

*VIEWS OF WORKING WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA ON
CERTAIN ASPECTS OF JOB SATISFACTION:
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS*

B.J. Erasmus

Department of Business Management
University of South Africa

E. Sadler

Department of Applied Accountancy
University of South Africa

The purpose of this article is to report on the views of working women in South Africa on job satisfaction issues in the workplace. A random sample of 1 764 women was drawn from the possible 23 000 members of the Women's Bureau of South Africa. A comparison is also made, where applicable, with the results of the Working Women Count study conducted during 1994 in the United States of America. The main findings of the survey indicated that working women in South Africa enjoy their jobs, feel that they are very productive and like the company of co-workers. However, they are dissatisfied with their pay, the benefits they receive, job training opportunities, job security and flexible working hours. The main recommendations are that organisations should identify women in organisations who are productive, and create opportunities to develop their managerial skills to ensure that they can further enhance organisational achievement. The changes in the growing number of women in the workforce in South Africa call for innovative organisational policies which afford greater flexibility and support mechanisms

1. INTRODUCTION

Social change in South Africa has been extraordinarily rapid in the nineties and has influenced many individual's day-to-day existence in the country. South African women have borne the brunt of the country's history of oppression and male dominance but are now faced with the prospect of fair treatment. Most women are aware of their rights enshrined in the Constitution, but these will only remain on paper unless effective mechanisms of enforcement and implementation are

established. The greatest impact would, however, be for working women to take action to translate these rights into organisation policy and laws.

In 1960, the South African economically active population consisted of 77 percent men and 23 percent women. By 1991, men constituted 60 percent and women 40 percent (Barker, 1995:33), and by 1995, 57 percent and 43 percent respectively (Central Statistical Service, 1995). The increase in the participation of women in the South African labour market emphasises that their opinions and experiences should be heard. Women are making significant contributions in the search for solutions to the problems facing South Africa today, the most important being (Prekel 1994:3):

- economic growth and the creation of job opportunities, with a concomitant improvement in productivity
- improving the educational qualifications of workers
- improving community development, for example, social services, health care and housing

Since there is an increasing move from a production-oriented economy to one in which services and information take priority, every day new doors are being opened to women in South Africa. An investigation conducted by the American Department of Labour found that gender patterns in the workplace were set to alter drastically (Mittner, 1997:5). The study found that industries usually dominated by men, such as manufacturing, are on the decline. Women in the workplace also appear to be better trained than men - they hold jobs longer and often manifest better social skills.

Another important issue prevalent in a working woman's life, is family obligations. The traditional family, with an employed breadwinner husband and a full-time homemaker wife is now the exception rather than the norm. The authors believe that a major reason for the trend towards dual earner families is the growing need for two incomes. Also important, however, are women's career aspirations. At one time ambitious women tended to remain single and to forego motherhood,

which was deemed to be totally incompatible with a career. Nowadays, however, there is an increasing tendency towards women combining a career with marriage and parenthood, bringing into their marriages expectations of much greater male participation in family work.

Much research has followed women into the workplace, documenting, analysing and theorising about the impact of this demographic change in organisations, women, men and families. The literature consistently shows (Anderson, Johnson and Reckers, 1994; Heaton and Simmons, 1994; Smith 1993):

- women are entering organisations as managers and professionals in numbers equal to men
- women and men are equally qualified and committed to their careers
- managerial women and men share similar work orientations and career expectations
- men and women are equally satisfied with their jobs
- men's compensation, promotion and job satisfaction begin to exceed women's after the first five years

According to Prekel (1994:12), working women generally face two types of problems, namely external issues related to the work environment, managers and colleagues and internal issues related to their own abilities, approaches and attitudes. Most women are held back by a combination of internal and external problems. Irrespective of the issues that may hamper the career prospects of women, they can contribute to the shortage of skilled human resources in South Africa and make a major contribution to the workplace in the sense that they are more family and individual orientated than their male counterparts. In the light of the important role women are playing in the South African economy, it was decided to obtain the views of working women on certain issues related to job satisfaction in the workplace.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this article is to report on the views of working women on certain job satisfaction issues in the workplace obtained from a survey conducted during 1996. Where applicable, reference will also be made to a study conducted in the United States of America during 1994 on similar aspects of job satisfaction (United States Department of Labour, 1994). The reason for the reference to the study in the United States is to highlight possible similarities or differences on the views of First and Third World working women, presuming that South Africa is more Third than First World.

3. JOB SATISFACTION

Employees in any organisation form attitudes about many things, such as pay, company of co-workers, benefits, training opportunities, job security and working hours. It is also important to know that some of these attitudes are more important than others and will to some extent determine how satisfied people are with their jobs. According to Moorhead and Griffin (1995:64), job satisfaction, is "...an attitude that reflects the extent to which an individual is gratified or fulfilled in his or her work". Extensive research on job satisfaction has indicated that personal factors such as an individual's needs and aspirations determine this attitude, together with group and organisational factors, for, example relationships with co-workers, working conditions, work policies and pay (Moorhead and Griffin, 1995:64). Satisfied employees also tend to be absent less often, make positive contributions in the workplace and remain with organisations. However, high levels of satisfaction do not necessarily lead to higher levels of performance.

Mathis and Jackson (1997:72) are of the opinion that job satisfaction is a "positive emotional state resulting from evaluating one's job experiences" and that job dissatisfaction is present when job expectations are not present, for example, if an employee expects to have friendly and cooperative co-workers, it is likely that he or she will be dissatisfied if confronted with hostile and aggressive co-workers. Kleiman (1997:17) believes that job satisfaction concerns the "favourableness of employee

attitudes towards their jobs”, and together with employee competence and employee motivation, can contribute significantly to organisational success and therefore an organisation’s competitive advantage. The most common factors that reflect job satisfaction are job content, supervision, financial rewards, promotion, working conditions, job security, co-worker organisational culture and philosophy (Lawler 1994:83).

Reece and Brandt (1996:84) also reported that when people were asked what they most want from their jobs, the typical answers were mutual respect among co-workers, recognition for work well done, opportunities to develop skills and that the work should be interesting. People will further be satisfied with their jobs when they enjoy their work, have a realistic opportunity to advance within the company, like the people they deal with, like and respect their supervisors and believe that their pay is fair (Kleiman, 1997:17). Each of these factors contributes to an overall feeling of satisfaction with the job itself.

There is, however, no simple formula for creating and predicting an employee’s satisfaction but a critical factor is what employees expect from their jobs and what they are receiving as reward for their jobs. An important issue is to determine the impact of job satisfaction on organisational commitment, which affects the ultimate goals of productivity, quality and service (Kleiman, 1997:17; Mathis and Jackson, 1997: 73).

Four theories of job satisfaction are provided by Lawler (1994: 84-93) and are briefly discussed:

- The fulfilment theory. This theory was the first development and argues that job satisfaction will vary directly in relation to the extent to which those needs of an individual which can be satisfied are actually satisfied.
- The discrepancy theory. This theory attempts to take into account that people have different desires, and maintains that satisfaction is determined by the differences between the actual outcome a person receives and some other outcome level. Many discrepancy theorists

argue that total job satisfaction is influenced by the sum of the discrepancies that are present.

- Equity theory. The equity theory is basically a motivation theory which also addresses the issues of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Satisfaction results when perceived equity exists in terms of inputs to the job and outputs received.
- Two-factor theory. This theory maintains that satisfaction and dissatisfaction do not exist on a continuum running from satisfaction through neutral to dissatisfaction. Two independent continua exist: firstly, one running from satisfied to neutral and another from dissatisfied to neutral, and secondly, that different job facets influence feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

One can conclude that overall job satisfaction is determined by the difference between what things a person considers be to derived from his or her job and what the person actually receives.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 TARGET POPULATION

A random sample of 1 764 women was drawn from the possible 23 000 members of the Women's Bureau of South Africa. The mission of the Women's Bureau of South Africa includes the following: "to promote and improve the socioeconomic upliftment and conditions of women of all races; to analyse legislation of concern to women, children and families; to protect women's interests, their health and wellbeing; to interpret women's needs; to alleviate violence and abuse in the family; to work for women's empowerment and to adapt to a changing world and thereby make women aware of their vital role in society". The sample was adjusted to 1 508 because of unknown addresses and overseas addresses. A response of 526 (34,9 percent) was obtained after three reminders were sent out to those who did not respond during the last part of 1996.

4.2 QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The questionnaire used in this study was based on a questionnaire developed by the American Department of Labour titled Working Women Count and was administered by the Bureau of Market Research at the University of South Africa. Besides the biographical details, the part of the questionnaire that focused on job satisfaction consisted of the following 11 items: pay, benefits, flexible working hours, training opportunities, authority to do their work, job security, productivity, company of co-workers, learning new things, liking what you do and enjoying working in a team. Respondents were asked to indicate, on a five-point scale, where number one indicates "strongly disagree" and number five "strongly agree", how the various items contribute to job satisfaction. The questionnaire also included other issues, such as factors that may be a problem at work and suggestions about changes to be made in the workplace, but these results are not reported in this article. An open-ended question was also posed affording respondents the opportunity to tell President Mandela about what it was like being a working woman.

4.3 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data processing and analyses were done with the use of a statistical software package producing frequency distributions and cross-tabulations between job satisfaction items and the different biographical items. The cronbach alpha coefficient score provided an acceptable reliability score of 0,75 for the items measuring job satisfaction.

4.4 BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

The occupations of women who took part in the survey are reflected in Table 1, which shows that the majority of women (59,8 percent) were involved in three occupations, namely as business women (19,3 percent), as professional women (26,7 percent) such as lawyers and doctors, and as managers (11,8 percent). The general profile of the

women who took part in the survey can further be described as follows: They had only one paid job and worked between 40 and 50 hours a week. They were mainly between the ages of 30 and 49 years and the majority possessed a degree and/or postgraduate qualification. Salaries averaged between R2 000 and R4 999 a month, although a large group (31,4 percent) also earned between R5 000 to R9 999 per month. Only 6,2 percent earned more than R15 000 a month.

The majority of respondents were married (59,3 percent), did not have children (55,2 percent) and those who did, had two (75,3 percent), the youngest child being under 23 years of age (80,3 percent). They lived mainly in Gauteng (44,1 percent), the Western Province (20,1 percent) or KwaZulu-Natal (18 percent) and were predominantly from the white population group (82,1 percent).

TABLE 1
BIOGRAPHICAL DATA: OCCUPATION

	Frequency	Percent
Business	100	19,3
Diplomatic service	2	0,4
Clerk	35	6,8
Domestic worker	1	0,2
Professional	138	26,7
Housewife	19	3,9
Manager	61	11,8
Media	14	2,7
Nurse	37	7,2
Politics	1	0,2
Public relations	21	4,1
Retired (part-time worker)	17	3,3
Saleswomen	17	3,3
Secretary	52	10,1
Trade industry	2	0,4
Frequency missing = 9	517	100,0

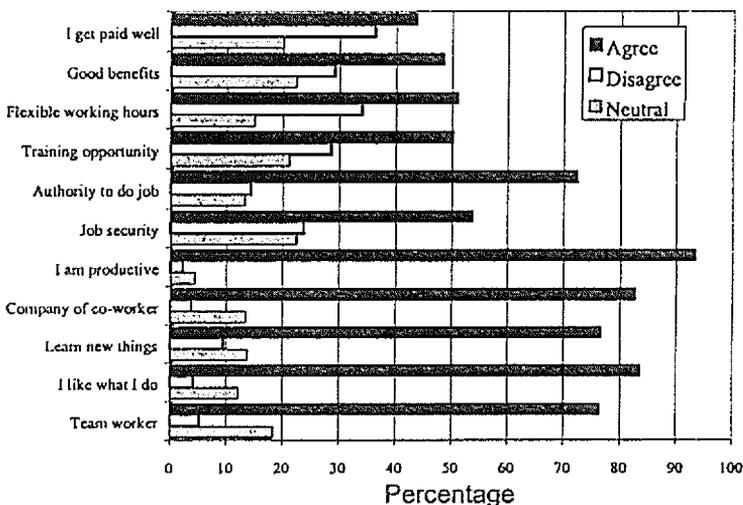
5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section the results of the survey will be reported and discussed. Some comparisons will also be made with the 1994 American study, Working Women Count, and all references to the American study refer to this study.

5.1 JOB SATISFACTION

An overview of these results is first provided (see Figure 1), followed by a more detailed discussion of the more important issues.

FIGURE 1
JOB SATISFACTION



5.1.1 General

Over 93 percent of the respondents considered that the fact that they were very productive, contributed the most to their job satisfaction. Eighty-four percent of the respondents indicated that they enjoyed what they did, followed by 83 percent who considered the fellowship of co-workers contributed to their job satisfaction. Respondents also

valued the opportunity to learn new things, rating this aspect the fourth highest contributor to job satisfaction. This confirms the finding in another section of the questionnaire wherein they supported "on-the-job training opportunities to learn new skills" as their number three overall priority for workplace change. Seventy-six percent of the respondents also enjoyed working as part of a team, and seventy-two percent were generally satisfied that they possessed authority to perform their functions (72 percent).

The item that was the lowest on the job satisfaction list was that of pay. Other items that were also rated low when compared to the other items, were benefits, job training opportunities, job security and flexible working hours.

5.1.2 Productivity

As indicated, more than 93 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the fact that they were productive. There were no significant differences in responses from women of all groups whether in different types of organisations, full-time or part-time employment, with or without children, marital status, race or earnings levels. Respondents were not asked to indicate how productive they were but a possible interpretation is that respondents indicated that they were getting more out of their work than what they put into it or that they were fully occupied and enjoyed their work. One may therefore conclude that this group of respondents generally possessed high self-esteem and portrayed a positive attitude towards their work, an aspect which is very positive and should be encouraged in South Africa.

5.1.3 Company of co-workers

Respondents in smaller organisations (fewer than 100 employees) (83 percent), those employed full-time (80 percent) and the white population group (81 percent) in particular were most satisfied with this aspect of their employment. In the American study, the respondents indicated that the company of their co-workers was the part they enjoyed most in their employment.

There were no significant differences between the different age groups, those with or without children, marital status and earnings level. Company of co-workers seems to be one of the aspects the respondents liked about their work both in South Africa and the United States. One may therefore conclude that co-workers possibly provide support to a worker in time of need and that without the support of co-workers the work would not be as attractive.

5.1.4 Pay

The item that ranked lowest on the job satisfaction list was the fact that the respondents felt that they were not well paid. In addition, in another section of the questionnaire, respondents indicated that "pay" was their second biggest problem at work with a rating only below too much stress at work. The American survey showed similar results, with 49 percent of the respondents indicating that this factor was a serious problem in their jobs. In South Africa, less than 50 percent of single women considered that they were well paid, compared to 57 percent of married women with similar views.

During the period between 1991 and 1994, the increase in the income of female graduates outstripped the inflation rate. At an average inflation rate of 11 percent, during the period from 1991 to 1994, the income of female graduates rose by 15,2 percent in the public sector and by 12,8 percent in the private sector. The median income of women in this period was still considerably lower than that earned by their male counterparts. According to an unpublished World Bank Report, South African women receive on average only 87 percent of the salaries men receive (Schutte, 1997:4). Employers should, however, note that, according to Cascio (1995:416), one of the most important managerial principles is that employees do only what they are rewarded for.

Women workers in government were the least satisfied with their income, followed by those working in smaller organisations. Self-employed women were more satisfied with their pay, while no significant difference in the perceptions of full-time and part-time

employees were found. No differences between this last category were also reported in the American study. The younger respondents and those with children were also marginally less satisfied with their pay, which corresponded with the results in the United States. Respondents earning less than R60 000 a year rated very low satisfaction with their pay, with more than half expressing their dissatisfaction with this issue. Although pay seemed to be a problem, the respondents still considered themselves to be productive and were reasonably satisfied with their jobs. One may deduce that pay will remain a problem, but fortunately not the sole reason for seeking employment. Other factors inherent in their work seemed to be motivators.

5.1.5 Benefits

The respondents were profoundly worried about the benefits they received at work, which they rated as the second lowest job satisfaction contributor. They also rated "benefits" as their third most serious problem at work. A similar result was obtained in the survey of working women in the USA. The studies in South Africa and the USA indicated that benefits affected full-time as well as part-time workers. In the survey in South Africa, only 62 percent and 52 percent respectively of the full-time and part-time workers gave positive ratings to the benefits they received, while 72 percent of the American full-time employees were satisfied with their benefits.

Respondents with children were more negative about this factor than those without children: 19 percent of those with children disagreed with the statement that they received satisfactory benefits, while only 13 percent of those without children had similar views. Younger working women also had more positive perceptions about their benefits than their older counterparts. Similar results were obtained in the American study.

Further analysis according to type of organisation showed that women working for large and medium organisations were more satisfied with the benefits attached to their jobs than those working for smaller organisations and the government. Although they are indirectly part of pay, benefits seemed to play an important part in job satisfaction.

Benefits may of course include a wider variety of things, such as flexible working hours and child-care facilities, and that this could be a reason why respondents with children were more negative about their benefits because of a perceived lack of these facilities.

5.1.6 Job training opportunities

Job training was third lowest on the respondents' perception of job satisfaction. When asked to select items that might provide a better workplace, "on-the-job training opportunities" was selected as third overall priority for workplace change both in the South African and the American studies.

The responses, however, differed in particular organisations, race and earnings groups. Twenty-four percent of women in smaller organisations, compared with 17 percent and 11 percent respectively in medium and large organisations, were dissatisfied with job training opportunities.

Women earning more than R24 000 per annum were significantly more satisfied with their job training opportunities than those earning less than that amount. Married women and those without children were only marginally more positive than their unmarried counterparts or those with children. There were no significant differences of opinion on this factor between full-time and part-time employees or women in the different age groups.

Thus, although women have family constraints, they are still viewed as having the potential, although progress will be at a slower pace. Many women perceived the opportunity for training within their workplace to be limited. One reason why the respondents felt that they have limited training opportunities is that they might feel frustrated for not having enough time for training because of family constraints and probably because of the reluctance of management to invest in training employees with a possible low rate of return. Regardless of the reasons, organisations should correct this perception and invest in training, irrespective of gender.

5.1.7 Job security

Less than 60 percent of the respondents in the South African survey indicated that they were satisfied with their job security. An interesting response was that almost 57 percent of those who were self-employed indicated that job security did not contribute to their job satisfaction. Employees working for government were also not very comfortable with their job security - 40 percent indicating that this aspect of their job did not contribute to their job satisfaction. This might be attributed to the affirmative action policies applied by the new government, especially in state organisations. Part-time employment is normally very scarce, and this may be the reason why only 40 percent of respondents, compared with the 56 percent of the full-time workers, agreed that job security contributed to their satisfaction at work. Women under 30 years of age and those without children were also more positive about job security.

Another interesting response was that only 41 percent of the respondents who earned more than R15 000 a month agreed that job security contributed to their job satisfaction. Respondents earning lower salaries were generally more satisfied about the contribution of job security to their overall job satisfaction.

5.1.8 Flexible hours

Although flexible working hours were rated only sixth on the priority list for job satisfaction, almost 40 percent of the respondents indicated that they had a good to excellent flexible work schedule.

In the United States of America, flexible working hours were rated as the second most popular aspect of the working woman's job. The difference between the two countries may indicate that the American workplace has adapted more to the working mother with children. However, in the survey in that country, 35 percent also named flexible hours as a high priority for change. Even those women who rated flexible schedules as a favourable aspect of their jobs also experienced high levels of stress and felt that they had insufficient time for their families.

In the South African survey, "more flexible work hours" was rated only seventh when respondents were provided with a list of items that would provide a better workplace. Factors such as more responsibility, retraining opportunities, on-the-job training opportunities and pay were more important than flexible working hours.

Women who were self-employed (83 percent), academics (78 percent) and women who worked for smaller organisations (59 percent) had more flexible hours than, say, those who were employed in government (25 percent) and in large and medium organisations (both 38 percent). An interesting result was that there was no difference in the responses from women with and without children. There were also no significant differences between the different age groups, marital status and race. Women earning less than a R1 000 a month reported more flexibility in working hours than those earning more than that.

South African businesses have long been criticised by women for not adequately accommodating their interests. However, the number of businesses in the country in which the interests of women are being promoted is on the increase. For example, Eskom introduced a system whereby women may work on a half-day or contract basis if they have small children, while a specific programme was introduced in order to reduce the gender gap in income. At Nestlé, women can take up to seven months' maternity leave of which four months are paid for (Mittner, 1997).

A study conducted in England showed that seven out of ten British private sector companies employed part-time managers, mainly women (Boyer, 1993). The companies reported that it paid to develop flexible working arrangements whereby managers are retained after maternity leave. Managers working part-time tended to see their jobs as at least equal to their previous full-time positions - or even more challenging. The study concluded that employers have found that productivity gains and savings from the retention of trained staff on the payroll make employment of flexible managers a "good deal" for them. However, other studies have found that many women are not using flexible working arrangements because they fear participation in

these schemes might hinder their advancement in the organisations (Higham and Libby, 1994:26).

5.1.9 Male culture/gender bias

As women have entered the workforce in greater numbers, some workplaces have begun to change in response, although, many respondents in both the local and the American survey considered that the pace of change has not been fast enough and that they continue to experience unfair treatment because of gender bias and the male culture within organisations. However, equal opportunities in the workplace as a priority for change in the workplace, was rated only eleventh in the local survey. In the American survey, this was the number four change that the respondents wished to take place in the workplace. Interestingly, respondents in the government sector of employment perceived less gender bias and male culture than those otherwise employed.

5.2 MESSAGES TO THE PRESIDENT

To quote President Mandela in his State of the Nation Address in 1994: "... freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression. All of us must take this on board that the objectives of the Reconstruction and Development Plan will not have been realised unless we see in visible and practical terms that the condition of the women of our country has radically changed for the better, and that they have been empowered to intervene in all aspects of life as equals with any other member of society" (Beijing Report, 1994:1.)

In the light of the above, the respondents were asked what they regarded as the one thing they would tell Nelson Mandela about being a working woman. Extensive qualitative data were provided by the correspondents and the answers were coded for their thematic content. The four most frequent themes, in ranked order, were:

- problems balancing work and family, including child care
- lack of equal treatment and equal opportunity

- work status and benefits
- expectations of the working environment

Each of the above is discussed below.

5.2.1 Problems balancing work and family, including child care

The number one issue women wished to bring to the President's attention was the difficulty of balancing work and family obligations. They reported that the problems of balancing their professional with their private lives made it difficult to be motivated for work.

Their dilemmas fell into three main categories: overall stress, shortage of time and, finally, problems with child care. It is striking that when women both in South Africa and the United States of America ranked their problems in the workplace, "too much stress" was the number one problem cited. The qualitative responses contained comments such as "hectic", "hard", "tough" and "hell", conveying the strain that many women are under as they seek to provide and or arrange care for children. Many responses are summed up in one woman's outcry:

"I do not have enough time for myself and my God!"

In the South African study, stress was considered by more than half of the respondents as between somewhat serious and one of the most serious at work. In the USA, almost 60 percent of all respondents identified this as a problem. This study also reported that stress was particularly acute for single mothers as well as for women in their forties who held professional and managerial jobs (74 percent).

5.2.2 Lack of equal treatment and equal opportunity

Many working women, both in South Africa and in the United States, believed that there will always be gender bias, because the role of women cannot be changed, for the simple reason that they are still expected to raise families. Gender issues will therefore remain a problem. There was also a strong belief that as long as women work in organisations where there is bound to be a male culture, the issue of gender bias will exist. Male attitudes towards women will still prevent

women from obtaining senior positions, or achieving their full potential.

Pay-related themes consistently reappear in the responses to this open-ended question, revealing how working women themselves define the causes and consequences of their lower pay. Many respondents felt that they were still not being paid at the same rate as men who performed the same jobs. Comments on this problem came from women at all levels. As one respondent asked: "When will affirmative action for women really come into its own?"

In addition, in both studies, respondents highlighted problems with pay and benefits and rated these as their second and third most serious problem at work. This reflects their role as breadwinners who are responsible for a significant proportion of family income and who often provide access to benefits for themselves and their dependants. As providers, women are very often concerned about the issues that affect their pay cheques and the availability of benefits such as medical aid and insurance.

5.2.3 Work status and benefits

Some working women were pessimistic about the general status of women in the workplace, and in the business environment generally. On the other hand, there were also respondents who felt that women are gradually receiving more fair treatment, but that their own careers were nevertheless unrewarding and stagnant, possibly because of their personal belief that it is difficult to balance work and personal or family commitments. One woman explained: "Although I have a career, I firmly believe a woman's right place is at home to be with her children." Notwithstanding these pessimistic comments, the majority, 84 percent and 74 percent respectively in South Africa and the USA, indicated that they either "love" or "like" their jobs overall.

5.2.4 Expectations of the working environment

Having experienced gender bias, some women suggested ways in which the perceptions about the role of women can be changed. Their suggestions included, for example, flexibility in working hours, the

improvement of child care facilities and an increasing awareness of equal opportunities. They considered that the government should promote equal opportunity measures, and flexibility in working hours, and lobby for tax deductions on child care. Similar views were expressed by the respondents in the American study.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Working women in South Africa enjoy their jobs, consider that they are very productive and enjoy the company of their co-workers. They are, however, dissatisfied with their pay, the benefits they receive, job training opportunities, job security and the opportunity to work flexible hours.

While some of the obstacles identified stem from discrimination, others reflect the trend towards a workforce anxious about stagnant wages and declining benefits. The stresses on working families affect all family members and, likewise, the remedies stand to benefit all. The bottom line for any profit-oriented organisation, regardless of size, is profitability and ensuring maximum output from minimum input. High employee turnover rates result in the need to constantly hire and train new employees, and these efforts incur costs and absorb direct resources and ultimately reduce the profitability of any organisation. By developing programmes and policies that deal with family issues and flexible schedules, organisations can maintain quality skills by significantly reducing staff turnover. Organisations should therefore recognise women's abilities, promote women and maintain attractive working conditions for them if they do not want to lose this valuable resource. If employers wish to maintain or improve the positive attitudes of these women and thereby maintain or improve productivity, they should provide benefits that workers consider important.

Organisations should therefore:

- hold open discussions on the issue of the upward mobility of women

- institute constructive child care policies and nurture an attitude and culture that encourages flexibility
- define their position on pregnancy and child care leave with clearly written policies
- implement a well-integrated set of policies that addresses both advancement, retention of women and family issues

The following broad recommendations are made:

1. Managers in organisations should identify those women in organisations who are productive and create opportunities to develop their managerial skills to ensure that they can further enhance organisational goal achievement.
2. Women managers should be tasked to start and facilitate worker participation within organisations because it is a crucial factor that could ensure organisational success.
3. Women should also be tasked with the responsibility to act as mentors for younger women in the workplace to encourage the training and guidance of talented women.
4. Women in organisations should not hesitate to use their rights in terms of the Constitution and the Labour Relations Act to oppose any unfair labour practices in the workplace.
5. Changes in the growing number of women seeking long-term advancement in employment, call for innovative organisational policies which afford greater flexibility and support mechanisms.
6. If women are to overcome traditional career obstacles, employers, too, should demonstrate a positive commitment to changes, particularly in terms of organisation culture, since legislation alone cannot create equal employment opportunities for women.
7. Organisations should endeavour to resolve the problems involving maternity. Biological factors require women to take off from work, often early in their careers. Employers need to have

workable leave policies and realistic expectations of women with very young children. Flexibility is a critical ingredient in finding solutions that will work for both sides.

8. Employers should consider the needs and problems of women in the workforce. Alleviating key problems should help employers acquire and retain women employees for a longer time, thereby maximising their hiring and training investment.

In conclusion, women should feel that they are being developed and promoted. Perceptions about women should be changed and solutions should be found to encourage their advancement.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, J.C., Johnson, E.N., & Reckers, P.M. (1994). Perceived effects of gender and family structure on career progression in public accounting. Accounting, Organizations and Society, 19 (6), 483-491.
- Barker, F.S. (1995). The South African labour market: critical issues for reconstruction. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Beijing Conference Report (1994). Country report on the status of South African women. Cape Town: Office of the State President.
- Boyer, I. (1993). Women choose part-time management. Management Accounting, 71 (2), 5.
- Cascio, F. (1995). Managing human resources. New York: McGraw - Hill.
- Central Statistical Service. (1995). Household survey (Report PO317). Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Heaton, C.B., & Simmons, B.S. (1994). All men are created equal but women aren't men. Massachusetts CPA Review, 68 (2), 19-21.
- Higham, J.E., & Libby, S.E. (1994). Business faces the challenge of advancing and retaining women. CPA Review, 68 (3), 24-27.
- Kleiman, L.S. (1997). Human resources management: A tool for competitive advantage. New York: West Publishing.

Lawler, E.E. (1994). Motivation in work organisations. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mathis, R.L., & Jackson, J.H. (1997). Human resources management. New York: West Publishing.

Mittner, M. (1997, May). Women have more muscle at work. F & T Weekly, 23.

Moorhead, G., & Griffin, R.W. (1995). Organisational behaviour. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Prekel, T. (1994). South African women: meeting the challenges of the 1990s. In M. Lessing (Ed.), South African woman today. Cape Town: Maskew Miller.

Reece, B.L., & Brandt, R. (1996). Effective human relations in organisations. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Schutte, H. (1997, August). SA vroue verdien nog veel minder as mans. Beeld, 5.

Smith, C.R. (1993). Career development for women. Women in Management Review, 8 (3), 17-22.

United States Department of Labour (1994). Working women count: A report to the nation. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

*A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF REAL ESTATE
FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS AND A FRAMEWORK FOR
RETAIL FEASIBILITY*

V.G. Ghyoot

Department of Business Management
University of South Africa

Real estate feasibility studies do not in general have a good reputation. This stems in part from the difficulty of demonstrating in the abstract that a proposed development is likely to succeed. Another reason is the lack of precise models of the feasibility analysis process.

This article presents a conceptual model of real estate feasibility analysis. The model is simpler than the classic and widely used framework of Graaskamp, yet more comprehensive than the simplified models proposed by other authors. Its application in practice is illustrated with reference to retail feasibility analysis.

The model systematically examines each of the following elements: concerns of the stakeholders, proposed development, property characteristics and market characteristics. Information on each element is obtained and analysed to determine whether the project is likely to meet its objectives. In retail feasibility analysis, market analysis is often the critical element.

1. INTRODUCTION

The real estate literature has a dearth of simple yet comprehensive conceptual models of feasibility analysis. James Graaskamp's classic framework is comprehensive and has been adopted widely, but it is not easy to conceptualise (Graaskamp, 1970). In referring to Graaskamp's work, Terry Grissom (1984:357) mentions "the chaos of a multitude of constraints". Over the years many authors have tried to refine Graaskamp's work, with varying success. Several have published simpler models of feasibility, often at the cost of being comprehensive. Significant examples include Brown (1971:89); Lex (1975:101); Rams (1976:35); McKeever and Griffin