

MATTSON SUNDERLAND



Women Employed by the City & County of Honolulu

A Focus Group Study

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The Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women
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Other important contributors include Director Jimmy Sato, Assistant Director Cynthia Bond, June Hashimoto, Gwynne Inamasu, and Lois Enomoto, Department of Civil Service; Director Carol Costa, Office of Information and Complaint; Director Victor Guillermo, Jr., Executive Assistant Ernie Martin and Planner Patti Cook, Department of Human Resources; and Salvatore Lanzilotti, Office of the Managing Director.

Chair Linda Colburn and her Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women colleagues Nanci Kreidman, Gerald Ohta, Christine Arakaki, Marilyn Moniz-Kahoohanohano, Martha Ross, Barbara Tavares, Cindy Yonover, Pat Boyd-Rivera, and Gay Timon provided focus group facilitation skills, editorial assistance and planning support throughout the project.

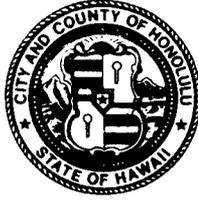
The University of Hawaii Office of the State Director for Vocational Education provided funds for the study data to be tabulated, analyzed and prepared by Mattson Sunderland Research and Planning Associates, Inc.

HONOLULU COUNTY COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
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August 27, 1992

Aloha,

The Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women has, as its principal mission, the responsibility to advocate on behalf of and for the advancement of the status of women. In keeping with this purpose, the HCCSW initiated a series of focus group discussions designed to identify work related issues of concern to female County employees.

The HCCSW facilitated discussions with departmental directors, deputies and randomly selected female employees of the City and County of Honolulu. Those discussions revealed a number of concerns and observations which are described in the findings which follow.

The report indicates that some of the problems identified by participants were related to variations in applying policy or to uneven communication rather than to an absence of appropriate policy. We believe that many of the issues detailed in the report are characteristic of large work forces that are diverse and have many work settings.

This report will also provide examples of instances where the City and County of Honolulu has demonstrated leadership in its practices and policies through its provision of innovative programs, not yet routinely available in other employment contexts.

The City administration's willingness to collaborate with the HCCSW in not only supporting the project but also in developing immediate and concrete responses to the findings is commendable and much appreciated. Several Civil Service initiatives, for example, have already been taken by the City in response to this joint endeavor.

We look forward to ongoing opportunities to advise the City administration, and to working with the dedicated personnel of the City.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Linda M. Colburn in black ink.

LINDA M. COLBURN, Chair
Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women

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Purpose and Methodology

The Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women (HCCSW) in 1990 initiated a project to solicit and examine issues affecting the quality of women's work lives as employees of the City and County of Honolulu. The objectives of the study were to:

- Identify the issues of concern and needs of women regarding their career advancement;
- Determine what obstacles are faced by women working for the County;
- Learn what contributes to a quality of work life that supports and challenges women on the job;
- Examine what training and skill enhancement would increase productivity and lead to promotion; and
- Determine what assistance can be provided by HCCSW which is not currently being offered by the administrative structure of the City and County.

To accomplish these objectives, a three-part research study was designed: Phase I examined the attitudes and experiences of City department heads and deputies through holding focus group discussions with them; Phase II implemented similar focus groups, but this time with female personnel selected at random from a roster of City employees; Phase III surveyed the focus group participants using a self-administered document, giving women the opportunity to express any opinions they were not able to bring up in the group sessions. Each of these phases is described in detail below.

Phase I—Department heads and deputies

Although the original research design called for holding these administrative focus groups with female department heads and deputies only, it was later decided that the project would be incomplete unless the insights and impressions of male administrators were also included. Thus, eight women and 25 men eventually took part in the four discussion sessions held with department heads and deputies of the City and County of Honolulu. The groups were stratified by sex.

The sessions were held on December 4, 1990, January 29, 1991, and March 5 and 19, 1991, in the Mayor's Conference Room at Honolulu Hale. Each one was approximately an hour and a half in duration. The remarks of the participants were tape recorded for later analysis.

The topic outline for the groups was developed by the Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women, and the sessions were moderated by Linda Colburn, Vice Chair of the HCCSW. Notes taken during the meetings were circulated to participants for their review and comment. A summary featuring the

highlights of the discussion sessions was prepared and forwarded to the Mayor and his cabinet members.

Phase II—Women employees

A total of 66 women took part in the focus group research among employees, each attending one of eight different sessions that were held in the period from October 15 through 30, 1991.

The following criteria were established for participant selection. Four employees from each County department were to be named to the groups. Within departments, the names of all female employees were put into one of two different sets: 1) Service providers, which included officials and administrators, professionals, paraprofessionals and technicians, and 2) Service supporters, including protective services, office and clerical or administrative support, skilled craft, and service and maintenance personnel. Equal numbers of employees were then selected randomly and without bias from each of the two sets to provide a good cross-section of personnel by age, position, ethnicity, and other variables. A letter subsequently sent to potential participants made clear that attendance at the sessions and participation in the project was voluntary.

Two focus groups sessions per day, each lasting approximately an hour and a half, were held on October 15, 16, 17 and 30, at the Honolulu Municipal Building. The topic outline for the groups was designed by HCCSW, and these sessions were also moderated by Linda Colburn of the Honolulu County Committee. The discussions were tape recorded for later analysis.

Phase III—Self-administered survey

At the close of each focus group with female employees, a survey instrument was passed out for women to complete at that time, if they wished, or take with them and return later, if they preferred to fill it out in private. A completed questionnaire was eventually received from each of the 66 participants.

The survey was designed by HCCSW, following a model from a 1976 study of women in Civil Service in Hawaii.¹ The document was shortened for ease of analysis, and revised to reflect current circumstances. A copy is included in the appendix section of this report.

At the close of the three stages of research, a consulting firm, Mattson Sunderland Research and Planning Associates, Inc., was retained by the HCCSW to analyze the information gathered, and prepare a report documenting the research findings, using the completed survey questionnaires and focus group tapes and transcriptions as the basis for any conclusions drawn.

¹Survey & Marketing Services, Inc., *A Study of Perceived Career Barriers to Women in Government*, prepared for the Department of Personnel Services, State of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1976.

The Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women was therefore responsible for the design and execution of the research study. Mattson Sunderland Research and Planning handled the tabulation of the questionnaire data, the analysis of the focused discussions and the development of the final study report.

Findings are discussed on the pages to follow.

**Comments and Caveat
City Department of Civil Service**

The Department of Civil Service appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women's survey on "Women Employed by the City and County of Honolulu: A Focus Group Study." Participants were invited to give candid comments regarding their perceptions of "obstacles that interfere with the quality of their work life or impede their ability to realize career advancement and promotion." (see page 11)

While the study represents perceptions and experiences of only 3.2% of the City's 2,035 female employees and is, therefore, not "statistically projectable" to the larger population, it has sensitized our department to a number of issues of key concern to women employed by the City. (see page 4)

In reviewing the report, the Department of Civil Service learned that at least some City employees misunderstood, or were unaware or uninformed of important policies, rules and programs directly impacting their work. In response to these findings, the Department will take action to ensure more comprehensive dissemination of such information.

The reader is invited to refer to the Appendix, which was prepared by our department in collaboration with the HCCSW, and appears at the end of this report. It is intended to provide the reader with an enhanced understanding of selected personnel processes, practices, and existing solutions which pertain to some of the concerns raised in this report.

Other important issues which may require more lengthy treatment or explanation will be addressed in future Civil Service-sponsored employee training and publications.

Lastly, this report also contains observations which reaffirm the value of progressive initiatives taken by the City and County regarding such programs as the City's child care center, parental leave, flex time, and training opportunities. We view this exercise as an additional resource to strengthen our ongoing efforts to enhance the overall quality of the workplace for employees of the City and County of Honolulu.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The detailed report on the pages to follow describes the outcome of three separate but complementary efforts: focus groups held with City and County of Honolulu department heads and deputies of both sexes; focus groups with randomly selected female employees of the City and County; and a survey administered to the women employees who also took part in the focus group discussions.

All three phases had the same objective: to examine the quality of the worklives of women employed by the City, and to discuss what actions might mitigate or eliminate any obstacles identified.

As with all qualitative research, the findings to be presented in this report are to be viewed as indicative rather than definitive. The group discussion technique is used in marketing and public policy research as a means of developing insights and direction based on the opinions and experiences of participants. Even when an unbiased method of selection is used to recruit those who take part—as was the case here—the results are not statistically projectable to larger populations because of the limited sample sizes involved as well as the group dynamic itself: that one participant's observations may influence another's, and not all who take part are equally expressive. (Since the survey, too, was limited to only the 66 women who participated in the discussions, those findings must also be used as only a broad guideline about workplace experiences.)

That said, it is also true that focus group studies uncover information that no other research method is likely to reveal. The time allotted to the discussion, the rapport that develops between the moderator and participants, and the "safety" of the setting, all lead to candor in reporting experiences and an in-depth examination of opinions held. If something is expressed by one, two or several persons in a focus group, we no longer have to wonder whether that event occurs; we know it does because that number has reported it. The limitation of a focus group study is that percentages cannot be attached to these observations, and therefore we cannot know whether it is 10 percent, 20 percent or 90 percent of the larger population that holds an identical perception.

The emphasis in a focus group study is primarily on the quality of what the participants express and the intensity of feelings they describe. Nevertheless, the importance of any observation becomes more pronounced when it emerges spontaneously in every group or if there is significant and enthusiastic agreement among most participants—as was often the case in these sessions.

The analysis of these focus groups makes no attempt to validate the accuracy of any opinions expressed about City government, Civil Service regulations and

practices, or any other matter that came up for discussion. The critical findings from a focus group discussion come from what participants believe is true, and what they say they have observed or experienced. Those perceptions may or may not coincide with actual administrative policies or workplace regulations.

Findings

Strongly parallel findings emerged from the two sets of focus groups, the sessions with department heads and deputies and the ones with rank-and-file female employees. Virtually every issue described by employees as an obstacle to career advancement for women was echoed by at least some of the administrators. The paragraphs below briefly synopsize the principal issues identified through the research, and some of the solutions proposed.

- **Maternity, child care, and family obligations**

Widespread agreement emerged that in two-parent households the care of the family remains most often in the hands of the female and in single-parent homes it is usually the mother who has custody of the children. Those obligations are viewed by both administrators and employees as one of the principal barriers to women's advancement. Managers and supervisors are reportedly sometimes reluctant to hire or promote women who may be absent for family reasons, and some women may forgo advancement because of the tug of war they feel between the needs of their children and their commitment to the job.

Maternity, too, was thought to be part of the same issue—that leave provisions for expectant and new mothers are limited and managers may be wary of taking on women who may be absent in the future because of pregnancy. (In the survey, one third of the women said they believed that the possibility of pregnancy is or has been a barrier to their advancement.)

A number of solutions were proposed to address these family responsibilities. Some department heads suggested that maternity leave for women be treated the same as military leave for men: an obligation that the employer is bound to support. Others thought there was more to be done in areas such as job sharing, flexible work hours, and granting the ability to work at home, to assist new mothers and mothers of young children to responsibly fulfill both their career and child-rearing commitments.

Assistance in finding satisfactory and affordable child care was another area where many felt the employer should help shoulder the burden. Suggestions here included City-subsidized care, priority standing to get into the HMB day care facility, off-site care centers for the children of City employees who work at remote locations, and help in locating care for infants and toddlers.

Importantly, the women called for an attitudinal change in the organization, one that recognizes the societal expectation that females should provide primary care for the family, and supports them in doing so.

- **Absence of upward mobility for women**

It was not uncommon for group participants to acknowledge the protection against sex discrimination that Civil Service affords; in both the department heads' sessions and the employee sessions it was said that it is more often the private sector where discrimination against women is routine and unchallenged.

Nonetheless, there are institutionalized practices within the City and County, participants said, that may also interfere with women rising to their full potential, despite the "sex-blind" mandates of Civil Service.

Included here were: 1) woman-dominated positions such as clerical continue to be undervalued because of their historical linkage with the female sex; 2) there is no clear upward path out of the lower SR's; 3) there are still male strongholds—both in certain departments and in occupations that are non-traditional for women—where it is difficult for females to gain entry; 4) role models and mentoring are less relevant to women because most of the top appointed positions, as well as managerial and supervisory jobs, are held by males. (Regarding that latter issue, the women who had reached department head or deputy status usually credited the support of a mentor as a critical factor in their eventual success.)

In the employee survey, 83 percent of the women agreed either strongly or somewhat that women must do better than men to get the same professional recognition, and 74 percent agreed that promotional opportunities go more often to men than to women.

Employer-sponsored training and education were viewed by many as the key to bettering the status of women working in the City and County. (The survey results showed that nearly nine out of every 10 women would like further training, even if they had to attend the classes on their own time.)

Included in the educational desires cited were training in leadership and managerial skills; the ability to attend City-sponsored classes for positions above the one presently held; an introduction to non-traditional jobs in public safety and other areas; and tuition subsidies toward undergraduate and graduate degrees.

One clear finding in the area of education and training was that the women were generally uninformed about what the City offers now, and what steps they would need to take to qualify for and be admitted to existing programs. Some believed there to be inconsistent practices from department to department, with the top administrator in each one being the arbiter for employee access to training.

In addition to wanting ways to increase their knowledge and skills, participants also asked for a reassessment of all Civil Service policies, with an eye toward those that may have a particular impact on women. In particular they were of one voice in asking that accrued expertise gained through on-the-job experience be given more credence in determining opportunities for promotion—

at least as much as the degree that is allegedly the minimum qualification for most positions above clerical.

- **Sex-based stereotyping and sexual harassment**

One notable difference between these 1991 focus group discussions and the ones held in 1976, was that women then often tended to assign their lack of upward mobility to what they called "women's traits"—such things as being emotional, "picky," weaker and less able than men to grasp "the big picture." Self-disparaging remarks of that kind were noticeably absent from the 1991 sessions comprised of female department heads and employees.

Nevertheless, the subject of role stereotyping as a career impediment—as well as an irritation—was brought up a number of times, and attitudes clearly persist about certain tasks belonging to the purview of women rather than to all personnel. Both the administrators and the rank-and-file employees said that it is still women who are turned to when there are parties to be planned, telephones to be answered, meeting notes to be taken in a secretary's absence, coffee to be made, and clean-up chores to be done. Women are then caught in a dilemma where they would like to be viewed as helpful and cooperative, but find it hard to ignore the injustice in such requests.

The topic of the annual Christmas tree competition and display emerged spontaneously in several of the sessions as an example of a task that was to be done cooperatively by men and women both but in reality has most often fallen to the women to execute, even when they must perform the work on their free time.

Sexual harassment was touched on briefly in several of the focus group discussions but was not examined in depth, perhaps because of considerations of privacy.

In the survey, however, more than one fourth of the respondents told of experiences they've had at the City and County that they consider sexual harassment. Few reported the incident or incidents, they said, mainly because they were convinced that the consequences would affect them more than the instigator, or because they believed their complaint would not be taken seriously.

Some women also discussed a prevailing sexist attitude in their work environment where jokes and demeaning remarks about women's temperament and physiology are commonplace and participated in by all levels of personnel including the top administrators. While they acknowledged that such behavior may not spring from any malicious intent, it is offensive nonetheless, they said. "We must work on men's attitudes" was the closing remark of one participant.

These and other findings of the research are discussed in depth on the pages to follow.

Focus Group Discussions With Department Heads and Deputies

The four focus group discussions with cabinet-level administrators resulted in a listing of 20 areas where women were seen to be at a disadvantage or subject to discrimination, and where remedial actions should be undertaken. These are featured in the section to follow.

The areas of concern were developed not only from the remedies and opportunities suggested by those who see inequities in place, but also from descriptions of physical, emotional or attitudinal limitations of women that some administrators believe they've observed. Among the latter were:

- Women have trouble managing because they are oversensitive, take things more personally than men and retain hurts and grudges for a long time.
- Women may be endangered if sent to assignments in remote areas.
- Women aren't aggressive enough for some positions that require them to exercise authority over men.
- Women do not have the physical strength and stamina for some non-traditional occupations such as in certain areas of public safety.
- Women may be satisfied where they are and don't want greater responsibility.
- Extended maternity leave, and part-time and flexible time positions for new mothers are not reasonable expectations because of the burden placed on organizational resources.

In general, though, those were minority views, voiced most often by male administrators. The full range of problems identified and solutions offered are documented below.

Perceptions of Career Barriers for Women

Maternity and child care needs

- Maternity leave provisions are limited. The current system does not ensure that a female can return to her job after maternity leave with the same career momentum that existed prior to her leave. She loses time from the job and may lose benefits, e.g. retirement, etc. The established and approved policies that provide for military leave for men should be expanded to encompass women's need for time off for childbirth and recovery.
- Child care is a more serious problem for female workers than male workers. The existing systems do not provide adequate quality child care to support female workers if their children become ill, nor is there an adequate child care system to care for children while mothers work. Therefore, female workers, who are most usually responsible for child care, are more likely to take time

off from their careers in order to care for their children since societal expectations persist that females should provide primary care for the family. Males are less likely to request or take time off from their jobs in order to care for children.

Role stereotyping and discriminatory attitudes

- In general, men appear to get better assignments from their male bosses.
- Women managers and directors are often viewed as figureheads and sometimes encounter resistance from male as well as female subordinates until they "prove" themselves.
- Women who have come up through the ranks believe they realize a lower level of respect than men in the same situation.
- People still expect women to function as secretaries if a secretary is absent in a group meeting, regardless of the status of the women in relation to less senior males present.
- Opportunities for women are lessened when managers or supervisors assume that women will become pregnant and as a consequence will be absent for extended periods every few years. The expectation that women won't be there when needed sometimes results in preferences favoring males in hiring and promotion.
- Both male and female middle managers should be trained to be sensitive to women's needs related to job requirements, discrimination and other factors.

Male strongholds

- Women in the City and County are not fully aware of the full range of opportunities to pursue nontraditional work, nor are they fully aware of the educational and/or experience requirements to qualify for employment in these nontraditional assignments.
- There are other established male strongholds such as in planning, business administration, public works and public safety. Women encounter even more difficulty moving through the ranks in these areas due to the perceived limitations associated with female candidates.

Training, promotion and earnings

- Pay disparity appears to exist between men and women who perform the same caliber of work and who have similar work experience.
- Women appear not to be seeking or securing the education and/or training that would qualify them for managerial positions. Males acquire/accumulate skills in military service and through other means that afford them an advantage when competing for positions which are supervisory in nature. These opportunities to acquire leadership skills are not as readily available to women.

- There is a need to provide training to prepare women for promotion to upper level management positions that would emphasize developmental supervisory skills, assertiveness training and communication. Since there exist assumptions about the need to exercise authority in certain positions, this training should emphasize non-confrontational, non-competitive approaches to leadership.
- Existing policies which enhance promotability of female workers should be reinforced by adding more educational opportunities, stronger outreach, more aggressive recruitment, provision of additional support and the creation of career mentoring relationships.
- The Civil Service recruitment system should continue its current efforts to actively seek out qualified women and increase their distribution throughout the workforce.
- Women who have not had leadership roles need to learn more about discipline, goal setting and motivation in the workplace.

Sexual harassment

- Sexist attitudes toward women exist throughout the workplace and take the form of comments and jokes about pregnancy, female sickness and female temperament. While many of these comments are made in a joking manner they nonetheless adversely affect the self esteem of female workers, according to participants' remarks.
- Sexual harassment is still a problem which detracts from the quality of the work experience. This has been reported by male as well as female workers. The scarcity of females in managerial positions, however, makes this more of a problem for women. While situations are sometimes inadvertently created because men do not recognize that these behaviors are offensive, the persistence of this conduct creates unnecessary legal liability for the County.

Cultural discrimination

- There are cultural, ethnic and racial influences that affect hiring and promotion in some departments. These cultural preferences arise from familiarity. At times it appears that recruitment for the purpose of building a "team" implies ethnic homogeneity of membership in that team.

Focus Group Discussions With Female Employees

The purpose of the research reported on these pages was to bring together women employees of the City and County in a forum where they could identify and discuss any obstacles that interfere with the quality of their work life or impede their ability to realize career advancement and promotion.

To that end, eight focused discussion sessions were held among women employees of the City and County of Honolulu. A random process was used to ensure the unbiased selection of individuals from the various county departments, and to provide a good cross-section by age, marital status, ethnicity, position, tenure, SR level, and so on. In all, 66 women took part in the focus groups.

The paragraphs to follow present a synopsis of the principal issues the participants introduced, and the main points made about each of those issues. It should be noted, however, that over the eight sessions there were scores of different topics, problems, and experiences brought up which a volunteer recorder committed to paper during the groups. Those lists are shown in their entirety in the appendix section of this report.

This narrative, however, will address only the primary areas of concern, the issues that were discussed in depth or with particular conviction, or which emerged in several or all of the sessions. Among these were:

- the conflict between at-home and on-the-job responsibilities
- role stereotyping
- low pay in woman-dominated positions
- a lack of upward mobility for support and clerical staff
- inadequacy of in-service training, cross-training and educational programs to enhance skills
- the need to reconsider the basic premises underlying the civil service system and reframe classifications considering accrued expertise, knowledge and comparable on-the-job experience.

Conflict between work and family

This issue was brought up in every session and, just as in 1976, when the benchmark study on job-related issues for women was done, was viewed as one of the primary impediments to career advancement. Although it may particularly affect young mothers, some of the women pointed out that it's a long-term problem, that by the time a person's children are grown she may be facing elder care for a parent, or is by then close enough to retirement to feel that advancement and greater responsibility are no longer worthwhile or attainable objectives.

Participants said that both supervisors and co-workers often show resentment toward those who take leave for family reasons, and that women who do so may be at a disadvantage in vying for higher-level responsibilities. Some said there are supervisors, managers and even department heads who openly appraise a candidate's likelihood of being absent for maternity leave or child care before hiring or promoting female applicants.

The following comments² illustrate the tug of war women feel between family and job. As shown, most believe that since the role of family caregiver is likely to continue to fall to women, the employer should recognize this obligation and provide support for it:

"I think for a lot of women, especially when you're younger, families become the first priority, whereas for men, they're free to do whatever they have to, to go up the career ladder. They don't have to come home from work and cook and clean and whatever. If the children get sick, who takes off to go see the doctor? It's not the male; I see very few males in doctors' offices. Generally you don't have a great deal of time to devote to your career until the children are older and by that time, you're thinking of retirement."

"There's bias in terms of women going on maternity leave and who take off to be with the children. I don't know how to deal with that. It's a stereotype (about women) but it often is a reality: children get sick, children keep (us) out. I think it's something that should be accepted and dealt with. We all have lives outside our office and women often do have to take off, but I don't think it should be held against (us). Someone's got to do it."

"I work with mostly males, and it's hard because I have kids and I take off more than they do. If my kids are sick—I have young children—I have to stay home while my husband goes to work. I feel guilty about that because the men (I work with) never have to take off for child care, their wives do. I'm lucky because my supervisor has several kids, so he kind of understands but...the other men, I don't think so."

"These periods are not forever. You may have a year's period, or several years' period where you're involved with some kind of home-care issue. If the County were supportive, I think you'd have better employee retention. The supervisor takes the lead, and if the supervisor is supportive, the other (workers) are apt to feel less critical. They'll know that if they have any of those kinds of problems later on, tolerance would be shown to them too."

"When a child is sick, or some other family member is sick, who takes the time off? It is always the female. The husband goes to work on his merry way, as usual. When she does that, takes the time for sick children, she cannot take sick leave, she has to use vacation. There's nothing for her to fall back on."

²Remarks are presented verbatim except for occasional editing to enhance readability.

"I think child care is really important, but elder care is going to be too. More of us are going to have those responsibilities and that will affect us at work. Lots of care givers are employed and stressed out. We will need to have resources available, flexible hours and support for the situation."

Maternity leave was discussed as part of this issue, too. Group participants reported that the City and County does not have a maternity leave policy and therefore women are obliged to use sick leave to cover childbirth and the post-natal period. Some of them thought that the private sector was more progressive in that regard, with policies more lenient and supportive of the family than City government's. A couple of persons said it's not uncommon to return from childbirth and find one's job altered in some way that has a negative impact. One woman said:

"I'm personally surprised that pregnancy is still such a big issue for women (at the City) as a career barrier. You still hear of people who say 'I got pregnant and when I came back they moved me to another department,' or 'When I came back I got moved out into the country,' or 'I don't get to do the same job that I did before.' I don't think that just because you go away to have a child that you should come back and not have your same job. You should be able to take up right where you left off, obviously."

While recognizing that the home vs. work conflict is societal rather than strictly organizational, participants thought there clearly were actions their employer could take to help women fill both roles responsibly without sacrificing career for family, or family for career. Among the suggestions were:

- Establish policies dealing with maternity leave, ensuring that the mother's position, duties or opportunities for advancement are not compromised for using that benefit.
- Attempt to provide part-time work or shared-job positions for new mothers who require or desire additional postpartum time at home.
- Adopt measures that permit women to "pay back" any time spent with sick children through working off hours or completing assignments at home.
- Grant sick leave time for family illness or establish a parental leave program.
- Permit women to bring mildly ill children to work with them, and/or establish a sick-child care facility on or near the premises.
- For long-term illness in the family, permit job-sharing, flex time, work at home or leave time that will not jeopardize the position held.
- Ensure that supervisors handle these situations compassionately.

Finally, child care was brought up in virtually every session too, and though the City was congratulated for establishing a facility on the premises, many believe

there is more to be done and cited their own difficult situations as evidence. Their needs included:

- Access to a “clearing-house” of information about available child care resources and alternatives.
- Care options for infants and toddlers.
- Priority standing to get into the HMB facility; discounted rates there for City and County employees
- Employer-subsidized care for children of single mothers and others who are not able to pay care fees on their own.
- On-location care for children of City and County workers whose job locales are distant from City Hall and its central day care facility.

One woman brought up the struggle that single mothers have in fulfilling job demands, tending to the children, and also having sole responsibility for all aspects of running a household. She observed that there are many others at the City in her situation who would benefit from an employer-sponsored guide to child care resources, home and yard repairs and maintenance, where to get male companionship for fatherless children, and the whole realm of services needed by women who may find it difficult to perform on the job because of the other pressures on their time as heads of household.

Role stereotyping

Although there was far less talk about role stereotyping in the 1991 focus groups, compared to 1976, the tendency for women to be viewed as the ones to take notes at meetings, provide coffee and refreshments for male employees, and perform other “female duties” has not entirely disappeared, according to these discussions.

One facet of that, an irritation that emerged spontaneously and was hotly discussed in several of the sessions, is the work that women are expected to do on behalf of the Mayor’s annual Christmas tree display at City Hall. It began on a smaller scale, participants said, and at first was an event in which all employees were to lend a hand, but it has now evolved into a lengthy and time-consuming chore where women have been expected to take the lead role, even when it is on their own time.

“Well, I don’t know how other women feel, but this annual Christmas tree thing that we have is something I want to bring up. The ladies in our section are always the ones that have to take part, we have to make the ornaments and it’s not like it is a voluntary thing. One year we were ordered to do it by our department head. It’s always the ladies. Why can’t the men? We aren’t happy about having to do that.”

"Can I throw in one more thing? You know the Mayor has this big event, this Christmas tree celebration thing. That drives me crazy! You're trying to get something done and the staff, for two months they're busy with the Mayor's thing. It's gotten out of hand. And there's real pressure on you, that you have to do this. It used to be a voluntary thing, but not any more."

"You know this Christmas tree thing? Well, it takes a lot of time, a lot of money, and you have to take stuff home to work on. You're not supposed to be doing it during work time, although a lot of people do. Most of the women end up doing it all. Some men are good, and help, but most refuse, so the women end up doing the Christmas tree work."

Some participants said, too, that no matter what a woman's job level or position is, she is far more likely than a man to be expected to perform secretarial tasks, answer the telephone, do clean-up duties or other jobs traditionally thought of as "women's things." That causes discomfort because the women want to be cooperative but at the same time perceive injustice in such requests. As one said:

"It puts women in such a difficult position. They would like to say no, but they also want to show they are cooperative, and a team player. Men don't get asked to do those things so they aren't put in that position so much. They should ask themselves: 'Are you asking this person to do this because of the fact they're a woman? Would you feel as comfortable asking a man in the same position to do what you're asking the woman to do?'"

Inequality in women-dominated positions

One participant called the City and County "sex blind," saying that the regulations imposed by Civil Service ensure that sex is not a factor in hiring or promoting employees. Others too, observed that gender discrimination occurs less frequently in government than in the private sector, in their experience.

But despite those perceptions, there was probably no topic discussed at greater length in the sessions, or with more conviction, than the inadequate pay women employees of the City and County receive, and the limitations in advancement they experience. Most did not see this as outright sex discrimination, but rather a reflection of a larger, societal attitude that undervalues the positions filled by females. While Civil Service may indeed be sex blind, they said, women are usually in non-hierarchical classifications where salaries are at the low end of the scale and there is limited upward mobility.

"It's not just hard to get ahead, it's that even if you have more education, or if you go out for your master's degree or whatever, there's still no place, no means of awarding the next step up for training or for gaining another skill. The entry-level job, entry-level pay in female-dominated jobs, I think, is very low, terribly low."

"If I could talk to him (Mayor Fast), right off the bat I'd say upgrade the salary range of all the clerk typists, which are mainly occupied by women."

"The blue collar workers get paid more than clerical because they do physical work while you do mental work. When I was with the State, the delivery men made more money than I did, even though I could do their job but they could not do mine. That's why I'm not with the State anymore. (The pay inequity) is because blue collar have always been male jobs and clerical have always been female jobs. That happened a long time ago, the differences in wages, and they've always kept it that way."

"The clerk typists are usually the lowest on the rung and yet we do so much. Without us as a base, they wouldn't get far. They downgrade us so much, I don't understand it, even when we are delegated so many different duties and the volume is there."

Many of the focus groups participants were in clerical or support positions and those jobs in particular were viewed as virtually impossible to break out of:

"Once you get into a class, you tend to have to stick to that class. When you join the City you just take what's available at that time and (once there) it's very difficult to break out."

"I've been in the secretarial field for a long time; I started as a clerk typist. I feel that if you're a professional, say a civil engineer, when you get your license you are automatically reallocated. They send the forms in, and it comes back a week later and you get it. In the secretarial field, you have to wait until somebody dies!"

"I know some of our clerk typists are actually doing fiscal work—a lot of bookkeeping with money involved, big money. It's still a lousy SR8. Figure it out! I can't!"

Regarding that last point, there were numerous complaints that clerical workers' tasks are gradually extended and upgraded, but that no reclassification or promotion follows, that there exists in most position descriptions the phrase "and other related duties," which excuses the assignment of duties which may extend far beyond the originally agreed upon job description.

There was some discussion of the better pay and promotional opportunities in career paths that have not been traditional for women—firefighting, police work, wastewater management, parks maintenance, and so on—and what it is that keeps greater numbers of women from seeking those positions. A participant with personnel experience thought that the limitations were mainly self-imposed, that women were welcomed in those jobs but seldom go after them. Another who currently is in a non-traditional job cautioned that women must insist that physical performance tests in those areas be upheld for both sexes, that a relaxing of

standards to attract more females may have the paradoxical effect of acting against women by giving the men a rationale for opposing their entry into those fields.

Finally, a couple of women said that the Mayor could set a better example by naming qualified females to department head positions other than what one person labeled "the insignificant departments" that traditionally are assigned to that sex.

Throughout the discussion about the lack of opportunities in women-dominated fields, two foundations for change were expressed frequently: that the City and County needs more training programs to help women gain skills, and that Civil Service regulations should be reviewed and revamped. These two concepts are discussed below.

Training and education

The survey results featured in the report section to follow show that nearly 90 percent of the focus group participants said they'd attend employer-sponsored classes, even if they had to do so on their own time. The single type of education most desired, according to the survey responses, was leadership training: the opportunity to learn administrative, supervisory or managerial skills. These desires were brought up often in the focus group discussions too. Among the education and training needs expressed in the groups were:

- **Access to training for higher positions**—A difficulty that some of the women brought up is that City-sponsored training for employees is often limited to classes and seminars directly related to one's current position. The women asked, therefore, for improved access to programs that will prepare them to advance into new areas rather than simply focusing on performance in an existing position.
- **Familiarization seminars for women interested in non-traditional occupations**—It was suggested that additional women may seek careers in non-traditional occupations—police work, firefighting and the like—if they, through seminars, gained a better understanding of what it takes to qualify, and what the salaries, working conditions, and advancement possibilities are within those fields. Seminars, they said, would serve to familiarize those who may be hesitant to investigate these opportunities on their own.
- **Adequate trainings to meet the demand**—Some women told of signing up for various classes and seminars, but rarely getting in because demand exceeds the slots available. They believe the employer should boost the number of trainings to give everyone a better chance of participating within a reasonable time, or even out distribution of limited training opportunities to more employees.

- **Classes in supervisory and leadership skills for women only**—The participants acknowledged that training in supervisory skills exists now, but thought there should also be such classes for women only, where the sexes are not mixed. They said that women face special challenges when supervising men, and therefore need instruction tailored to those circumstances.
- **Tuition subsidies toward undergraduate and graduate degrees**—Some private sector companies encourage university attendance by employees through help with tuition, participants said, and they would like the City and County to consider a similar program whereby tuition costs would be reimbursed for courses successfully completed.

One person also wondered whether it would be possible for City government to secure reduced tuition or tuition waivers for its employees who would like to attend UH.

- **Flex time for employees taking classes on the outside**—Women from certain departments said that their department heads already permit personnel to make up any hours taken from the job to attend daytime classes at UH or elsewhere. If that is not a consistent practice from department to department, as some women thought, they'd like to see it changed to apply across the board.

Based on what was said in the discussion sessions, information about educational benefits currently available to City and County employees is not always widely disseminated, nor are people certain of how to make known their training desires or how to apply for consideration. It was suggested that a brochure to clarify these matters be developed and distributed to all personnel.

Civil Service

The rigid structure of Civil Service and its regulations were viewed by participants as a two-edged sword. On the one hand a number of women observed that it is comforting to have the protection of such an overseer, that some of the abuses they've seen in the private sector—such as women being offered less pay than male predecessors earned for an equal position—aren't likely to occur in Civil Service.

But on the other hand, women think the rigidity of the system also acts against creative solutions to some of the obstacles they perceive: that to advance they have to have a precise number of subordinates, for example, or a specific degree or a formal redefinition of duties, no matter how many years they've been on the job or how excellent their performance. The following are suggestions about areas of Civil Service the women would like reassessed, and the reasons behind their opinions.

- **Reallocation**—Participants pointed to inequities in the Civil Service standards for classification and reallocation. For professional positions, they said, reallocation occurs almost automatically at various anniversaries, whereas at the clerical levels the reallocation process is less clear and seemingly near to impossible to obtain.

"Professionals, you reach one year at the job and you get promoted, you reach two years and you get promoted. They have all these one year, two, three four, five (promotions). With secretaries you have a clerk typist, clerk steno, senior clerk steno, and that's it. There's no place to go because you're considered 'en masse.' You have, say, a thousand secretaries, and if I'm doing a good job I can't get promoted unless the whole thousand secretaries get promoted."

"Why isn't a secretary, even if she is certified, considered a professional after 25 years on the job?"

"I'm a control clerk one. Now how do you get to be a two? Well, a two has to have a certain number under her, that she supervises. However for the past six years I have supervised one, two, three people at a time. I don't have anybody now, but over a period of six years I have supervised at least a dozen. But that does not go to my credit."

"I think you kind of get the impression that it (Civil Service classifications) is written in stone some place and you can't ever change it. But I think it needs to be more open and have more interaction and more women have to get involved. We have investigators where we work and a lot of the investigators have me do a lot of their work, but I'm not getting investigator pay. They are SR 24's. And we have a lot of clerical that do paralegal work, and the highest they can go is a 16 whereas the paralegal can go to an 18 or a 20, yet a lot of the time the paralegal is doing clerical work."

- **Establish a way out for those in dead-end positions.** This includes the need for better training programs, but also that intermediary positions need to be established for clerical workers and others motivated to advance when there is no hierarchy or upward path in their present occupation.

"Because of the series I'm in, there's one job above me, and that's it. For people who are supervisors at a certain level, there's no place to go. You're getting stale but you don't want to retire. Maybe (Civil Service can) offer some other kinds of training or education where people can go into another area, another series, another field."

"We have three positions open and no one wants them because there's only one step possible, from a 14 to a 15. I don't blame them. I myself am thinking about going back to doing something that can be reclassified, even if I have to take a (step down)."

"In customer service we have a constant turnover in our reps because they just can't get ahead. If we had more steps it would create opportunities for advancement."

- **Eliminate the "shibai" from the selection process.** Despite the rigorous standards that Civil Service is mandated to follow in the matter of promotions, inequities nevertheless exist, participants said. They discussed the always-on-the-list people, the ones who turn up every time a position opens, but who may not really be interested in the job or have no chance to attain it. The ongoing presence of these "veterans" reportedly keeps out those who want or need the higher-level position, and their names are not purged from the roster except after a very long time and repeated appearances on limited-slot lists.

Another discouraging factor, some women said, is that the decision about who the job will go to is made far in advance of its award:

"I didn't want to say anything, but since it was brought up I will, since everybody comes to me (about it). What I've seen done is, you apply for a promotion and you go through this interview and you're nervous as hell. But actually the committee already knows who they want. To me that's a waste of time and it's bullshit! You have to go through all that and they already know this is who they want. People come and talk to me, from the other departments, and they say 'I applied, but they already knew who they wanted. So why did I go through all that?'"

It was therefore suggested that the selection panel include members from the private sector or the community at large. That way, people said, applicants and their credentials can be assessed without bias.

- **Close the loophole that permits contractual hires to displace civil servants.**

"I've seen positions that I qualify for being taken by students in graduate programs who are on contract working in our department. They did not have to take a civil service exam in order to get in, but still are gaining the experience that they will be credited with on their (eventual) application. In the meantime, I've spent 12 years getting my bachelor's degree and then I'm passed by because the Civil Service system allows these students to come in on contract. In the meantime, I'm getting older and when positions finally open up, they'll go to (one of these) younger persons."

- **Review position descriptions and classifications more frequently.** One participant claimed that her position was approaching its third decade without a review:

"When I die or retire or whatever, they're going to hire someone who will come in at the same level that I went out. I don't think that's right, I don't think that's the way it should be. The Civil Service has not reviewed the

position for 27 years, even though they were ordered by the Civil Service Commission to do so two years ago."

- **More serious evaluation of experience-based competency.** Many of the women began their careers with the City and County at a time when acquiring a college education was not the norm for most females. They said that now, with a bachelor's degree being the minimum qualification for most positions above clerical, they are shut out. They spoke of this as an injustice, believing that their accrued expertise supplies benefits of comparable value to the credentials of a recent graduate.

"If you have this amount of education they will put you in such-and-such a classification, but if you don't—if you have your years of experience instead—well, I'm sorry, but you gotta go to school and get this degree."

"Because you didn't have college you didn't get promoted. College was the in thing. And what is experience?"

"Let's talk about education versus experience. If my boss decides to leave, I would have to have a diploma. I would have had to graduate from college to get the position, even though I have been there for ten years."

- **Civil Service should be an advocate for the employee.** Some participants asserted that Civil Service was designed to serve an advocacy position on behalf of employees, but that its character and mission have changed over the years:

"Return it to what it was meant to be: an advocacy for the employee. Give Civil Service the right to teach people how to type 60 words a minute... whatever they need to be a secretary or whatever their next step is. Civil Service is now a complete police department for the employer, and that's not its intention."

"Civil Service, rather than just standing on policy, should revise policy. I really feel that right now Civil Service is just the palace guard. It's just out there on its own and there is no communication or interaction with the employees."

"When you go up for reallocation, Civil Service takes a position that's adversarial (to the employee)."

Finally, an observation made by a number of the research participants, one that was not particularly deemed a women's issue but rather a limitation of the Civil Service system overall, was the absence of incentive at the City and County of Honolulu. People noted that even though periodic evaluations are conducted, there is no reward for exemplary achievement and no penalty for failure. Thus, performance too often tends to level out at mediocrity—a situation not well tolerated by those who strive to succeed. Some comments in that regard were:

"It's time to overall clean house—every department. Every department should really be looked into from A to Z. Let's see what each worker is doing."

"Mediocrity is the norm, and anything beyond mediocrity is very frowned upon."

"Reward initiatives. The reward could be in-service training and opportunity for promotion, of course. It doesn't necessarily have to be monetary, it could be an opportunity to have more supervisory responsibilities so that you can enlarge your qualifications, or get perks, like being able to go to a conference, that are not salary increases."

Employee Survey

- The median age of the women was 44 years. A thirty-eight percent plurality was between 35 and 44 years of age.
- About six out of every ten were married and living with their spouses and another 24 percent were once married, but now are separated, divorced or widowed. Just a small handful, 17 percent, had never been married.
- The majority had children—most often one or two—but in most instances the children were either grown (18 or older) or in their teens. About 20 percent had young children and/or pre-teens (birth through 12 years of age).
- Overall, the women were well educated. Nearly half (47 percent) held a bachelor's degree or better, and another 27 percent had some education beyond high school (trade or business school, or some college) although they did not graduate from a four-year college. Just under one out of four had only high school or less (24 percent).
- Women of Japanese ancestry were the dominant ethnic segment represented in the study, accounting for 42 percent of the total. Caucasians were in distant second place at 21 percent.
- A fifty-three percent majority had been with the City and County of Honolulu 10 years or less. The median time of employment with the City was 9.4 years.
- A majority of the women (53 percent) were at salaries lower than SR20 (or the comparable wage scales applying to non-SR employees).

TABLE I: DEMOGRAPHICS

age	%	highest level of education	%
less than 25 years	2	high school or less	24
25 to 34	8	some college/trade/business school	27
35 to 44	38	bachelor's degree or better	47
45 to 54	24	no response	2
55 to 64	21	ethnicity	
no response	8	Caucasian	21
median age	44 yrs	Japanese	42
marital status		all others	29
single	17	no response	8
married	59	tenure with City & County	
divorced/widowed/separated	24	less than 5 years	21
number of children		5 to 10 years	32
none	26	11 to 20 years	27
one	18	more than 20 years	18
two	29	no response	2
three	15	current SR level*	
four	6	SR 7 to 12 (and WB's)	29
five	2	SR 13 to 19	24
no response	5	SR 20 to 28 (and EM-ES)	42
age of youngest child		no response	5
under 5 years	8		
5 to 12 years	12		
13 to 17 years	11		
18 years and above	39		
no children/no response	30	sample = 66	

*Personnel with designations other than SR (WB, EM, ES) were aggregated with SR's at comparative salaries because there were too few to protect their anonymity if shown separately.

Opportunities for promotion

A section of the questionnaire addressed the issue of promotion: whether the women had ever applied for a promotion that went to someone else; whether they would now apply if they qualified for a certain position; whether and what additional training they believe they need to gain advancement; and so on. The answers women gave are shown on Table 2, and discussed below.

TABLE 2: ATTITUDES TOWARD PROMOTION

applied for promotion but didn't receive it	%	would attend classes	%
yes	36	yes	89
no	64	no	9
		no response	2
(If yes) why not selected*		flexible hours would be . . .	
reason not made clear	25	a great advantage	30
person selected more qualified	21	of some advantage	11
didn't have influence	21	of no advantage	11
not qualified	17	already flexible	42
males preferred	8	no response	6
other	38		
subsample = 24		would work "on-call" basis to advance	
would apply for promotion if qualified		yes	45
yes	79	no	53
no	15	no response	2
depends	5	would seek promotion if quality day care provided	
no response	1	yes	32
need additional training to qualify		no	62
yes	36	no response	6
no	39	supervisors motivate female employees to seek promotion	
don't know requirements	21	yes	41
no response	3	no	51
		no response	8
<i>* sums to more than 100 due to multiple responses</i>		sample = 66	

- More than one third have applied for a promotion they did not receive (36 percent). About a quarter of them didn't know why the position went to another, but among those who thought they knew why, 38 percent blamed it on personal failings (17 percent said they weren't qualified for the job and another 21 percent said the successful applicant was more qualified).

Twenty-one percent said they "did not have influence in the right places," and eight percent said a male was preferred for the position.

Nine of the women penciled in a statement (categorized as "other" on the table) to explain why they thought they had been passed over. Their comments were:

"I was too important in the job I was doing."

"I'm not on the civil service list."

"I was promised a promotion after my maternity leave."

"I need to have more confidence in myself."

"My age."

"It's a dead-end classificatton."

"I didn't pass the test."

"I lacked seniority."

"A political applicant was picked."

- Nearly eight out of ten, however, said they would now apply for a promotion if the position was one they qualified for.

(The ones who would not apply gave a variety of reasons: they are satisfied with their present position, will be retiring soon, have home commitments that preclude additional job responsibilities, feel there's too much stress involved in advancement, or said they were already in the high position desired. Each reason was given by just one or two persons.)

There was about an equal split between those who believe they already possess the skills to be promoted and those who think they'd need additional training first (36 percent vs. 39 percent). Another 21 percent said they'd have to know more about the requirements before judging whether or not they are qualified without further training or education.

- Asked whether they would take, on their own time, an employer-paid training course as a foundation for promotion, nearly all of the women said they would (89 percent).
- Far fewer, though, (just 45 percent) indicated interest in working in an "on-call" position, even if doing so would advance their careers. The following reasons

were offered to explain why an on-call job would not attract most of the women:

family priorities (8 mentions)

I like my current set schedule. (3 mentions)

It would conflict with other commitments I have. (3 mentions)

It's too hard to get child care for on-call work. (2 mentions)

Working on call would/should not be a criteria for advancement. (2 mentions)

One mention each of:

It may conflict with my educational advancement.

All my time is taken up with my current job; there's always more to be done and accomplish there.

My work day is long and I need my own time.

I wouldn't be able to make plans.

I'm working only part time and that's all I can work.

I would do the work not for job advancement but because I wanted to.

I'm just not interested (in it).

- Most of the women would, however, find an advantage in flexible hours (or already work "flex" time). Forty-two percent now have the opportunity to work flexible hours if they want to, and another 41 percent would find that option either "a great advantage" or "some advantage," if offered in their departments. Only a small handful of women denied any interest in flex time.
- One third said that access to quality day care for their children would enhance their interest in promotion. Interestingly, many more women asked for day care than have young children at home. Thus, some of the childless may be planning to start families in the future; others may have answered in the affirmative out of concern for their co-workers' needs or because of grandchildren in the home (a review of individual questionnaires showed that some women with only grown children answered that access to day care would increase their likelihood of applying for a promotion).
- The final inquiry in the promotion section of the questionnaire asked respondents their opinion about whether "City and County supervisors actively encourage and motivate female employees to pursue promotions."
Only a minority—four out of every ten—believe that supervisors encourage women employees to advance. Fifty-one percent said they do not, and eight percent didn't respond to the question.
- A follow-up question to "(Would you) attend classes or take a training course... on your own time?" asked women to name the type of training or education

they thought would most improve their opportunities for promotion. Their responses are featured below, on Table 3.

TABLE 3 : TYPES OF TRAINING DESIRED

	no. of mentions
administrative/supervisory/management skills	13
computer classes	12
on-the-job technical training	5
business/secretarial skills	4
continuing education courses, general	4
personnel/human resources	3
finance/accounting	3
public relations	2
civil service overview	2
other/miscellaneous	8

As shown on Table 3, more women are interested in leadership training (administrative, managerial or supervisory skills) than any other form of preparation for advancement (named by 13 women). Computer training was in second place, with 12 mentions. All other training requests were cited by five or fewer respondents each.

- The final table in this section—Table 4—evaluates the SR ranking women have attained against their length of service with the City & County, their education and their ethnic background.

TABLE 4: SR RATING BY TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japanese	Caucasian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
SR 7 to 12	29	36	24	30	63	39	6	29	21	32
SR 13 to 19	24	14	29	27	25	28	23	21	21	26
SR 20 to 28	42	50	43	40	6	28	68	50	50	32
no response	5	—	5	3	6	6	3	—	7	11
sample	66	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

Tenure with the City seems generally unrelated to the level of SR a woman holds. Half of the respondents with less than five years of service are at a relatively high level (SR 20 to 28)—a marginally larger proportion than women with greater seniority.

Education is strongly correlated, however. Two-thirds of those with no education beyond high school are at an SR level of 12 or under, while two-thirds of the college graduates are SR 20's or above. Very few of the women who didn't go beyond high school are able to break the SR 12 barrier, according to these data, no matter what their length of service in the job.

There are higher proportions of Japanese and Caucasian women at the upper ranges of SR's (about half of those ethnic segments); the women categorized as "all others"—Filipinos, Hawaiians, etc.—more often are below an SR 20. Of course there may be an educational component to that too, since Caucasians and Orientals may have had a greater opportunity to get a college education and thus begin higher or advance faster because of that. (In fact, a cross-tabulation of education by ethnicity showed that while a majority of Caucasian and Japanese participants had bachelor's degrees or more, few of the others had gone beyond high school or business school.)

On-the-job conditions

A section of the questionnaire asked women to agree or disagree (strongly or somewhat) with six different assertions about negative on-the-job conditions and perceptions that may affect female workers and their ability to advance with the City & County.

- Table 5 presents an overview of responses to the six agree/disagree questions. The statements are presented from left to right on the table below, ordered by the greatest agreement to the least. Thus, that “Women usually have to do better than men to get the same amount of professional recognition” elicited the strongest agreement of any of the six assertions. Fifty-two percent strongly agreed that was true, and 32 percent agreed somewhat, for a total of 84 percent on the side of agreement with this assertion.

On Table 5 there is also a mean rating for each statement: the closer the rating is to “1”, the stronger the agreement with it.

TABLE 5: OPINIONS REGARDING ON-THE-JOB CONDITIONS

	women must do more for same professional recognition	men offered more promotional opportunities	some jobs are off-limits to women	males make more money than female counterparts	women discouraged from taking non-traditional jobs	possibility of pregnancy a barrier to advancement
	%	%	%	%	%	%
strongly agree	52	41	38	35	15	14
agree somewhat	32	33	21	26	26	18
disagree somewhat	3	2	8	9	12	8
strongly disagree	6	8	11	11	14	24
neither/no response	8	17	23	20	33	36
average rating*	1.78	2.00	2.32	2.33	2.83	3.11

* the closer to “1,” the greater the agreement with statement;
the closer to “5,” the greater the disagreement

In second place, about three out of every four women also agree—41 percent strongly, 33 percent somewhat—that “When men and women are working at the same level, men are more likely to be offered opportunities for promotion.”

About six out of every ten agreed that “Certain jobs seem to be off limits to women,” and “When men and women are working at the same level and have

similar qualifications, men seem to make more money than their female counterparts.”

Forty-one percent voted on the “agree side” and 26 percent on the “disagree side” to “Women are discouraged from applying for non-traditional jobs”—still more agreement than disagreement.

The final statement shown on the far right: “Discrimination on the basis of possible pregnancy and future maternity leave may be a barrier to my advancement” was the only one where there was a near balance between agreement and disagreement, with attitudes tipped toward the “strongly disagree” category. However, earlier-presented statistics showed that the average age of the respondents was 44 years, and that many of them have children who are grown; therefore it would be expected that these women would already have passed the time when their managers may fear they’d be subject to a possible pregnancy.

- Tables 6 through 11, to follow, again show responses to these statements, this time with the two agree categories and two disagree categories combined for ease of analysis, and the responses crosstabulated against women’s SR ratings, tenure, education and ethnicity.

The figures are interesting to review and there are some small differences in perception between segments. Differences have to be interpreted with caution, though, because the subsamples for most segments are quite small and therefore they may not be statistically relevant. For the most part, majority or plurality agreement is pretty consistent from group to group except when the reason for the different viewpoint is obvious. For example, only 13 percent of the women with more than 10 years seniority thought the possibility for pregnancy was a barrier, and of course that segment would be comprised of the ones who are most often beyond their child-bearing years.

TABLE 6: WOMEN MUST DO BETTER THAN MEN FOR SAME PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION BY SR-RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			—education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japan-ese	Cauca-sian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	83	79	75	89	93	90	73	88	72	87	86	93	79
disagree strongly or somewhat	9	16	13	4	7	5	13	13	17	3	7	—	11
neither/don't know/no response	8	5	13	7	—	5	13	—	11	10	7	7	11
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 7: MEN ARE OFFERED MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			—education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japan-ese	Cauca-sian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	74	74	88	68	86	76	70	81	72	71	75	79	68
disagree strongly or somewhat	9	10	—	11	7	—	13	6	11	10	11	—	11
neither/don't know/no response	17	16	13	21	7	24	17	13	17	19	14	21	21
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 8: CERTAIN JOBS ARE "OFF LIMITS" TO WOMEN BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japanese	Caucasian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	59	47	63	64	64	62	53	69	39	68	61	64	63
disagree strongly or somewhat	18	26	13	18	7	14	27	13	33	10	14	21	16
neither/don't know/no response	23	26	25	18	29	24	20	19	28	23	25	14	21
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 9: MEN MAKE MORE MONEY THAN FEMALE COUNTERPARTS BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japanese	Caucasian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	61	63	75	50	71	57	60	63	61	61	50	79	68
disagree strongly or somewhat	20	11	6	32	14	10	27	6	22	23	25	—	21
neither/don't know/no response	20	26	19	18	14	33	13	31	17	16	25	21	11
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 10: WOMEN ARE DISCOURAGED FROM NON-TRADITIONAL JOBS BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japan-ese	Cauca-sian	all others
agree strongly or somewhat	41	26	44	46	43	43	37	31	33	52	29	64	53
disagree strongly or somewhat	26	26	13	36	14	14	40	19	33	23	29	14	26
neither/don't know/no response	33	47	44	18	43	43	23	50	33	26	43	21	21
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 11: POSSIBILITY OF PREGNANCY IS A BARRIER TO ADVANCEMENT BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japan-ese	Cauca-sian	all others
agree strongly or somewhat	32	37	38	29	50	48	13	25	33	36	43	36	16
disagree strongly or somewhat	32	37	13	39	21	19	47	44	28	26	14	36	47
neither/don't know/no response	36	26	50	32	29	33	40	31	39	39	43	29	37
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

Perceptions of discrimination

A series of questions similar to the ones in the previous section were also featured in an agree-disagree format. This time seven statements about possible discriminatory factors were measured, along with an eighth that asked women whether or not household responsibilities interfere with their advancement at work. Responses here were not so one-sided as before; for most of the eight assertions the balance tipped toward the disagree side.

- Table 12 features all eight statements, again ordered from left to right by the strength of the agreement response, and showing an average rating at the foot of each column of figures.

Statements with average ratings of less than 3.0 are where more agreement exists; where the average rises above 3.0, the response is tipped to the disagree side. Thus, more agree than disagree that promotional opportunities are scarce in the respondent's own field, and that even additional training and better skills may not be rewarded with career advancement (62 percent agreed with the first statement; a 41 percent plurality agreed with the second).

TABLE 12: OPINIONS REGARDING BARRIERS TO ADVANCEMENT

	lack of promotional opportunities in field	more training would not help	political discrimination	discrimination on basis of age	discrimination on basis of sex	veterans preference policies	discrimination on basis of ethnicity	household responsibilities interfere
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
strongly agree	47	17	11	14	6	9	8	6
agree somewhat	15	24	20	15	20	14	6	9
disagree somewhat	11	17	17	21	24	11	26	17
strongly disagree	9	20	21	26	29	36	41	56
none/no response	18	23	32	24	21	30	20	12
average rating*	2.16	2.98	3.18	3.30	3.50	3.55	3.86	4.08

* the closer to "1," the greater the agreement with statement;
the closer to "5," the greater the disagreement

There is more disagreement than agreement, however, with each of the following: Political discrimination may be a barrier to my advancement (a 38 percent plurality disagreed); discrimination on the basis of age may be a barrier to my advancement (a 47 percent plurality disagreed); Discrimination on the basis of sex may be a barrier to my advancement (53 percent disagreement); Veterans Preference policies may be a barrier to my

advancement (a 47 percent plurality disagreed); Discrimination on the basis of ethnicity may be a barrier to my advancement (67 percent disagreed); and A higher level job would interfere with my responsibilities at home (73 percent disagreed).

- Tables 13 through 20 again break out these response by a number of personal and job characteristics of the women who participated: their SR, years of service with the City, education and ethnicity.

Here too, the differences between segments are usually not great and the subsamples are small and therefore not statistically reliable. Nonetheless, there are indications that women at the lower SR's, with only a high school education and an ethnic background other than Caucasian or Japanese, are less optimistic, not surprisingly, about their chance to advance. More of them agreed to the lack of opportunities in their field (presumably clerical, often), and that any additional training they'd get may not be rewarded. They also were more likely to agree that age discrimination is a barrier for them (other indications on that table point to the young as feeling more age discrimination, the ones who have been in their jobs the shortest time).

Sex discrimination was more frequently perceived by the better educated and by Caucasians, as was ethnic discrimination. Household responsibilities that interfere with career advancement appeared to be experienced more often by Japanese respondents than other ethnic groups.

TABLE 13: LACK OF PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN FIELD BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japan-ese	Cauca-sian	all others
agree strongly or somewhat	62	68	69	54	57	57	70	75	61	55	57	50	68
disagree strongly or somewhat	20	21	13	25	21	24	17	6	17	29	29	29	5
neither/don't know/no response	18	11	19	21	21	19	13	19	22	16	14	21	26
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 14: ADDITIONAL TRAINING/SKILLS WOULD NOT BRING ADVANCEMENT BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japan-ese	Cauca-sian	all others
agree strongly or somewhat	41	53	50	32	43	38	43	50	33	42	36	43	47
disagree strongly or somewhat	36	21	25	54	36	38	33	25	28	48	39	43	32
neither/don't know/no response	23	26	25	14	21	24	23	25	39	10	25	14	21
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 15: POLITICAL DISCRIMINATION IS A BARRIER TO ADVANCEMENT BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japanese	Caucasian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	30	21	31	36	7	43	30	25	17	42	32	36	32
disagree strongly or somewhat	38	53	25	39	43	19	50	38	50	32	36	36	42
neither/don't know/no response	32	26	44	25	50	38	20	38	33	26	32	29	26
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 16: AGE DISCRIMINATION IS A BARRIER TO ADVANCEMENT BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japanese	Caucasian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	29	47	31	18	43	24	27	38	44	16	32	21	26
disagree strongly or somewhat	47	37	50	57	43	38	57	44	44	48	46	43	47
neither/don't know/no response	24	16	19	25	14	38	17	19	11	35	21	36	26
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 17: SEX DISCRIMINATION IS A BARRIER TO ADVANCEMENT BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japan-ese	Cauca-sian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	26	16	38	25	29	29	20	25	17	32	25	36	26
disagree strongly or somewhat	53	58	31	61	50	52	57	63	61	45	50	50	58
neither/don't know/no response	21	26	31	14	21	19	23	13	22	23	25	14	16
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 18: VETERANS PREFERENCE POLICIES ARE A BARRIER TO ADVANCEMENT BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			— education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japan-ese	Cauca-sian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	23	26	19	18	29	24	17	19	17	29	29	14	26
disagree strongly or somewhat	47	53	44	46	36	38	60	63	61	32	46	36	53
neither/don't know/no response	30	21	38	36	36	38	23	19	22	39	25	50	21
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 19: ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION IS A BARRIER TO ADVANCEMENT BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			—education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japanese	Caucasian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	14	16	13	14	14	14	13	6	6	23	11	29	11
disagree strongly or somewhat	67	68	56	68	86	57	63	69	89	55	82	36	63
neither/don't know/no response	20	16	31	18	—	29	23	25	6	23	7	36	26
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

TABLE 20: HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES WOULD INTERFERE WITH PROMOTION BY SR RATING, TENURE WITH CITY & COUNTY, EDUCATION, AND ETHNICITY

	total	— SR rating —			— tenure —			—education —			— ethnicity —		
		7 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 28	less than 5 yrs.	5 to 10 yrs.	more than 10 yrs.	high school or less	some college, trade, or business school	bachelor degree or better	Japanese	Caucasian	all others
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
agree strongly or somewhat	15	21	—	21	21	24	7	6	17	19	29	7	5
disagree strongly or somewhat	73	74	75	71	79	62	77	88	78	61	54	86	84
neither/don't know/no response	12	5	25	7	—	14	17	6	6	19	18	7	11
sample	66	19	16	28	14	21	30	16	18	31	28	14	19

Sexual harassment

The questionnaire's final section asked women whether they had ever experienced sexual harassment while an employee of the City & County, and, if so, whether they had reported the incident and how the matter was resolved.

- More than one out of four women (29 percent) have experienced what they perceived to be sexual harassment at their City job (19 women out of the 66 interviewed).

TABLE 21: EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT WHILE EMPLOYED BY CITY & COUNTY

	%
yes	29
no	53
no response	18
sample = 66	

- The majority did not report the incident to their supervisor (five did so, 12 did not, two did not answer the question). Below are shown the reasons women gave for failing to report such incidents, presented just as they wrote them on the questionnaires. As shown below, most of the victims of harassment were convinced that making a report would cause more harm to themselves than to the instigator—label them a troublemaker or a “goody-goody,” or amount to a black mark on their record.

Why the incident wasn't reported...

“I didn't want a 'cry-baby,' 'super-sensitive' image.”

“Snide comments and jokes are expected to be ignored and considered all part of being among a predominantly male work force. I would be considered a prude or Miss Goody-Goody.”

“I didn't think the consequences of the specific incident were significant enough to warrant the potential trauma of complaining.”

“I was scared and they wouldn't believe me.”

“It would cause trouble—be a 'black mark' against me. I might have had to prove it and publicize the incident.”

“It would have created more animosity and made things very strained at work.”

“Because of the level of the harasser.”

“I took it as a joke.”

“I took care of it myself and/or I ignored it.”

"The supervisor and 'boss' department secretary allows and participates in it, although they don't necessarily encourage it."

"I was new on the job and the subject was not as openly discussed then as it is now."

"Back in 1978, sexual harassment was still in the 'closet.' You didn't talk about such things; just suffered and ignored it in silence. There was no need to create embarrassment on your part."

- Of the five who reported the incident to a higher-up, three said they were satisfied with the way the matter was resolved, two said they were not. They commented as follows:

(not satisfied) *"I chalked it up to 'this is just the way it is.'"*

(not satisfied) *"I was told not to take it seriously."*

(not satisfied) *"I was told: 'That's just the way he is; he's always been like that. Don't worry, he'll be retiring soon.'"*

(satisfied) *"The harassment stopped immediately although there were some uncomfortable feelings at the beginning."*

(satisfied) *"Considering the male supervisor's level of intelligence, he did the best he could."*

- A blank space was left at the end of that questionnaire section, where women could write anything they wanted about sexual harassment. Five respondents used that space to add remarks, reported verbatim below:

Comments regarding harassment

"Sexual harassment is extremely prevalent at my work place, especially with our director. Comments are made about little woman job assignments focused on children, animal jokes concerning sexual traits, etc."

"Most men now are aware that sexual harassment is illegal and avoid the obvious. However, demeaning remarks are still made every day in the work place by men who are sometimes unaware that what they said may be offensive. We must work on men's attitudes."

"For the most part, any comments that were 'inappropriate' were not said maliciously. These men just don't have a lot of regard for women's feelings and rights. They are supportive of me in other ways so it was not appropriate for me to make an issue of it."

"Harassment was of a verbal manner, but irritating and disgusting, and on a daily basis in the office."

"It's easier to ignore or remove myself from the vicinity than stir up negative feelings among fellow employees."

Other comments

On the last page of the survey instrument a space was left for respondents to write in any remarks they cared to make. The following statements were offered:

Miscellaneous comments

"It was really fun to meet other employees and hear about their situations; great to have a chance to focus on women's issues. Linda was a great facilitator. It was a great exercise, but could have been longer with more time for informal discussion. I would really appreciate feedback on this whole project."

"The meeting was very good and it was enlightening to see that all the other women think the same way."

"I'm grateful that I was selected to attend the HCCSW meeting. Linda handled the meeting very well. I hope some issues will be resolved."

"Keep up the good work! I suggest this process be used not just for women's issues, but to streamline the city's operations as well. I heard a lot of issues raised—such as concerns about the length of time getting new employees on board adversely affecting departments, problems with lists, etc. A priority listing of these major impediments would be helpful in making the city operate more efficiently and harmoniously."

"Speaking for a minority group of women, I would like to see appointed secretaries (secretaries to a director or deputy of a department) be able to have tenure. Also, assistance and counseling given to those interested and motivated toward higher education for better promotions or a career change."

"As women, we're on our own to get what we want!"

Appendix

DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

HONOLULU MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 6TH FLOOR
650 SOUTH KING STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813 • (808) 527-5311



FRANK F. FASI
MAYOR

MARIA VICTORIA R. BUNYE
DIRECTOR
Acting
VICTOR D. GUILLERMO, JR.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
Acting

HONOLULU COUNTY COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

A G E N D A

For Phase II

Random Sample of Female County Employees
Focus Group Discussions
October 1991

- I. OPENING REMARKS
- II. INTRODUCTIONS
- III. ISSUE DISCUSSIONS
 - a. BARRIERS
 - b. MAYOR'S EAR: If you could speak directly to the Mayor what would you want him to know?
- IV. WRITTEN SURVEY
- V. CLOSING REMARKS
 - a. PROJECT: NEXT STEPS
 - b. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Focus Groups - Phase I

DECEMBER 1990 - APRIL 1991

The following are issues/barriers described by male and female cabinet members at four focus group sessions dealing with the employment status of female County employees:

1. Pay disparity appears to exist between men and women who perform the same caliber work and with similar work related experience.
2. Men and women in the City and County are not fully aware of the full range of opportunities to pursue nontraditional work, nor are they fully aware of the educational and/or experience required to qualify for employment in these nontraditional assignments.
3. Women appear not to be seeking or securing the education and/or training that would qualify them for managerial positions. Males accumulate/acquire skills in military service and through other means that afford them an advantage when competing for positions which are supervisory in nature. These opportunities to acquire skills are not as readily available to women.
4. Child Care is a more serious problem for female workers. The existing systems do not provide adequate quality child care to support female workers if their child becomes ill, nor is there an adequate child care system to care for children while mothers work. Therefore, female workers, who are most usually responsible for child care, are more likely to take time off from their careers in order to care for their children. Societal expectations persist that females should provide primary care for the child. Males are less likely to take or request time off from their jobs in order to care for children. (Since there may be more single females with children than single males with children, this issue is of particular concern to the HCCSW.)
5. Maternity leave provisions are limited. The current system does not insure that a female can return to her job after maternity leave with the same career momentum that existed prior to her leave. She loses time from the job and may lose benefits, i.e., retirement, etc. Some male supervisors view interruption of work due to prospective maternity leave as a disincentive to hire and/or promote female workers.
6. Men, in general, appear to get better assignments from their male bosses.
7. Women managers and directors are often viewed as figureheads and sometimes encounter resistance from male as well as female subordinates until they "prove" themselves.

8. Women who have come up through the ranks appear to face a lower level of respect than men in the same situation.

9. Sexist attitudes towards women exist throughout the workplace and take the form of comments and jokes about pregnancy, female sickness and female temperament. While many of these comments are made in a joking manner they adversely affect the self esteem of female workers.

10. Promotion opportunities for women are lessened when managers or supervisors assume that women will become pregnant and as a consequence will be absent for extended periods every few years. The fear that female workers won't be there when needed sometimes results in preferences of favoring males in hiring and promotion.

11. There are cultural, ethnic and racial influences which affect hiring and promotion in some departments. These cultural preferences arise from familiarity. It sometimes seems that "team" implies ethnic homogeneity of membership.

12. There are established male strongholds such as in planning, business administration, public works and public safety. Women encounter even more difficulty moving through the ranks in these areas.

13. Stereotyping problems persist. Everyone still expects women to take notes if a secretary is absent in a group meeting.

14. Women, quite often will not apply for positions other than clerical/secretarial because they prefer remaining at their existing level of employment. Not all women have upward career mobility as their highest priority.

15. There is a need to provide training to prepare women for promotion to upper level management positions that would emphasize developmental supervisory skills, assertiveness training and communication.

16. Existing policies which enhance promotability of female workers should be reinforced by adding more educational opportunities, stronger outreach, more aggressive recruitment, provision of additional support and creating career mentoring relationships.

17. The Civil Service recruitment system should continue to actively seek out qualified women to increase their distribution throughout the workforce.

18. Both male and female middle managers should be systematically sensitized to women's needs, i.e., job requirements, discrimination and other factors.

19. Sexual harassment is still a problem which detracts from the quality of work experience. This has been reported by male as well as female workers. The scarcity of females in managerial positions, however, makes this more of a problem for women. While situations are sometimes inadvertently created because men do not recognize that behaviors are offensive, the persistence of this dynamic creates unnecessary legal exposure to the County.

20. Women who have not had leadership roles need to learn more about discipline, goal setting and motivation in the workplace.

Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women
Focus Groups CONFIDENTIAL Survey 10/91

Please check the appropriate items and fill in applicable blanks below:

- A. Sex: _____ female _____ male
- B. Age: _____ years
- C. Marital Status: _____ single _____ married
_____ divorced/separated/widowed
- D. How many children do you have? _____ Age(s) _____
- E. Please check your highest educational degree or certificate:
_____ grade school Last year completed _____
_____ high school diploma
_____ technical/business school certificate
_____ associate degree
_____ bachelor's degree
_____ professional certification (R.N., C.P.A.)
_____ master's degree _____
_____ doctor's degree (Ph.D., M.D., J.D., D.D.S.)
- F. What is your ethnicity? _____
- G. How long have you been an employee of the City & County of Honolulu? _____
- H. What is your current SR level? _____

SECTION I:

1. Have you ever applied for a promotion which you did not receive?
_____ yes _____ no
2. If yes, why do you believe you were not selected?
_____ didn't meet minimum qualifications
_____ person selected was more qualified
_____ didn't have influence in right places
_____ males are preferred for this job
_____ reason was not made clear to me
_____ other: _____

3. If you qualified for an announced promotional opportunity, would you apply? _____ yes _____ no

If NO,
Why? _____

4. Do you need additional training and education in order to qualify for a promotion? _____ yes _____ no

_____ I don't know what's required

5. If you were offered an opportunity to attend classes or take a training course paid by your employer, would you be interested in doing so on your own time? _____ yes _____ no

6. What type(s) of training(s) would be most helpful to you to improve your qualifications for promotion?

7. Which one of the following statements best describes your feelings about working flexible hours? (i.e., being able to begin your work day earlier or later, as long as eight hours were completed each day.)

- _____ Flexible hours would be a great advantage for me.
- _____ Flexible hours would be of some advantage for me.
- _____ Flexible hours would be of no advantage to me.
- _____ I can already work flexible hours if I want to.

8. Would you consider working on an "on call" basis such as is required for civil defense and other emergency service jobs in order to advance your career? _____ yes _____ no

If you answered NO,
Why? _____

9. Would the availability of quality affordable day care increase the likelihood of your seeking a promotion? _____ yes _____ no

10. Do you think City and County supervisors actively encourage and motivate female employees to pursue promotions? _____ yes _____ no

Section II:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements regarding obstacles to your career advancement?

- 1 = strongly agree
- 2 = somewhat agree
- 3 = neither agree or disagree
- 4 = somewhat disagree
- 5 = strongly disagree

(Please circle the appropriate number on the scale)

	Strongly Agree				Strongly Disagree
1. There is a lack of promotional opportunities in my field.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. A higher level job would interfere with my responsibilities at home....	1	2	3	4	5
3. Discrimination on the basis of age may be a barrier to my advancement..	1	2	3	4	5
4. Discrimination on the basis of sex may be a barrier to my advancement..	1	2	3	4	5
5. Discrimination on the basis of ethnicity may be a barrier to my advancement.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. Political discrimination may be a barrier to my advancement.....	1	2	3	4	5
7. Even if I acquired additional skills or training, I probably would not be rewarded with career advancement.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Discrimination on the basis of Veteran's preference policies may be a barrier to my advancement.....	1	2	3	4	5

Section III:

Listed below are a variety of comments relating to the general area of women working in professional and other areas. Please indicate whether or not you agree with each of these statements by circling one of the five numbers next to each:

- 1 = strongly agree
- 2 = somewhat agree
- 3 = neither agree or disagree
- 4 = somewhat disagree
- 5 = strongly disagree

	Strongly Agree			Strongly Disagree
1. There are certain jobs that seem to be "off limits" to women.....	1	2	3	4 5
2. Women are discouraged from applying for nontraditional jobs....	1	2	3	4 5
3. Women usually have to do better than men to get the same amount of professional recognition.....	1	2	3	4 5
4. When men and women are working at the same level, men are more likely to be offered opportunities for promotion.....	1	2	3	4 5
5. When men and women are working at the same level and have similar qualifications, men seem to make more money than their female counterparts.....	1	2	3	4 5
6. Discrimination on the basis of possible pregnancy and future maternity leave may be a barrier to my advancement.....	1	2	3	4 5

Section IV:

1. Have you ever experienced "sexual harassment" while an employee for the City and County of Honolulu?

If yes,
Did you report the incident(s) to your supervisor?

_____ yes _____ no

If no,
Why didn't you report the incident(s)? _____

If yes,
Was the matter resolved to your satisfaction?

_____ yes _____ no

Please comment:

OTHER COMMENTS:

ERRATA

The transcription of group comments referenced on page 11, paragraph 3 of this report has been retained for use and review by project participants and HCCSW members as a means of preserving the anonymity of focus group membership.

APPENDIX

The Department of Civil Service was given the opportunity to review and comment on the focus group study which invited 66 women in the City's work force to express their perceptions of *"obstacles that interfere with the quality of their work life or impede their ability to realize career advancement and promotion."*

The following are some of the main themes expressed in the report of findings:

1. Conflict between work and family. While the group acknowledged the broader societal influences on the sharing of domestic responsibilities in a dual wage earner home, some participants may not have been aware of options available to them today:

A. Some of the group participants reported that the City and County does not have a maternity leave policy. (see page 13)

Comment: Under the City's leave of absence rules, both mothers and fathers have long been permitted to take child care leave of up to one year for the birth or adoption of a child.

B. Participants felt their employer could take actions to support women in better balancing their career and family goals by granting sick leave to care for family members who are ill. (see page 13)

Comment: Under a policy recently adopted (March 1992), family members are entitled to use vacation, sick leave or leave of absence for birth or adoption of a child as well as to care for seriously ill relatives.

C. Focus group participants suggested that for long-term illness in the family, flex time should be permitted "that will not jeopardize the position held." (see page 13)

Comment: Since 1973, eligible employees have been allowed to adopt flexible starting times to accommodate family and other personal responsibilities.

D. Participants observed that there may be times when they are faced with long term home care issues and added, "If the County were supportive, I think you'd have better employee retention." (see page 12)

Comment: Because of exactly these issues, many women with family obligations accept City jobs, citing the 21 days of vacation available beginning the first year, with accumulation

of up to 90 days (over four months). Serious family concerns can affect employees' work; in 1974, the City established its Employee Assistance Program to provide employees and their family members with confidential counselling and referral service to help them deal with personal problems, especially those affecting their job performance.

E. The City was congratulated for establishing a child care facility on the premises. Participants believe more could be done. They cited the need for "Priority standing to get into the HMB facility..." (see page 14)

Comment: Children of City employees have priority on the waiting list for the Early Education Center, located atop the Civil Center parking facility. The center cares for 261 children from 16 months to five years of age.

2. Perceived inequality in women-dominated positions. Some participants expressed a concern about pay and a lack of career mobility opportunities in women-dominated fields such as in clerical job classes. Insufficient information and/or a misunderstanding of the processes of promotion, reallocation, classification and pricing apparently contribute to this concern. Following is current information addressing this concern:

A. In certain "male strongholds such as in planning, business administration, public works and public safety" women encounter difficulty moving through the ranks due to "perceived limitations associated with female candidates." (see page 9)

Comment: While public safety occupations (police, fire, water safety) and public works positions (e.g., refuse collection, road maintenance, equipment operation, plant operators, truck drivers and laborers) may be primarily occupied by men, women have made significant inroads in our police force (nearly 1 in 11 police officers and recruits are female) and there are increasingly greater proportions of women in professional positions in planning (35%), personnel (78%), budget (37.5%), accounting (40%), and recreation (46%).

B. Participants maintained that positions filled by females are "undervalued." (see page 15)

Comment: To address this persistent concern, the State legislature ordered a review of selected State and County job classes. The independent consultant's 1987 report disclosed no sex-based differences in pay or pay range assignments. The study concluded there was no indication of differences in pay attributable to sex. ("A Job Evaluation Study of Selected Job Classes of the State and Counties of Hawaii." Arthur Young & Co. Jan. 1987. Available at Municipal Reference and Records Center.)

Nonetheless, Civil Service is concerned that such perceptions exist and will work toward providing employees with current salary and benefit data.

C. Participants observed that women are "usually in non-hierarchical classifications where salaries are at the low end of the scale and there is limited upward mobility." (see page 15)

Comment: A number of circumstances and factors contribute to the domination of women in certain jobs, including personal choice. Upward mobility should be limited only by the limits set by the employee, regardless of gender. Career opportunities result from career planning, including post-high school education. In order to facilitate movement of women into less traditional jobs, an increasing number of training opportunities are being provided by the City to enhance women's competitive position in this regard.

D. One participant noted that acquiring advanced education and additional skills does not allow one to move to higher steps in the pay scale. (see page 15)

Comment: This concern is not limited to women only but affects all employees. Of course, opportunities are available for promotion to other jobs using the added education and skills, with commensurate compensation adjustments. Provisions relating to compensation and step movement are the result of negotiations between the appropriate employee union representatives and multiple employer jurisdictions statewide. The last settlement with Bargaining Units 03 and 04, for example, provided for step movement beginning in July 1993 based on satisfactory work performance.

E. Participants suggested that compensation for entry level positions in female dominated jobs is low. (see page 15)

Comment: While this appears to be a commonly held perception, the 1991 Hawaii Employers Council Pay Rates in Hawaii publication indicates that mean (average) salaries for State/County entry level clerical jobs are clearly competitive with those of the private sector. Again, the Department is concerned about the perception and will address this by providing more information to employees. (see Comment 2.B.)

F. Participants suggested the Mayor should upgrade the salary range of all clerk typists which are mainly occupied by women. (see page 16)

Comment: Unfortunately even the Mayor cannot unilaterally authorize such increases. Pricing and repricing of classes is governed by a statewide compensation law to insure

uniformity in the salary range assignments for comparable classes of work in the State and all County jurisdictions.

G. Some participants stated that blue collar workers are paid more than clerical workers. (see page 16)

Comment: It is difficult to make appropriate comparisons in the pay rates for blue collar and white collar jobs because of the differences in the structure of their respective salary schedules. The non-supervisory blue collar salary schedule contains only one rate or step on a range while white collar salary schedules include a range of rates or multiple steps on a range. Therefore, while a groundskeeper with one day or 25 years of service is currently paid the same \$1646/month, the clerk typist is afforded progression over time beyond the hiring rate through a range of rates, i.e., from \$1476 to \$2184/month.

H. Comments were made regarding the regularity of "promotions" received in such professions as those in the engineering classes as compared to the limited advancement opportunities in the clerical classes. (see page 19)

Comment: The processes of promotion, reallocation, classification and pricing are complex and warrant thorough discussion.

The duties and responsibilities assigned determine the **classification** of a position. As the employee learns and acquires greater knowledges and skills, increased duties and responsibilities can be assigned. In occupations where the field is broad in depth and scope, e.g., professional jobs, there is more to learn and greater opportunity for growth as compared to other occupations, e.g., clerical, where there is less breadth and scope of work involved. Therefore, as employees in broad occupational fields learn and are assigned increasingly more responsible duties, their positions are reallocated through progressive trainee and subjourney level classes to the independent worker or journey level.

Promotional opportunities, on the other hand, occur as new positions are established or vacancies occur in higher level jobs. And, where adjustments are made to the salary range assignments of classes affecting all incumbents, these are the result of statewide repricing actions.

I. Some participants expressed concern that clerical workers' tasks may be gradually extended and upgraded without benefit of reclassification or promotion. The phrase "and other related duties" which appears in most job descriptions exacerbates this situation. (see page 16)

Comment: Whether duties and responsibilities have been assigned which exceed the scope and level of work of the classes to which positions are allocated cannot be assessed without job audits. However, it is normal for job duties to experience change over time, as technological advances or changes in processes and procedures take place. Jobs do not remain static. The changes which may occur, however, do not necessarily mean the jobs have become more difficult. In some cases, technological advances have actually **simplified** work. Neither does **more** work, or additional work, necessarily mean a change in classification or pay grade level is warranted. Whether new tasks warrant reclassification, whether "other related duties" are "beyond the job description," depend on the scope and complexity of the work assigned, the skills, knowledges and abilities required for performance, the independence afforded, guidelines available, supervision received, and other factors which contribute to the classification and level of work.

3. Training and Education.

A. Participants expressed a desire for the City to encourage university attendance by employees through a tuition reimbursement program for courses successfully completes. (see page 18)

Comment: The City has a Training Reimbursement Program in its Employee Development and Training Policy. In fiscal year 1991-92, 26% of the approved requests for training reimbursements were submitted by women.

4. Civil Service.

A. Participants felt the system's advancement requirements specifying a precise number of subordinates, a specific degree or a formal redefinition of duties regardless of years of service or quality of performance seemed unnecessarily rigid. (see page 18)

Comment: Scope of supervisory responsibilities, skills, knowledges and abilities required to perform a job, and changes in duties and responsibilities are indeed among the factors involved in the position classification system. Such factors are there to provide consistency and equity in the way positions are classified and paid. The number of years on the job and the quality of employee performance, on the other hand, may provide the basis for step movement progression or promotion but not reallocation.

B. Women maintained that decisions about who jobs would go to are often made far in advance of selection. (see page 20)

Comment: Concerned individuals have available to them appeal procedures which will provide a review of the process and bring forth documentation of the selection decision. Inequities may exist because those who believe they exist have not pursued their right to have the inequities corrected.

C. A participant stated that her position description had not been reviewed by Civil Service for "27 years." (see page 20)

Comment: The Department of Civil Service has a program (Periodic Maintenance Review of Position Descriptions) under which position descriptions are reviewed for currency on a three year review cycle. While an employee may not have reviewed his or her position description with Civil Service, it does not mean a revised description was not prepared by the employee's department or reviewed by Civil Service in this time.

D. One participant voiced a wish that Civil Service would be an advocate for the employee. (see page 21)

Comment: The civil service system was designed as a remedy to the "spoils" system or the political patronage system. Today, under the City Charter, the system is to maintain "proper balance in employer-employee relations between the people, as the employer, and employees, as individual citizens, to achieve a well trained and productive working force." Civil Service advocates for the proper application of personnel laws, rules and policies, whether in advocating for or against management or the employee, as the circumstances of a case may dictate.

E. Another felt that when one's position is up for reallocation, Civil Service takes a position that is adversarial to the employee. (see page 21)

Comment: Understandably, there will be times when employees are dissatisfied with classification actions taken by Civil Service. However, Civil Service is charged with and must advocate for maintaining the classification system to assure consistency and equity in job classification for all positions.

F. Participants noted that although periodic evaluations are conducted, there are no rewards for exemplary achievement and no penalty for failure. They observed that this leads to mediocrity -- which discourages those who strive to succeed. (see page 21)

Comment: The collective bargaining agreements negotiated for bargaining units 03 and 04 (non-supervisory and supervisory white collar employees) contain provisions which will

provide for step movement progression from July 1, 1993 based on **satisfactory** performance. Furthermore, periods of **unsatisfactory** performance will not be applied toward the creditable service requirements for step movements.

In addition, the City has an incentive awards program through which employees are recognized for superior or exceptional performance via Employee of the Year, Sustained Superior Performance, and Exceptional Achievement awards.

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