (Project 10). It was particularly concerned with the factors that both encourage or inhibit women from applying for positions, and with the factors that facilitate or hinder fair selection practices and fair appointment outcomes when they do apply. We were specifically asked to investigate job requirements, and human resources (HR) policies and practices. The research drew on sources which were relatively readily available, and included some primary research to investigate areas identified by the Taskforce education sector sub-group as important. In consultation with the sub-group, the decision was made to work with the schools and tertiary sector only. Primary research was carried out in the schools sector, while the focus in the tertiary sector was on secondary research including institutional statistics and documents. The findings result from a content analysis of the interviews (including those from Project 2), reports and the statistical data available, supported where appropriate, by key themes in the literature. The findings aim to note the generalisations or similarities that were evident within and across the primary and secondary sectors, and within and across universities, polytechnics and colleges of education in the tertiary sector. We cover our findings in some detail later in the paper.

Public sector overview

The pay equity picture in the public sector provides one broad indication of the success or failure of Equal Employment Opportunities programmes. The current data, while uneven in coverage, shows broad and persistent patterns of occupational segregation by

gender, and women are generally still lower-paid and lower in the relevant hierarchies than men (Project 1). This aggregated data is already broadly familiar to researchers, and has limited extra value for informing specific change programmes. The sector-specific data is probably more useful in considering the occupational and/or organisation-specific issues that would have to be addressed in any change programme. The most detailed data is available in the Public Service, followed by the Education then the Health sector. Even in the Public Service, where there is a clear attempt to link Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) programmes and targets with the outcomes described in the data, it is acknowledged that the quantitative data alone does not 'prove' causal relationships or pick up more subtle but powerful aspects of pay and employment equity such as a supportive workplace culture (SSC, 2002).

Legislation

The State Sector Act 1988 requires Public Service CEOs to operate on the principle of being "a good employer", which requires an Equal Employment Opportunities programme. The specific EEO groups to be recognised are spelt out: Māori; women; ethnic minority groups; and persons with disabilities. Responsibility for EEO implementation rests explicitly with each chief executive. Since June 1998 each department is required to provide a status report on its own EEO position and to identify the way in which it is addressing the objectives of EEO policy. The SSC monitors EEO as part of the departmental performance assessment process. The collation and analysis of departments' performance in EEO provide the information necessary to assess Public Service-wide progress against the objectives in the policy.

Like the Public Service, the public education sector (early childhood, primary and secondary schools, tertiary) is regulated by the State Sector Act 1988 and its "good employer" provisions, which require EEO programmes. In the schools sector, this means that school Boards of Trustees have a legal responsibility to ensure that schools implement EEO, and councils are responsible for EEO in the tertiary sector. But there is no requirement to report publicly on EEO programmes or outcomes (although some aggregated pay and occupational data is reported to the Ministry of Education and published). For the tertiary sector some aggregated data is available, but there is no uniform or established method of reporting on Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO), that includes gender, age and ethnicity. All tertiary institutions currently produce a more or less detailed EEO plan and report in some way on this report (often as a small section in general annual plans for the institution), and all sign up in some way to merit principles in appointment and selection processes. Some institutions fail to report on EEO in their annual report (MoE, 2003a).

The public health sector (Central Government Health Services) consists of publicly owned hospitals, organised since 2001 into 21 District Health Boards (DHBs). The establishment of the DHBs coincided with the Employment Relations Act (2000), and the move to national/regional multi-employer collective agreements for nurses and doctors. The health sector differs from the education sector and the Public Service in that DHBs are not covered by the State Sector Act. The primary legislation that governs the DHBs is the New Zealand Health and Disability Act 2000 which covers "good employer" provisions. In this Act, "to be a good employer" is one of the key objectives of a DHB, and is defined in the Act along similar lines to the coverage in the State Sector Act, including requirements for an EEO programme. Unlike the education and Public Service sectors, the health sector has no central collation or monitoring of

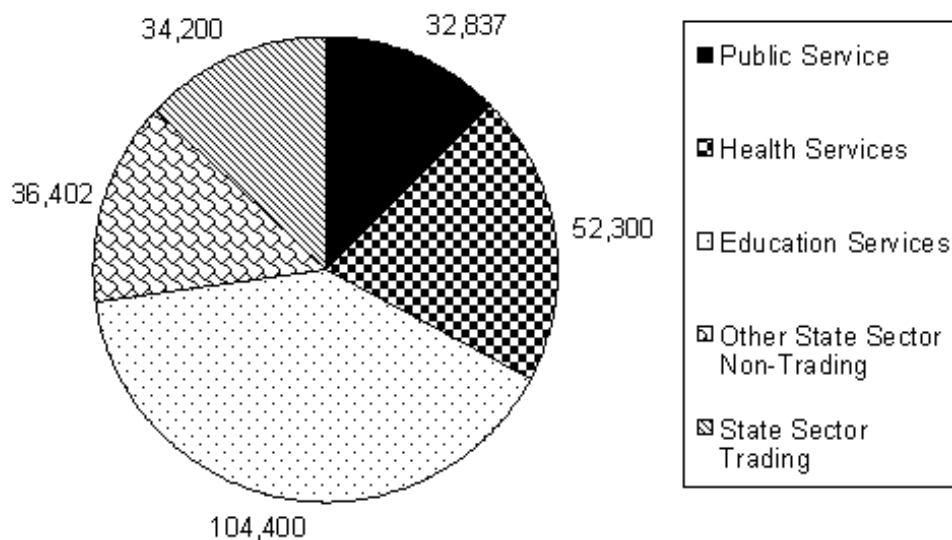
EEO plans and no central collection of remuneration or other pay and employment equity data. Recent major planning processes carried out by the Health Workforce Advisory Committee (HWAC) make no mention at all of employment equity issues.

Basic data on employment equity in the public sector

As we have already noted, there is no one data set which allows for cross-sector comparisons in terms of employment equity. The data given here allow us to pick upon key issues in each sector. Although the focus in this paper is on EEO, some remuneration data is included here to give a sense of EEO outcomes.

The SSC Human Resource Capability Survey 2002 (2001b) provides the basis for comparing employment and remuneration across the three sectors.

Figure 1: **State Sector Employment 2002**



Source: Statistics NZ, Quarterly Employment Survey, May

Source: This figure from SSC, 2001b.

The Public Service makes up a small proportion of total state sector employment (measured by SNZ QES). In 2002 the Public Service made up only 13% of the 260,000 state sector jobs. By far the largest group in the state sector is the education service, which makes up 40% of total state sector employment.

The overall gender pay gap is considerably larger in the Public Service (where average pay for women is 81% of the average for men) than it is in the labour force (87%). However, this situation is reversed when the data are broken down by occupation. This is because the Public Service employs very few staff in the occupations (mostly the Trades and Production Workers) that are dominated by relatively low-paid men in the labour force, and because those in the lower paid occupations in the Public Service are overwhelmingly women. The adjusted pay gap in the Public Service is considerably smaller than that in the labour force (Gosse and Ganesh, 2002; 2003).

In general, the occupational concentrations in the Public Service are similar to gender clustering trends in the labour force as a whole. The main difference from the labour force is the absence in the Public Service of the sorts of positions found in the Protective and Personal Services Workers occupation group in the labour force - the largest single group of women employees in the labour force. In the Public Service this group is almost completely made up of prison officers (who are mostly men), while in the labour force it is mostly staff working in the retail sector (who are mostly women). Similarly, the Professionals group is mostly made up of teachers (55 percent) - a female-intensive occupation - in the labour force, while only 2 % of Public Service professionals are teachers.

A feature of the Public Service is that, for the occupation groups with relatively low proportions of women (managers and science/technical), this low level is not consistent across the age groups. While the overall representation of women in management is very similar for the labour force (39 %) and the Public Service (38 %), in the Public Service a much higher proportion of managers in the younger age groups are women (see Table 1: *Managers by Gender and Age Group (June 2000) - Public Service*). This suggests that the overall female representation rates in these occupations may rise over time.

The EEO Progress report 2003 (SSC, 2003) summarises the representation of women, Māori and minority ethnic groups from 1998-2002. Most of those who became senior managers over the year ending June 2002 were women (53%), but low turnover (6%) means that change in the overall figures will happen slowly. In fact the *Human Resources Capability Survey* estimates that at the current rate it will take until 2028 before 50% of all senior managers are women (SSC, 2001b).

Table 1: Managers by Gender and Age Group (June 2000) - Public Service

Age Group	Public Service		Labour Force	
	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %
20-24	*	*	56	44
25-29	62	38	47	53
30-34	57	43	42	58
35-39	49	51	36	64
40-44	37	63	37	63
45-49	35	65	28	72
50-54	29	71	34	66
55-59	28	72	39	61
60-64	33	67	27	73
65 & up	17	83	*	*
Total	39	61	38	62

Source: SSC, 2001b.

The education sector

The education sector is occupationally more homogeneous than the Public Service, with a preponderance of professional teachers at its various levels, and is also unique in that at the early childhood level the teaching professions is a segregated female occupation, with male teachers gradually more involved as the status - and usually the pay - rises, until university education is male-dominated. Pay parity between primary and secondary teachers was introduced in 1998, so that primary teachers and principals with the same job size, experience and qualifications received the same pay as secondary teachers and principals. This initiative was widely seen as a major structural change which addressed the lower pay traditionally associated with the more female-intensive primary sector. In a further step addressing occupational segregation in the education sector, kindergarten teachers will eventually reach pay parity with all other teachers, to be phased in over five years from July 2002.

The Ministry of Education prepared a report on gender pay equity in schools for the Taskforce (Furze, 2003). However there is no data currently available regarding the salary and pay rates for staff employed in New Zealand's early childhood education sector. There are very few males working in the early childhood education sector (only 3%), this is true across both teacher-led and parent-led early childhood services. The small number of male staff in early childhood services significantly limits the usefulness and validity of any comparisons on the basis of gender (e.g., professional qualifications). The key

employment equity issue in Early Childhood Education has been pay parity, and this has recently been addressed, as discussed above.

In the schools sector, "Teachers with the same teaching positions, with the same level of experience and qualifications will generally receive the same pay, regardless of their gender" (Furze, 2003). Unlike most positions in the public sector, teaching positions in the schooling sub-sector are based on a set salary rate for a given position, rather than a range of rates. These payments are based on extra responsibilities assessed in a unit system). So any pay gap between male and female teaching staff is likely to be based on differences in teaching position, qualifications, years of experience, and employment status (i.e., part-time versus full-time). While females make up the majority of the overall teaching workforce, female teachers do have a lower median salary than male teachers. Some reasons include:

- Females are less likely than males to be a principal or to hold a management or leadership position. Male teachers are more likely to be employed in either a management or principal position than are females (43% of males compared to 24% of females). (See also Table 2: Staff (FTTE)* at New Zealand schools, by gender and designation, 2003)
- In primary schools, female staff in principal, management and teacher positions receive a lower median salary than their male counterparts in the same position.
- In secondary schools, pay disparity exists with males receiving a higher median salary than females.

Table 2: Staff (FTTE)* at New Zealand schools, by gender and designation, 2003

	Females		Males		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Principals	1,002	3%	1,507	12%	2,509	6%
Management	6,163	21%	3,942	31%	10,105	24%
Teacher	22,540	76%	7,253	57%	29,793	70%
TOTAL	29,705	100%	12,701	100%	42,406	100%

Note: This data is for state and state integrated schools only

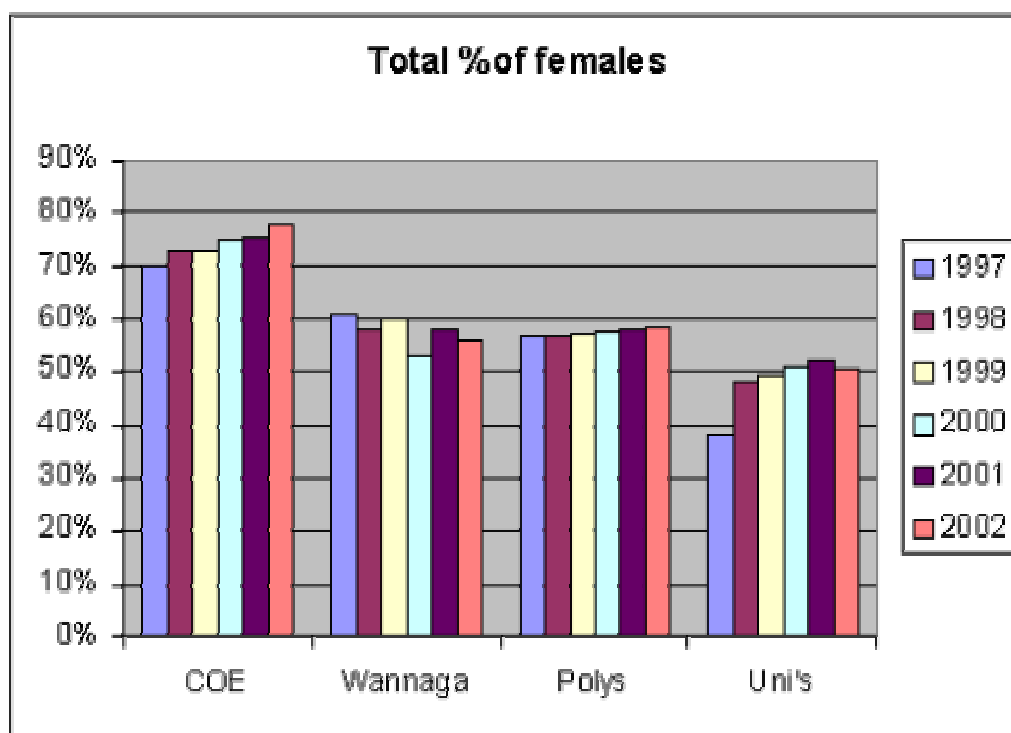
* Full Time Teacher Equivalent

Source: Furze, 2003.

The non-teaching workforce in education covers a wide range of occupational fields, and for this reason aggregated comparisons are not very meaningful. Over the past six years the median fortnightly pay of support staff who are male has been on average 34% higher than the median fortnightly pay of support staff who are female. This is explained in the Furze report by, first, the type of support roles females hold compared to men. Higher proportions of women support staff are in secretarial positions compared to men (54% compared to 11%). Male support staff are more likely to be employed in clerical/ executive jobs than any other jobs (61%). Secondly, there is a disparity in the hours females work compared to men. Women support staff typically work fewer hours in a fortnight than male support staff. This explains in part why males received higher fortnightly pay than female support staff across all job positions.

There is very limited data publicly available regarding the salary and pay rates for staff employed in New Zealand's tertiary institutions. The teaching and non-teaching workforce employed in all tertiary institutions in New Zealand is predominantly female (see Figure 2, Total percentage of females in the tertiary sector, 1997-2002).

Figure 2: Total percentage of females in the tertiary sector, 1997-2002



Source: MoE, 2003b.

The roles undertaken within the sub-sector by females seem to be mainly advisory or administrative. Most of these are in effect low-paid female clerical work. Other key roles are academic and senior management positions.

The universities sub-sector has the lowest proportion of female academic staff with 39 %, although this proportion is increasing consistently each year. The polytechnics have slightly increased the proportion of female academic staff from 48% to 50% in 2002. However, the Colleges of Education show contrasting trends, as over the last 5 years they have maintained over 60% of females in all staffing facets of their institutions and currently have the highest percentage of female academic staff across the sector (76%).

The field of educational administration is historically a female concentration, and this predominance continues across the tertiary sector where females feature in more than

60 % of the administration positions. From the point of view of employment equity, the continued dominance of the education sector by women numerically can be seen to reflect continuing occupational segregation by gender, which is not necessarily good news. A non-gendered sector would show women and men proportionally across all levels and in all occupational groups. In the interim, it is clear that female 'domination' numerically does not necessarily mean that women are proportionally 'dominant' in key decision-making and high-status positions, either within occupational groups or in the sub-sector as a whole.

The data currently available gives little indication of women's seniority compared to men. The Ministry of Education information on numbers of women by positions at each university also shows considerable variation between the progress made by women from one university to another (from MoE, 1964-, released to AUS).

The Association of University Staff (AUS) argues that in spite of "the lack of comprehensive, consistent national data" (relative to other comparable countries), there is "enough evidence to indicate that university women aren't doing too well in the employment stakes" (Ledgerton, 2003). A few of the indicators provided by AUS in support of this argument from the available local information are listed below:

- While women may make up the majority of general (non-teaching) staff they hold only one third of senior non-teaching positions (University of Auckland, 2002).
- The proportion of female professors has increased from 2.9% in 1983 to only 10.9% in 2001 (from MoE, 1964-, released to AUS; Ledgerton, 2003).
- Female academics earned an average \$12,000 less than their male counterparts in 1998 (Chalmers, 1998).
- Women dominate academic library positions, but this seniority is not fully reflected in comparable higher salaries because of the overall lower salaries of the female-intensive library occupational group. For this reason, AUS suggests that this occupation is a good candidate for a comparable worth exercise benchmarked against a male-dominated group (Ledgerton, 2003). A pay equity adjustment would affect the overall gender pay gap in the university sub-sector.
- Looking broadly across the education sector, using the QES, the gender pay ratio in the tertiary sector is about 80% compared to about 93% in both the primary and secondary sectors (see Project 1, Table 18).

The health sector

As we have indicated, there is very little available on employment equity in the health sector. It is possible to get a broad overview of the position of women in the health sector from the various data compiled in the process of health practitioner registration. In addition, the New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) has compiled a range of data in its various reports on nursing pay and occupational segregation, which is discussed below. The QES data by gender and sector gives a broadly indicative sense of the gender pay gap in health (see Project 1, Table 18), but the broad range of occupations within the sector, as well as the regional variations that are characteristic of localised collective bargaining for many occupations in the health sector, means that this data is of limited value in analysing trends.

The New Zealand Health Information Service (NZHIS) has a Health Workforce Data Collection (NZHIS, 2003). Like the health workforce policies, it is focussed around the health occupations which are considered essential to health care provision, and includes

little information on pay and employment equity issues. However some data by gender is available, and is summarised below.

Women in the health workforce

Women were:

2001

- just under a third of active medical practitioners (32.6%)
- over a third of active general practitioners (36.9%)
- just under a fifth of active specialists (19.2%)
- less than a quarter of active dentists.

2002

- 90.5% of all registered nurses and midwives and 93.6% of active enrolled nurses working in New Zealand
- 97.5% of active registered nurses with midwifery qualifications.

Sources: EEO Trust, 2003; see also NZHIS, 2003.

Occupational segregation in the health sector

The total health workforce is predominantly female, and there is considerable occupational segregation within the health workforce. Some of these female intensive occupations - such as cleaners, kitchen staff and home carers - are very low-paid, and they tend to be employed by service providers contracted by the Department of Health and/or DHBs. Of these, home carers have been discussed in the *Next steps* backgrounder as an example of the kind of low-paid female-intensive occupation that contributes to the gender pay gap (MWA, 2002).

While nurses are - compared to these low-paid women workers in the health sector - relatively well-paid professionals, they have argued strongly for decades that as a 90% female-intensive professional occupation their work is historically undervalued (NZNO, 2002a, 2002b). In the 1996 Census, nurses and midwives were number 5 of the top 10 occupations for women, and made up 3.8% of all women employed. They were also the top professional occupational group for women (with teachers at 2.8%, number 10) (SNZ, 1999). On the basis of the argument that the main contributor to the aggregate gender pay gap is occupational segregation, adjustments to the relatively low pay of nurses would make a significant difference to the gender pay gap as a whole, not just to the pay gap in the health sector.

Table 3: Women as a proportion of selected health occupations

Occupation	Numbers	% women
Midwife	2121	100
Administration officer	2346	99
Reg. Nurses	25,272	94
Nurse Aides	6402	94
Home aides	5259	94
Occupational Therapists		89
Physiotherapists		79
Medical Lab Technicians		73
Pharmacists (hospitals)	312	70
Psychologists	1317	69
Mental health nurses	1326	65
GPs	3798	37
Hospital Orderlies	984	29
Surgeons	561	8
Social workers	10401	75

Source: PSA, 2003.

What's worked and what hasn't - general comments across all sectors

We have provided a brief summary of the public 'sectors' under discussion (above) to 'tune you in' to the comments we are about to make about what we think has and hasn't worked to support the achievement of EEO for women across the sector. Our comments and discussion are informed also by the primary research undertaken as part of Projects 2 and 10. We now focus on 'What's worked and what hasn't' across the public sector (see Table 4: Employment Equity in the Public Sector: Overview What Works, What Doesn't).

1. Broader supportive business environment

EEO in the public sector is also shaped by the economic and ideological shifts of the broader business environment (Project 2). Factors impacting on organisations' current approach to EEO include: industrial/employee relations environment; government reforms; and organisational change. For instance, in the health sector, with the advent of enterprise-based bargaining under the Employment Contracts Act of 1991, the unions described their role during the '90s (in equity terms) as fighting a rearguard action to retain hard-won conditions such as childcare subsidies and payment for parental leave. HR managers also stated that equity issues were secondary to key health issues such as survival and staff safety.

Table 4: Employment Equity in the Public Sector: Overview
What Works, What Doesn't

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: OVERVIEW	
WHAT WORKS	WHAT DOESN'T
1. Broader supportive business environment, especially industrial relations setting for negotiating equity issues in a centralised way.	Decentralised bargaining: 'survival' issues which keep employment equity low on the agenda.
2. An employment environment where there is some central commitment to and overview of equity issues	Decentralised employment policies in the public sector which leave equity planning and monitoring to the discretion of individual CEOs or boards.
3. Legislation which clearly sets out EEO strategies and accountabilities	Removal of legislation requiring EEO strategies in the public sector
4. Reporting requirements which makes EEO strategies and outcomes transparent to all stakeholders	Inconsistent and incomplete reporting which is not adequate collated, analysed or reported
5. Leadership which makes employment equity a key business priority	Leaders who see EEO as an optional extra and/or delegate EEO leadership to too low a level
6. EEO infrastructure including and resourcing	'Mainstreaming' of EEO under general HR policies
7. Perception by senior management that EEO is strategic change activity which requires regular review and monitoring	Putting EEO policies 'in place' then just turning them over at a minimal level; ad hoc gender equity initiatives undertaken by the organisation (whether under the umbrella of EEO or something else such as contract negotiations); and/or being fair in human resource management processes such as appointment and promotion processes (part but not the whole of EEO).
8. Designated specialist expertise in EEO policies and practices	Leaving EEO to HR staff with little or no capability, and many other responsibilities
9. Organisational capability in gender equity: knowledge of what constitutes an EEO programme, and the ability to analyse organisational issues from an equity perspective.	EEO off the radar or covered by minimal policies; little or no experience or training in gender or general equity issues.

2. An employment environment in the public sector where there is some central commitment to and overview of equity issues

Although limited, the role of the SSC in the Public Service appears to have been important in maintaining a Public Service-wide recognition of, and commitment to, EEO. (SSC, 1997) This has included some central level of monitoring, with mentoring within departments with varying levels of depth and expertise (SSC, 2001a: 2003). The SSC's role in the public service can be compared with what has happened in the health sector since the disestablishment of the EEO Monitoring Unit in 1991. The Health Services EEO Development Unit played an important part in the development of EEO in the health services, prior to being disbanded at the end of 1991. A brief history of EEO in the health sector over the last 13 years would appear to support this assertion. As already noted, our research indicated the lowest level of EEO activity (in any sense) in the public health sector. There is a limited awareness of EEO in the health sector. This contrasts markedly with EEO activity in the health sector in 1990, when it was assessed as running a close second to the Public Service. At the time, under the Area Health Boards Amendment Act 1988, all Area Health boards were required to be 'good employers', to have an EEO programme and to report on it.

3. Legislation which clearly sets out EEO strategies and accountabilities in the public sector

There is a some correlation between the level of EEO activity in the three sectors (most in the Public Service and least in the health sector) and the strength of the legislative imperative to deliver on EEO. This is arguably linked to the requirement to report on an EEO programme (to SSC in the Public Service, and in the annual report for the university), and in the case of the Public Service, annual monitoring of the *EEO Policy to 2010* (ref) by the State Services Commission. In 1990, a report to the Commission for Employment Equity made the following comment:

"Despite the best efforts of personnel working in the area, significant progress was not achieved in EEO until legislation was introduced **requiring** government employers to take action.EEO is about systemic and structural organisational change, which aims to promote good employment practices and policies which prevent discrimination." (CEE, 1990)

The Mintrom and True HRC Framework report (Mintrom and True, 2004a, p. 113) compares centralised EEO planning with the voluntarist anti-discrimination framework and argues that: "Legislation that bans discrimination but that leaves it up to individuals to lay complaints is likely to have a weaker effect on the advancement of EEO than legislation that requires the development of EEO plans and make adequate provision for systematic monitoring and enforcement from a central agency".

4. Reporting requirements which makes EEO strategies and outcomes transparent to all stakeholders

Data collection does not in itself solve pay and employment equity discrepancies, but the absence of consistent data collection and of regular EEO reporting mechanisms in pockets across the sectors can be seen to indicate a lack of strong commitment to pay and employment equity outcomes. As public sector managers are well aware, reporting processes set up relationships of accountability. The production of publicly available reports acknowledges that there is a wide range of stakeholders in issues to do with pay

and employment equity. The Public Service is the only sub-sector where there are both regular reporting requirements and some analysis of the results, which can help to make connections between human resources (HR) practices and EEO outcomes. The State Services Commission (SSC) investigates and reports on matters relating to departmental performance within the Public Service, including pay and employment equity issues.

5. Leadership which makes employment equity a key business priority

In the organisations where most EEO activity in respect of women was occurring there was strong leadership on gender equity issues from the chief executive or a key senior manager

6. EEO infrastructure including resourcing

In the organisations where most EEO activity in respect of women was occurring, there was a clear organisational infrastructure for EEO.

7. Perception by senior management that EEO is strategic change activity which requires regular review and monitoring

In organisations that had the more effective EEO programmes, staff understood EEO as a systematic, planned, results-oriented activity. and familiarity with integrating equity issues into strategic HR processes.

8 Designated specialist expertise in EEO policies and practices

Designation EEO positions (e.g. in the public service, some universities) is currently or has historically related strongly to EEO reporting and trends of improvement in EEO outcomes.

9 Organisational capability in gender equity

It is useful to think of gender equity in terms of organisational capability. 'Organisational capability in gender equity' is considered to have two parts: understanding what might reasonably be expected of organisations delivering an EEO programme; and understanding equity/equity capability. In respect of an EEO programme, an organisation might be reasonably expected to know how to:

- have identified the issues or barriers to women's employment and progression
- have considered its workforce requirements to meet current and future business requirements, and recognised that EEO initiatives form part of addressing these 'strategic' requirements, taking account of the changing labour market and employment expectations
- have a programme of some sort in place i.e. the strategies and activities that are currently being undertaken to achieve equity for women, whether implemented under the agenda of EEO and/or diversity or not,
- have some way of assessing the effectiveness of these strategies, and
- monitor outcomes and changes, including what has happened to members of EEO groups within organisations, to organisational cultures, to human resource systems and processes.

Women and HR practices in the education sector

We go on now to explore employment equity and HR practices in more detail, by discussing more detailed research carried out in the education sector. We argue that women in this sector are in general in a relatively strong position: they are more highly qualified than most women workers as a group, as well as being located in a female-dominated sector that is strongly unionised and has a coherent professional identity. 'On paper', Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) policies have long been part of educational institutions. However we found that these factors do not guarantee employment equity. It is clear that women are not moving through to senior positions in the schools and tertiary sectors in proportion to their numbers. The key factors that stand out in this research as blocking progress are job requirements and HR policies and processes.

In this section we discuss in more detail the research carried out in Project 10, which explored the issues that impact on the progression of women to middle management, senior teacher and senior academic positions across the public education sector. It was particularly concerned with the factors that both encourage or inhibit women from applying for positions, and the factors that facilitate or hinder fair selection practices and fair appointment outcomes when they do apply. The researchers were specifically asked to investigate job requirements, and human resources (HR) policies and practices

The information-gathering phase was structured around answering the following questions:

- Why are women not going through to senior positions in the education sector?
- Are women applying? If not why not? What would help?
- Are women being appointed? If not why not? What would help?

For the purposes of this project senior positions were defined in the terms of reference as: in tertiary institutions - senior academics (including senior lecturers, associate professors and professors), deans, heads of schools/faculties; in schools - AP/DP positions and principals, senior support staff positions (bursar, office manager), teachers that hold management units. This definition represents a range of senior positions rather than one key cut-off point. There was no standard cut-off point for general (allied, non-teaching) staff, as these varied according to school or institution. Tertiary respondents were asked to comment on senior general staff positions in terms of whatever they considered 'senior' to be in their context.

It is clear from our research that women are not moving through to senior positions in the schools and tertiary sectors in proportion to their numbers. Here, we briefly review the data to show the areas of inequity. It is important to note that the data picture does vary across the different levels of the education sector, and even within the different levels.

Schools: (see Figure 3: Men and Women in the Teaching Profession)

In primary schools: The data suggests that, in terms of gender equity, it is at the level of principal that women are either not applying and/or not being appointed, or as Livingstone puts it in relation to principals "...there is a very large pool of well qualified and experienced women who may be hitting a glass ceiling" (cited in Brooking, 2003).

In secondary schools, the data suggests that, in terms of gender equity, it is at the level of both management positions and principals positions where women are either not applying and/or not being appointed.

The tertiary sector: It is much more difficult to concisely and accurately describe the current baseline situation for women moving by appointment or promotion to senior positions in the tertiary sector. In comparison with schools, where blockages to seniority for women can be clearly pinpointed from salary data, the data on gender at various levels of seniority in the tertiary sector is very limited. The three types of tertiary institution covered (polytechnics, universities, colleges of education) also vary in the proportion of academic to non-academic ('general' or 'allied' staff) by gender. This makes a difference in understanding the distinctive barriers to women's career progression in each context. For instance, in polytechnics academic positions are more likely to be held by women (70% vs. 51% of men); in colleges of education proportions are roughly equal (36% women, 37% men); and in universities female staff are much less likely than men to be employed in an academic or research position (39% women, 61% men) (Furze, 2003). Some indicative information drawn from MoE data and partial data from institutions is summarised below.

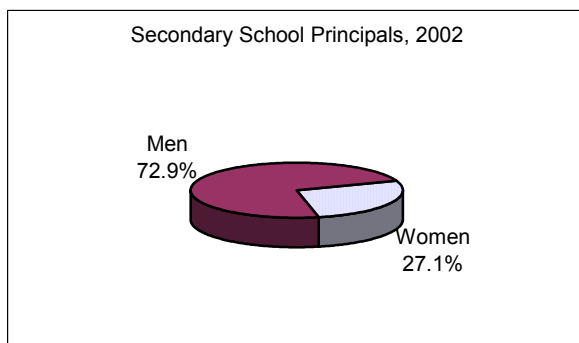
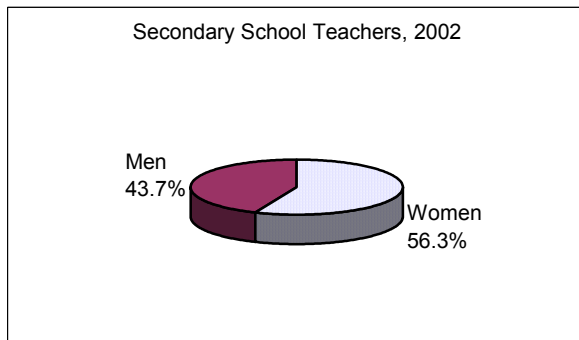
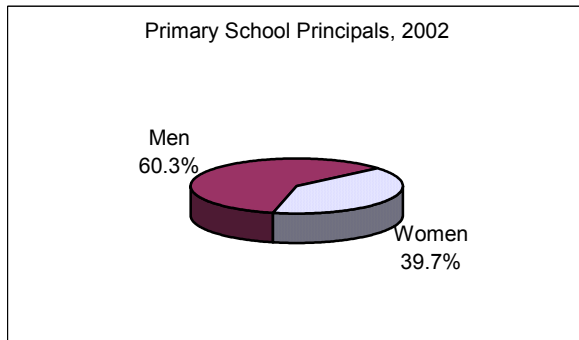
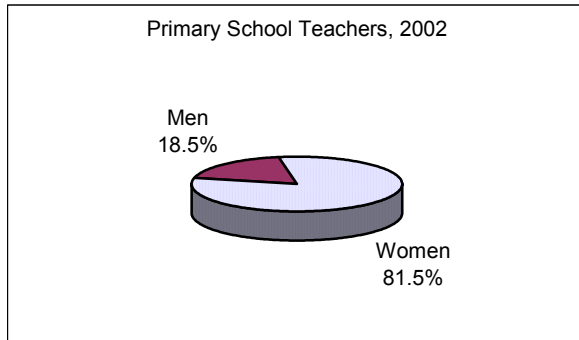
Among non-academic staff, the 'administration' group is historically dominated by women (60% 2001 - MoE, 2003a), but the higher status and higher paid 'executive' staff category is historically dominated by males. Females are 26% of university executive staff (2001: MoE, 2003a). This comparison indicates that female non-academic staff are not progressing proportionately from administrative to more senior executive positions. In terms of the most senior academic staff in universities, the proportion of female professors as a percentage of all academic staff for instance was only 10.9% in 2001, while lecturers were 51% (Ledgerton, 2002 and AUS pay and employment equity submission; MoE, 2003b). Taken together, the data indicate that women - both academic and general/allied staff - are not progressing to senior positions in the tertiary sector proportionally to their numbers.

HR policies and processes in the education sector

While there are EEO policies on paper throughout the sector, these policies are not always implemented consistently. The existing EEO practices do go some way to opening up opportunities for women to move to senior positions, but in practice the appointment criteria, and the weighting of these criteria, are often applied inconsistently, opening up possibilities of bias. In some cases the stated job criteria are not the basis for decision-making. In effect gendered cultural attitudes and practices undermine what seem to be transparent and merit-based processes.

In the tertiary sector appointments and promotions processes are distinct. Once an appointment is made, there is a gray area as far as salary negotiations are concerned. The managers making appointments have wide discretion to appoint within a range of rates for specific positions, and gender bias is not monitored. Even below senior positions, lower starting salaries slow down progress to eventual senior positions.

Figure 3: Men and Women in the Teaching Profession



Mintrom and True, 2004a, p. 55. Data Source: Ministry of Education Statistics on Teaching Staff, March, 2002.

Although EEO policies exist on paper, there are issues of implementation. EEO processes and policies have been 'mainstreamed' in recent years. To many respondents, the will of senior managers to implement EEO policies in a rigorous way is seen to have receded, and there are now few institutions where designated EEO managers remain. In addition, EEO is no longer monitored by designated Ministry of Education staff with expertise in EEO. At the same time job intensification has accelerated throughout the education sector, and increasing workloads tend to have greater implications for women's lives and career choices.

The decentralisation of employment processes in the schools sector has meant that there is less professional HR expertise brought to bear on appointments, and the existence of this expertise in larger tertiary institutions is obvious in processes such as the involvement of EEO observers in promotions, and (in some cases) EEO reporting systems. In the absence of clear and consistent HR processes, it is more likely that social attitudes about gender - implicit or explicit - will affect appointment processes to the disadvantage of women.

Women and senior positions

While the data available gives us no conclusive or consistent answers, we have formed the conclusion that women in the education sector are not applying for the most senior positions in proportion to their numbers. The information we have on the lack of women in senior management positions, combined with respondents' comments and indications that when women do apply for senior positions they are strong candidates, suggests that women are not applying in proportion to their numbers in the relevant occupational groups.

Our findings suggest that women do apply for senior positions up to a certain level, but the applications fall away at the point that these start to be identified as management positions. In primary schools women are applying in numbers consistent with their representation in the teaching workforce up to AP/DP level, and the Brooking research indicates that more recently women are applying as often as men to principal positions, although not yet in proportion to their numbers (Brooking, 2003; Brooking, et al. 2003). In secondary schools there are proportionally fewer women applying for principal positions.

Table 5: EEO in the education sector: Overview of HR practices: What Works, What Doesn't

EEO IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR: OVERVIEW OF HR PRACTICES	
WHAT WORKS (OR WOULD WORK?)	WHAT DOESN'T
1. Reductions in current workloads, including realistic job sizes and monitoring of workloads	Workloads and job sizes for senior positions that deter women from applying
2. Effective work/life balance programmes including introducing more flexibility into management jobs	Loss of flexibility in switching from teaching or academic jobs, or less senior administrative jobs, to senior management positions
3. Role modelling and professional development programmes for women which address 'confidence factors'	Senior management culture where women feel uncomfortable
4. Alternative career paths where senior positions can still have focus on teaching or research e.g. shared principalships schools.	Senior management jobs which are less attractive in terms of values and identity than teaching or research.
5. Active recruitment processes encouraging women to apply for promotions and senior positions	'Gender neutral' processes which fail to address women's specific promotion issues.
6. Robust selection criteria and weighting of various key criteria for appointment or promotion.	Lack of rigour in appointment and promotion processes means that gendered attitudes and assumptions can still operate.
7. Relevant decision makers - BoT's, principals, or tertiary appointment committees - need to be trained to understand how gender issues affect appointment and promotion procedures	Assumption that the presence of HR specialist or avoidance of blatant discrimination will ensure employment equity in appointment and promotion processes.

The key factors that stand out in this research as blocking progress are job requirements, and HR policies and processes (see Table 5: EEO in the Education sector: overview of HR practices: what works, what doesn't).

1. Reductions in current workloads, including realistic job sizes and monitoring of workloads

Structural issues related to job size were critical barriers to women in applying for senior positions. The escalation of job size discourages women from applying for senior positions. Management jobs often allow less flexibility in terms of hours and location of work, and in polytechnics means loss of leave. Women are often not attracted to management jobs in the form that they now take, and often consider that the extra remuneration for management responsibilities does not compensate for longer hours, less flexibility and a move away from teaching or research. In schools, the small extra payments for management units is not considered to be worth the extra time involved, both in terms of financial remuneration but perhaps more importantly because of the perceived lack of value and recognition this suggests.

2. Effective work/life balance programmes including introducing more flexibility into management jobs

Issues of work/life balance are important to women, and for academic/teaching women in particular the switch to management positions may mean loss of flexibility in how time is used. More flexibility needs to be introduced to promote work/life balance: for instance, there should be structured opportunities to move into and out of part-time work in senior positions and retain security of tenure. Steps should be taken to minimise differences between general and academic positions in terms of flexible work patterns.

3. Role modelling and professional development programmes for women which address 'confidence factors'

'Confidence factors' and general comfort with the promotion system, as well as attitudes to career, may mean that women are less likely to find extra status and salary worth trading off the values discussed above (Slyfield et al, 1989). Development programmes (such as the Women and Leadership programmes run by Auckland university) have been successful in addressing a range of issues - cultural factors, confidence, knowledge of process and of management roles - that may deter women from applying for senior positions.

4. Alternative career paths where senior positions can still have focus on teaching or research

Professional identification with teaching: women seem to be especially attached to teaching and it is central to professional identity: management work is less attractive. In schools, shared principalships in schools could enable participation in management without giving up teaching. In the tertiary sector, career paths could allow increased research seniority without necessarily taking in management responsibilities.

5. Active recruitment processes encouraging women to apply for promotions and senior positions

Women seem to be generally less comfortable with the promotion systems. They tend to delay applying until they think they are really qualified. Or as one respondent put it, men apply 'prematurely'. A Canterbury university study of recruitment and promotion in the mid-90s (Keelly, 19??) suggested that a peak in the numbers of women applying, especially in less traditional areas, was related to activities by an EEO officer who encouraged actively seeking out female applicants through a wider range of networks.

6. Robust selection criteria and weighting of various key criteria for appointment or promotion.

Selection criteria and weighting of various factors for appointment or promotion are not robust enough, and allow bias to operate. In primary schools gendered attitudes and assumptions still operate overtly, and affect decisions. Some of these are linked to concerns specific to primary school teaching, such as a perceived need for 'male role models'.

For appointments from 'outside' to positions in the tertiary sector, Heads of School have a lot of discretion to negotiate starting rates, and the process is not transparent. This leaves open the possibility that women are less likely to negotiate hard (as wider EEO studies suggest) and/or that Head Of School will see women as less valuable appointees and start negotiations lower. It was also noted that external appointments are more likely to be made on 'potential' and are much less comparatively rigorous than promotion processes. This opens up the possibilities of bias. A key observation is that women are appointed at lower levels than men with equivalent educational qualifications and experience. This delays and possibly prevents the eventual promotion or appointment of women to senior positions.

7. Relevant decision makers - BoT's, principals, or tertiary appointment committees - need to be trained to understand how gender issues affect appointment and promotion procedures

In schools, BoTs and principals need training in appointment process and EEO/gender issues. At all levels, the Ministry of Education needs to have greater oversight of appointments, including reporting on process as well as outcomes. At all levels, clearer statements of weighting for various factors in appointments / promotions needs to be worked out and clearly communicated to both appointment committees and candidates.

Conclusions and speculations

We have three key conclusions based on our education sector research. First, voluntary or semi-voluntary EEO policies are not effective enough. They are unlikely to generate the kind of creative strategic thinking that keeps up with, or even tries to shape, developing professional and workplace issues. Secondly, even where there are "gender neutral policies and practices" operating, so that when women apply for senior positions they are equally or even more likely to be appointed to them in comparison with men, some women are not applying. At a certain point, women seem to lose interest. They are not attracted to high-pressure big jobs which take them away from valued professional activities or their lives beyond work. Here we need to go beyond the idea of 'gender neutral' HR policies and to consider what we can call 'cultural issues'. HR and work

systems can be seen as gendered in themselves, as they are based on careers where senior jobs are the wrong size and quality for many highly qualified women. This paradox raises major questions for employment equity agendas. Many women are resisting being shoehorned into jobs that don't fit. While we believe that realistically job-sized senior positions and flexible work arrangements are essential to employment equity, the political and practical challenges are huge. Finally, we are convinced of the value of qualitative and case-study based research to investigate this kind of complex issue.

In asking ourselves 'what's new' about our findings, we have found it interesting to speculate on what has changed since, say, 1984, when EEO was first introduced into the Public Service. Couldn't we equally then have pointed out that employment equity would depend on factors such as legislation, leadership, commitment, accountability, good 'gender neutral' HR practices? Yes, but much has changed. Our list of key relevant changes, based on our research in the education sector, includes:

- EEO policies are now ubiquitous, at least on paper
- There is a perception that EEO has 'been done'; this complacency or 'been there done that' needs to be countered by precise understandings of how gender equity (or inequity) operates in specific situations
- There are now many more women in senior positions
- More women are highly qualified in terms of both education and experience
- When women do apply for senior jobs they are likely to get them
- Everyone in senior jobs are working much much harder than people in similar positions did 20 years ago, and all jobs in education have got bigger
- While some women are still aspiring to senior jobs, and sometimes facing discrimination, it seems now that another group of women is 'refusing' senior positions that don't fit their lives
- Occupational segregation patterns continue to shift, often in unpredicted ways - for instance, teaching is an even more female-dominated profession in terms of numbers than it used to be.

Recommendations to the Taskforce on Pay and Employment Equity in the Public Service and Public Health and Education Sector

The recommendations summarised below are based on the main ones resulting from Project 10. Here they are framed to be relevant, where possible, beyond the education sector, and to focus at the organisational level of HR practice.

1. Data collection: Basic, standardised EEO statistical data should be collected to provide a fuller picture of the situation regarding women to enable a benchmark to be established (applications, appointments, promotions, job designations, salaries, educational qualifications). This information should be published regularly.
2. Development of an EEO strategy must be based on data analysis. This ideally includes qualitative analysis to get a richer sense of what creates bottlenecks for women at certain points.
3. Resources must be developed to enable organisations to carry out this strategy effectively;
4. Monitoring of the strategy must be built in, and should ideally include perspectives from all stakeholders - a 360-degree view of EEO progress. This would include monitoring appointment processes and outcomes from a gender perspective.

5. Training for all key decisions-makers in appointment processes and EEO/ gender issues should be considered integral to professional competencies.
6. Senior positions should be urgently and independently reviewed and realistically job-sized.
7. Comprehensive training and development opportunities should be centrally coordinated to enable women to develop an understanding of leadership roles, e.g., information sessions, job shadowing experiences, project work.

For discussion

What more qualitative research into employment equity is needed? What forms might it take? What might it investigate? E.g.

- Why don't some women apply for senior jobs?
- How do women in various communities, e.g., rural, see their careers in terms of their gender identities?

RESEARCH REPORTS FOR THE TASKFORCE ON PAY AND EMPLOYMENT EQUITY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND PUBLIC HEALTH AND EDUCATION SECTOR

These are referred to in this paper by number as follows:

Project 1

Jones, D. (2004). *Project 1: Literature and data search and high level analysis*. Project 1 Report for the Taskforce on Pay and Employment Equity in the Public Service and Public Health and Education Sector. Deborah Jones with Rae Torrie. January 2004. Wellington: Department of Labour. [Available from the Department of Labour: see <http://www.ers.dol.govt.nz/about/taskforce.html>].

Project 2

Torrie, R. (2003). *EEO research across sectors report*. Project 2 Report for the Taskforce on Pay and Employment Equity in the Public Service and Public Health and Education Sector. Rae Torrie with Robyn Rendall. November 2003. Wellington: Department of Labour. [Available from the Department of Labour: see <http://www.ers.dol.govt.nz/about/taskforce.html>].

Project 10

Jones, D., and Torrie, R. (2004). *Project 10: The impact of Human Resources policies and practices and job requirements on entry and promotion in the Public Education sector*. Project 1 Report for the Taskforce on Pay and Employment Equity in the Public Service and Public Health and Education Sector. February 2004. Wellington: Department of Labour. [Available from the Department of Labour: see <http://www.ers.dol.govt.nz/about/taskforce.html>].

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