MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND WOMEN'S PROGRESS IN MANAGEMENT: AN EVALUATION OF THE MAURITIAN SITUATION

Final Report

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Organisational Culture and Women's Progress in Management : an evaluation of the Mauritian situation

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**ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND WOMEN'S PROGRESS IN MANAGEMENT;
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a study on organisational cultures in Mauritius and how these cultures impact on the representation and progress of women in management.

The research was undertaken in two stages, the initial phase being conducted among 1753 organisations operating in Mauritius representing both the private and the public sector, and Phase II amongst a sample of these organisations. Participating organisations thus represented a cross section of the economic and social activity of the island, including Ministries and parastatals, educational institutions, the agricultural community, Social Services, the Finance, Insurance and Banking sector, Service companies, Sugar Estates, Small Businesses, Transport, and Wholesale and Retail Trade.

The rationale for the first phase was the perceived need to separate the highly qualitative data (to be gathered during Phase II) from the purely quantitative information required for attaining the aims of the research. Because the scope of the survey was significantly large, in that it aimed firstly at gathering hard statistical data on management structures in Mauritius, and secondly at exploring the 'softer' issue of corporate cultures, it was necessary that the areas of questioning in the first phase be of a purely quantitative nature, to be supplemented by the qualitative nature of the Phase Two questionnaire. Lines of questioning in the first phase included : size of organisations (number of employees), age of organisations (year established), levels of management, number of managers at each level, their sex, age, formal qualifications, tenure, initial and current job position, department or section, and salary range.

Phase Two was conducted among a stratified quota sample of Chief Executives of organisations The number of CEOs contacted was 432, and 138 valid questionnaires were returned. The objective of this part of the survey was to investigate those organisational practices and systems that reflected the culture of each organisation. The topics under investigation were streamlined into five categories:

1. Questions aiming at determining the degree of awareness of Chief Executives on the issue of Organisational Culture as a concept, and as a phenomenon within their own organisation;

2. Questions exploring the degree of awareness of CEOs with regard to the special difficulties and issues faced by women in managerial positions;

3. Questions aimed at determining what, if any, positive actions have been taken so far by senior management with respect to addressing the issues faced by women ; and

4. Questions relating to senior management's perceptions of the nature of managerial work and of the determinants of effectiveness in management.

The overriding aim of the research was to determine the exact degree of participation of women in Mauritian organisations, to draw up a gendered profile of Mauritian managerial structures, and to identify the organisational factors that could be obstructing or facilitating the progression and mobility of women in management.

The **Introduction** to the Report puts into perspective the gender issue in organisations in general, and in the Mauritian context in particular. A statement of the Research Problem follows, rooted around the following questions:

i. What is the management structure of Mauritian enterprises, broken down by gender?

ii. What is the profile of the Mauritian senior manager, by gender, age, education level, and seniority?

iii. What is the profile of organisations that employ women at top management level, by size and age of organisation, and sector/industry.

iv. What is the extent of progress of women from supervisory to middle management level, and from middle to top management level?

v. What are the characteristics of women who either 'plateau' in organisations, or who climb the managerial ladder? and what are the characteristics of their organisation ?

vi. What dimensions of corporate culture may explain the progression/stagnation of women in management? (Physical or overt factors : physical setting/language/policies, and covert, "values-and-beliefs" factors: perception of 'good' management/ perception of women in management/family issues/carry-over issues).

vii. What are the cultural factors - behavioural, attitudinal - that have adversely affected women's career advancement and their positive participation in top management?

viii. What organisational policies and programmes are in place for enhancing and promoting the presence of women in management positions?

ix. Are there any organisations and institutions that have made the effort to initiate affirmative action programmes geared towards gender equality for positive change, and what is the profile of these organisations?

x. What is the overall perception of effectiveness in management, and how well or badly do women fare in the minds of people?

xi. What is the degree of awareness of Chief Executives of the related issues of equality, ethics, social responsibility, and organisational culture?

xii. What is the perception of Chief Executives of the career problems and issues of working women in general and of executive women in particular?

xiii. What do Chief Executives think about work/family conflict and family-friendly work practices?

In order to successfully suggest strategies for improving the progress of women in organisations through the cultural forces present at the workplace, the questions stated above were addressed rigorously and constituted the focus of the study. Thus the

research on corporate culture and women in management was conceived within the premise of :

a. The paucity of women in important decision making positions in Mauritius despite equal educational opportunities and the high level of education of girls and women.

b. The lack of awareness amongst top managers of the realities and problems that may be faced by women aspiring to, or already in, management positions.

c. The lack of information on organisational structures and cultures on which to base suggestions and recommendations on the necessary strategies for overcoming barriers to women's progress in management.

d. The positive correlationship between the two dimensions of organisational culture (the physical, overt dimension, and the underlying, values dimension) and the position and progress of women in the same organisations.

e. Research results show that organisational structures in Mauritius are profoundly hierarchical, with few managers at senior level (24.1 percent) and a significant bulge at middle level (52.5 percent).

Male managers represent the majority of all Mauritian managers (74%). At top management level, only 16.6 percent of all managers are female, and 83.2 percent are male.

The age profile of managers shows that, the older the age group, the more likely is it to be male-dominant. Thirty-one percent of all male managers at top level are aged between 31 and 40 years, 30 percent are aged between 41 and 50, and 28.9 percent are 51 years or older. For the same level, women are clustered in the 31 to 40 age group (42.8 percent) and only 17.8 percent holding senior positions are in the 41 to 50 years age group.

Tenure at one job position, analysed by management level, and by sex, illustrates the disparity in job stagnation between the two sexes. The lower the level of management,

the longer the plateauing by women managers: 37.3 percent of women with 16 to 25 years in their current position were to be found at supervisory or junior management level, against only 15.2 percent of men at the same level. Only 5.7 percent of men stated that they had remained more than twenty-five years in a supervisory job, whereas upto 23.1 percent of such cases were women. Although the gender disparity 'pans out' at mid-management level, it is clear that significant stagnation occurs at this level for both sexes. The same percentage of women and men claim to have been in a mid-management job for 16 upto 26-plus years , namely 31.1 percent of all men with that tenure, and 38.5 percent of women with such tenure.

Data gathered on Educational Profiles of Mauritian managers show that, by and large, the level of formal education of the vast majority of our decision makers in the private and public sector is very poor, with   28 percent of all managers only holders of a School Certificate as their highest qualification, 17 percent holding a Higher School Certificate, 29 percent a Diploma and 19 percent a Degree. Women fare better in terms of HSC qualifications, although both sexes are at par as far as other qualifications are concerned, which indicates that, as far as formal education is concerned, this is not the rationale for explaining the poor representation and progress of women in Mauritian management.

The disparity between the sexes is predictably high as concerns salary levels : the higher the salary range, the less represented are women. Upto 43 percent of all managers in the "less than Rs.5000 /month" range are women, and 33 percent of all managers earning between Rs 5,000 and Rs 10,000 a month are also women, showing the high proportion of females in the lowest salary brackets. Male managers begin to crowd the group as from the Rs 10,000 bracket (78 percent of all managers in this group). It is evident that the male corporate culture is excluding women from enjoying the high executive salaries they should be entitled to. The question that must be asked at this point is "How *aware* are senior decision-makers of the issues facing women with the talent and potential for managerial work?" Survey results show that Mauritian CEOs rate women managers "as good" as men (83 percent of responses). 44.2 percent believed however that men in

general would feel uncomfortable about having a female boss, while 15.6 percent thought that men in general would actually feel "good" about having a female boss. The ideal situation was not found, namely, that most CEOs believe that men perceive their bosses indifferently, that is, irrespective of the boss's gender.

The degree of awareness of women's issues represented a key area of analysis in the report. Respondents were presented with a list of issues generally believed to affect women's progress in the management ranks of their organisation, and were asked to rate each issue as being either a "major problem", a "mild problem", or a "non-issue". Twenty-nine percent of CEOs believed that such factors as Sexual Harassment, difficulty with childcare arrangements, exclusion from high-profile development programmes, absence of mentors, and other issues, were really "non-issues". However, 51 percent of respondents believed that Sexual Harassment was a major workplace problem, and 38.8 percent recognised "exclusion from high-profile training programmes" to represent a major workplace problem in Mauritius, while 39.5 percent felt this was a non-issue. More alarmingly, however, was the score on "difficulty with childcare arrangements", which a mere 19.7 percent stated as a major workplace issue.

The degree of "supportiveness" of CEOs to women's issues was also evaluated in the survey, through questions relating to the necessity of having organisational policies and procedures in support of women managers' specific problems and concerns. As regards the instrumentality of laws on Equal Employment Opportunity, Chief Executives were asked to rate how important they believed the provision of such laws was in expediting the progress of women in management careers. Sixty-five percent of respondents did state that the provision of such laws would be of help, while 33.3 percent felt that such a measure would not help much in an effort to redress the discriminatory procedures in the workplace culture of Mauritius. In general, participating senior managers appeared in favour of various forms of positive action: 68.8 percent believed that it was "very important" that responsibility for pushing for changes should be shared by *all persons in managerial and leadership capacity*. Also, a cumulative percentage of 87.5 percent

believed that it was either "very important" or at least "important" that businesses themselves be directly involved in positive, voluntary action in support of women's progress into management. The majority (70.6%) also believed that the mere provision of laws would not suffice in meeting this objective, and that the administration of such laws was as important.

However, holding a positive, supportive *attitude* toward women's issues is not necessarily an indication of actual affirmative action in the same direction. Findings report that 69.7 percent of Chief Executives admit to never mentioning to their peers, for instance, during management meetings, that it was necessary to recruit, and retain, able and high-potential women at management level in the organisation. However, an unpredictable 71 percent claim to have "already implemented" an organisational policy on Equal Opportunity in recruitment, training and promotion, and 54.4 percent claim to have made "conscious efforts" to achieve this aim.

However, 26 percent of responding Chief Executives admitted that they were "not ready to consider" the implementation of a policy on Sexual harassment, while 32 percent said that they may consider such a measure "some time in the future". Similar findings were found with regard to policies on parental leaves, for which almost half of responding CEOs said they were not even ready to consider such a policy. Most organisations were also found to be unwilling to consider seriously such issues as childcare facilities, flexible working hours, part-time work, and career breaks, all of which are known to be beneficial to enabling women (and increasingly, men) with young children better manage the work-home conflict. Whether the top deciders of Corporate Mauritius find it even necessary to help women through their managerial career through such policies is questionable, especially considering their responses to the issue of managerial effectiveness: most respondents rate "masculine" characteristics higher than so-called "feminine" traits as determinants of managerial effectiveness. Aggressiveness, authoritativeness, and a high degree of assertiveness were considered more important

than, for instance, such traits as supportiveness, caring, intuitiveness, and a collaborative and participatory style of management.

Further findings indicate that actual practices in Mauritian organisations do not reflect any significant knowledge of the corporate culture-women at work link. A high level of awareness of the culture concept was noted (88%), and 49.7 percent even claiming to have attempted a culture audit. 65.3 percent believed that their corporate culture was "appropriate".

An overall analysis of the survey findings shows that women represent 25.4 percent of the managerial population of Mauritius, with the level of Management being inversely proportional to the number of women at each level. Most women in management are employed by Government Ministries or Parastatals (35.2 %), followed by the manufacturing sector (24.8 percent of all women managers work in this sector). A distant third employer, the Finance, Insurance, Banking and Real Estate sector employing 13.2 percent of all female managers in Mauritius. Of all organisations employing women in management, 36.5 percent were of small size (upto 25 employees), and 16.9 percent of organisations employing women in management were relatively large employers (between 200 and 500 employees).

Progress of women in management was measured along two dimensions, namely, within management ranks, without promotion, and from a non-managerial to a managerial position, that is, through a promotional move. 37.3 percent of women suffered job stagnation at supervisory level, (against 15.2% of men with a 16-25 year tenure at supervisory level), even though the degree of stagnation, especially at mid-level, was also significant for men (34% of women at mid-management level had 16 to 25 years tenure in the same job, and 37.9 % of men at that level had the same tenure).

Improvements with a view to professionalise the entire Human Resource Management systems of Mauritian organisations, including the management of culture, will no doubt

produce immediate as well as longer-term benefits to the social fabric of organisations, and their ensuring levels of productivity and efficiency. Deliberate, voluntary, positive action must be taken at senior level to bring organisations and their management teams to a level of involvement and dynamism that will ensure a shared responsibility for workforce diversity, career progression, and equitable participation at all levels. Because the findings of the survey clearly illustrate that women in Mauritius have made no remarkable advancements in their emancipation and participation in top-level decision-making, their future does not seem bright with regard to their integration in the mainstream of this country's development. The problem should therefore be viewed at macro and societal level, as well as in strategic, organisational contexts.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Human Development paradigm

At the heart of human development is the expansion of human choices by developing human capabilities. The *Human Development Report* (UNDP) has consistently defined the basic objective of development as enlarging people's choices. At the heart of this concept are three essential components :

- Equality of opportunity for all people in society
- Sustainability of such opportunities from one generation to the next.
- Empowerment of people so that they participate in - and benefit from - development processes. (Human Development Report, 1995)

The recognition of equal rights for women along with men, and the determination to combat discrimination on the basis of gender, are achievements equal in importance to the abolition of slavery, the elimination of colonialism and the establishment of equal rights for racial and ethnic minorities. Numbers, indices, and policy packages cannot capture the true essence of this movement, but they can help propel the movement by providing the backdrop of professional and independent analysis.

For too long, it has been assumed that development was a process whose benefits trickled down all income classes - and that it was a gender-neutral in its impact. However, moving towards gender equality is not a technocratic goal - it is a political process : it requires a new way of thinking, in which the stereotyping of women and men gives way to a new philosophy that regards all people, irrespective of gender, as essential agents of change. The human development paradigm, which puts people at the centre, must be *engendered*. Legal, economic, political or cultural barriers that prevent the exercise of equal rights should be identified, and removed through comprehensive policy reforms, and strong affirmative actions by all concerned.

The Organisational context

In no society do women enjoy the same opportunities as men. And there is no doubt that organisations are also essentially gender-biased (Van Nostrand, 1993). All organisations embody a male managerial culture because when organisations were first formed, only males were in the paid workforce. Despite increased educational opportunity at all levels, and increasing actual numbers of women in the workforce as a whole, there has been little change to the underlying male-dominated culture, wherein only a very small, token number of women actually are empowered, developed, and promoted into decision-making and executive roles. Investing in women's potential and capabilities and empowering them to exercise their choices is not only valuable in itself, but is also the surest way to contribute to economic growth and overall development. Women must be regarded therefore as agents and beneficiaries of change.

It is only recently that researchers, particularly feminists, have begun to conduct studies on the experiences of women at executive levels in organisations, and within managements, as shaped by the male-dominated cultures within organisations (Cooke and Black, 1991). The work of a few researchers, such as Kanter and Stead, are beginning to recognise that women should not be neglected in workplace studies and that it is important, as mentioned above, to establish a political agenda within organisations in order to understand the (organisational) barriers that women face as effective strategic decision makers (Okanlawon, 1994). It appears indeed that women who possess certain distinct talents and capabilities may be better prepared to cope with the challenges of the future than many 'traditional' males. The skills that women were not encouraged to use as they entered management, are finally beginning to be recognised as critical to their organisation's long-term health and prosperity.

The Mauritian context

World-wide, women still occupy only 14% of managerial and administrative jobs. The results of this study throw light on the Mauritian situation. World-wide, women often

work longer hours than men, but much of their work remains undervalued, unrecognised, and unappreciated. If development is meant to widen opportunities for all people, then continuing exclusion of women from many opportunities of life, and this includes organisational opportunities, totally warps the process of development. A lay glance at the male-female share of management jobs in our own organisations in Mauritius, public, and especially private, gives an indication that women are a small minority in upper managerial positions. How well does Mauritius compare with, say, Bangladesh, whose Government actively supports the strategies and plans of action sponsored by the United Nations through the World Conferences on Women ? Can a political agenda be developed to shift emphasis in women's programmes from a consumption-oriented approach to a development-oriented approach? It is important that women be seen by governments, businesses, citizens, and by themselves, as productive contributors to the national economy. The mere provision of legal measures to improve the status of women and to increase public awareness will not in itself solve problems of discrimination and inequality. The administration of the law - if any - or, at least, the application and support of strategies of World Conferences, by individual women, by employing organisations (i.e., by managements thereof), by industry associations and by the actions of NGO's, are the life-breath of such laws. Without the translation of strategies into clear, explicit policies, no government and no organisation can claim to support "equal opportunities" for all ; without Affirmative Action in such terms as carefully-monitored 'Quota' systems, "Women's Watch programmes", formal Mentoring systems, and the like, are ways of effectively eliminating the various forms of gender discrimination that have existed historically in organisational settings. The focus should not be on affirmative action that reverses the discrimination by inappropriate promotions and recruitments, simply to play the numbers game. The most important action by employers is the identification of priority action areas, including cultural change, the appointment and retention of senior women, and family-friendly working practices. Just as a national campaign for upgrading and enhancing our education and skills base, a campaign, nation-wide and highly visible, with the objective of improving training, development and support of working women , is a necessity if organisations wish to ensure their future effectiveness and profitability by attracting and retaining the best possible employees. One ILO Committee of Experts, for instance,

noted that employers who have adopted family-friendly policies and facilities report positive changes in the workplace including : improved morale; lower absenteeism and staff turnover; easier staff recruitment; and favourable publicity and community relations (ILO Report, 1993).

It pays to invest in women - not just for them, but for children and men as well . Even so, strengthening the position of women is an uphill task.. In Many countries of the world, including Mauritius, as in other countries aware of the disparity in education, job opportunities, working conditions, or income levels, have worked, or are still working, on Equal Opportunity legislation and on "awareness" campaigns, which have indeed brought about substantial improvements in the lives of many women, and subsequently, of men and children too. Real and lasting equality can only be achieved, however, when gender equality is accepted as being *morally right* as well as making good economic sense. The concepts of ethics and social responsibility, which both embody what is 'morally right or wrong', is therefore to be urgently integrated into the cultures of our organisations. Anecdotal evidence indicates that considerable concern exists on the part of senior managers for the related issues of ethics (especially in relation to bribery and corruption), social responsibility (especially with regard to the environment), and to discrimination on the basis of ethnicity. This is not the time for despondency, but for a redress of the situation. Identification of shortcomings in our societal and organisational culture is the first step to Affirmative Action in each of these areas. The present milestone study is therefore one positive step in that direction; by uncovering the managerial structures and corporate cultures of Mauritius, it will lay the foundation for the consideration and implementation of positive actions, on the part of organisations, but also by Government, and by individuals. It will also, hopefully, pave the way for future and more in-depth studies of these crucial issues.

1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

An approach often taken to the study of gender diversity in management is known as the "person-centred" or "gender-centred" approach (Horner, 1972; Riger and Galligan, 1980; and Terborg, 1977). This framework argues that gender influences men and women's behaviours, attitudes, traits, and the like and encourages comparisons between women and men to evaluate the occurrence of gender-based differences. When gender differences are found, they are often attributed to differences in women's and men's biological heritage and/or their socialisation patterns (Powell, 1988; Riger and Galligan, 1980).

While the gender-centred perspective has proven useful in the analysis of women's experiences, actions, and impact in organisations, it has been criticised for ignoring situational variables in organisations that may be orchestrating women's and men's movements, behaviours, attitudes, and so on (Fagenson, 1990a; 1990b, Kanter, 1977; Riger and Galligan, 1980). Thus, according to the organisation structure perspective, the perceptions, beliefs, and behaviours of men and women managers are a function of the different organisational structures they experience (Kanter, 1977). Women are typically few in number in the management ranks, are placed in positions with little job mobility and opportunity, and are vested with little real organisational power as compared with men (Kanter, 1977; Maniero, 1986). According to this perspective, any observable differences in the behaviour, attitudes, traits, etc. of men and women managers are attributable to such structural and situational factors.

A third approach, the gender-organisation-system (GOS) perspective, agrees with the basic tenets of both the above-mentioned perspectives, and makes two further assumptions : (a) An individual and his or her organisation cannot be understood separate from the societal culture in which he or she exists, and (b) when the individual, the organisation or the system in which they are embedded changes, the other components change as well (Fagenson, 1993). Systemic factors that can influence both

individuals and organisations include laws, policies, stereotyping, expectations, ideologies, cultural values, etc. (Fagenson, 1990b; Martin, Harrison, and Dinnito, 1983). The GOS approach further suggests that the organisational context affects individuals' behaviours, experiences, and orientations. Naturally, the organisational context includes such factors such as corporate policies, ideology, and culture as well as organisational structure. Thus, this perspective examines not only the status and experiences of women and men in organisations, but also the organisational and societal system in which they function. It suggests the use of several levels of analysis (systemic, organisation, and individual) to explain the problems and experiences of women managers. This study uses the GOS perspective to focus on the structural and cultural organisational factors at play in the context of women in management. It is further to be hoped that other researchers may investigate other topics surrounding the women managers issue at other organisational and individual levels.

In Mauritius, the number of women in top decision-making and top management positions apparently remains negligible despite official national and international declarations affirming equal opportunity and rights, in other words, equality, of women and men. Observation and personal experience indicates that there are great disparities in proportions of women in terms of access to all levels of employment, remuneration, and empowerment. The fact that women in management positions in Mauritius remain few is a manifestation of the barriers that block the way to the advancement of women to top decision making levels. There are therefore several questions that demand answers:

i. What is the management structure of Mauritian enterprises, broken down by gender?
ii. What is the profile of the Mauritian senior manager, by gender, age, education level, and seniority?
iii. What is the profile of organisations that employ women at top management level, by size and age of organisation, and sector/industry.
iv. What is the extent to progress of women from supervisory to middle management level, and from middle to top management level?
v. What are the characteristics of women who either 'plateau' in organisations, or who climb the managerial ladder? and what are the characteristics of their organisation ?

vi. What dimensions of corporate culture may explain the progression/stagnation of women in management? (Physical or overt factors : physical setting/language/policies, and covert, "values-and-beliefs" factors: perception of 'good' management/ perception of women in management/family issues/carry-over issues).

vii. What are the cultural factors - behavioural, attitudinal - that have adversely affected women's career advancement and their positive participation in top management?

viii. What organisational policies and programmes are in place for enhancing and promoting the presence of women in management positions?

ix. Are there any organisations and institutions that have made the effort to initiate affirmative action programmes geared towards gender equality for positive change, and what is the profile of these organisations?

x. What is the overall perception of effectiveness in management, and how well or badly do women fare in the minds of people?

xi. What is the degree of awareness of Chief Executives of the related issues of equality, ethics, social responsibility, and organisational culture?

xii. What is the perception of Chief Executives of the career problems and issues of working women in general and of executive women in particular?

xiii. What do Chief Executives think about work/family conflict and family-friendly work practices?

In order to be able to suggest or recommend strategies for crafting organisational cultures that would improve and enhance the performance and well-being of women in management, all the above questions have to be answered. Hence the focus of this study.

The Conceptual Framework

The research on organisational culture and women in management was conceived within the following premises :

a. The paucity of women in important decision making positions in Mauritius despite equal educational opportunities and the high level of education of girls and women.

- b. The lack of awareness amongst top managers of the realities and problems that may be faced by women aspiring for or already in, management positions.

c. The lack of information on organisational structures and cultures on which to base suggestions and recommendations on the necessary strategies for overcoming barriers to women's progress in management.

d. The positive correlationship between the two dimensions of organisational culture (the physical, overt dimension, and the underlying, values dimension) and the position and progress of women in the same organisations.

In this context, the Chief Executive is conceived as the individual who exercises the ultimate influence and decision-making power in an organisation. This assumes that both structural and cultural factors within the organisation, which serve either to enhance or lessen the status of women in management, is largely a function of this individual's decisions, perceptions and attitudes. And, because such corporate vetting bodies are male-dominated, embracing a male macho culture, the changes are that very few women will be able to 'impose' a non-male culture either at management level or at a wider organisational level.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

i. The core objective of the study is to determine the degree of representation and progress of women into management positions in Mauritian organisations.

ii. To explore the degree of awareness of top management to the issue of Women in Management, their contribution, their specific problems, and affirmative actions that can be taken at organisational level to create a gender-equitable workplace.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.3.1 Women in Management

There exists no data and information on women and management in Mauritius. However, studies that have been carried out elsewhere, both in industrialised and developing nations, seem to concur that women everywhere still comprise a disproportionately small percentage of individuals participating in senior decision-making roles, even in traditionally female dominated professions.

Although there may have been increases in numbers of women in male-dominated professions, women for the most part remain statistically rare in top management positions. Where figures are available for developing countries, the picture is particularly disheartening : The 1986 United Nations Study (UNECA 86/05) showed that only 91 women in Egypt held management jobs, representing less than 1% of females employed in the formal sector, and these were in 'feminized' industries such as spinning and weaving. In Uganda, despite affirmative action programmes aiming at improving the status of women, only 17% of all occupational categories in the public service was occupied by women (Hampden-Turner, 1990). However enlightened government policy and affirmative action of women might be, it is possible for certain factors and situations to frustrate its implementation. In Uganda still, despite official national declarations affirming the legal rights and equality of men and women, women remain deprived of their rights to influence decisions determining their own lives, and societal change, women in top decision-making positions still remaining few. In Mauritius, for instance, while the number of female parliamentarians has risen slowly over the years, it is not clear what part of this was due to affirmative action, if any. The following table gives a clear picture of the current under-representation of women in such crucial areas and posts as permanent secretaries to Ministers and Judges and Magistrates .

POSITION	FEMALE	%	MALE	%	TOTAL
Parliamentarian	7	10.6	59	89.4	66
Permanent Secretaries	1	4.3	22	95.7	23
Judges of the Supreme Court	4	40	6	60	10
Magistrates	11	38	18	62	29

Even in the academic field, for the 200 academics employed by the University, the proportion of female academics is only 29%, within which there are only 2 female professors currently working at the University of Mauritius.

This backdrop suggests that the world is characterised by inequalities between individuals, sexes, between and within countries. Such inequality is still one of the major root causes of household, cultural, economic and political instability and ethnic animosity in various countries all over the world, and Mauritius is no exception.

1.3.2 Organisational Culture

Culture theory has been a useful way of understanding what happens in organisations. It has been used to explain some of the dynamics and mechanisms of organisational behaviour and how organisational culture influences the practices and values of organisations (Mwaka, 1995). According to Handy (1985), categories of organisational culture include role cultures (bureaucratic, based on procedures and position power), power cultures (control exercised by individuals at the centre), person cultures (where the organisation is subordinate to the individual), and task cultures (influence based on expertise). These categories of culture are also all gendered : men are largely in power roles and positions, the power culture perpetuates itself, with men choosing the 'right people', who can think in the same way they do, and exercising control through the selection of key individuals embracing the same culture; person cultures are peopled by men and produce policies, procedures and practices defined by male values, experiences and expectations ; task culture, operating within the role culture, is often based on competition and male bonding. Handy (1985) gives an illustration of the ideal corporate

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high-flyer as needed 'to proceed intuitively, to know by instinct' what to do (p.204). It is only possible to know instinctively what one is "born" to or "bred" for and familiar with... Men will be more comfortable in institutional roles, not because these come 'naturally' to them, but because they will have more experience in those cultures, which have been constructed around the 'male chronology' of full-time, uninterrupted employment and freedom from domestic responsibilities (Itzin and Newman, 1995). Maccoby's (1976) four corporate types - the 'Jungle Fighter', the 'Company Man', the 'Gamesman', the 'Craftsman' - are all masculine stereotypes, as are Kanter's (1989) corporate characters : the 'organisation man', the 'corporate', the 'maverick', and the 'cowboy', in particular, who 'lives in a world of immediate action... wants to seize every opportunity, betting big... strains limits... breaks rules and gets away with it', and 'shoots from the hip' (p.360).

Gender culture within organisations *per se*

The literature thus provides us with a picture of organisational culture as gendered and of discrimination based on gender as embedded in organisational culture. There are also systematic power relations which are gendered and which permeate the culture and practice of organisations. Role culture - the dominant, visible, formal framework of many, if not most, of our Mauritian organisations, within which task and power cultures operate on an informal, but acknowledged basis, - is governed by 'rules and regulations'. Gender culture, by contrast, is unarticulated and usually rendered invisible by virtue of being regarded as perfectly 'natural'. Its rules and regulations do not have to be written down and published : the gender culture is just another way of "doing things around here" in organisations. One research carried out by Itzin and Newman (1995) produced the predictable results accounting for why women fail to achieve their potential, their ambitions, and parity with men in top management positions. Apart from the societal, familial, factors accounting for this situation - evidence of the unequal sexual division of labour in the home, with women carrying out the majority of housework and childcare - a number of organisational factors emerged, including :

- the long hours expected and required of senior managers, which were incompatible with women's domestic responsibilities;
- lack of encouragement for women from other, especially male, managers;
- women's lack of confidence to go for positions of power;
- the ways that the interview process disadvantages women;
- women's isolation and lack of support;
- the prevalence of sexual stereotyping, and
- the incidence of sexual harassment.

The data leave little doubt about the nature and extent of discrimination and disadvantage experienced by women working in organisations. The data also make explicit the cultural as well as structural and practical obstacles that exist, and the extent to which gendered power relations determine the practices and culture of organisations.

1.4 RESEARCH ORGANISATION AND METHODOLOGY

1.4.1 Key Informant Survey

In addition to the Literature Review, a more accurate 'feel' of the Mauritian context was considered necessary prior to embarking on questionnaire design and even sample design. The idea of capturing first-hand impressions on the dual issues of Organisational Culture and Women in Management was pursued, and a small pool of respected, influential individuals on the local scene was contacted. This list of individuals (available in Appendix I) was drawn up on the basis of the latter's involvement, experience and high status and (assumed) competence in various sectors of the economy. The project leader interviewed each of these persons with a view to acquiring a realistic picture of the Mauritian scene (as far as the research issues were concerned) before attempting the design of the research instrument, thus incorporating not only the information and views from the international Literature Review, but also those from a cross-section of 'authorities' locally. The interviews were all open-ended, ensuring the capture of as much data and opinion as was possible.

However, interviews were structured around specific issues, and a list of these, in the form of flexible questions, is found in Appendix II.

The information gathered from this exercise served to design both the Data Classification Questionnaire (see Appendix V) as well as the "main" opinion-survey questionnaire of Phase Two.

1.4.2 PHASE ONE - MANAGERIAL STRUCTURES AND PROFILES

One major objective of the research was the study of the managerial structures of Mauritian organisations, with a view to identifying the numbers, positions, and profiles of women in management in such organisations. Since no data exist to date regarding the number of women and men in managerial positions in the private sector, it was deemed necessary to first gather this quantitative data relative to managerial structures.

This section presents an outline of the "Data Classification" phase of the research in terms of population and sample area, methodology, questionnaire design, key variables and data collection techniques.

1.4.2.1 The Sampling Process

Because it was impossible to obtain a single complete list of all registered organisations operating in Mauritius, it was necessary to create a comprehensive database of all organisations, both public and private, from various sources ; thus, lists of members of various organisations and associations comprising all sectors of economic were integrated to form a unique database of Mauritian organisations. The list of sources is available in Appendix III. The tedious task of compiling this database, with particular care taken to avoid duplication of items, lasted from February 1996 up until June 1996, in conjunction of course with other tasks. Thus the sampling frame was in fact to be the population itself, and it was assumed that other organisations operating in the Mauritian economy were either not registered under an official list, or that available lists were

simply not updated. The total number of organisations thus drawn up from our lists was 1753, of which 123 were returned by the Post Office as "Closed Down" or "Gone Away".

1.4.2.2 The Data Classification Questionnaire

Each organisation forming part of the Database thus constructed was sent the questionnaire by the postal method, addressed to the Chief Executive. A covering letter (see Appendix IV) explaining the objective and spirit of the research accompanied the questionnaire, as did a self-addressed envelope. A sample of this questionnaire is found in Appendix V. The questionnaire had three levels, one for each level of management, namely top/senior, middle, and junior/supervisory. Each 'level' contained question-boxes on the same variables. These variables were : age, sex, educational level, year joined the organisation, and the position occupied then, the present position or job title, the department or section, and the monthly salary (optional). All these variables related to the managerial structure of a given organisation, if studied by 'level', as the questionnaire was designed. Respondents were also asked to state the year the organisation was established and the number of employees at present. The questionnaire was also designed in a pre-coded manner so as to facilitate data entry later on.

1.4.2.3 Data Collection

It becomes clear that data for the study was to be made available from primary source. The scant secondary data that was tapped for the research were : Human Development Report 1995, Women and Work (UN-NGO Group on Women and Development) 1994, Women in Figures (Mauritius Ministry of Women's Rights), African Platform for Action (UN Economic and Social Council), and the Survey on the Mauritian Family, all courtesy of the Ministry for Women, Family Welfare and Child Development.

1.4.2.4 Personnel

Due to the sample size being quite formidable, and to the general poor reputation of postal questionnaires as far as response rate goes, the methodology was designed to include a team of chasers in order to guarantee a reasonable response rate. Students from various Faculties of the University of Mauritius quickly volunteered, were interviewed, and selected for the task of 'chasing' respondents, all the while working as a team. Starting from a briefing session in Mid June 1996, chasers working either on their own or in small groups 'chased' respondents both by telephone and by personal collection of questionnaires. They were each remunerated at Rs. 75 per satisfactorily-completed questionnaires and for submitting a "chaser's report" at the end of their assignment, stating the ease or difficulty in reaching each respondent, attitude of respondent, comments made by respondents regarding the survey, and general comments of the chaser himself/herself. A total of seventeen such chasers were involved in the project, although several dropped out after a while, leaving a "core group" of seven young girls and boys, highly motivated and truly committed to the objectives of the project. The contribution of this team, under the professional co-ordination of the Research Assistant, cannot be stated strongly enough : the exceptional response rate of 46.2% is directly attributable to the determination, hard work, entrepreneurial spirit and team work of these young people, and the success of this phase of the project, both in terms of the actual response rate itself, and of the moral support, encouragement, and lively atmosphere surrounding the project, is largely due to them. Indeed, in many cases, respondents who were over-impressed by the questionnaire required assistance in completing their questionnaire, and this had to be done tediously over the telephone, or else chasers would have to meet the respondents personally to assist them in completing the questionnaire. Table 1.4.2.3 below gives a breakdown of response rate by sector.

Table 1.4.2.3 Response Rate - Phase One

SECTOR	SENT	RESPONSE	Closed Down	Response Rate
Agriculture & Fishing	19	14		73.68%
Air Connections	7	1		14.28%
Community, social & personal services	41	30		73.17%
Construction	20	10		50.00%
Electricity, Gas and Water	3	1		33.33%
Financing, Insurance, Banking & Real Estate	130	92	2	71.87%
Hotels and Restaurants	105	58		55.23%
Manufacturing and Quarrying	636	243	117	46.82%
Ministries and Parastatal bodies	181	84		46.4 %
Service companies	403	104	2	25.93%
Small businesses	53	23	3	46.00%
Sugar Estates	20	6		30.00%
Transport, storage, shipping, communications	55	32		58.18%
Wholesale and Retail trade	80	54		67.5 %
TOTAL	1753	752	123	46.13%

1.4.2.5 Data Analysis

The data processing procedure was built into the questionnaire during its preparation, since most questions were pre-coded. Data entry was begun in November 1997, using the SPSS (for Windows) social survey analysis package. Because the database had been constructed according to the data lists drawn up, the entire database required re-coding into *actual* economic sectors of Mauritius. For instance: the Yellow Directory list, comprising firms operating in all sorts of sectors, required classification according to real sectors as defined by ourselves for the study, namely :

- Agriculture and Fishing
- Air Connections
- Community, Social and Personal Services
- Construction
- Electricity, Gas and Water
- Financing, Insurance, Banking and Real Estate
- Hotels and Restaurants

- Manufacturing and Quarrying
- Ministries and Parastatal bodies
- Service companies
- Small businesses
- Sugar estates
- Transport, Storage and Communication, Shipping, Clearing and Forwarding
- Wholesale and Retail Trade.

In addition, certain adjustments in coding within the questionnaire itself were necessary in order to *quantitatively* analyse the information gathered in the few open-ended parts of the questionnaire. Thus, some additional variables were added before data entry started proper.

1.4.2.6 Problems and Constraints

As usual, time constraint was the major problem. The very real dilemma of the researcher embarking upon a project and actually not knowing what to expect in the immediate future was faced. Also, unless research projects resemble each other closely, whereby certain pitfalls can perhaps be avoided in the subsequent work, each piece of research work is unique, and raises unique, unexpected problems. The difficulty in compiling and integrating the various lists for the purpose of constructing the database had been underestimated, and the time taken for this exercise was much, much longer than foreseen. Needless to say, the data collection itself, given that the survey was postal, entailed such problems as out-of-date telephone numbers, numerous resends, difficulty in connecting by telephone, unattainable Chief Executives, secretarial barriers, reluctant Personnel officers, and so on. Secondly, the administrative procedures seemingly inherent to this type of research presented a major hindrance to the efficient running of the project; multiple-level approval procedures, delays in procurements, and lack of clarity as to what items of expenditure are authorised or not, invariably set the researcher back from the research work itself.

1.4.3 PHASE TWO - OPINION SURVEY

1.4.3.1 Methodology

The extensive literature review provided the essential framework for the methodology. While questionnaires developed by other researchers are always an option to consider for use, the particular nature of this survey, i.e., the fact of being (a) conducted in a largely un-women-sensitive environment, and (b) addressed to Chief Executives, with obvious implications for length and complexity of questionnaire, it was necessary to devise a tailored methodology accordingly. As indicated in section 1.4.1 (Key Informant Survey), readings on the subject were supplemented by a series of in-depth qualitative interviews of individuals both knowledgeable and experienced in relevant fields, with high potential for providing valuable views and information on the subject of organisational culture and women in management. Such views and data were subsequently incorporated into the design of the methodology, in terms of sample size, issues to be raised in the survey, and various do's and don'ts.

1.4.3.2 The Sampling Process

The advantage of conducting a two-tiered survey (in two phases) was made apparent at this stage of the research: the population to be utilised for sampling purposes was already constituted, being the database constructed for the first phase of the project. It was naturally clear that the Opinion Survey could not also be conducted as a 100% population survey (as had been the case for the first phase), but that it was necessary to draw a sample from the already stratified database. The deciding factors that were considered before determining the nature and size of the sample were as follows :

1. The nature of the Respondents;

2. The qualitative dimension of the issues to be addressed;

3. The necessity for follow-up (based on experienced gained from Phase One), and the subsequent human resource and time implications, and

4. The necessity for conducting qualitative interviews, with subsequent human resource and time implications.

The Nature of Respondents

On the premise that Organisational Culture issues are best determined and articulated at the apex of organisations, it was decided that the senior management of responding organisations would be the individuals best suited to providing information regarding the culture of their respective organisations. The acceptable quantum in social science research for surveys targeted at Senior managements being 60, it was decided that this would be the minimum figure for the sample size, and that survey questionnaires be addressed to Chief Executives of Private Sector organisations, and to Permanent Secretaries of Ministries and Parastatal organisations.

The Qualitative Nature of Issues to be Addressed

Because the survey would entail raising questions of a highly subjective and qualitative nature, based on the objective of exploring attitudes and perceptions "at the top" with regard to organisational culture and to women managers, it was necessary consider the length and complexity of the questionnaire, and the ensuing complexity of analysis. It was therefore decided that the sample be kept to a minimum of sixty.

The Necessity for Follow-Up procedures

Experience gained from Phase One with regard to the extreme difficulty in getting respondents to reply to questionnaires provided the basis for the decision to allocated substantive time and funds to the follow-up aspect of the Opinion Survey as well. This problem it was envisaged, would be exacerbated by the nature of the respondents, being extremely busy individuals with apparently no time for surveys. Thus, due to limited time and human resources especially, it was estimated that some 30% of questionnaires would be returned successfully by the post, but that the remainder, necessary for meeting

a minimum target of 60, would necessitate intensive 'chasing'. This was another determining factor that would limit the sample size.

The Necessity for Conducting Qualitative Interviews

As set out in the objectives of this research, it was necessary to gain insight into the attitudinal aspects of corporate culture with regard to women's issues and in particular, as affecting women in management. It was foreseen that, no matter the response rate of the mail Opinion Survey, the majority of questionnaires would be returned with very little "comments" and "remarks", so necessary for a qualitative dimension to the boxed answers. It was decided that a sub-sample of the Opinion Survey Sample be reserved for personal face-to-face interviews which would be taped and transcribed, so as to supplement the forced-choice answers. The implication of this decision was that resources would have to be tied to this exercise, thus restricting the time and effort that could have been placed in 'chasing' a larger sample.

The resulting sample was thus determined as being targeted at Senior Management, stratified, as per the Database, into sectors, thus gleaning a total of 319 questionnaires to be distributed as per stratification, and including approximately ten to twenty face-to-face interviews, based on the same questionnaire. The field work strategy to be employed was a sharing out of the face-to-face interviewing task between the Researcher, Research Assistant, and a small team of experienced interviewers of the Central Statistical Office, and the utilisation of the communication skills and experience of student chasers for the mail questionnaires.

1.4.3.3 Questionnaire Design

The deciding factors detailed above were incorporated, not only in the sample design, but also in the crafting of the Questionnaire itself. As such, while issues emerging from the literature review and from the Key Informant survey were crucial in determining the categories of questions to be addressed, the question of length of questions, complexity of questions, grouping of issues, the rendering of questions 'catching' and interesting,

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- Questions relating to Senior management's perception of the nature of managerial work:

Length and Complexity of questions

Much effort was invested in designing a Questionnaire that did not frighten off respondents by the complexity of questions. It must be appreciated that this was no easy task, given the complex nature of the subject under study itself. In order to encourage the respondent "along the way", it was necessary to place certain very straightforward, simple questions which solicited the most spontaneous responses. However, in order to address the objectives of the research and uncover the more complex, underlying and usually unarticulated views and perceptions of respondents, a fair number of rather complex questions were deemed necessary. For instance, to the simple question "Please state your opinion about the idea of women in management" (Question 7), a respondent may tick "I 'm indifferent", which in itself would be interesting to the researcher, but would not provide sufficiently deep insight into what the respondent was really indifferent to, or uninterested about, given the width of the notion of "women in management". Thus, operating under a "Factor Analysis" *principle*, a later question (Question 11) was designed to gain deeper understanding of Senior managers' views and perceptions about how big a problem was a given "women manager" issue. Respondents indicating that several, or all, issues indicated in the question were only mild or minor problems would be indicating that they were either unaware of, or uninterested in, the issues and problems facing women managers.

Interest-arousing questions

Again with a view to create and maintain interest in the questions and thus to encourage respondents not only to complete all the questions, but also, hopefully, to give their full attention and genuineness to their responses. For instance, it was estimated that a question addressing their opinion on what they believed to be the characteristics of good management would sharpen their interest in the questionnaire as being a *management* questionnaire. Also, in asking a Chief Executive whether he or she had implemented, or thought of implementing such policies as Equal Opportunity in recruitment, training and promotion, Parental Leave, Flexible working hours, and so on, it was believed that this

would trigger a reflex in the respondent that perhaps this survey would lead to firm recommendations and realistic ideas regarding such policies, which they, Senior managers, could then consider for implementation in their own organisations. Thus the survey would gain in status as being results-oriented and not an academic fantasy.

Open-ended questions

Given the nature of Senior Management's work, it was obvious that a questionnaire demanding a series of written comments through open-ended questions would only serve to irritate and thus rebuff respondents. This resulted in the decision to render more complex the questions without them being open-ended. In other words, much information and insight could be gained from closed questions if these were so structured as to demand checks in boxes instead of written statements. Nevertheless, the covering letter exhorted respondents to make use of the specially-provided spaces after *each* questions, for any remarks and additional information they wished to provide. This particular impediment was the major factor in deciding to conduct a sub-survey of face-to-face interviews which, if conducted correctly, would necessarily provide valuable qualitative data.

Verification questions

Researchers naturally cannot ever be certain of the veracity of their respondents' answers, and some degree of face-value acceptance of responses is necessary. However, it is desirable that at least an equal degree of "checking" on respondents' coherence, if not sincerity, be an integral part of every survey. Therefore, certain early responses to questions in the questionnaire were subjected to 'verification' for consistency in meaning by later questions. For example, senior managers claiming that they "liked" the idea of women in management, or even "strongly appreciated" it, may have given a hasty answer, or simply a politically correct answer. When their attitudes to women issues are explored in a later question, what is actually being verified is whether this "appreciation" is translated into a "sensitivity" to women's issues, by indicating whether they believed such issues to be major, mild or non-issues. Similarly, this same category can be verified for consistency by examining responses to policy implementation : senior executives who "like" or "appreciate" the idea of women in management, and/or who

believe women managers to be "as good" or "better" than male managers may be making a weak statement by later admitting that they are not ready to consider any women-friendly policies for their organisation...

Forced-choice questions.

When the questionnaire was informally peer-reviewed by a few senior colleagues, one remark was that there were too many dichotomous "Yes-or-No" questions which did not leave opportunity for "Don't Know" or "Not Sure" responses.

This is indeed a fact and it is a deliberate feature of this particular survey. Two factors determined this choice of question structure: (a) The relative "newness" of the Culture concept among practitioners in Mauritius, which may have led to "copping out" of the questions altogether, by checking "Don't Know" boxes, and (b) the fact that the number of face-to-face interviews designed to extract elaborate, qualitative data being limited, and the near certainty that mail respondents would NOT include qualitative dimension to their responses, represented a danger for the complexity of results that was desired. Should a majority of respondents check "cop out" boxes, the sophistication and richness of results would remain a dream.

1.4.3.4 Pre-testing (The Pilot)

(a) The Methodology thus devised and the Questionnaire designed and ready for administration, it was necessary to test it for ease of administration, accuracy of questions, and ability to obtain data that would ensure meeting survey objectives. Ten respondents from a cross-section of Mauritian industry were contacted for interview, and their positive response made it possible to conduct all Pilot interviews during the month of December 1997. One interviewer was recruited at his stage to assist with the field work. The outcome of the Pilot was generally very positive, with all interviewees congratulating the initiative, all providing extensive qualitative data, suggestions, and a keenness to be informed of the final results. Subsequently, the methodology was readjusted in the following ways:

(b) The difficulty in gaining access to Senior executives and the general problematic nature of establishing a serious appointment made it clear that the survey would not realistically be able to depend on face-to-face interviews of senior executives as the main methodological support;

(c) Likewise, the length of the interview (minimum 45 minutes, upto 2 hours), using a questionnaire of 22 questions, with a good dosage of complex questions, all dealing with a complex set of issues, made it again clear that resource implications were great.

(d) Certain questions required rephrasing, having tended to confuse respondents about the notions of "Culture" in general and "Organisational Culture" in particular. It was decided to remove altogether the question on cultural diversity, since it further served to create a mix-up in the minds of respondents yet unfamiliar with the subtlety of the various notions surrounding Culture. Other questions necessitated emphases, where it was not clear to respondents that they were being questioned on *their own organisation's* culture and practices.

(e) Certain terms required explaining and/or defining, and so bottom-page footers were placed clearly so as to facilitate and familiarise respondents, in lay terms, with the more technical terms that appeared sometimes in questions and at other times in the multiple choice answers.

A revised and final version of the Survey Questionnaire can be found in Appendix IX. The accompanying Cover Letter is in Appendix VIII.

1.4.3.5 Questionnaire Administration

The Administration of the Survey Questionnaire was designed to operated in two parallel parts : one being the face-to-face interviews, and the other, larger, being the mail survey, both employing the same questionnaire. The Chaser Lists were drawn up for the mail survey and distributed among a team of four student chasers, already familiar with the Project for having been actively involved in the first phase. Four other lists were drawn

up for face-to-face interviews to be conducted by a team of experienced interviewers of the Central Statistical Office. These latter individuals were to work on a list of 100 organisations (five lists of 20 organisations) and bring in as many transcripts of interviews as possible. This exercise was organised at the end of January and the cut-off date for interviews was Beginning March 1998. The team of student chasers were to conduct telephone interviews (or "chasing") in parallel. The cut-off date for telephone "chasing" was 15th April 1998. The Research Assistant would organise and co-ordinate the entire operation. Questionnaires accompanied by the Cover Letter were mailed to all respondents. A suitable-sized return envelope bearing the name and address of the Researcher was also attached to the questionnaires.

1.4.3.6 Data Collection

As Questionnaires began to return, they were checked for completion and filed if satisfactory, or else "chased" again for reasons of either incomplete data, or else inappropriate respondent (for instance, the gender aspect of the survey would sometimes result in the questionnaire being filled in by the Chief Executive's secretary...). Nevertheless, the fruits of the tremendous effort by the Research team are recognisable through the laudable response rate of the survey (34%). The table below shows the details.

Table 1.4.3.6 Response Rate - Phase II

	Questionnaires distributed	Closed Down/Not Valid	Total Returned	Response Rate
Interview Survey	100	10	24	26%
Mail Survey	332	16	114	36%
Total	432	26	138	34%

1.4.3.7 Data Analysis

All questions were first coded. Phase Two (Opinion Survey) questionnaires were merged with Phase One data input for information on Organisation Age and Organisation Size which would be used for analysis. Qualitative dimensions were incorporated at a later stage. Data was input using the SPSS statistical analysis package and some amount of re-coding and re-organising of variables was necessary. Analyses include Frequency tables and graphs, cross-tabulations, and computations of existing variables into new, more sophisticated indices.

1.4.3.8 Problems and Constraints

Problems and constraints were centred around two issues : the grossly inadequate photocopying resources at the University, and the ineffectiveness of the interviewer team of the Central Statistical Office. Indeed, whereas the Research Assistant would prepare mail merge lists, labels and envelopes, and whereas the chaser team would organise themselves to undertake telephone chasing, the fact remained that questionnaires were never available in a constant flow for distribution. This was a major drawback to the project, in terms of wasted time but also the constant re-organising of the team's tasks, notwithstanding their professionalism and patience.

The lack of office space for telephone interviewing exacerbated the problem, since, often, at the time that an office was made available for the chasers, respondents on their lists would not have received their questionnaires yet, because of the chronic delay in photocopying the questionnaires for distribution.

The second problem relates to the ineffectiveness of the interviewer team contracted to manage the face-to-face interviewing of Chief Executives; missed deadlines, and Extensions of fifteen days were allowed on two occasions, and it was expected that this at least would have produced a reasonable, if not minimum, number of responses.

Alas, this was too much to be expected , as not only did these individuals handle the entire assignment in an unprofessional manner, choosing to send in their meagre harvest without any manner of report, but also (despite their stated "experience" and confidence in interviewing) failing to demonstrate a commitment to the project. The result of this was that the University-based team (The Researcher, Research Assistant, and Chasers) were constrained to carrying out *in extremis*, a small number of face-to-face interviews in order to meet at least a bare statistical minimum.

1.5 RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents in detail the research results for the Data Classification (Phase 1) and Opinion Survey (Phase 2) of the study. In section 1.5.1, the profile of institutions participating in the survey is outlined.

Section 1.5.2 details the profile of managerial structures of participating institutions;

Section 1.5.3 gives a distribution of managers by gender and for each managerial level;

Section 1.5.4 examines the age distribution of all participating managers

Section 1.5.5 and its tables details the managerial tenure at every level of the managerial structure, and differentiated by sex;

Section 1.5.6 looks at the educational profiles of managers;

Section 1.5.7 examines the movements by managers within management, and from non-managerial to managerial positions within the same organisation.;

Section 1.5.8 details managerial salaries in participating organisations;

Section 1.5.9 explores the awareness of senior managers of women's issues;

Section 1.5.10 examines respondents' attitudes on women's issues;

Section 1.5.11 examines the degree of positive action on women's issues;

Section 1.5.12 explores managers' perceptions of managerial work;

Section 1.5.13 analyses senior managers' awareness of Corporate Culture issues;

Section 1.5.14 discusses in detail the issue of Women's representation in Mauritian organisations, and finally

Section 1.5.15 discusses the issue of Women's progression in Mauritian managerial ranks.

The report concludes at this point, makes the appropriate recommendations based on the analysis, and signposts the areas for future research.

1.5.1 Institutional Profiles

This section examines the characteristics of participating institutions, spelling out the Industry or sector of operation.

Table 1.5.1a on the following page shows these details for Phase One of the Project and Table 1.5.1b shows the results for Phase Two.

Table 1.5.1a   Institutional Profiles of Participating organisations (Phase 1)

SECTOR	Contacted	Percentage Participating
Agriculture & Fishing	19	74
Air Connections	7	14
Community, social & personal services	41	73
Construction	20	33
Electricity, Gas and Water	3	72
Financing, Insurance, Banking & Real Estate	130	72
Hotels and Restaurants	105	55
Manufacturing and Quarrying	636	38
Ministries and Parastatal bodies	181	46
Service companies	403	26
Small businesses	53	46
Sugar Estates	20	30
Transport, storage, shipping, communications	55	58
Wholesale and Retail trade	80	68
Total	1753	46.2

Table 1.5.1b Institutional Profile of Participating Organisations

SECTOR	Contacted	Percentage Participating
Agriculture & Fishing	8	75
Air Connections	3	67
Community, social & personal services	7	86
Construction	1	0
Electricity, Gas and Water	2	100
Financing, Insurance, Banking & Real Estate	37	51
Hotels and Restaurants	20	65
Manufacturing and Quarrying	186	28
Ministries and Parastatal bodies	51	39
Service companies	56	29
Small businesses	9	33
Sugar Estates	4	100
Transport, storage, shipping, communications	21	0
Wholesale and Retail trade	27	11
Total	**432**	**34**

1.5.2 Profile of Managerial Structures in Mauritius

Participating organisations' managerial structures seem by and large to be highly hierarchical, with few managers at senior level (24.1%) and even supervisory level (23.2%), while significant clustering appears at mid-management level (52.5%). Chart 1.5.2 shows the managerial structures of participating organisations in terms of percentages of top, middle and supervisory managers.

Chart 1.5.2 Distribution of Managers by Level

JUNIOR/SUPERVISORY
29.4%

TOP
30.2%

MIDDLE
40.5%

1.5.3 Gender Distribution in Management by Level

Other interesting data emerging from this category of analysis is the gender distribution of managers by managerial level. Overall, over the three levels, male managers represent unsurprisingly, the majority, with 74% percent , against only 25.8% of females. A cross-tabulation of the same results by managerial level shows that only 16.6% of females make up top management in Mauritius, against a majority of males, (83.2% of all top managers) and that although the imbalance appears to lessen for lower managerial levels, it is clear that women, although representing over 50% of the workforce, are grossly underrepresented in management, as shown in Table 1.5.3.

Table 1.5.3   Gender Distribution of Managers by Level

			SEX		
			MALE	FEMALE	Total
MANAGERIAL LEVEL	TOP	Count	1660	332	1994
		% within MANAGERIAL LEVEL	83.2%	16.6%	100.0%
		% within SEX	34.0%	19.5%	30.2%
	MIDDLE	Count	1950	708	2661
		% within MANAGERIAL LEVEL	73.3%	26.6%	100.0%
		% within SEX	40.0%	41.5%	40.3%
	JUNIOR/SUPERVISORY	Count	1267	663	1938
		% within MANAGERIAL LEVEL	65.4%	34.2%	100.0%
		% within SEX	26.0%	38.9%	29.4%
Total		Count	4878	1704	6595
		% within MANAGERIAL LEVEL	74.0%	25.8%	100.0%
		% within SEX	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chart 1.5.3 Sex Distribution by Level
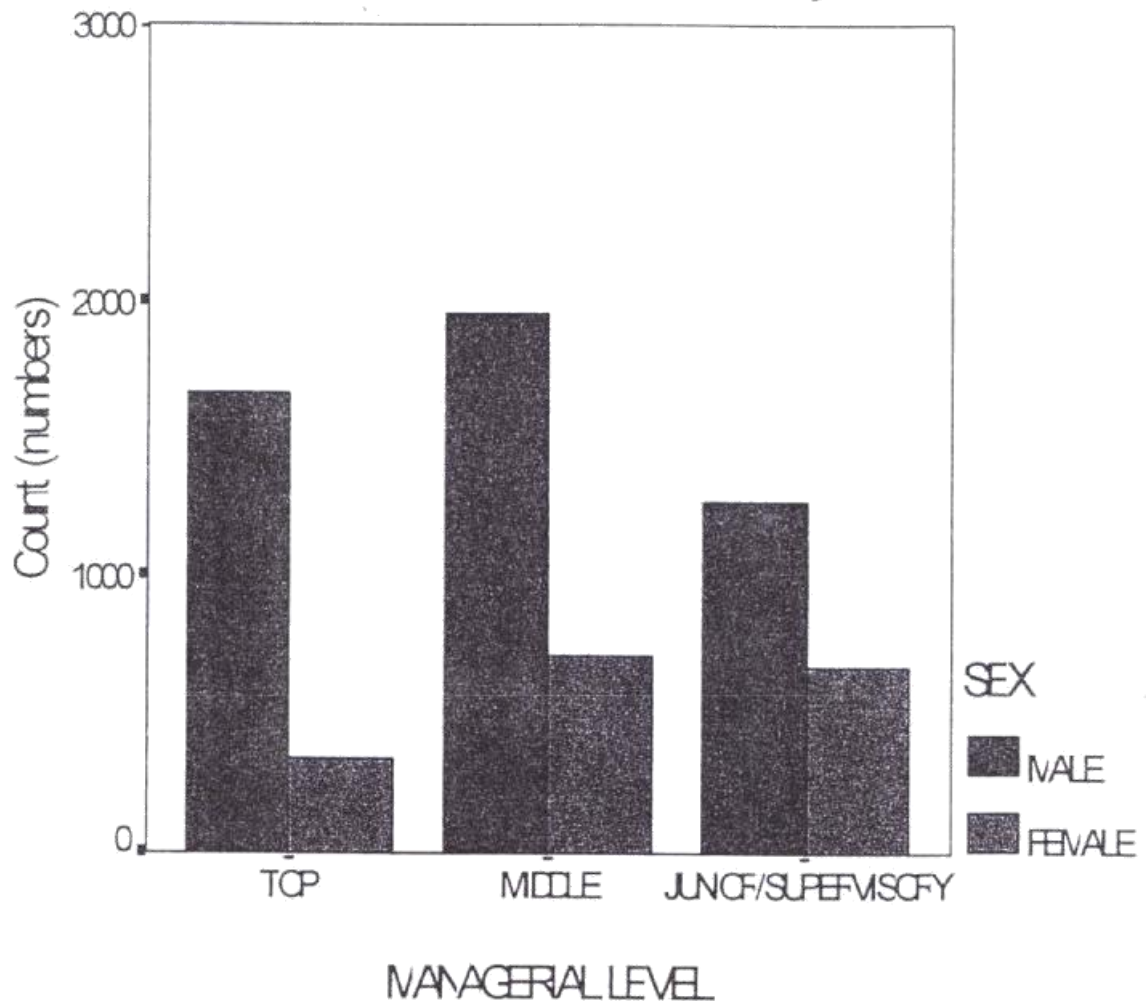
1.5.4 Age Distribution of managers

In the context of a gender analysis of management structures, the age profile of male and female managers at the various management levels are indirect revelations of the speed - or slowness - of progress from one managerial layer to the next. As such, although it would be difficult to hypothesise about "stagnation" or "plateauing" at a given level simply by observing the age of managers at that level, the necessity of making a descriptive analysis becomes evident for purposes of considering such results in conjunction with other results, both exploratory and descriptive.

Would the results of the preceding section be supported by the age profile of respondents at each level? The results below (Table 1.5.4) show details of age distribution by level for women and men holding managerial jobs.

Even a cursory glance at these figures indicates that the "newness" of the woman manager phenomenon is a reality in corporate. Indeed, the older the age group, the more likely we are to see males in that group : 80.7% of all managers at top level aged 31 to 40 years are male, and 85.2% of managers aged 41 to 50 years are also male. For the same level of management, women appear to be clustered in the 21 to 30 age bracket (41.2% of all females at that level. At mid-management level, most men cluster in the 51 to 60 age bracket (87.3%), while women are represented again in the young bracket of 21 to 30 years (36.7% of all managers at that level and in that age group). Findings relating to Junior and Supervisory level are significant in that women are comparatively much younger at this level, in all age groups, but more so in the "less than 20" age group.

Table 1.5.4 Age Profile of Managers by Sex and Level

			SEX	
			MALE (Percentage)	FEMALE (Percentage)
TOP LEVEL	AGE	<20	71.4%	28.6%
		21-30	58.8%	41.2%
		31-40	80.7%	19.3%
		41-50	85.2%	14.7%
		51-60	88.3%	11.7%
		>60	94.3%	5.1%
	Total		83.3%	16.6%
MIDDLE LEVEL	AGE	<20	80.0%	20.0%
		21-30	63.3%	36.7%
		31-40	71.2%	28.7%
		41-50	76.1%	23.6%
		51-60	87.3%	12.7%
		>60	85.7%	14.3%
	Total		73.0%	26.9%
JUNIOR/SUPERVISORY LEVEL	AGE	<20	31.3%	68.8%
		21-30	60.9%	38.6%
		31-40	58.9%	40.4%
		41-50	64.8%	35.2%
		51-60	72.2%	27.8%
		>60	81.8%	18.2%
	Total		61.4%	38.2%

1.5.5 Years Spent at various Management Levels (Tenure)

In the same line of analysis, one may also consider that the number of years spent by a manager at one managerial level could well be an indication of "plateauing", especially where the level concerned is supervisory or middle level. The following analysis of data collected from the question "no of years in present position", when analysed by level of management and by gender, illustrates the disparity between sexes, even though no linear relationship can be drawn between years spent by women at one managerial level and the (small) number of women at higher management levels. Tables 1.5.5a and 1.5.5b show details of the data obtained in this connection.

A first analysis shows that the vast majority of responding managers do not seem to spend very long in one managerial position; 63 percent of all male managers and 68.8

percent of all women managers stating to have spent less than six years in their current position.

Detailed analysis of the findings show that 28.9% of all males with less than 6 years tenure in their current position were found at top management level. 17.2% of women stating to have been in their current position for less than six years were also at top management level. The proportion of women spending only one to five years in a junior or supervisory position was low as compared to men : 39.5% of females, against 28.8% of males, possibly indicating that men seem to 'move out' of low management faster than do women.

As we examine the data pertaining to tenure at any given level, we find that, that lower the level of management, the longer women seem to be 'plateaued' there : 37.3% of women with 16 to 25 years in their current managerial position were at supervisory level, against only 15.2% of all men at the same level.

Only 5.7% of men stated that they had remained for more than 25 years in a supervisory job, while upto 23.1% of such cases were female. These findings are highly significant, indicating severe stagnation of women in low decision-making positions, which cannot find any easy explanation. For instance, if educational qualifications are a predictor of success at management level, (at any level), then the educational profiles of women, which compare favourably with those of men, cannot be said to explain the stagnation of women at supervisory level. See Chart 1.5.5). It appears that other criteria may be in use...

The middle management layer appears to 'pan out' the gender disparities in stagnation, but this does not excuse the plateauing that occurs anyway : for instance, although the same percentage of women and men at middle level claim to have been in that position for less than six years (42.3% males and 43.3% females with that tenure), the actual percentage of women (and men!) who spend anywhere between 16 and 26-plus years at middle level is arresting: of those male managers with more than 26 years' tenure, 31.1% were in mid-management positions, and 38.5% of women with 26-plus years'

experience in one job were found at this same level. Similarly, of those men with 16 to 25 years tenure in their job, 37.9% were at middle level, and of the women with this tenure, 34.3% were at middle level.

Therefore, whether plateauing of females at supervisory levels is more striking, or whether stagnation at middle level is apparent for both men and women, the fact remains that there does not seem to be any "progress" to speak of within the management ranks in Mauritius, and much more so for women. The overwhelming stagnation of managers clearly occurs at middle management level, pointing to difficulties in the local context with career management, planning, and progression. Given the lack of new blood at upper level, this does not augur good for corporate Mauritius, which may suffer from organisational inertia through, firstly, the presumably 'older' paradigms in force at top level (20.9 percent are in the 51 to 60 age group, and 60.8 percent of all managers in the 26-plus tenure group are found in the top management layer), and secondly, the inability of younger management staff (at middle level) to impart their new skills, knowledge, attitudes and visions to the strategic apex of their organisation.

Table 1.5.5a Years spent by males & females in one position.

			SEX		
			MALE	FEMALE	Total
RANGE OF YEARS	less than 6	Count	3076	1172	4257
		% within range of years	72.3%	27.5%	100.0%
	6 - 15	Count	1412	450	1865
		% within range of years	75.7%	24.1%	100.0%
	16 - 25	Count	277	67	344
		% within range of years	80.5%	19.5%	100.0%
	26+	Count	106	13	120
		% within range of years	88.3%	10.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	4871	1702	6586
		% within range of years	74.0%	25.8%	100.0%

Chart 1.5.5 Educational Profile at Supervisory Level

EDUCATION LEVEL

- <SC
- SC
- HSC
- DIPLOMA
- DEGREE
- MASTERS
- OTHER[PROF]

MALE Percent   FEMALE Percent
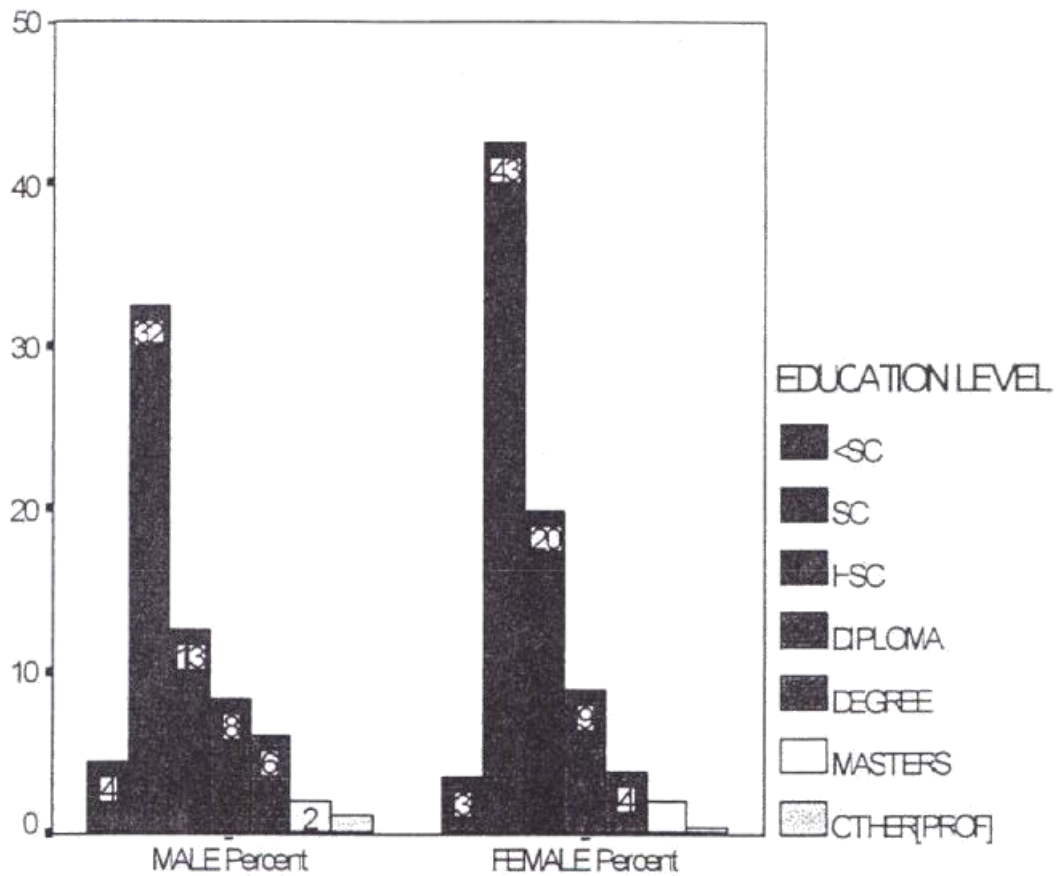
Table 1.5.5b Range of years spent at each level

			MALE	FEMALE	Total
				SEX	
			MALE	FEMALE	Total
LESS THAN 6 YEARS	TOP	Count	889	201	1090
		% within SEX	28.9%	17.2%	25.6%
	MIDDLE	Count	1300	508	1809
		% within SEX	42.3%	43.3%	42.5%
	JUNIOR/SUPERVISORY	Count	886	463	1357
		% within SEX	28.8%	39.5%	31.9%
	Total	Count	3076	1172	4257
		% within SEX	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
6 - 15 YEARS	TOP	Count	572	107	680
		% within SEX	40.5%	23.8%	36.5%
	MIDDLE	Count	507	171	680
		% within SEX	35.9%	38.0%	36.5%
	JUNIOR/SUPERVISORY	Count	333	171	504
		% within SEX	23.6%	38.0%	27.0%
	Total	Count	1412	450	1865
		% within SEX	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
16 - 25 YEARS	TOP	Count	130	19	149
		% within SEX	46.9%	28.4%	43.3%
	MIDDLE	Count	105	23	128
		% within SEX	37.9%	34.3%	37.2%
	JUNIOR/SUPERVISORY	Count	42	25	67
		% within SEX	15.2%	37.3%	19.5%
	Total	Count	277	67	344
		% within SEX	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
MORE THAN 26 YEARS	TOP	Count	67	5	73
		% within SEX	63.2%	38.5%	60.8%
	MIDDLE	Count	33	5	38
		% within SEX	31.1%	38.5%	31.7%
	JUNIOR/SUPERVISORY	Count	6	3	9
		% within SEX	5.7%	23.1%	7.5%
	Total	Count	106	13	120
		% within SEX	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

1.5.6 Educational Profile of Managers

The survey also sought to uncover the degree of formal education of our local managers. In view of the paucity of management development programmes in the country, and the minority of privileged Mauritians enjoying overseas higher education, we find ourselves

Discussion:

Do women in management suffer from stagnation in their jobs to a greater extent than their male counterparts. Of all male managers who participated in the survey, 54.9 percent remained in the same position since joining the organisation, much the same as the women managers (54.5 percent), indicating that approximately half the management population in Mauritius is suffering from job stagnation within their organisation.

In any organisational moves made by our manager-respondents, it would be useful to examine the nature of such moves. In other words, were they promotional? Did the individuals concerned advance from a non-managerial to a managerial job since joining their organisation? Data from Table 1.5.7b shows that the vast majority of managers (76.6 percent) in the survey did not make a promotional move within the management ranks of their organisation. Of all promotional management movements, 65.6 percent were made by males, and 34.1 percent by females. Not only do these results reflect on the seemingly static nature of managerial careers in general, both for male and female managers, suggesting that the more modern, less hierarchical, approaches to advancements and promotions, do not seem to be present in organisational cultures in Mauritius, but also that the gender disparity in such promotional moves are worthy of serious consideration, in an emerging era of equal opportunities and career development for all, especially given that both sexes are at par in competence, educational levels, and work experience.

1.5.8 Managerial Salaries

One of the traditional claims of the Equal Opportunity concept has been 'Equal Pay for Equal Work'. It has been proved through research, and it is estimated plausible by anecdotal reference, that women at all levels of employment and in all professions suffer from discrimination on the basis of remuneration, and other forms of rewards. It is nevertheless a difficult exercise to set about proving this in our local context, as the very nature of information on pay and benefits raises resistance and reluctance on the part of respondents. The question of indicating the range of salary being optional, many

respondents (36.4%) did not provide the required information. Based on limited responses, therefore (63.5 percent of all participating managers), the profile of monthly salaries of managers is depicted as follows :

Table 1.5.8 a Managerial Salaries

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	<5000	330	4.9
	5001-10000	1692	25.2
	10001-20000	1443	21.5
	20001-30000	471	7.0
	30001-40000	189	2.8
	40001-60000	137	2.0
	>60000	1	.0
	Total	4264	63.5
Missing	0	2443	36.4
Total		6715	100.0

As can be observed from the data, the median range is between Rs 5000 and Rs 20 000 monthly for managers responding to the survey. The following Graph details the distribution of salaries by sex.

Chart 1.5.8 Monthly Salary by Sex

Salary (Rs.)
- <5000
- 5001-10000
- 10001-20000
- 20001-30000
- 30001-40000
- 40001-60000
- >60000
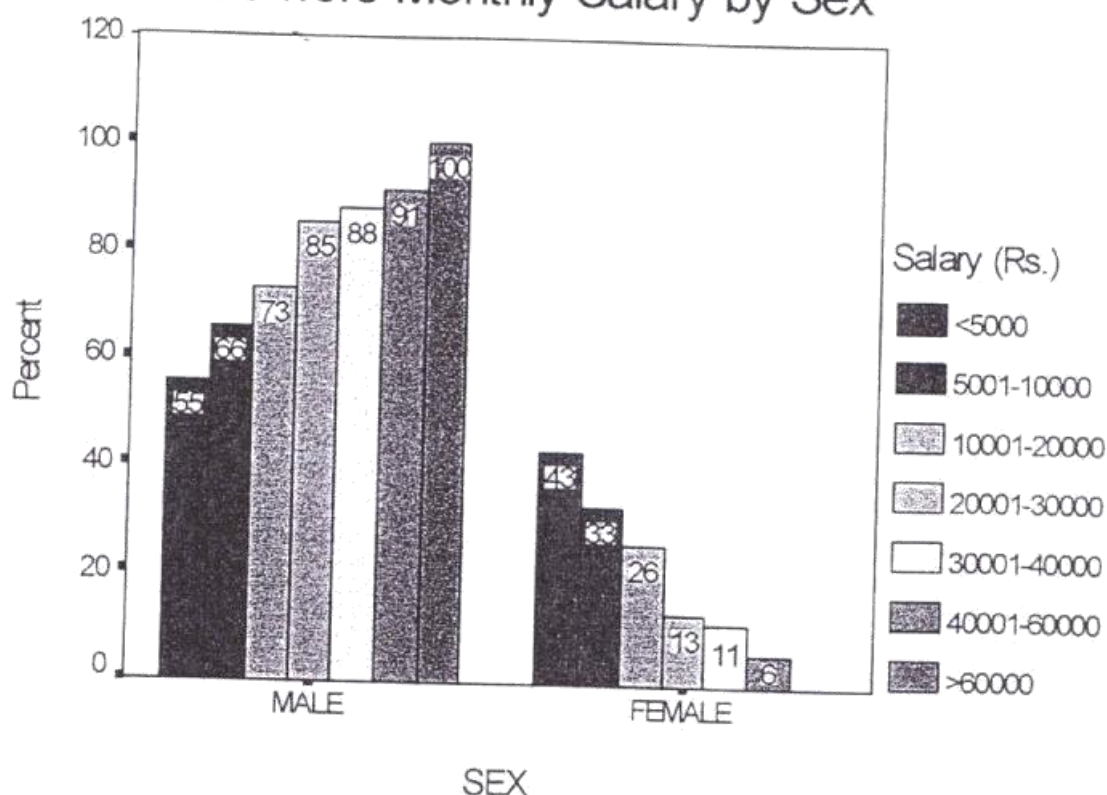
There is an enormous disparity in salary levels between males and females at managerial level, irrespective of level. Indeed, the higher the salary scale, the fewer the number of women present in that category: upto 43% of all managers in the "Less than Rs 5000/monthly" category are women, and 33 % of all managers in the Rs 5001- Rs 10000 range are also women, indicating a high proportion of women in the two lowest salary ranges. The disproportion of salaries is really apparent as from the middle-earning range, that is, as from Rs 10001, where males represent 73.8 percent of all managers earning between Rs 10000 a month and Rs 20000 a month. The trend continues right up to the "Over Rs 60000 a month" category. Although only 134 managers earn between Rs 40000 and Rs 60000, there are only eight women of a total population of women managers of 1156 participating in the survey, that earn this figure monthly, and no women earn over Rs 60,000.

1.5.9 Awareness of Women's Issues

Several questions in the database relate to awareness of Women's issues. This line of questioning was deemed important since perception and awareness of an issue are always the first paradigmatic steps in taking action on the given issue. Therefore, it was felt that it might well be a futile line of inquiry to research into positive actions and policies of Mauritian organisations in such matters as women-friendly and family-friendly policies without first questioning senior management on their degree of awareness, that is, how far they felt this was indeed an issue after all. As the following figure (1.5.9a) illustrates, the most frequently occurring response (mean score) was "I strongly appreciate the idea of women in management", followed by 44% claiming to "like" the idea. No senior manager of the survey said that they "opposed" the idea.
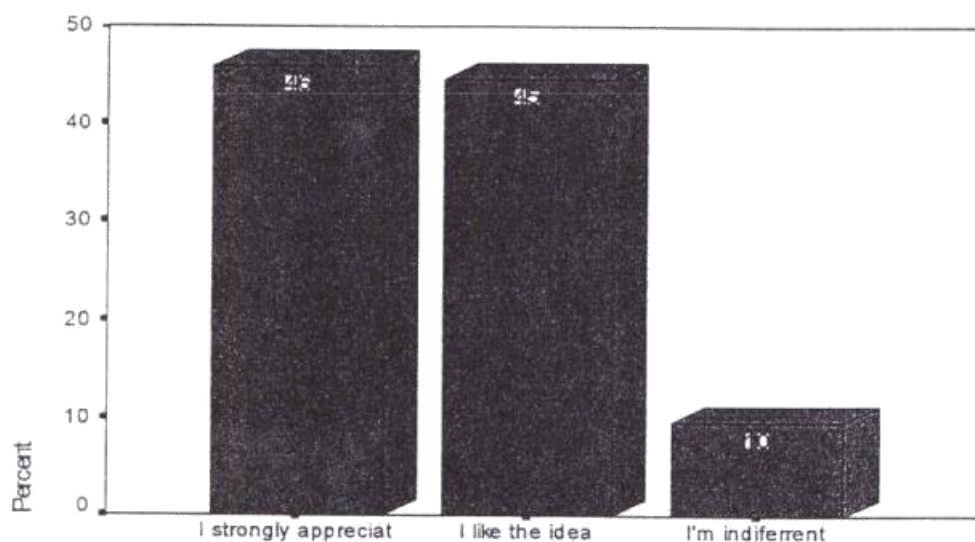
Fig. 1.5.9 Opinion on the idea of Women in Management

Although *a priori*, this first piece of data would seem a positive result in an exploration of senior managers' level of awareness and appreciation of women managers, it is necessary that such superficial information be verified for consistency and coherence. Indeed, does a mere statement of "strong appreciation" of women managers lead to an appreciation of the latter's issues at work? Of women's issues at work in general? The possibility of politically-correct answers to such questions cannot be totally overruled, and therefore a response such as that depicted above should only be analysed with caution. The following questions relate to senior managers' perceptions of women in

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management ranks. Table 1.5.9b shows that a mere 6.1 percent of senior managers responding to the survey rated women managers "better" than men, while the vast majority (83 percent) rated them "as good". Interestingly, 8.2 percent rated women managers "worse" than their male counterparts. To the question relating to the feelings of both men and women regarding a female boss, respondents gave the following answers : Most respondents believed that men in general would either feel indifferent (36.1%) or uncomfortable (44.2%) about having a female boss, while only 15.6% believed men in general would feel "good" about having a female boss. In this age of Equal Opportunity and the militancy for equality of treatment and perception, it is interesting to note the two extremes to these responses. The preferred response would be that men and women alike perceive the fact of having a female boss as a normal matter, and not one to feel either "good" or "uncomfortable" about. Nevertheless, those men who are assumed to feel "good" about having a female boss may be assumed to *prefer* the female managerial style, an issue which is not developed in this particular survey.

Responding to the question *"How do you think women in general (would) feel about having a female boss?"*, 39.5% percent of senior managers believed women would feel good about having a female boss, 45.6% said women would only be indifferent to the fact, while 12% thought women would actually feel uncomfortable having a female boss. The issue remains, what prompts such responses?

Table 1.5.9b Women managers compared to male managers

	Better than men	As good	Worse	Total	Total
Frequency	9	122	12	146	147
Percent	6.1	83.0	8.2	99.3	100.0
Cumulative Percent	8.2	91.8	100.0		

If almost half (44.2%) our respondent senior managers, of whom 69.4% are male, state today that men in general would feel uncomfortable about having a female boss, the implications for the recruitment and promotion of women in management ranks is

important : senior managers may deduce that, if subordinates do not look favourably on having a female boss, then co-operation and productivity under female leadership is surely to suffer. What actions does the senior manager take? Does he/she attempt to limit the number of females in managerial posts? It becomes interesting at this stage to cross-check such mental programs of senior managers by observing their responses to Question 12 in the survey. This particular part of the questionnaire was carefully elaborated and represents a key area of analysis. Just how aware are Chief Executives and other senior managers of women's issues at work? After painstakingly streamlining the various "issues" as found in the literature and presenting the list in as non-threatening language and format as possible, this question (12) was designed with the aim of understanding exactly how senior managers perceive such real issues as Sexual Harassment and difficulty with Child Care as being a concern for management of organisations. The table below details the responses of senior managers regarding their opinions on women's issues at work :

Table 1.5.9c Awareness of Women's Issues/Problems

Issue	Major Problem (% responses)	Mild Problem (% responses)	Not an Issue (% responses)
1. Lack of challenging, high-profile assignments	13.6	32.7	39.5
2. Difficulty with Childcare arrangements	19.7	23.8	52.4
3. Hitting the Glass Ceiling	15.6	35.4	39.5
4. Stereotyping	17.7	36.7	39.5
5. Lack of support from male peers	26.5	45.6	23.1
6. Lack of support from male bosses	23.8	43.5	29.3
7. Lack of support from female peers	37.4	42.9	14.3
8. Lack of support from female bosses	34.7	38.8	20.4
9. Pay and other reward inequities	22.4	36.1	34.7
10. Exclusion from high-profile training programmes	38.8	31.3	23.1
11. Lack of formal qualifications	34	32.7	26.5
12. Poor self-image/lack of self-confidence	19	41.5	36.1
13. Lack of support from male subordinates	27.9	38.8	27.9
14. Lack of support from female subordinates	38.8	41.5	15
15. Absence of mentors	32	31.3	26.5
16. Sexual Harassment	51.7	25.2	14.3

An average of 28.4 percent of Chief Executives in Mauritius believe that the issues listed are major issues or problems; an average of 33.4 percent of the same respondents believe these issues are "mild" problems, while 29% perceive such statements to be non-issues.

A few interesting responses deserve to be selected for discussion here: fifty-one percent of respondents believe that Sexual Harassment is a major workplace problem for women. Mauritian organisations being in general either small or medium in size, it would be plausible to suggest that Chief Executives would be closer to workplace realities such as Sexual Harassment than what would suggest the literature (largely Western, large-corporation oriented). This gives rise to the urgency of dealing with this problem, be it implied, or stated, as here. The presence of Sexual Harassment at the workplace is an unacceptable situation for any self-respecting organisation, and it is necessary that policies for handling grievances at his level be stated and put into practice through procedures and systems, with the involvement of all managers and supervisors, both male and female.

Another interesting finding is the issue of *"exclusion from high-profile training programmes"*; 38.8% of respondents admitted to this representing a Major Workplace Problem for women executives in Mauritius. The interesting point about this statement is that high-profile training programmes are normally channelled through senior management, who themselves select and sponsor successful managers for such developmental events. Is this a confession by Chief Executives that they have themselves so far failed to effectively select and sponsor females for such training programmes? Wild speculation is not the objective of this discussion, however, and so we must point simply to an area which requires rethinking on the part of management, that is, equal treatment to males and females for management training, and perhaps training and development in general.

On the other hand, almost forty percent (39.5%) of respondents believe that the lack of challenging high-profile assignments is not really an issue for women executives. Two possibilities may occur here : either senior management makes no difference in

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allocating high-profile assignments to males and females, or else senior management perceives that the fact of barring females from such assignments does not represent a career threat to women. The literature provides some evidence to support the latter supposition. Often, senior managers, especially males, who "dish out" work assignments to junior and middle managers, perceive women as being unambitious, reluctant to take on challenging jobs, preferring low-profile assignments, and generally lacking in managerial drive. Thus, many males in management either despise the presence of females in management because they believe that they are out for an easy life, or else they consider the exclusion of females from such tasks as a paternalistic favour bestowed upon the "weaker" employee.

More alarmingly, however, is the score on "Difficulty with Child Care arrangements", for which a mere 19.7 % of respondents rated as being a major issue. Considering the general impression of family-unfriendliness of Mauritian organisations , however, it should come as no surprise that child care and other family issues are considered as non-issues. With no government or industry policy on flexible work hours, part-time work, parental leave, sabbatical leave, which are all related to the need of mothers (and increasingly, fathers) of young children, for striking a reasonable work-family balance, this statement is very alarming. Are senior managers assuming that Child care facilities are adequate and satisfactory? Are they assuming that child care arrangements are not a workplace concern, but instead restricted to the private domain ? Further research into the proportion of women who actually *choose* not to compete for managerial positions due to difficulty with balancing work and family is a must at this stage of our social development. The culture of organisations with regard to working hours of executives must be reversed. Long hours must no longer be the pointer for indicating the commitment level of a manager. The role of a rewarding family life in contributing to manager commitment and motivation cannot be sufficiently emphasised.

1.5.10 Women-Supportive Attitudes

In rather obvious ways, the question of Women-Supportive organisational cultures can only arise if and until the underlying values and assumptions found within that culture

are examined. In this section and the following, the "supportiveness" index of Chief Executives is examined. The analysis here is based on the premise that, should Chief Executives' attitudes reveal "supportiveness" of women's issues, we can hope, if not expect, that organisational policies and systems also in support of women's issues would be in place in that organisation. Likewise, a lack of "supportiveness" in the entire value system of the Chief Executive would tend to point to a deficiency in policies and systems in support of women executives. The barriers which have been effective in keeping women out of managerial positions are deeply embedded in the cultures and structures of societies and organisations (Mills, 1988). Since we have contended that much of an organisation's cultural values can be "uncovered" by an examination of senior management's attitudes and value sets (hence the rationale for the unit of enquiry being the Chief Executive), this particular section seeks to gain insight into Chief Executives' "supportiveness" in their attitudes towards women executives. These will be examined in the next section.

How do Chief Executives perceive the necessity of having organisational policies and systems in support of women executives? Abstracting the actual development and implementation of supportive policies and systems, what *attitudes* do we find among top policy-makers regarding women's issues? A fair idea of the situation has already been exposed in the previous section (Awareness of Women's Issues), but it is necessary to discriminate between Top Management's *awareness* of women's issues and their (top management's) prevailing attitudes regarding such issues. For instance, a positive attitude would be revealed by the view that "something has to be done" about an unacceptable situation, whereas a negative attitude would be expressed by an indifference or even antipathy towards actions in favour of redressing an unacceptable situation.

Responding to Question 16 of the survey "Do you think that new legislation will expedite progress towards Equal Opportunities for women at work in general", the following findings emerged, reflecting the degree of sensitivity of Chief Executives to the necessity for a redress of the situation. Sixty-five percent of respondents valued the provision of legislation regarding equal opportunities, while 33.3 percent felt that

provision of law in such a matter would not do much to redress the situation (see Figure 1.5.10 below).

Fig. 1.5.10 Attitude toward new Legislation

Do you think Legislation will expedite progress toward Equal Opportunit
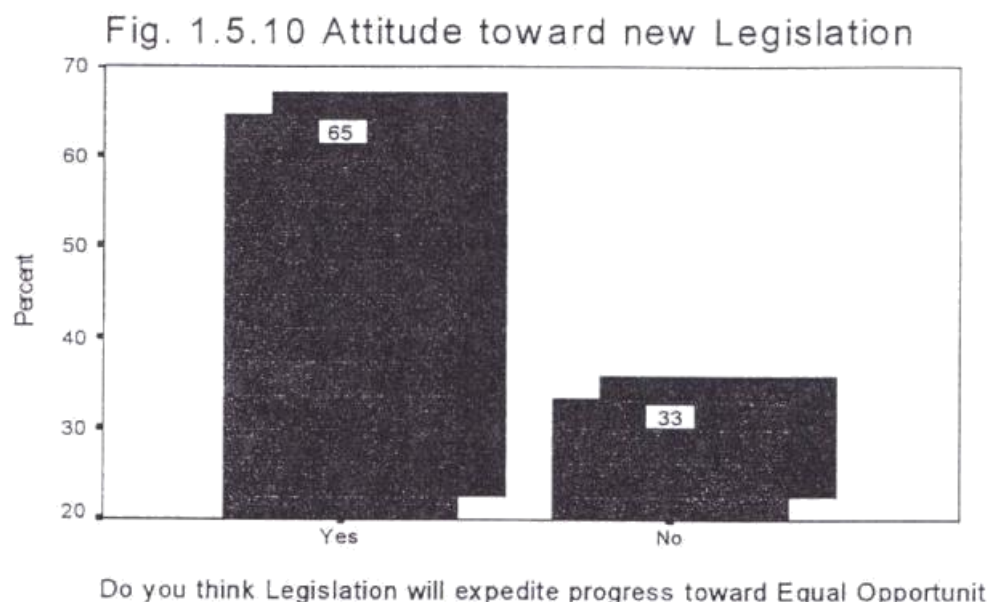
If Mauritian business is to remain competitive in the global marketplace, and if our society is to aspire for genuine equity, then women must be given genuine chances in all instances of their lives to reach what they are capable of attaining. It is comforting to note the findings here, which indicate that Mauritian business would be in support of Government's move to develop new legislation in favour of eliminating discrimination against women. This finding in itself ought to be a clear signal to the relevant authority that businesses perceive the provision of legislation as one mechanism that would improve the lot of women in Mauritius. Whether Chief Executives are actually *in favour* of such Legislation is another matter, however. What is to be made from this finding is that Government must now take the necessary steps for institutionalising Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) as law in this country. It is a fact that it is of course 'politically correct' to be in favour of a Equal Opportunities law, but somehow, nothing seems to done about it. The danger of relying on such findings to suppose a "positive" attitude of senior managers is that we may at the same time suppose the positive attitude to reign across the entire issue of equal opportunities, positive action, and so on, which may not be the case at all. One *may*, on the contrary, infer from this response by senior management, that the latter perceive the issue as purely a legal one, to be managed by

Government only, through legislation. Here would be an abdication of responsibility on the part of organisational leaders. Indeed, what part are they willing to play in bringing about genuine Equal Opportunity at the workplace? What meaning do they attribute to bottom-of-advertisement slogans "We are an equal opportunity employer"?? Are senior management willing to carry through their "positive attitudes" towards equal opportunity and the promotion of women in management? Question 17 of the survey served to give a clear indication of how important senior executives believed certain measures were for expediting progress toward equal opportunity in management. Responses were elicited around the following possibilities : (a) The provision of new legislation on discrimination, (b) the Administration of new legislation on discrimination, (c) Voluntary/Affirmative Action by businesses, (d) Voluntary/Affirmative Action by women themselves, and (e) Voluntary/Affirmative Action by all persons in leadership and managerial positions. The following table summarises the responses provided by Chief Executives :

Table 1.5.10 Ratings given for actions expediting progress toward Equal Opportunity

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Provision of new legislation on discrimination	39 %	32.9 %	23.3 %
Administration of new legislation on discrimination	41.1 %	29.5 %	23.3 %
Voluntary/Affirmative action by businesses	42.5 %	43.2 %	9.6 %
Voluntary/Affirmative Action by women themselves	59.6 %	28.8 %	6.2 %
Voluntary/Affirmative Action by all persons in leadership and managerial positions	65.8 %	24 %	6.8 %

These findings support those from Question 16 (concerning only the provision of new legislation towards equal opportunity for women at work in general). As we can see from the table, Senior Management responding to these queries appear largely to be in favour of various forms of actions that ought to be taken to expedite the progress of women in management in particular. This is a highly positive note, if one considers that 68.8 percent of responding Chief Executives believe that it is "very important" that responsibility for pushing for changes in the situation be shared by all persons in leadership and management positions. In addition, a cumulative percentage of 87.5 percent of Chief Executives believe that it is either "Very Important" or "Important" that businesses be involved in positive and voluntary action to help move women forward through managerial ranks. This disputes the inference in the previous paragraph, where it was suggested that Senior managers may hold the perception that this is an issue for Government action only. Equally interesting is the finding that the mere provision of legislation is not sufficient for ensuring changes in the situation, but that the Administration of equal opportunity (anti-discrimination) laws was as important. (71.9 percent stating that the Law itself was either Very Important or Important, and 70.6% stating that its administration was either Very Important or Important). As may have been expected, most respondents felt that affirmative action should also be taken by women themselves, if they are to make progress in management (59 % stating this was Very Important, and 28.8 % as Important).

An index was created in this section to determine what organisations, or rather which Chief Executives, were the most "supportive of women's issues", including women-in-management issues. The question detailed above was used to compute the Women-Supportive Attitude Index of Chief Executives responding to the survey. The scores are as follows (see Table 1.5.10b) by sector of activity. We can thus have a fair notion of those sectors or industries in Mauritius, represented by Chief Executives in those sectors, which hold supportive attitudes toward women's progress in management in particular and toward non-discrimination measures at the workplace in general.

Table 1.5.10b Women-Supportive Attitude Index by Sector

Women-Supportive attitude index	Agric & Fishing	Community, Social & Personal Services	Electricity Gas & Water	Financing, Insurance, Banking & R.Estate	Hotels & Restaurants	Manufacturing & Quarrying	Ministries & Parastatals	Service companies	Small business	Sugar Estates	Transport, Storage, Shipping & Communications	Wholesale & Retail trade	Total
0	16.7%					4.3%		5.0%					2.7%
3					9.1%	2.1%							1.4%
4							5.0%						.7%
5					9.1%								.7%
7	16.7%				9.1%	2.1%	5.0%	5.0%					2.7%
8				10.5%	9.1%	8.5%				7.1%		50.0%	6.2%
9				5.3%		10.6%				7.1%			4.8%
10			50.0%	5.3%	9.1%	12.8%	10.0%	10.0%	33.3%	14.3%			11.0%
11	16.7%		50.0%	10.5%		21.3%	15.0%	20.0%		7.1%			15.1%
12	16.7%			10.5%	18.2%	8.5%	15.0%	5.0%		21.4%			11.0%
13	33.3%			36.8%	18.2%	17.0%	20.0%	15.0%	33.3%	21.4%		50.0%	21.2%
14		100%		21.1%	9.1%	8.5%	30.0%	15.0%	33.3%	21.4%	100%		9.6%
15					18.2%	4.3%		25.0%					13.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

57

As can be seen, there seems indeed to be certain sectors which differentiate themselves from others on the basis of their supportiveness index, although generally, scores appear to be relatively high, namely in the 8 to 15 range. (the Index was computed to represent organisations with high scores as those being the most supportive). The highest possible score (15) was obtained by the following sectors, indicating that Chief Executives from these sectors perceived all the measures proposed in the question to be Very Important :

Hotels and Restaurants, Manufacturing and Quarrying, Ministries and Parastatals, Service Companies, Sugar Estates and Small Business.

The high score range of 10 to 15 was distributed among the sectors as follows :

Chart 1.5.10c Women-Supportive Attitude Index by Sector of Activity
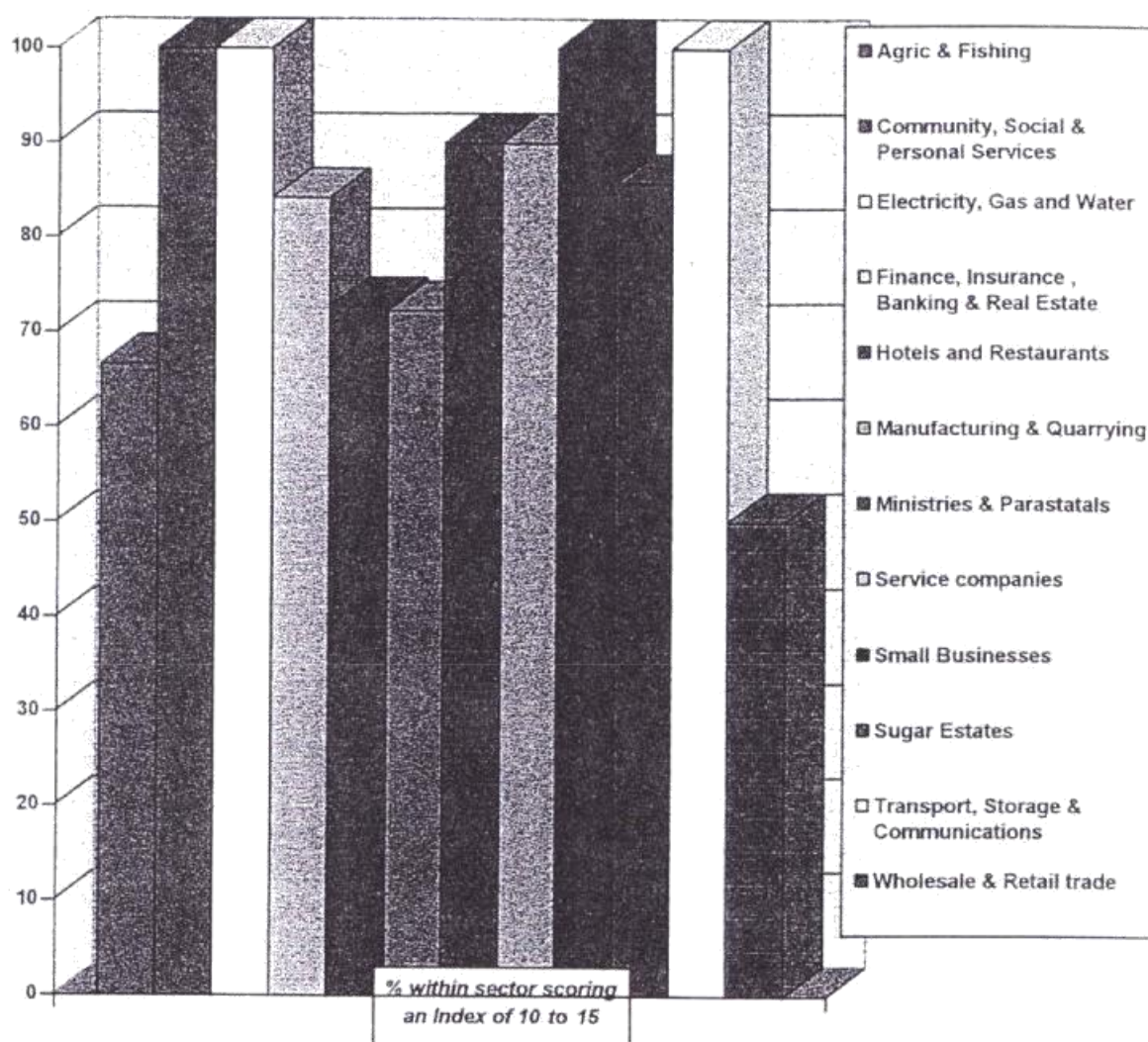
Thus we find that 72 percent of the most-represented sector of the survey, Manufacturing and Quarrying, emerges as a sector claiming its supportiveness for measures to be taken in favour of non-discrimination and promotion of women in management. Ministries and Parastatal organisations are also high scorers (90% of organisations participating in the survey scored an index between 10 and 15). Service Companies also scored high, with 90 percent of respondents in the high 10 to 15 range. Noteworthy is the finding that no Chief Executive believed that the measures proposed were "not important".

Are the most attitudinally-supportive organisations headed by younger or older CEOs? What can be inferred from such a finding? The following Table depicts the age distribution of CEOs and their scores on the Women-Supportive Attitude Index.

Table 1.5.10c Women-Supportive attitude index by CEO Age

			CEO Age						
			Less than 25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	Total
Women-Supportive attitude index	0	Count		2	2				4
		Percent		7.4%	3.4%				2.7%
	3	Count				1		1	2
		Percent				2.7%		25.0%	1.4%
	4	Count				1			1
		Percent				2.7%			.7%
	5	Count					1		1
		Percent					5.9%		.7%
	7	Count		2		1	1		4
		Percent		7.4%		2.7%	5.9%		2.7%
	8	Count			4	4	1		9
		Percent			6.8%	10.8%	5.9%		6.2%
	9	Count		1	4	1		1	7
		Percent		3.7%	6.8%	2.7%		25.0%	4.8%
	10	Count	1	1	7	4	3		16
		Percent	50.0%	3.7%	11.9%	10.8%	17.6%		11.0%
	11	Count		6	10	5	1		22
		Percent		22.2%	16.9%	13.5%	5.9%		15.1%
	12	Count		3	6	3	3	1	16
		Percent		11.1%	10.2%	8.1%	17.6%	25.0%	11.0%
	13	Count		3	12	10	5	1	31
		Percent		11.1%	20.3%	27.0%	29.4%	25.0%	21.2%
	14	Count	1	2	8	1	2		14
		Percent	50.0%	7.4%	13.6%	2.7%	11.8%		9.6%
	15	Count		7	6	6			19
		Percent		25.9%	10.2%	16.2%			13.0%
Total		Count	2	27	59	37	17	4	146
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The findings that emerge from this data are unfortunately hard to interpret in view of the over-representation of some age groups and the under-representation of others. Although 100% of Chief Executives in the less than 25 age bracket are high scorers, it is difficult to infer that Mauritian organisations ought to have younger senior managers if the country is to develop a corporate culture that is supportive of non-discrimination, etc. The age distribution is summarised below as a reminder that, although samples may be constructed to represent all sectors of activity in Mauritius, it becomes unfeasible to stratify the sample by age group of Chief Executives, since there is no assurance that the response rate will reflect the stratification. In addition, one may perhaps decide to rely on the data thus gathered, by supposing with some

accuracy (based on a general feel and experience) that Chief Executives of organisations around the world, and indeed perhaps more so in newly industrialising countries such as ours, that an average CEO age would range around 45 to 60 years of age, and that subsequently, the apparent over-representation of this age group would in fact be a fair representation of the typical CEO profile anyway.

Chart 1.5.10d CEO Age Distribution
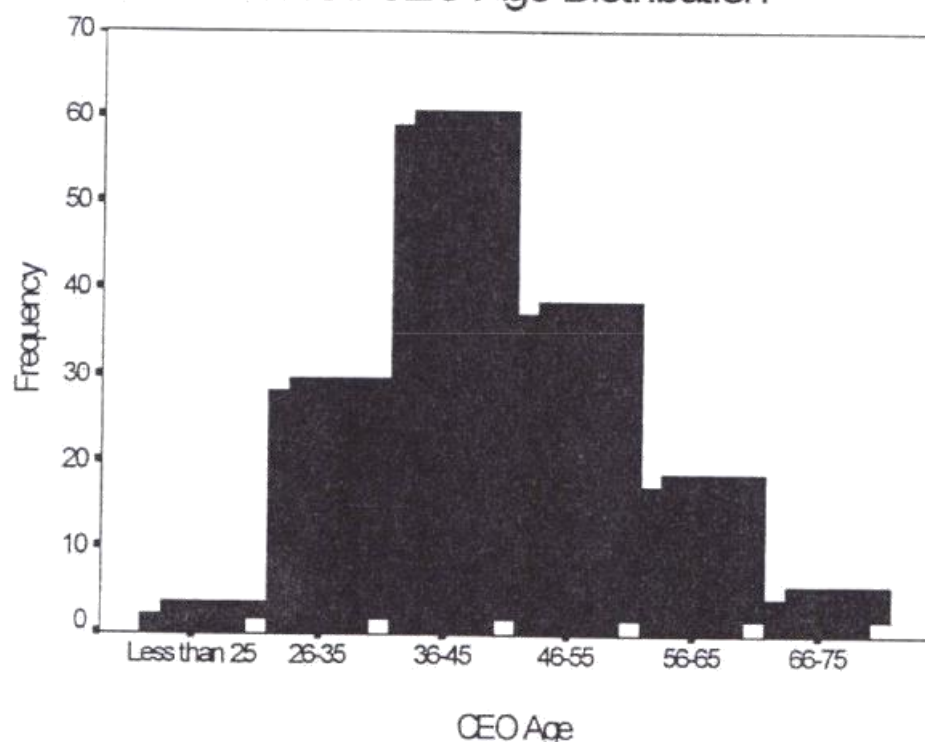
Thus, the following are the percentages within in each age group that scored high (between 10 and 15) on the Attitude Index :

Age group "less than 25 : 100 %

    "26 to 35"   : 81.5%

    " 36 to 45"   : 83 %

    "46 to 55"   : 78.4 %

    "56 to 65"   : 82.4 %

    " 66 to 75"   : 50 %

which actually demonstrates a generalised high score across the entire sample, save for the 66 to 75 age group, of which only half emerged as highly supportive, attitude-wise.

1.5.11 Degree of Positive/Affirmative Action regarding Women's Issues

As mentioned briefly in the previous section, holding a positive attitude towards the issue of supportiveness to women's problems and issues may reveal to be mere statements of platitudes, if such attitudes do not get reflected into actual systems, policies and strategies. Indeed, the practical, everyday aspects of the way organisations structure their work are a feature of that organisation's culture; they will be reflected in performance criteria, reward systems, recruitment practices, training and promotion practices, and so on. Many Chief Executives may believe in equal opportunity, and indeed, as demonstrated by the findings in the previous section, most Chief Executives may positively perceive the provision and administration of legislation towards redressing the gender imbalance, and positive action by organisations and their leaders and managements, it would be interesting to find out how they relate such issues with organisational productivity and how they integrate such issues into everyday organisational life through policies and systems. Bridging the gap from platitudes to action is by no means an easy task, and credit must be given to organisational leaders who have taken steps to remedy what they have perceived to be a problem of social injustice as well as one of organisational productivity and effectiveness.

Responding to question 13 : *"In the last twelve months, during high-level meetings, strategy discussions, or even casual conversations, has any mention been made by management in your organisation of the necessity to promote women in management and to increase the number of women at executive level?*, the response is follows :

Chart 1.5.11a Responses for any mention made regarding the promotion of women into management ranks

Yes
30.3%

No
69.7%
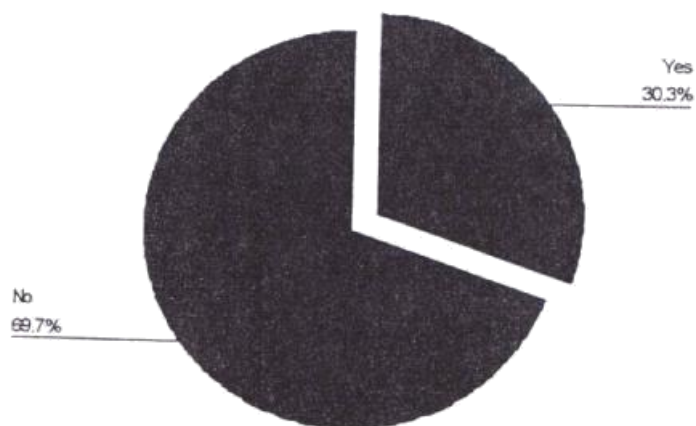
To question 14 of the survey, *Is there any conscious effort on the part of management of your organisation, especially of Human Resource Management, to attract and retain competent women and move them up through the management ranks?*, the responses were as follows :

No
43.3%

Yes
56.7%
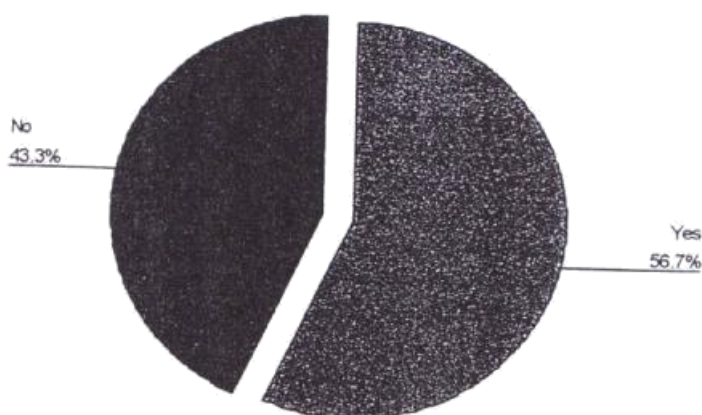
Chart 1.5.11b Responses for Conscious efforts to Attract and Retain women

As the findings demonstrate, although a predictably high proportion (67.3 %) of organisations in Mauritius have not made any mention at management level of the necessity to tackle the women managers issue, a relatively high proportion (54.4%) claim to have made some conscious effort to attract and retain competent women into the organisation and move them up through management. One may wonder at such findings, since the reverse proportion would seem more reliable : although *mention* may be made at management level, informally or formally, it may happen that no systemic measures are taken, and so the proportion responding "yes" to "mentioning the necessity" would likely be higher than the percentage claiming to have made conscious efforts to take action. This is not revealed in the findings. Instead, we find that a mere 29.3% claimed to have even mentioned the issue, while 54.4% state to have made conscious efforts (without mentioning the issue?) These claims will partly be verified through the analysis that follows :

Question 15 in the survey probes responses regarding the implementation of a list of policies for the promotion and support of women's issues. Respondents were asked whether such policies are already in place (verifying the 54.4% response above), whether these policies will soon be in place, whether they will be implemented some time in the future, or whether management is not ready to consider the implementation of such policies. The results are given in the sections that follow :

Policy on Equal Opportunity in Recruitment, Training and Promotion

The objective of this question was to elicit responses from Senior Managers regarding how far "down the road" towards creating a discrimination-free workplace they were. To this question, 71 percent of respondents claimed to have already implemented a policy for equal opportunity in recruitment, training and promotion. Although the question itself was not framed in such a way as to elicit specific replies, this finding was one of the most unexpected of the survey. Indeed, with no Government legislation, no information campaign, no established set-up to prompt or force employers to becoming Equal Opportunity employers, how astounding that the initiative should have come from

organisations themselves! In this respect, a major item on the research agenda in the area of Equal Opportunities is an in-depth investigation into the mechanisms within organisations that are utilised for the setting up, implementation, follow-up and dissemination of policies of all nature. Of vital importance is an assessment of the overall strategy and policy making function of Mauritian organisations. Where do policies flow from? Is there widespread use of the strategic approach, which would inform policy decisions, or do senior managers hold merely a fuzzy notion of what strategy and policy making is all about? The Chart below demonstrates the findings on this issue; the disparity between all the other responses and the "Already Implemented" response (71 %) is indeed striking.
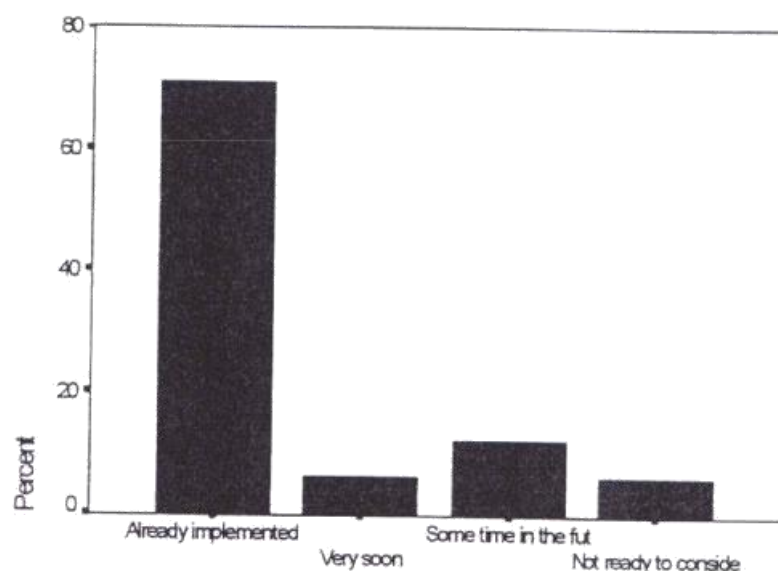
1.5.11c Equal Opportunity policy for Recruitment, Training and Promoti

Policy on Sexual Harassment

Somewhat more plausible are the findings regarding the implementation of an organisational policy on Sexual Harassment at the workplace. Perhaps because most senior managers hold at least a lay view (and that itself is helpful, though insufficient) of the notion of Sexual Harassment, responses to this question reflected the poor progress made in this direction : 26% of organisations were at 1998, "not ready to consider" such a policy, and 32% may think about the possibility some time in the future.

Here again, on the Research agenda should be a thorough analysis of the 12 percent who actually state they have already implemented a policy on sexual harassment. What prompted them? What can other organisations learn from their experience?
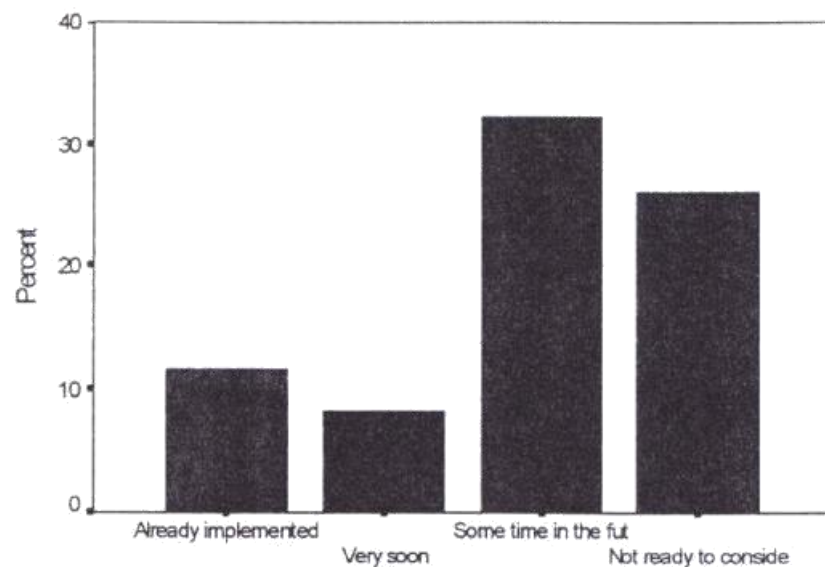
1.5.11d Sexual Harassment policy

Policy on Diversity

What is "Diversity" to the Mauritian Chief Executive? To the Mauritian lay person? If 70% of responding senior managers claim to have already implemented a policy for the promotion of diversity in their organisations, what interpretations can we make? Either the concept is not very clear, or else organisational cultures in Mauritius are far more sophisticated than anecdotal evidence would suggest. Let us provide some technical explanation for the benefit of unenlightened readers. The term *cultural diversity* has been used to refer to workplace differences that are associated with any or all of the characteristics that may make employees dissimilar. It may be restricted to differences in sex, race, religion, nationality, age, and whether the person has a 'disability'. It may also refer to differences according to characteristics such as personality, physical appearance, sexual orientation, marital status, and parental status. The point is that it is necessary to bring about changes to prevent *discrimination* on the basis of such differences. Employees who are accustomed to working with 'similar' people may not wish or know how to work with people who are 'different'. The premise is that, for instance, the experience of working with women in the management team promotes

acceptance of them in that capacity. The Mauritian situation is a nightmare scenario, for the very basic of change measures does not even exist : Laws on Equal Employment Opportunity. It has been widely recognised in countries where EEO laws have existed for a long time, that the latter is simply not enough, because many organisations continue to adhere to managerial practices that are more geared to homogeneity of their workforce, rather than to diversity. The diversity argument pushes into focus the differences that we all bring to our roles, rather than trying to eliminate or deny the differences. In other words, the *culture* of the organisation is largely responsible for the adoption or ignorance of equal opportunity paradigms. The most important initial step an organisation can take - and this should be taught by example from the top - is to stop thinking that there are no differences. Thus, the equal opportunity debate has evolved from a purely legalistic measure into the organisational culture arena :

a) organisational effectiveness today will be enhanced by a greater understanding of customer needs, *because they replicate customers in their managerial workforce*;

b) business development and activity will be constantly innovative *because all viewpoints are encouraged , rather than just those of dominant groups*; and

c) employers will keep ahead of changing demographics *because they will make use of the best talent available, regardless of its packaging.*

Simply put, *proactive organisations* would be equal opportunity employers even in the absence of EEO laws! Mauritian organisations would gain from adopting such a perspective. By actively recruiting female employees for male-dominated jobs, such as in management, they will have a stable population of female talent available for promotion. By using various career planning devices, training and development programmes, and other developmental activities for *all* managers, they will be naturally more successful in growing their own in-house pool of managerial talent.

The opposite culture, the *benign neglect organisations*, do nothing to eliminate sex discrimination or to alleviate its effects. They would likely see government activity in this area as a misguided and hopefully passing fad. They would be inclined to wait and see if these laws will really be enforced before doing anything to promote equal

opportunity. *Reactive* organisational cultures would merely react to government EEO laws, attempting mere minimal compliance by adding token women as managers. Naturally, they become over time vulnerable to charges of discrimination and court actions by aggrieved employees.
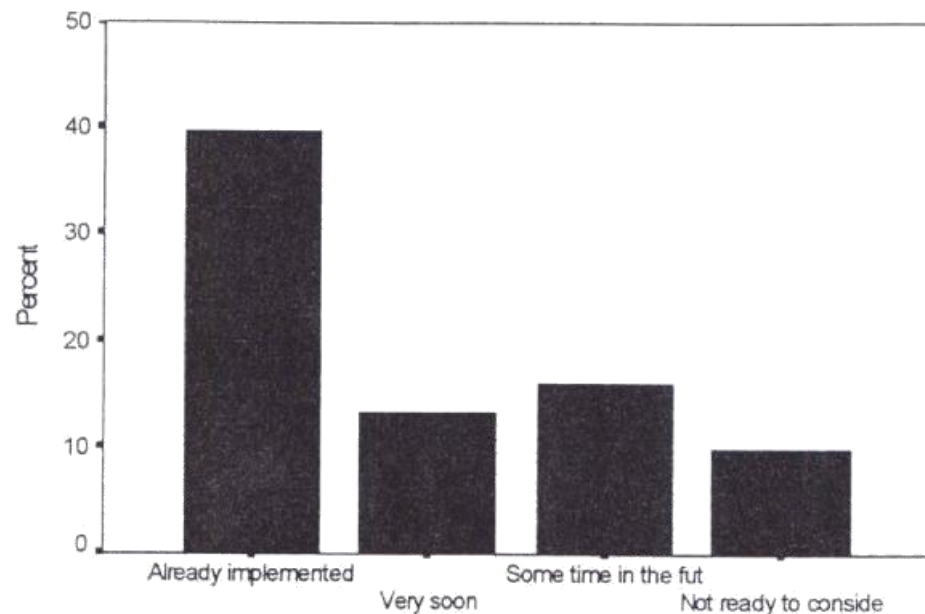
1.5.11e Diversity policy

Policy and Code of Practice for Interviewing

Perhaps not yet widely appreciated for its potential for creating a non-discriminatory culture, the policy of an organisation for recruitment and selection plays a major role and deserves top management's attention. Discriminatory practices at the first stage in the employment process signal unethical conduct on the part of the organisation, and this permeates the entire culture. Introducing discrimination during the interview necessarily debars certain categories of job candidates and unduly favours others, and often, interviewers are not even aware of this. However, much worse is that they *are* aware, and consciously practice discrimination in the process of interviewing candidates for recruitment, appraisal, and promotional purposes. Just how aware are senior managers of this problem? Just how professionally and ethically are job and promotion interviews conducted? Does the data presented in the following chart accurately reflect organisational practices in Mauritius? The establishment of a code of practice and/or policy for interviewing is a direct reflection of the sophistication of Human Resource

Management systems in an organisation, and this finding is perturbing in the least, since it is well-known that Human Resource personnel do not enjoy such status in Mauritian organisations in general. Yet, how do we explain that over half (51%) of Chief Executives in Mauritian claim to have established a code of practice for interviewing? Once again, what is understood by "Code of Practice"? Perhaps the 51% of managers under scrutiny here include many who perceive the *practice* of using the interview as a tool (presumably for selection, essentially) to be a "Code"... More research seems to be necessary to determine the level of familiarity of our senior managers with management vocabulary.
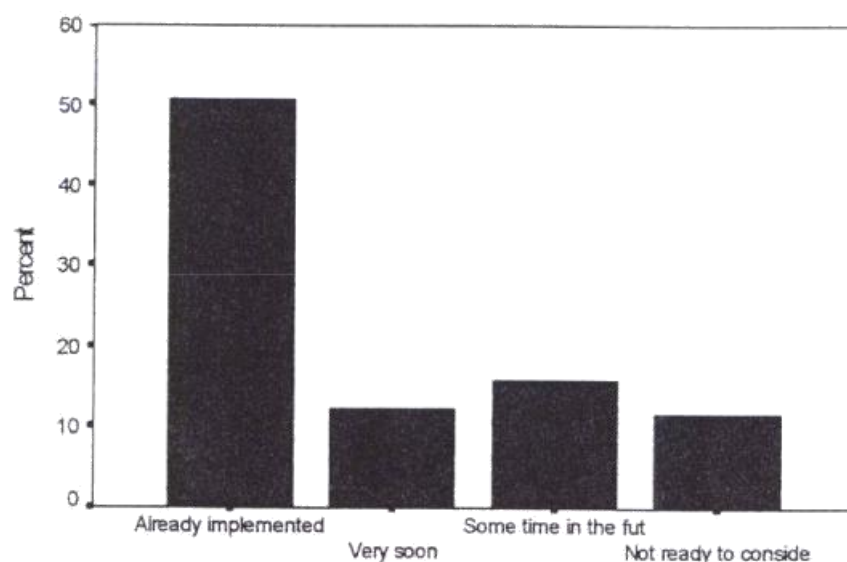
1.5.11f Code of practice for interviewing

Policy on offering Part-time Work Opportunities
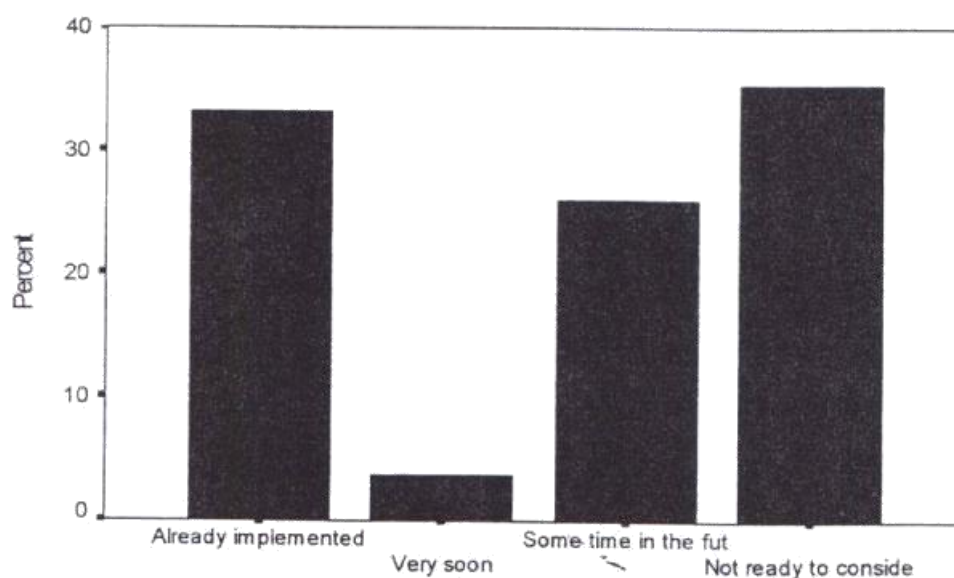
1.5.11g Policy on Part-time work

Thirty-five percent of our organisations are not ready to consider the implementation of a policy on part-time work. Possible explanations for such a reluctance may include the necessity for a legal framework for the operationalisation of such a policy, and a lack of guidelines from Government regarding the same. Although such explanations are perfectly feasible, one may have hoped for a higher rating on "some time in the future", since this direction in organisational manpower management has been on the discussion agenda for some time now, and organisations ought really to be thinking seriously on the issue, while awaiting the legal guidelines. However, it appears that most are not willing to consider such measures, once again demonstrating their lack of vision with regard to their inability to foresee solutions to organisational problems such as lack of skilled workers and low level of commitment. Offering part-time work opportunities may not only open doors to a wider pool of competent individuals, but, because of the attractiveness of such a work schedule to literally thousands of women, provide organisations with a higher commitment level from such a category of staff.

As far as those respondents claiming to have already implemented a "policy" on part-time work (33 percent), the survey does not provide the data necessary to determine the nature of activity involved. This can however be inferred to some extent from the nature of business activity of those organisations. The table below indicates the sector of activity of those organisations having stated to have a part-time work policy in place. As can be seen, organisations from the Manufacturing and Quarrying sector (30.4%), from the Financing, Insurance, Banking and Real Estate sector (17.4%), from Service companies (15.2%) and from the Hospitality and Tourism sector (10.9 %) are those with a part-time work policy. Whether these organisations are the lighthouses of organisational practice and policy or whether part-time work is merely a well-established system responding to the nature of the given sector's activities remains to be investigated. For instance, it is clear that the Construction industry (included in the Manufacturing and Quarrying sector) favours part-time and "casual" work because much of its activity revolves around project-based, temporary work. Also, the Insurance and Real Estate industries would normally engage in the recruitment of individuals on a part-

time basis for the purpose of selling their insurance services and real estate products, as the case may be.

Table 1.5.11 e Organisations having already implemented part-time work policy BY Sector of activity

		partime = 1 (FILTER)	
		Selected	
		Count	% within partime = 1 (FILTER)
Sector of activity	Agric & Fishing	3	6.5%
	Community, Social & Personal Services	1	2.2%
	Electricity Gas & Water	1	2.2%
	Financing, Insurance, Banking & R.Estate	8	17.4%
	Hotels & Restaurants	5	10.9%
	manufacturing & Quarrying	14	30.4%
	Ministries & Parastatals	2	4.3%
	Service companies	7	15.2%
	Sugar Estates	4	8.7%
	Transport, Storage, Shipping & Communications	1	2.2%
Total		46	100.0%

Policy on Parental Leave AND Policy on Extended Unpaid Parental Leave

The most recent research findings indicate that work-family inter-role conflict is more likely to be increasing than decreasing in the future, and it is clear that both national and organisational policy still lags behind the realities of current and future members of the

workforce. Following from the argument in the preceding section, it is obvious that the ability to attract and retain an effective workforce in the face of current and future challenges, and to understand which organisational expenditures are costs and which are investments, is going to require a business environment that is sensitive to the needs of dual-career families. And another way of addressing these needs is to build in a solid, realistic leave policy with the flexibility to satisfy people's life demands as well as allow the organisation to function effectively and efficiently. Again, the figures (see the two Charts below) show that employers in Mauritius are mostly "not ready to consider" the implementation of such policies.
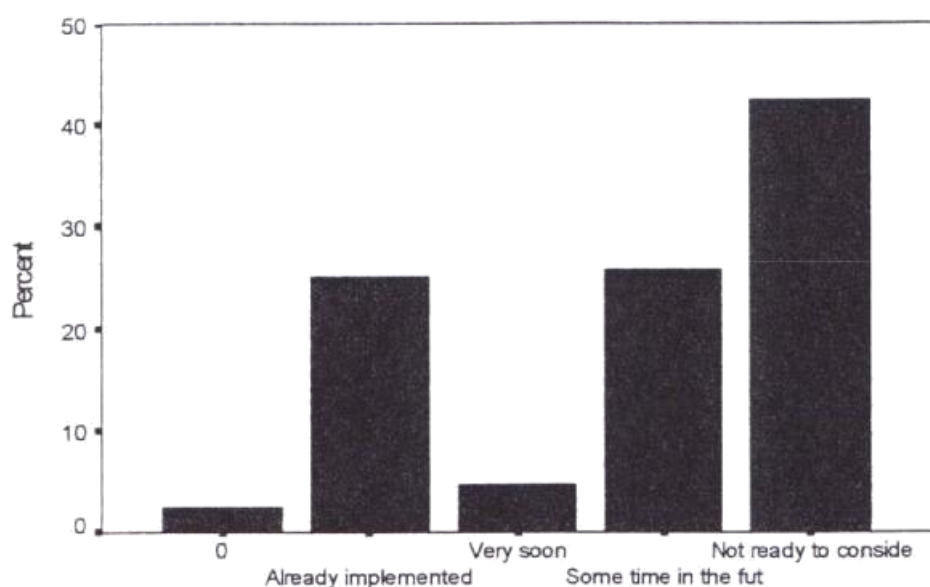
1.5.11h Parental Leave policy
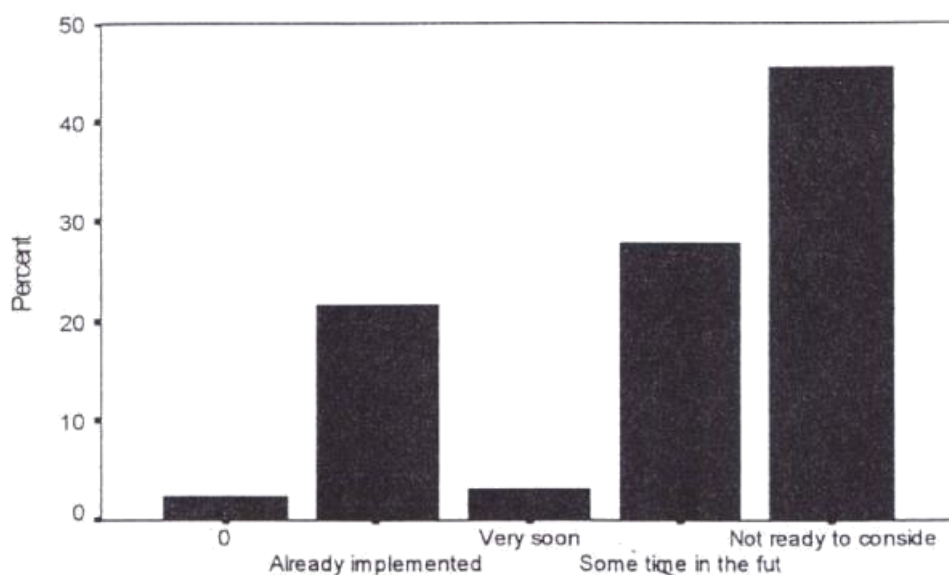
1.5.11i Extended Unpaid Parental Leave policy

It is well-established that the "traditional household" where the father worked and the mother cared for the children at home is mostly a thing of the past for Mauritian society. Although Mauritius does hold a statutory maternity leave policy (12 weeks post-partum), the inadequacy of this national policy has neither been recognised nor acted upon by either Government or organisations. This inadequacy, related to its shortness and the exclusion of the father from any leave benefit, gives rise to childcare-related anxiety, depression, and stress that extends automatically into the workplace and result in tardiness, absenteeism, turnover, high accident rates, low morale, and productivity losses. It is time therefore that the culture of organisations be reviewed in order to grasp the seriousness of this situation. Organisational leaders must realise that *any* problem that affects an employee's performance will eventually effect the business as well.

Policy on Subsidised On-site Childcare facilities
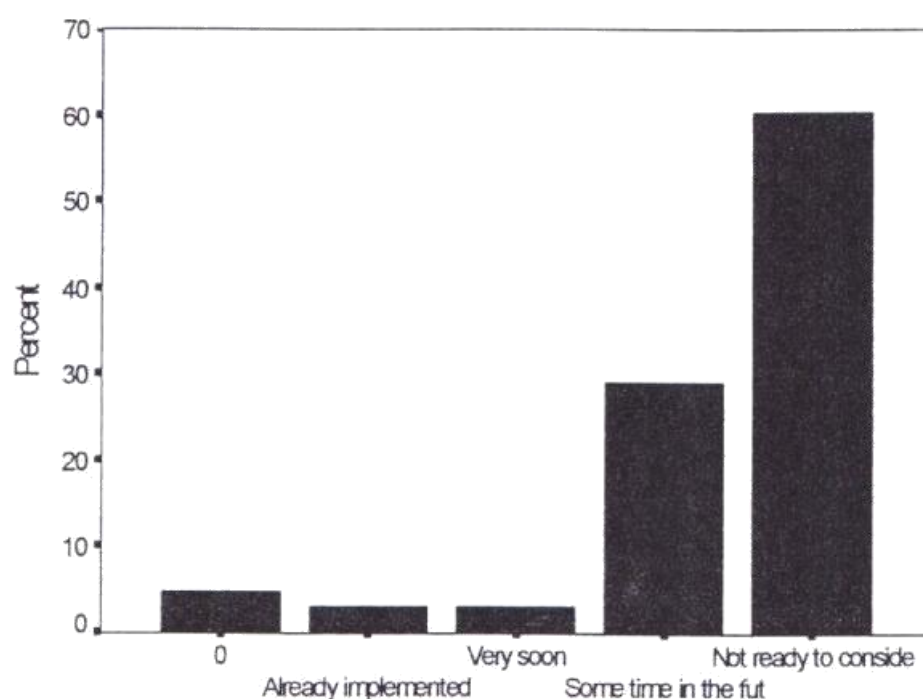
1.5.11j Subsidised on-site childcare facilities

The data presented in the above Graph speak for themselves. The majority of our organisational leaders are not ready even to *consider* the development of a policy and ensuing system for providing childcare facilities. Although not within the scope of this research work, wide anecdotal evidence is readily available to demonstrate that

organisational cultures which are family-unfriendly not only eventually lose their best female managerial talent, but are also those firms which find that absenteeism, tardiness, lack of commitment on the part of *all* employees at *all* levels can be easily traceable to problems relating to difficulty with childcare arrangements. Because women will still remain the parent with most of the responsibility for household and childcare arrangements, unless organisations revisit their policies on childcare, the entire workforce will continue to be plagued by the same fundamental problems of conflicting roles. Women are likely to suffer most from the backward and unethical economic conception that organisational survival is based purely on low-cost strategy, and that providing for such "facilities" as childcare are detrimental to organisational survival. However, those absences, tardiness cases, and so on, believed to cause the most disruption and expense, are short, unforeseen absences that not only involve costly overtime, lost time, and paid (sick/casual leave) benefits, but also production disruptions. These are the types of disruptions that are likely to be experienced today by organisations unwilling to consider and accommodate a workforce that is under increased pressure to satisfy demands outside their work.

Policy on Flexible working hours
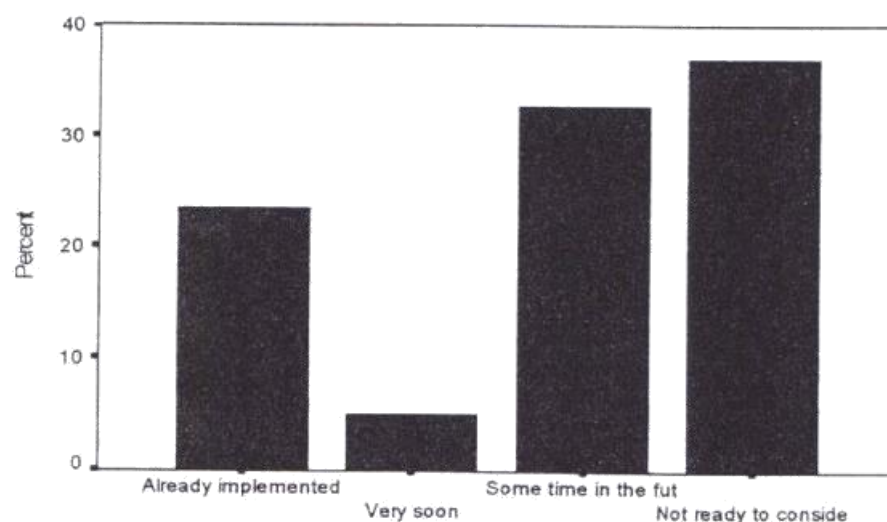
1.5.11k Felixble working hours

Again, most organisations are unwilling to consider flexible working hours as part of their employment policy, and this in the face of serious problems with regard to labour shortages and low levels of employee morale and commitment. More and more, women (and increasingly, men), are looking for employers who offer flexible working hours and

who clearly support working parents. The prospect of more flexible work hours, with scope for individual (unitarist) negotiation, is overwhelmingly attractive to women and their partners. We must bear in mind that increasingly, labour shortages are becoming more serious and the labour force more difficult to manage, and that the mass influx of women into the labour pool must be perceived by employers as a critical and indispensable labour resource. The problem will not be one of *job* scarcity, but one of skills shortage. The same jobs will evolve, and, along with new jobs, will demand higher skill and educational levels. Mauritius still bears the burden of a significant segment of the labour pool that is uneducated, undereducated, unskilled, and unemployable, while the Mauritian economy is increasingly facing the challenge of competing with countries with better products, better technology, and labour forces that are significantly more productive. The ageing of the population also means that more and more older workers will be less likely to move, change jobs, or undergo training. Although empirical findings are required to support this stance, it would seem plausible to assume that Mauritian women, who still spend many more hours than men accommodating family responsibilities, would value flexibility of work hours and seek out job opportunities which offer this flexibility (see Rosin and Korabik, 1990, and Feldman, 1990, for research in the area).

Policy on Career breaks and Sabbaticals
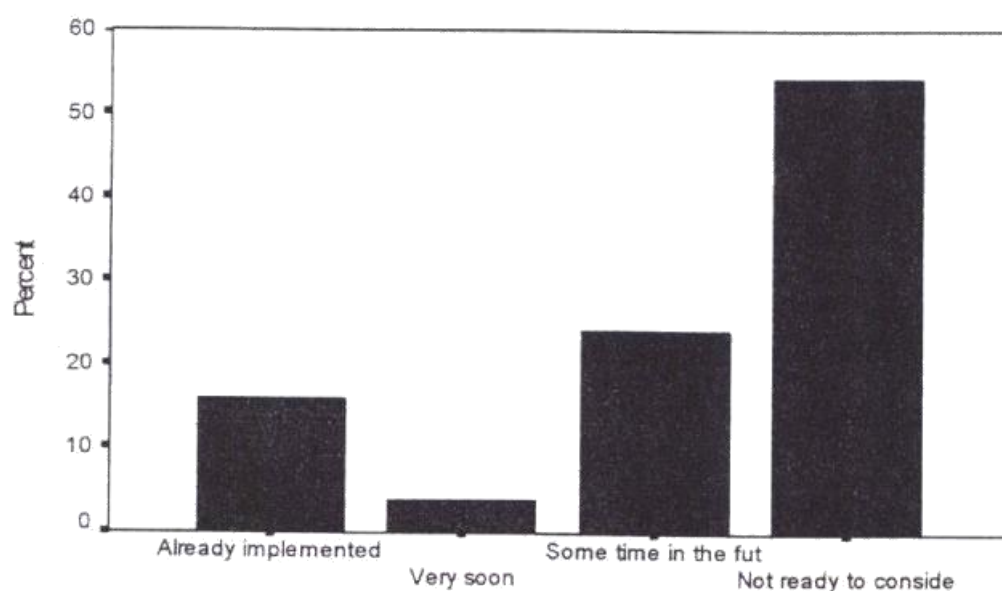
1.5.11l Career break and sabbatical policy

Sixteen percent of responding Chief Executives claim to have a policy on career breaks and sabbaticals, while the majority (54%) admit to not being ready to consider such an issue.

This question remains in line with the former arguments, wherein any policy and practice which is in support of women's special needs at managerial level will be an attractive option for capable women, thereby enhancing their productivity and commitment and loyalty levels. However, whether career interruptions or sabbatical leaves be taken by executives for family concerns, emergencies, or to pursue any other personal, social, or community objective, the existence of a policy for such leaves is an attractive human resource characteristic of an organisation. The stress levels associated with managerial work may well warrant "time off", especially for managers of long tenure who have demonstrated loyalty and devotion to their career in the organisation. Taking time off to care for very young children, elderly relatives, or simply for a well-earned personal break, is a social and business issue that most senior managers would understand, even if they disagree *a priori* about the solutions, such as sabbaticals and career interruptions. Just as with inadequate childcare support systems, lack of flexibility in work schedules and lack of part-time opportunities, the absence of a career break opportunity spins off on productivity and stress levels, when employees are forced to try and balance the demands of the workplace and the obligations and needs outside work.

1.5.12 Perceptions on Managerial Work

Quite recently, organisational researchers have begun to use what is often called "women's voice", or "feminist standpoint" as a lens through which to view organisational and managerial phenomena. The general goal of research from such a perspective is that it is an "epistemologically equal" perspective, claiming an equal valuing of the female voice and experience, and validating the female style and approach to management. What do Mauritian managers think of women managers in their broader paradigm of "management"? Do they, as traditional organisational cultures demonstrate universally, believe that managerial talent and managerial effectiveness is a male prerogative. Unspoken assumptions about men and women's positions in society are

woven deeply into the fabric of our society, which get directly translated into the deep fabric of our organisations. The survey did not aim at uncovering the specifics of senior management's perceptions of women managers talent and effectiveness, but it was essential that some idea be gathered with regard to perceptions of managerial effectiveness, and from that data, inferences be made regarding the assumptions of senior managers as to what a good manager was. Question 2 of the survey listed a number of characteristics of managers (by no means exhaustive, but the objective was to gain the general preference or bias of the respondent) and to elicit responses for each characteristic on the list. The characteristics were also presented in a (seemingly) random order, such that respondents be discouraged to check off closely related items automatically. The underlying structure of the proposed list of characteristics was such that some items on the list reflect a "feminine" managerial trait, and other items reflect a more traditional "macho" characteristic. Those Chief Executives leaning on a more "masculine" scoring may then be said to have less propensity to adopt a positive attitude towards women in managerial jobs. Those with high "feminine" scores would be considered as having considerable potential for accepting the presence of women in their management team. The findings are as follows :

Chart 1.5.12a Scores on Masculine Managerial traits
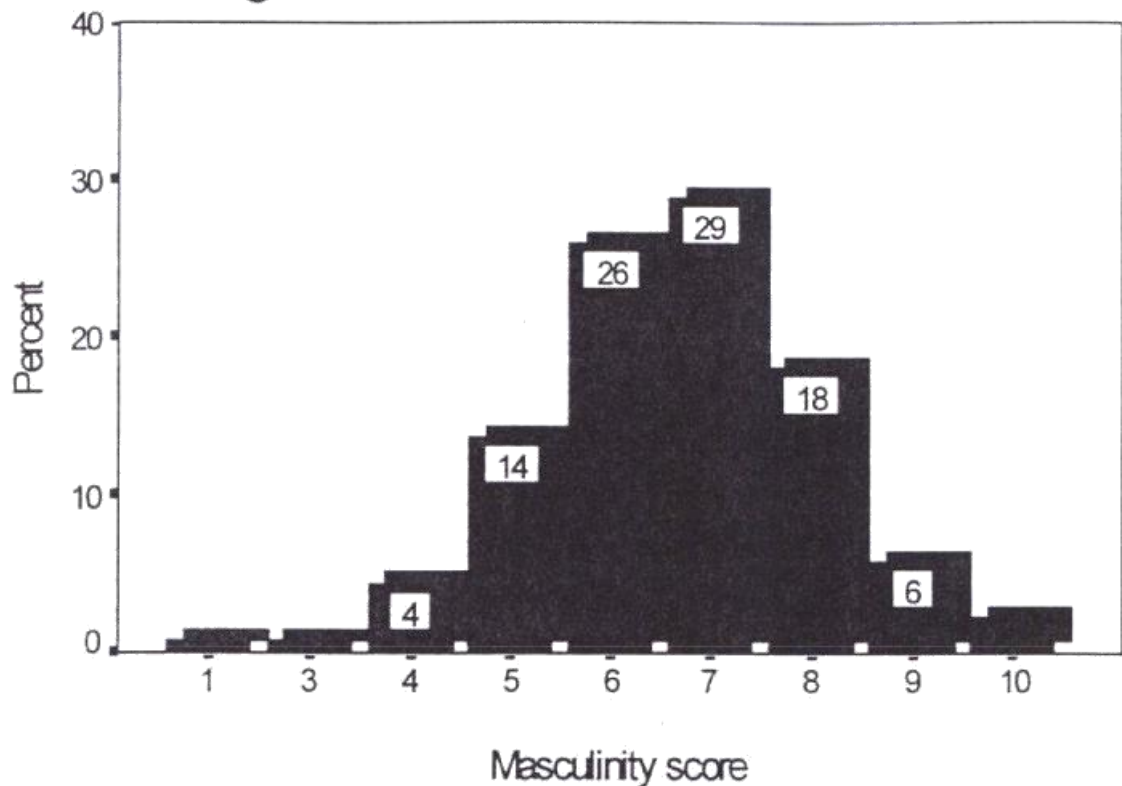
As can be seen from the findings depicted, the range of scores is clearly high on the Masculinity scale, with most respondents earning a 6-plus masculinity score. This indicates that respondents rated the "masculine" traits highly as being a combination of "very important" and "important" managerial characteristics (for which a weight of 3 and 2 was allocated, respectively). Consider the following finding relative to respondents' ratings of "feminine" characteristics in management :

Chart 1.5.12b Scores on Feminine Managerial characteristics

Femininity score
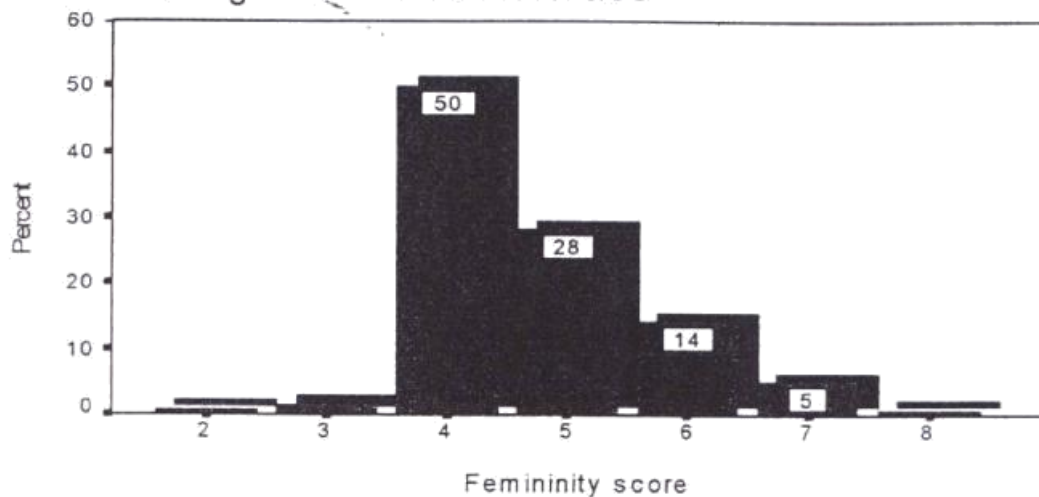
As can be seen, the median score lies around 4, which represents a significantly poorer score than that for Masculinity, where scores peaked at 6 and 7. The interpretation of such findings is straightforward: Chief Executives largely rate masculine characteristics in management as more important than so-called traditional feminine traits, such as being supportive, intuitive, having a bias for participatory and collaborative styles of leadership, and having a preference for building motivation into their work team. Traditional male traits include aggressiveness, forcefulness, authoritativeness, and a high level of assertiveness.

The problem that such findings pose for the future of management in Mauritius is that the "traditional" view of what constitutes important managerial behaviour is no longer valid in today's organisational world. Not only is the "style" of management now much more androgynous, incorporating *both* so-called masculine and so-called feminine approaches, but the *presence* of women in management teams is being increasingly valued as bringing a plus to the effectiveness of the team.

Some essential managerial skills considered as feminine, such as sensitivity to others, are now highly valued in management, and are naturally commonly found in women. As such, a management team comprising both men and women is likely to be stronger than one comprising only of the members of one sex. Women bring different experiences and perspectives to management. They often use a different style due to influences outside

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the work environment. Simply by being part of the team, women create a climate where things happen differently, either just as, or more, effectively. Proponents of the female standpoint theory (or the use of "women's voice") (Grant, 1988; Helgesen, 1990; Ruddick, 1989) suggest that, when used instrumentally, women's emotional and empathic capabilities have much to offer organisations. They assert that these skills encourage a more holistic, complex view of organisational phenomena because people with these characteristics are more likely to recognise that behaviour, facts, and events are not sufficient for understanding or responding to situations. Gergen (1990), Kaplan (1991) and Senge (1990) suggest that women are more likely to consider important emotional implications and contextual circumstances as factors that may influence organisational experience and/or that should be considered in making decisions. The efforts of management science to bring feminist standpoint theory (or using the "woman's voice") into mainstream organisational discourse on managerial effectiveness has identified ways in which the qualities of vulnerability, empathy and empowering can add value to organisations. In enlightened environments (mostly different from the Mauritian context ....), there would be few to challenge the notion that "relational" strengths can be used in the instrumental world of organisations to make the workplace more efficient, effective, and better positioned to compete in the global economy. And of course, using these relational qualities instrumentally will benefit all involved - organisations will become more effective, female diversity will be recognised and validated for its "value added" potential, and males will be encouraged to adopt so-called "female" characteristics. Thus, instead of viewing women in management under a "deficiency" model, where women are the ones to measure up to male managerial styles, thereby recognising that the qualities associated with men are also those most important to successful management, organisations should re-focus and be critically examining their own cultures or value systems. Thus, by talking of masculinity and femininity not as two ends of a pole, but as a continuum along which managers can choose to move, these managers adopt an androgynous management style. The androgynous manager can recognise when it is important to be supportive, and when to be forceful, and thus be more effective than being limited by the rigidity of accepting stereotyped single-sex traits and behaviours.

1.5.13 Awareness of the Corporate Culture paradigm

Respondents were asked, through several questions carefully spread out in the questionnaire, what their perception of organisational culture as an instrument was, and what was their perception and assessment of their own organisation's culture. The purpose of this line of questioning was to uncover the degree of awareness of senior managers (who are after all the major craftsmen involved in the development of their organisation's culture), to the culture issue itself. The premise here was that a lack of awareness of the culture paradigm would also signal a lack of sensitivity to organisational influences on the problems and issues of women managers, since both structurally and attitudinally, the culture of an organisation is ultimately the force that determines organisational phenomena. In a recent article in the local press (L'Express, 22nd April 1998), the findings of an American survey of businesses unveiled that women choosing to leave corporations to start up their own businesses did so not because they were rejecting corporations, but because they were "rejecting cultures that are not supportive". Twenty-eight percent of women in the survey said that they left their corporations because they were dissatisfied with their past jobs or traditional corporate culture, reported Sharon Hadary, executive director of the National Foundation for Women Business Owners (NFWBO). The survey also showed that women striking out on their own tend to practice people-oriented management styles and focused more on the general well-being of their workers. *"Our styles aren't necessarily better, but different"* noted Hadary. *"Women are creating a different kind of corporate culture, one that tends to be more family-friendly"*, she added. Indeed, 76 percent of respondents from her survey said that their current management practices were far more worker-friendly than those they experienced under previous employers.

In section 1.5.9, we discussed senior managers' level of awareness of women's issues in Mauritius, and findings revealed that the corporate cultures of Mauritian organisations, as reflected by the level of awareness in question here, were by and large unfriendly towards women's issues and problems. Might this suggest that corporate Mauritius is soon to witness an exodus of capable women, as the latter find better self-employment

opportunities where a more family-friendly and woman-friendly culture can be created and sustained? Consider the findings relative to senior managers' awareness levels of the importance of corporate culture as a useful paradigm, and the management of corporate culture, in a manner appropriate to furthering business objectives and strategy:

The questions relating to "Awareness of Organisational Culture" are as follows:

Question 3 of the survey requested respondents to react to the following statement :
Top Management has the greatest influence in the creation and development of an organisation's culture. This question was included because of the importance of an acknowledgement by senior managers of their instrumental role in creating culture. Leaders need to understand that what you see is not always what you get in organisations, and that underlying values and elements of an organisational culture are usually buried beneath a wide range of social behaviours and artifacts, and that the onus is on management to uncover these layers in order to understand the existing culture and craft an appropriate culture.

Table 1.5.13a Top management has the greatest influence on the creation and development of an organisaiton's culture.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	77	52.4
	Agree	67	45.6
	Disagree	1	.7
	Strongly disagree	2	1.4
	Total	147	100.0
Total		147	100.0

To Question 19 of the survey, senior managers who were asked to agree or disagree on the point that organisational cultures must evolve or change in order to ensure better corporate performance, the following results were found:

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Table 1.5.13b O.C must evolve/change to ensure better corporate performance performance

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Agree	129	87.8
	Disagree	6	4.1
	Total	146	99.3

These findings demonstrate not only a high level of awareness of the role of senior management in the creation of an appropriate culture (cumulative 98 percent strongly agreeing or agreeing), but also a high level of awareness (88 percent) of the necessity to enable the culture to evolve in an appropriate fashion, with a view to improving organisational performance. This can be interpreted as a positive sign in the future endeavour of this country to create a corporate environment that would be woman-friendly, family-friendly and society-friendly. If senior management, and indeed, all managers, of Mauritian organisations can first be made to appreciate the difficulties and serious issues faced by women in management and by women in general at the workplace, and if senior management realises the importance of crafting a corporate culture that would help manage such issues, then there may be reason for optimism.

From the findings in this survey, it is apparent that actual practices and policies within organisations do not reflect an awareness of the relationship between women's issues and corporate culture (represented by structures, systems and attitudes). This is therefore the next step to be taken by senior management, that is, recognise that their systems are not woman-manager-friendly (not woman-friendly in general), and begin changing their cultures in order to create a more equitable, human and socially just workplace, not merely for reasons of ethics and social justice, but for instrumental purposes of organisational effectiveness and efficiency as well. One enlightened respondent rightly stated :

"It seems that quite a large number of firms in Mauritius are frozen in their old habits. There is a reluctance to embrace a more modern way of management with emphasis on human development, instead of [pursuing] short-term

profitability. Unless firms modernise their management to improve their organisational culture, it is very unlikely that women will make any significant progress in management".

However, it is necessary to exercise caution in our optimistic stance. Once more, it is of essence to attempt an analysis of the statements made by senior managers with regard to their awareness of the culture paradigm before we can draw broad conclusions. Although a glossary was provided in the questionnaire for technical terms (such as organisational culture), we can never be very sure of the sense respondents make of such terms (which are impossible to translate into lay terms). A valid reason for being cautious of respondents' apparent sweeping confidence with the term in question is revealed by the following findings :

To Question 18: *Have you ever attempted to make a thorough analysis/examination of your organisation's culture?*, **49.7 percent** respondent positively, while **45.6 percent responded in the negative**. Considering the complexity of such an exercise as conducting a culture analysis, usually performed by the most *avantgardiste* of firms, mainly major corporations of the western world, some margin of caution requires application before one can rely on such data for the formulation of conclusions. In addition, if one were to accept at face value that 49.7 percent of participating organisations did indeed conduct a thorough culture analysis, then these organisations would be the only ones in a position to assess the appropriateness of their culture, whereas the survey reveals that 65.3 percent of respondents claimed that they found their culture to be appropriate. What is the basis for such an assessment by 65.3 percent of respondents, of which 15.6 percent did not even carry out a culture analysis? Herein lies the problem with respondents' claims to understanding such concepts as culture ; verification questions within the questionnaire are valued highly in such cases, since they provide data which set off warning signals. In short, although senior managers responding to the various questions on organisational culture appear at face value to possess a significant degree of awareness of the culture issue, further examination of *all* their responses to the 'culture' questions reveal contradictory replies, thus confounding results. Nevertheless, many senior managers did express sensitivity to the issue of

culture change, or at least voiced an opinion on the characteristics of a desired culture. A list of such desirable features found in the analysis of qualitative responses is given below :

- Development of a code of ethics
- Review of goals and objectives, and communicated to all employees
- An equal opportunity culture
- A culture of participation, safety, environment friendly
- A culture of professionalism
- Free employer-employee dialogue
- Proactivity, teamwork
- Enhanced human relations
- More sense of belonging
- More delegation and empowerment
- More results-oriented management
- Pleasant-to-work-in culture
- Progressive and communicative
- Individual responsibility, awareness of economic situation
- Diffusion of vision/mission
- Quality and work ethic
- Management with accountability
- Increased training
- Enhanced sense of belonging

The following quotes from two Chief Executive interviewed during the survey may hopefully serve as an example of not only culture awareness, but better still, culture management :

(1)

> I try to do [a culture audit] every six months; I have a staff of 27 people (...), and every six months I make an appraisal, going through all the parameters. Culture is also an important parameter. I try to do my best; I try to make my people feel comfortable in the culture".

(2)

"... We have to move with what is going on, so that we are constantly examining our culture, our norms, trying to adapt to the requirements".

1.5.14 Representation of Women in Mauritian Management

This section, together with the last, form, in effect, the culmination of analysis of the entire project. From the outset, this research aimed at determining the penetration or representation of women in the managerial ranks of Mauritian organisations, both public and private. Just where are these women found? What are the managerial structures of our organisations, and can such structural elements be linked to findings from the second phase of the research, for example, with the Attitude Index? This section will attempt analysis and interpretation of the findings.

The findings show that **women constitute 25.4 percent of the managerial population** of the island, all managerial levels included. This is broken down by managerial level as follows :

Chart 1.5.14b Sex distribution by Level
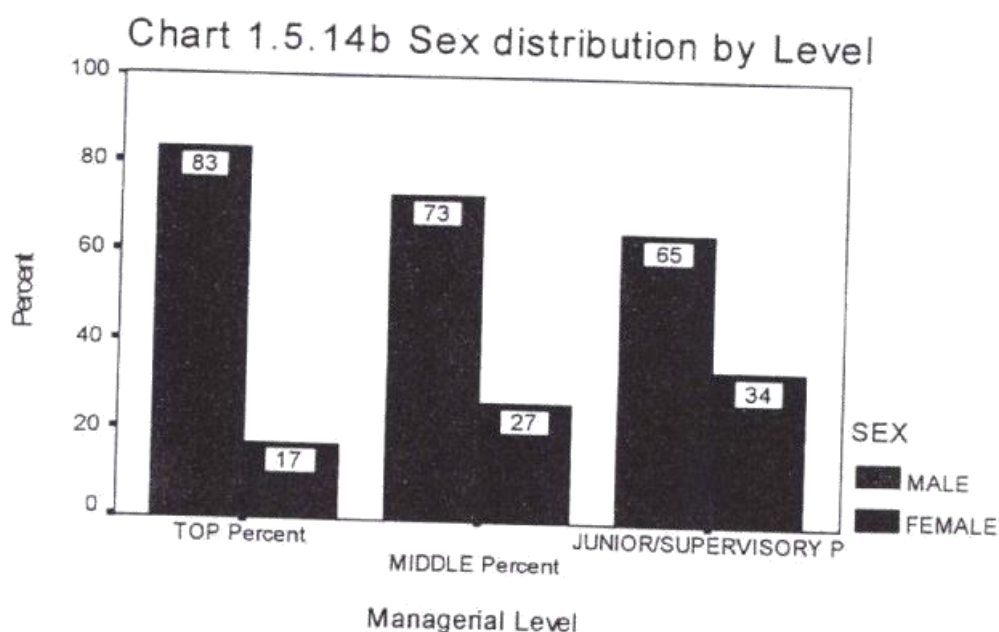
The figures demonstrate that at all managerial levels, the representation of women is disproportionate, even at supervisory levels. Males are over-represented in all

categories, but especially at higher levels; while top management is made up of 82.1 percent men and 16.4 percent of women, the latter make up 33.7 percent of supervisory jobs and 26.1 percent of middle management jobs. It is clear that the lion's share of higher levels of responsibility, and status, in an organisation, goes to males, flying in the face of the actual gender distribution of the workforce (50% of the labour force in Mauritius being female). The following depicts the sectors where women are employed.

Table 1.5.14 a   Sex distribution of managers BY sector of activity

			SEX		
			MALE	FEMALE	Total
SECTOR	AGRICULTURE & FISHING	Frequency	56	11	67
		% within SECTOR	83.6%	16.4%	100.0%
	AIR CONNECTIONS	Frequency	4	1	5
		% within SECTOR	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	COMMUNITY/SOCIAL & PERSONAL SERVICES	Frequency	1		1
		% within SECTOR	100.0%		100.0%
	CONSTRUCTION	Frequency	72	2	74
		% within SECTOR	97.3%	2.7%	100.0%
	ELECTRICITY, GAS & WATER	Frequency	3	2	5
		% within SECTOR	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	FINANCING, INSURANCE,& BANKING,REAL ESTATE & BUSINESS	Frequency	577	223	804
		% within SECTOR	71.8%	27.7%	100.0%
	HOTELS & RESTAURANTS	Frequency	370	121	493
		% within SECTOR	75.1%	24.5%	100.0%
	MANUFACTURING, QUARRYING, EPZ	Frequency	1203	422	1632
		% within SECTOR	73.7%	25.9%	100.0%
	MINISTRIES/PARASTATAL BODIES	Frequency	1464	599	2063
		% within SECTOR	71.0%	29.0%	100.0%
	SERVICE COMPANIES	Frequency	354	186	540
		% within SECTOR	65.6%	34.4%	100.0%
	SMALL BUSINESS	Frequency	61	6	67
		% within SECTOR	91.0%	9.0%	100.0%
	SUGAR ESTATES	Frequency	223	14	237
		% within SECTOR	94.1%	5.9%	100.0%
	TRANSPORT, STORAGE,& COMMUNICATIONS/SHIPPING, CLEARING & FOR	Frequency	162	47	209
		% within SECTOR	77.5%	22.5%	100.0%
	WHOLESALE & RETAIL TRADE	Frequency	328	70	398
		% within SECTOR	82.4%	17.6%	100.0%
Total		Frequency	4878	1704	6595
		% within SECTOR	74.0%	25.8%	100.0%

Chart 1.5.14 c Employment of Women Managers by Sector
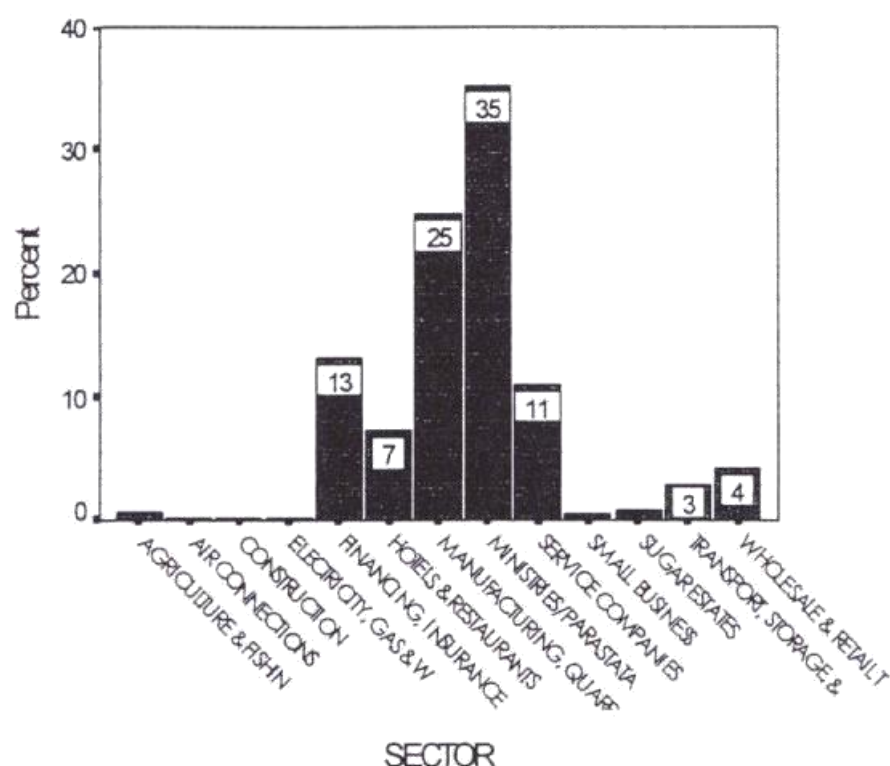
Some sectors or industries are larger employers of women at managerial level. Table 1.5.14a above shows that most women in management in Mauritius work in government ministries and Parastatals (35 % of all women managers in Mauritius), followed by the Manufacturing sector (25% of all women managers work in this sector), and a distant third being the Finance, Insurance, Banking and Real Estate sector which employs 13.2 percent of women managers of Mauritius.

In terms of the size of organisations, (see Table 1.5.14 b) , three categories appear to emerge as being most represented : the small and medium enterprises forming 29.3 percent, the 50-to-99-employees category representing 15.1 percent, and the large organisation category (200 to 500 employees) representing 19 percent of participating organisations. The question is to know which categories 'favour' employment of women at managerial level.

Table 1.5.14 b Size of Organisations

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	0-25	1965	29.3
	26-49	649	9.7
	50-99	1016	15.1
	100-149	606	9.0
	150-199	306	4.6
	200-500	1294	19.3
	500+	877	13.1
	Total	6713	100.0

Chart 1.5.14 Organisations employing Women in Management, BY size of Organisation
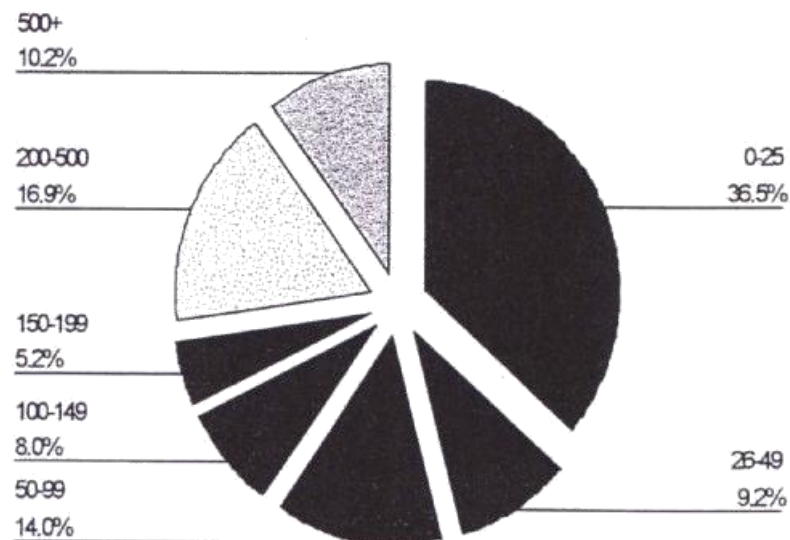
The data shows that, in terms of employment in management, the majority of women worked in organisations employing less than 25 persons, followed by the larger employers (200 to 500 employees), and lastly by the 50 to 99 employees category. This finding is directly in proportion to the distribution of organisations by size, as depicted in Table 1.5.14 b above.

As concerns the **age of organisation** participating in the survey, we find that 27.1 percent of all organisations are aged between 21 and 50 years, and 23.8 percent are between 11 and 20 years old. This data was computed through the "year established" information provided by respondents.

Table 1.5.14 c Age of Organisations (Years)

Age of Organisation (Years)	Frequency	Percent
1 – 2	20	0.3
3 – 5	174	2.6
6 – 10	1146	17.1
11 – 20	1598	23.8
21 – 50	1819	27.1
51 – 100	573	8.5
Over 100	194	2.9

The organisations employing the most female managers are depicted in Table 1.5.14 d. It appears that organisations in the 11 to 20 years of age are the highest employers of women in management (31.7 % of all managers employed in this category), followed by the much older, and presumable more stable organisations of over one hundred years, and the younger, perhaps more modern and dynamic, competence-driven firms of six to 10 years. Women managers in both these categories formed 22.8% of the managers employed.

Table 1.5.14 d Organisations employing Women Managers

Age of Organisation (Years)	Percent
1 – 2	0.5
3 – 5	3.1
6 – 10	22.8
11 – 20	31.7
21 – 50	0.5
51 – 100	3.1
Over 100	22.8

Occupational categories

Where do women managers find themselves once in management? In stereotyped occupational areas? Or better, in traditionally male-dominated professions and occupational categories?

Table 1.5.14 e Occupational Categories of Managers BY sex

| | | SEX | | | | | | Total | | |
| | | MALE | | | FEMALE | | | | | |
		Count	% with in SEX	% within DEPARTMENTS	Count	% with in SEX	% within DEPARTMENTS	Count	% with in SEX	% within DEPARTMENTS
DEPARTMENTS	CORPORATE	1220	74%	84.2%	227	69%	15.7%	1449	73%	100.0%
	FINANCE	114	6.9%	84.4%	21	6.3%	15.6%	135	6.8%	100.0%
	ADMINISTRATION	85	5.2%	73.9%	30	9.1%	26.1%	115	5.8%	100.0%
	MARKETING & DISTRIBUTION	47	2.8%	79.7%	12	3.6%	20.3%	59	3.0%	100.0%
	PERSONNEL & HR	12	.7%	70.6%	5	1.5%	29.4%	17	.9%	100.0%
	PRODUCTION & OPERATIONS	130	7.9%	88.4%	17	5.1%	11.6%	147	7.4%	100.0%
	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	25	1.5%	62.5%	15	4.5%	37.5%	40	2.0%	100.0%
	COMMUNICATIONS	6	.4%	75.0%	2	.6%	25.0%	8	.4%	100.0%
	SHIPPING(IMPORT & EXPORT)	11	.7%	84.6%	2	.6%	15.4%	13	.7%	100.0%
Total		1650	****	83.2%	331	****	16.7%	1983	****	100.0%

In order that better sense be made of the representation of either males or females in each category, hereunder is the tabulation method used at the data entry stage for this section :

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	OCCUPATIONS ENTERED UNDER CATEGORY
1 CORPORATE	LEGAL/NOTARY/INVESTMENTS/OFFSHORE/INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS/CONSULTANCY/
2 FINANCE	ACCOUNTING/CREDIT CONTROL/STATISTICS/ASSET MNGMENT/LOAN/INSURANCE/UNDERWRITING/PURCHASING/AUDIT/ INVENTORY/INTERNAL CONTROL
3 ADMINISTRATION	SECRETATIAT/OVERALL/RESEARCH & DOCUMENTATION/
4 MARKETING & DISTRIBUTION	SALES/TRANSPORT/ADVERTISING/MERCHANDISING/PUBLIC RELATION/
5 PERSONNEL/HR	EDUCATION & TRAINING, PERSONNEL
6 PRODUCTION & OPERATIONS	CUTTING/SEWING/QUALITY CONTROL/POLISHING/KNITTING/CUTTING/DYEING/PACKING/CATERI NG/FOOD & BEVERAGES FIELD/MEDICAL/GARAGE/SECURITY/ENGINEERING/CONTRACTING/ DESIGN/ARCHITECT/
7 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	TECHNICAL /LABORATORY/WHOUSE & STORES/WBRIDGE
8 COMMUNICATIONS	PR/ENTERTAINMENT/RECEPTION/MEDIA/PRESS RELEASE/NEWS REPORTING/PRESS ATTACHE/AUDIOVISUAL/NEWS REPORTING/
9 SHIPPING (IMPORT & EXPORT)	CLEARING & FORWARDING/CARGO/CUSTOMS/FREIGHT/

The findings show that there is a predominance of males in all occupational categories. Areas that are grossly underrepresented by women in terms of employment include :

- Corporate (15.7% only, against 84.2% of males)
- Finance (15.6% against 73.9% of males) and
- Production and Operations (11.6% against 88.4% of males)

However, women seem to be reasonably represented in such areas as Information Technology (37% of all managers in this category), in Personnel and Human Resources (29.4%), and in Administration (26.1%), indicating that, on the whole, women remain concentrated in stereotypical jobs such as Administration and Personnel, although noteworthy is the penetration into Information Technology-related occupations. Although our society requires an equal participation of both women and men in all productive sectors and activities, this is not the case currently. With such small numbers of women in high-status and economically-productive occupations, it is easy to see how the poor representation in senior management arises. And, unless women do represent their group at top management, it is unlikely that any significant increase in numbers of

women in management will happen, nor will women be significantly better represented in the more economically "important", bottom-line-relevant occupations.

1.5.15 Progress of Women in Mauritian Management

This section will attempt an analysis of the *progress* of Mauritian women in the managerial ranks of their organisations, under the assumption that 'progression' in this study remains at "within-organisation" level, and not across organisations in the country. Progress in Management will therefore be measured in two dimensions :

(a) as Progress within management, although not through a promotional move, and

(b) as Progress through a promotional move, from a non-managerial position to a managerial position.

Although the global concern for women has been gradually developing since the 1970s, the social, cultural and political culture in Mauritius has hardly made any advancements in this direction, at least not in the area of employment. It is high time therefore that the issue of advancement and integration of women in positions of power and decision-making be *explicitly* addressed at both national and organisational level. In section 1.5.7 the movements of managers within their employing organisation was examined, and it transpired that 54.5 percent of women suffered job stagnation at all three levels of management, even though the level of stagnation was also significant for males (54.9 percent). This "stagnation" phenomenon is linked to the lack of movement up the managerial hierarchy. Indeed, the data from the survey shows that generally, managers in Mauritian organisations who did make a job move since joining the organisation actually did not make a *promotional* move. That is, their movements were found to be *within* the same ranks they were working at. We find that, of the half or so of all managers have made some movements "since joining the organisation", the vast majority was not in an upward direction, but were rather "moved around" at the same level. This is evidence of lack of progression, both for males and females, in management. The implications of this are serious, and possible explanations are

numerous. What are the organisations where most stagnation takes place? The tables and charts that follow will attempt to depict a profile of such organisations :

Table 1.5.15 a Degree of stagnation BY size of organisaiton

			Same position since joining?		
			YES	NO	Total
NO OF EMPLOYEES	0-25	Frequency	1043	529	1575
		% within size	66.2%	33.6%	100.0%
	26-49	Frequency	444	152	596
		% within size	74.5%	25.5%	100.0%
	50-99	Frequency	605	274	879
		% within size	68.8%	31.2%	100.0%
	100-149	Frequency	283	316	599
		% within size	47.2%	52.8%	100.0%
	150-199	Frequency	83	129	212
		% within size	39.2%	60.8%	100.0%
	200-500	Frequency	549	716	1265
		% within size	43.4%	56.6%	100.0%
	500+	Frequency	209	529	739
		% within size	28.3%	71.6%	100.0%
Total		Frequency	3216	2645	5865
		% within size	54.8%	45.1%	100.0%

It can be seen from the table above that the smaller the organisation, the less scope for career progression in management, with changes in job position seeming only to be over the average in companies employing more than a hundred persons.

Table 1.5.15 b Degree of Job Stagnation of Women only, by Sector of Activity

| | | | SAME POSITION | | |
			YES	NO	Total
SECTOR	AGRICULTURE & FISHING	Frequency	5	3	8
		% within SECTOR	62.5%	37.5%	100.0%
	CONSTRUCTION	Frequency	1	1	2
		% within SECTOR	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	ELECTRICITY, GAS & WATER	Frequency	2		2
		% within SECTOR	100.0%		100.0%
	FINANCING, INSURANCE,& BANKING,REAL ESTATE & BUSINESS SERVICES	Frequency	124	95	220
		% within SECTOR	56.4%	43.2%	100.0%
	HOTELS & RESTAURANTS	Frequency	87	29	116
		% within SECTOR	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
	MANUFACTURING, QUARRYING, EPZ	Frequency	250	143	393
		% within SECTOR	63.6%	36.4%	100.0%
	MINISTRIES AND PARASTATALS	Frequency	203	302	505
		% within SECTOR	40.2%	59.8%	100.0%
	SERVICE COMPANIES	Frequency	74	49	123
		% within SECTOR	60.2%	39.8%	100.0%
	SMALL BUSINESS	Frequency	4	2	6
		% within SECTOR	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
	SUGAR ESTATES	Frequency	5	7	12
		% within SECTOR	41.7%	58.3%	100.0%
	TRANSPORT, STORAGE,& COMMUNICATIONS/SHIPPING, CLEARING & FORWARDING	Frequency	18	23	41
		% within SECTOR	43.9%	56.1%	100.0%
	WHOLESALE & RETAIL TRADE	Frequency	44	26	70
		% within SECTOR	62.9%	37.1%	100.0%
Total		Frequency	817	680	1498
		% within SECTOR	54.5%	45.4%	100.0%

These findings are interesting in that they are do not get reflected in the responses of the Chief Executives of firms in sectors where women's managerial stagnation is high. For instance, the Scores for Supportiveness of Women's Issues do not concord with the degree of stagnation in the same sector. Those sectors with the highest Supportiveness scores are set out below, against their women managers' figures for stagnation :

Table 1.5.15 c Highly Supportive Sectors and Degree of job stagnation of women in the same Sector

HIGH SCORING SECTORS FOR "SUPPORTIVENESS OF WOMEN'S ISSUES"	Percentage of women stagnating in management
HOTELS & RESTAURANTS	75 %
MANUFACTURING & QUARRYING	63 %
AGRICULTURE	62.5 %
SERVICE COMPANIES	60 %
SUGAR ESTATES	66.7 %
SMALL BUSINESSES	41.7 %

DISCUSSION :

With regard to stagnation at managerial level, or, in other words, lack of progression, many factors may be present that could serve to explain such a situation :

At the personal level : some people land jobs that do not match their qualifications. When we consider that the level of stagnation for both males and females in this survey of managers is high, and also take into account that the majority of both males and females have only basic educational qualifications (School Certificate), explaining stagnation in management by the inappropriateness of qualifications may be justified. Such individuals may either not aspire for promotional moves because of a fear of exposing their incapability at higher levels, or, because of their poor background, they cannot take advantage of higher training and education.

Poor performance on the job may also explain stagnation. Some employees outlive their purpose at the job, especially if they have recruited on the basis of ethnicity or personal favour and not on competence, as is so often the case in Mauritius. Consider the following quotation from a Chief Executive participating in the survey:

> ... *plusieurs employés ont atteri là par hasard; ils n'ont ni l'interêt,*
> *ni la motivation souhaitee"*

This naturally leads to low productivity, lack of innovation, and degeneration, instead of development. Many tend to take their job for granted and remain conservative, satisfied

with whatever benefits the position holds. As far as women are concerned, much has traditionally been attributed to their lack of drive and ambition, and low assertiveness. Certainly these can be key factors in explaining their lack of progress, as they fail to take responsibility for their personal and career development. A vicious circle is created, as they are subsequently perceived as being unresourceful and lacking dynamism, showing poor interest in the job and in the organisation, so that opportunities for training, for advancement and for development, are passed on to their male counterparts instead.

At organisational level : Poor progress may also be attributed to circumstances not directly under the individual's control. Women unfortunately suffer from stereotyping at the workplace, as a reflection of the stereotyping attitudes prevalent in our society. Prejudice is often present in terms of job segregation, as women get to land the "softer" jobs in administration, secretariat, personnel, PR, and so on, and men are appointed in positions of direct economic importance to the company, such as in Marketing, Finance, and Operations. Also, the issue of pregnancy, maternity leave, childcare, and so on, is perceived as a hindrance by managers, who fear disruption in the routine, instead of finding innovative ways of integrating such concerns with the concerns of the job. Women's potential, talent and skills are therefore not usually tapped to the full. As one of the respondents of the survey observed in relation to the stigma attached to women's inability to be committed to a managerial job due to family concerns, *"doit-on rester vieille fille pour réussir?"*

Poor progression may also be interpreted as a reflection of failure on the part of the employer and a sign of poor leadership and Human Resource Management systems. Improvements with a view to professionalise the entire HR system, including the management of the organisation's culture, will no doubt produce both immediate and longer-terms results. In addition, deliberate steps need to be taken to bring the organisation and its management members to a level of involvement and dynamism that ensures a shared responsibility for career planning and progression. Affirmative Action intending to create a favourable work environment must be undertaken by senior management in consultation with HR professionals, but must also be shared by individuals themselves.

Institutional factors: the absence of Laws on equal employment opportunity, Sexual Harassment and Affirmative Action only serve to exacerbate the problem of stagnation. Regardless of any marginal possibilities that unworthy individuals may benefit from affirmative action policies, the very foundation of EEO Laws cannot be disputed. Every individual has the right to work for a fair remuneration and treatment, irrespective of "differences". However, it is necessary that there be *specific* rules and regulations designed to protect women from discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplace, and to offer better services related to maternity issues and childcare. Above all, Affirmative Action is a matter of good will, not of compliance. Laws in this respect must be perceived as the drivers of a cultural change, and not as a hindrance to the perpetuation of what is really an unethical situation. In essence, the more comprehensive the legal framework, the more likely will be the gender(and other) equity policies and programmes designed and implemented in organisations. The corporate culture change will very naturally follow, but will require reinforcement by organisational leaders : employment equity, managing diversity, must be subjects integrated into management and supervisory courses, as must be the development of a work climate which is supportive and realistic. Both are an essential form of Affirmative Action. Supportive information must be disseminated in order to sensitise all managers and their subordinates to recognise, and manage, cases of discrimination, sexual harassment, and so on. Women themselves require this information in order to learn how to deal with difficult situations in cases of discrimination and harassment.

It must be remembered that societal factors such as legal requirements, government programmes and social norms are what lie behind the influence of many (if not all) organisational and personal factors affecting the career progression of women. It is therefore necessary to have both legal and cultural changes in our society to cause women's potential for high responsibility jobs to be valued rightly. It is easy to see that sex-role typing and discrimination will unfortunately continue to operate, but culture is something that can not only be diagnosed and measured, but also successfully changed. For instance, gender stereotyping should be seen to be a problem for both men as well as women. While many women will want to, and should therefore be allowed to, enter male-intensive occupations, other women, who will want to maintain their dual roles of

working mothers, should be allowed and helped, to integrate their joint responsibilities. Moreover, as men increasingly will want to play a more active role in the upbringing of children, they should cease to be stigmatised for raising family-related concerns at work .

Women and Childbearing

One of the most significant changes that has occurred in Mauritius in the last two decades has been the number of women who have entered the labour pool, especially women of childbearing age. This growth has had, and still has, a far-reaching and adverse impact on children, their parents, and on the productivity of organisations and of the country. The "traditional household" where the father worked and the mother cared for the children at home is clearly something of the past. Increasingly, families in Mauritius are considered non-traditional, especially with the move away from extended family structures to the "nuclear" system, and even single-parent families. Women, who formerly remained at home to care for children, today need to, and have a desire for, work outside the home. Currently women are some 50% of the labour force, and 80% of such women (of childbearing age) can be expected to become pregnant during a period of their employment. In many cases, it is not possible for these women to keep their jobs without shortchanging their newborn babies. Although it ought to be every woman's right to spend reasonable time with her newborn baby, women in Mauritius expect to receive little more than the statutory twelve weeks' Maternity leave after their baby is born. It would appear that Mauritian organisations cannot or will not justify concessions they would have to make if they were to provide their workers with enhanced Maternity leave, paternity leave, day care facilities, and so forth. It can be argued that the cost of not providing such benefits outweighs the cost of providing it. The reason for this is that if a company does not provide adequate structures and systems to help families with children , women will simply leave their jobs, or else under-perform due to stress and anxiety. Most women still work out of economic necessity, and many will find ways and means of supplementing the shortfall, often through the informal sector. However, the educational wastage and complacency vis-à-vis the exodus of high-potential and high-ability women into either the informal sector or worse, to economically unproductive

activity, represents a real danger and a serious shortfall on the nation's wealth-creating capacity.

Therefore, the need for organisations to offer flexible working hours, to be supportive of working parents is keenly felt today. Turnover for any position can cost an employer nearly 93 percent of a first-year salary when recruitment, training, and selection expenses are taken into consideration (Zedeck and Mosier, 1990). While the shortage of skilled labour is becoming more and more serious, it is surprising that organisations are not taking a closer look at the problems that could be underlying high turnover rates, absenteeism, tardiness, higher accident rates, low morale, and productivity losses. If women are to be reckoned with as being a critical and indispensable labour resource, and if organisations plan to effectively compete for experienced and skilled female workers, then firms may, in the near future, have no choice but to develop child care benefit programmes, productivity incentives, and recruitment and retention strategies. The following table (1.5.15 d) by making a few international comparisons, illustrates how backward Mauritian organisation systems are with regard to support-structure systems various countries provide for their childbearing workers.

Country	Maternity leave	Parental Leave	Employment protected	Childcare facility	Reduced workload	Breastfeeding facility	Other
Sweden		15 months between the parents, however they wish	Yes	Subsidised by Government	Parents with under-sixes may reduce their workday by two hours, with pay cut to match		Either parent can take upto 60 days a year, with pay, to care for sick children
Italy	2-3 months prior to childbirth, 3 months after						
England	6 weeks before childbirth, and the right to return anytime before a child is 29 weeks old.		Yes			Employers must give breaks for the first year of a child's life.	Either parent can take up to one year off, without pay, with job guarantee.
Germany	6 weeks before childbirth, 8 weeks after	"Educational leave" can be shared by the parents for upto 18 months after birth					

Table 1.5.15 d International Comparisons of Support-structure systems

Childcare

Surveys have found that employers have a much to gain by starting subsidised day-care centres. Benefits include lower absenteeism, increased ability to attract high-quality employees, lower turnover and absenteeism rates, favourable publicity, and improved employee attitudes towards the employer (Peterson and Massengil, 1988; Campbell and Campbell, 1988). Only unenlightened business will continue to charge that parental leave legislation and enhanced maternity benefits are too costly and unworkable. Indeed, such a position would only be an indicator of poor human resource strategies, policies and systems, and a failure to reckon with changes in the environment. There should be no reason whatsoever to expect serious increases in costs, nor difficulty in administering and implementing such legislation. Employees on family leave can easily be replaced by firstly, assigning their work temporarily to other employees, and secondly by using outside temporary replacements. Because it is readily arguable that pregnant women, newborn babies, and very young children need protecting, it is the government that is primarily responsible for guaranteeing that protection. Support structures are needed for women to fill dual, even multiple, roles in the home and at work, and private sector initiatives may not be forthcoming enough. As the data indicate, corporate response is very slow and very poor, perhaps because top management does not want to deal firsthand with the conflict. (On the agenda for future research is the necessity to determine whether Chief Executives and other senior managers are really the best persons to question regarding women's issues, since it is well-known, though not documented, that senior management's wives tend to stay at home...). It could be argued, from the data obtained (Ques.12,15,17), that senior management is making decisions and setting human resource policies (if only implicitly) for a workforce with a completely different lifestyle and set of home and work responsibilities than, firstly, themselves (senior management), and secondly, previous generations. However, as more and more women advance into positions of power and prominence, they will be in a better position to sway organisational executives and childcare policies in the favour of working women in general.

Children deserve the opportunity to be cared for and to grow up in as safe and secure environment as can possibly be given them. Organisations need a motivated, experienced, and steadfast workforce to operate productively. It would appear that these two fundamental concerns go hand in hand if a society is to flourish and be fruitful.

Government could do more to tackle this battle between the sexes over household and family responsibilities. The leave policy for seeing to children or elders should be a national policy, guiding organisations in the right direction. The lack of government legislation and programmes for childcare continues to hinder both women and men, although currently, women suffer the most. As one Chief Executive stated :

> "*Ambition is not important, and basically, I have found they all suffer a great deal in their family lives. [It is] either spouse, or children, problems. It certainly does not help productivity at higher managerial levels*".

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Laws, rules and regulations relating to employment of women in Mauritius**

Mauritius' national policy on employment is based on the philosophy and practice of equal pay for work of equal value regardless of sex. What one can expect therefore is equality of opportunity (chance) and equality of treatment in employment. However, the provision of law and its administration are two very different things. Just how aware are women, men, anybody, of the laws and regulations concerning discrimination at work? What do any of us know about the provision of law on women-related concerns, such as Sexual Harassment, such as equity with regard to recruitment and promotion revolving around issues such as pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, and childcare?

Although the essence of this research is organisational culture and its role in the progress of women in management, it is evident that the interplay between personal, societal, and workplace, or organisational cultures is a major factor in determining the progress (or lack of) of women in management. The cultural revolution necessary to redress the gender imbalance begins in the mind of the individual, thus influencing his or her personal culture. The individual is part of a family, community, social culture, and his or her personal culture in turn influences and is influenced by forces in these cultures. The individual finds work in an organisation, which is itself a culture, or forms a culture, over time, and the individual, quickly or gradually, is absorbed by the workplace culture in addition to bringing his/her own value system to the workplace. Therefore the permutations are incessant, and the forces causing such permutations must not be discounted. Such is the inevitability that laws, rules and regulations will also play an important part in the creation and development of a culture, and that the impact of such laws can be greatly enhanced by appropriate and focused administration thereof. It is essential that there is a significant, and visible, increase in affirmative action and goodwill by the Mauritian government towards women. This will set off a reflex of creating gender equity policies and programmes throughout the island. The

institutionalisation of formal structures to support the future integration of women throughout society, must be accompanied, and wherever possible, preceded by the commitment of government, as an essential reform in women's status in Mauritius. Affirmative Action on the part of government must include the implementation of equity programmes that incorporate the monitoring and evaluation of organisations (through their managers) that support employment equity initiatives. In addition, the provision of an Equal Opportunity Law will do scarce little if provision is not also made for punishment or violation of the law.

Women's access to scientific, technical and commercial education must be improved. Government must work with employers on developing programmes and initiatives to facilitate the work-home interface for all employees. Legislation on part-time work, job sharing, career breaks, parental leave, and flexible working hours is well behind the times and must be addressed urgently.

Policy distortions must be removed where they affect sectors dominated by women. For instance, the recent creation of a great number additional nursing posts presumably aimed at absorbing female unemployment, may in fact serve to further condemn women to traditional female areas of employment, instead of easing female penetration into male-dominated professions.

The provision of legislation on childcare, healthcare, and transport facilities is essential if women are to be sufficiently freed from such hassles and focus on their self-and career development. Thus affirmative action is necessary to assist women in coping with their multiple responsibilities of home and work.

Constitutional reform must be envisaged to include such explicit statements as the right of women (specifically) to affirmative action for the purpose of redressing the imbalance caused by history and tradition. Laws, cultures, and practices which are counter to the dignity, welfare, or interest of women, or which undermine their status must be clearly prohibited by the Constitution

Likewise, it must be clearly stated in writing, and the provision for the implementation must be seen to reflect Government's decision to do everything to promote a culture of co-operation, equality, understanding, appreciation, tolerance and respect.

Women's Affairs must be re-consolidated within the Ministry for Women, Family Welfare, and Child Development and *not be diluted* by the width of this ministry's

agenda. It is absolutely essential that women's issues be focused on as *women's* concerns and issues. As such, a women's desk must be given the necessary status (such as a Directorate) as a visible structure of affirmative action, and be allocated the rightful resources. Such a structure would then be made responsible for the political mobilisation, education/development of women on all issues of Mauritian development, with emphasis on the need for women to participate in one way or another in the politics of the island. Thus, awareness among women and men on issues of women's rights, protection, responsibilities and advancement, could be enhanced through the organisation of workshops, seminars, and various competitions and campaigns.

Affirmative action with regard to the representation of women as a minority should be given equal treatment to affirmative action on the basis of gender as it currently exists on the basis of ethnicity. Thus, women would be represented in Parliament in much the same fashion as the "best loser" system, guaranteeing the participation of women in the highest decision-making instance of the country. Also, it would be desirable to have at least one woman on the board of directors of all Parastatal bodies and other commissions set up by government. While such appointments would be political, the women selected will have to be from a pool of highly qualified individuals, and women should be as competitive as their male counterparts in terms of their skills, qualifications and experience.

- **Organisational Culture**

What is termed the "glass ceiling" - an impassable barrier - and that blocks women's professional advancement is formed out of biased work conditions within a male organisational culture. Employment rules, regulations, performance evaluations systems, all tend to be gender-biased, because these are mostly unsympathetic towards and unsupportive of, the styles, roles, outlook and experiences of women. Symptoms of a biased corporate culture are felt by women through the existence of sexual harassment, exclusion from development opportunities, exclusion from professional and managerial networks, and the downgrading of women's abilities and skills.

• Stereotyping

Stereotyping of women's preferences and skills is another bias that is embedded in the corporate value system. For example, although girls and women fare as well, and often better, than males in school, so that their qualifications are at par, there exist preconceived notions about what women are good at and what they cannot do well in, irrespective of their qualifications. Often women are not considered for promotion or for handling challenging assignments and projects because it is assumed that they either do not ambition for them, or else that they cannot withstand the pressure of difficult work. Along the same lines, it is usually assumed that women will possess "feminine" traits and skills, and so must be placed in positions and professions which predominantly require such skills. Just because someone is a woman does not mean that she necessarily has good "people" skills or poor technical skills. Likewise, not all male managers have good instrumental skills or inadequate interpersonal skills. It is thus crucial that organisational values do not encourage stereotyping of managers on the basis of biological sex, but instead, accept and value the diversity of values and styles among individuals. The ideal culture will not abandon completely all (traditional) male-centred structures, nor will it force both women and men to conform to feminine ones. Instead, it will retain what is good about the task-oriented structure while bringing it into harmony with an enhanced emphasis on interpersonal, social concerns within the organisation. For women to be effective managers and for organisations to benefit from their full potential, they need to be rewarded for all their contributions, in all areas. Thus, in an androgynous culture, both sensitivity to others and task competence is equally valued. The move must begin to be in the direction of acknowledging and rewarding behaviour and styles that bring about increases in productivity and better worker co-operation, and not purely behaviour that produces "statistical results", figures showing increased revenue and profit margins, to the ignorance of managerial styles that bring about increases in productivity that come from smoothing out the problems and getting people to work together, and from deliberately helping others do their job better. It has been found that it is easier for women to adopt 'male' traits than for men to openly adopt 'female' characteristics of behaviour. Men who express their thoughts as feelings are traditionally in danger of

losing credibility in their peer group. Their intuitive feelings, which are often entirely valid, are dismissed as unsubstantiated.

In short, organisations, through the people that make them, must begin to adapt their culture to recognise and encourage the development and use of *both* instrumental traits such as rationalism, assertiveness and competition, and behavioural traits including intuition, nurturing and co-operation, through a continuous culture change programme, focused at blending the positive elements of both types, in men and women working together.

- **Increasing the presence of women in decision-making**

Affirmative Action by organisations to increase the number of women in management and higher decision-making instances is essential if the gender imbalance is to be corrected for the good of all concerned. Recruitment and promotion policies may be changed to integrate the positive action element.

Gendered 'space' and time. Is it possible for Mauritian organisations to accommodate women within the 'male' space outside the domestic arena, if the work space is structured around a male organisational culture? That domestic or private space is a necessary support to public or workplace space has always been denied by men, who have traditionally insisted on a clear demarcation between the two, yet who could not even mange to turn up for work properly fed and clothed without support from the domestic arena. It is important that organisations acknowledge the role of the private in the workplace sphere, to make it easier for both women and men of modern Mauritius to participate fully and give their best to their careers and jobs.

- **Human Resource Practices**

In the theory and practice of management, strategic human resource management is argued to be 'the most critical of a firm's competitive advantages in the marketplace' (Dunphy and Stace, 1990, p. 53). However, despite the promise of human resource

management, observers conclude that the rhetoric has not been realised in enlightened personnel management practice. Inevitably, human resource practices , just like other facets of organisation, reflect the interests of the dominant group. For instance, organisations have generally failed to devise training strategies that respond to women's needs and the discrimination they encounter (Lee, 1986). Selection procedures likewise generally fail to eliminate discrimination at the very entry level of individuals in the organisation, and the culture is perpetuated through performance appraisal systems and promotional procedures.

- **Management training and development**

Women who are interested in management and professional development will benefit from two types of training. Firstly, women must develop their skills repertoire; those who have adopted or who already had a masculine style need to learn to be more effective in their social interactions at the workplace, and those who have maintained a purely feminine style need to build assertiveness, self-confidence and independence. By learning to be sharper in 'reading' situational cues, both men and women, in fact, can learn how to choose the appropriate behaviour or style for a given situation. Unfortunately, managers are often chosen and promoted on the basis of their task-related skills and competence, and the assumption that the interpersonal skills necessary for high-level leadership are "there", is a very short-sighted one. The management training that individuals must have should therefore be balanced between task and people skills. Research suggests that task-functions may be more easily delegated to specific experts than interpersonal ones (Bales, 1951), and that people skills is more consistently related to leadership effectiveness than is task-oriented behaviour (Fisher *et al.*, Bronnenbert and Ayman). In fact, several authors consider that the primary problem for managerial productivity today is the lack of interpersonal skills in both female and male managers (Peters & Austin, 1985, Bennis & Nanus, 1985, and Luthans 1986).

Thus has 'management' (as found in textbooks, journal articles, and training seminars, etc.) been traditionally centred around behaviours that are essentially 'masculine' and task-oriented.

Because organisations' managements have been dominated by a male managerial culture, the knowledge and skills required of managers have been transmitted by men to men. Women, unfortunately, have had much less experience in the management arena, and have had less ability to behave as required by the 'norm'. in the realm of management, therefore, women are seen to be "deficient" in relation to men's managerial styles, skills and talents.   As such, women must be given the opportunity, through training programmes, to overcome the inferiority complex that invariably sets in as a result of a "deficiency" complex.   Although it is obvious that many structural and even cultural factors cannot be challenged simply through training, much can be done to enable women to challenge the effects of such factors. This could involve an increase in self confidence, resulting from the learning gained on a training programme. Training and development programmes should be devised by organisations and by educational and training institutions to consist of such elements as :

1. Gender analysis of organisations, including analysis of managerial work, identification of institutional barriers, and of strategies to overcome these; identification of gender-power relations; development of formal and informal networks for support within organisation; and identification of action plans to implement the strategies.

2. The opportunity to increase knowledge on particular topics, such as policy making and processes; the utilisation of information systems.

3. Managerial skills building, such as planning, strategy formulation and implementation, oral presentation skills, assertiveness training, interviewing, group decision-making, managing conflict, handling grievances, delegating, negotiating, and business report writing.

Training for women managers (as for all employees) should be based on individual need. Some women will prefer women-only training, while others may wish to be treated "exactly the same as men" and to attend mixed courses. In any case, it is advisable that single-sex training, such as the one mentioned above, be designed at an early stage in their career, so as to build confidence and to give basic organisational and personal skills.

It also gives the opportunity for women to build a peer group with other women who face similar issues.

Some personnel and training managers actually use the need for women's development as a means of introducing change that is necessary, but would other wise be resisted. For example, a woman's development project specially designed to exposed fixed attitudes of senior managers, could catch the interest and then the support of the Chief Executive or Managing Director for broader management development in the organisation. Research in many organisations has shown that women generally do not have a problem in obtaining technical skills , but rather with areas where the need for training is ill-defined, such as those concerned with gaining self confidence and interpersonal skills, and general awareness about issues such as the informal network.

Of course, such 'gender' training need not always be in the form of a course. Apart from providing skills, a common management language, and a common organisational value system and stated philosophy, are usually in complement to management courses and women-only development courses. If women are to reach their full potential, then training needs to be part of a wider programme of initiatives and changes, which could include :

a) More flexible work patterns to help employees of both sexes accommodate childcare and domestic responsibilities, for example, more part-time work, job sharing, flexitime, extended maternity leave, paternity leave, re-entry possibilities, and career breaks and sabbaticals.

b) The institution of a monitoring policy and procedures to identify any need to change recruitment and advertising practices, appraisal and promotion systems, management talent-spotting, mentoring, and career counselling and planning.

- Staff Selection

Employers have a duty to ensure that they re using good practice in the selection of their staff. What happens often is that there exists an absence of guidelines or criteria when applying the test of suitability to candidates. This presents obvious dangers of direct or indirect discrimination, since there is no fair method of comparing one candidate with another, with no provision for the use of modern selection techniques which can help with objective personal assessment.

- **Encouraging workplace Diversity**

Accepting androgyny and valuing diversity will be the key to bringing equality to the workplace. It is a question of harnessing all the capabilities and talents available to enhance business effectiveness. Because a 'diverse' work community is one in which all viewpoints are encouraged rather than only those of dominant groups, the organisation remains constantly innovative, keeping ahead of demographic disruptions through making use of the best talent available, regardless of its packaging. The basic concept of managing diversity accepts that the workforce consists of a diverse population of people. The diversity argument is compelling in a social context such as ours, and the implications for encouraging diversity does not have implications only for women, but also for the various ethnic populations existing in Mauritius. Our organisational cultures must be crafted to push into focus the differences that we all bring to our roles, rather than trying to eliminate them or deny them, much in the manner of a "tossed salad", in which flavours remain distinct, but add to the whole. Individuals of all characteristics, be they male or female, or diverse through their ethnicity, must be encouraged to value their own diversity in the first place. It should be acceptable to bring your own differences of life experience, approach, style, and values to the task of management.

From the foregoing research results and discussions, it is evident that women in Mauritius have made no significant progress in their emancipation and participation in top management and in decision-making instances. If the current conditions persist, women's future is not bright with regard to their integration in the mainstream of the country's development. This research report makes it clear that the problem should be viewed at both micro and societal level as well as in the organisational context proper. As employment creation becomes more and more of a national concern, and as private sector initiatives to "go lean" are on the rise, there may well be an exacerbation of the problem of poor participation of women in management. Even today, the size of the Mauritian organisation is relatively small, making for poor upward -moving possibilities for both men and women with managerial talent and skill. With practically no female voice at the top, it is evident that women will once more be disadvantaged. The report forwards the finding that women in management are essentially at supervisory and middle management levels, indicating that their potential, skill, talent and expertise in management is recognised to a limited extent. Yet what is their fate during promotion decisions? What will happen to these women in the "lean" enterprise? Will organisations be proactive enough to recognise that such structural changes in the corporate world will only worsen women's prospects? What measures will be taken to integrate the real and special concern of women at the workplace? Is diversity in work teams, including management teams, valued? How courageous is Corporate Mauritius? Will necessary measures be taken to redress the gender (and ethnic) imbalance in employment? By whom, and how? Such are the questions that need to be addressed if thinking is to continue with a view to combat the prejudice and stereotyping that fossilises the imbalance of the sexes. If we want to create for women the opportunity to participate fully in the workplace at all levels, we do have to reconsider corporate culture so as to make it a joint women-men culture. Then we can remain men and women. The application of even some of the recommendations stated in the preceding section may certainly help, as a result of which, our organisations may become much better places for women *and* men. The major areas of future investigation could include :

1. Assessing the opportunity cost of *not* valuing women's potential in Management in Mauritius.

2. Affirmative Action programmes for Corporate Mauritius : any volunteers?

3. An examination of family-related constraints and problems of women managers in Mauritius and their impact on productivity.

4. A strategy for introducing a national policy on Family-friendliness in Mauritian enterprises.

5. An examination of the strategy and policy-making mechanisms in Mauritian organisations.

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APPENDIX I

KEY INFORMANTS

1. Mr. Philip Ah Chuen, *Mauritius Institute of Management*
2. Mr. Dan Bundhoo, *Rogers Group*
3. Mr Norman Cox, *Quality Management Consultants*
4. Mrs Rada Gungaloo (barrister-at-law) *S.O.S Femmes*
5. Mrs. Shakuntala Hawoldar, *Mauritius College of the Air*
6. Mr Azad Jeetun, *Mauritius Employers' Federation*
7. Mr. Armand Maudave, *Les Moulins de La Concorde Ltee*
8. Mrs Monica Maurel, *CCL Management Consultants*
9. Mr. Raj Mudhoo, (Permanent Secretary)*(then)Ministry for Civil Service Affairs and Employment*
10. Mrs. Therese Pilot, *Mauritius Commercial Bank*
11. Mr Diva Ramasawmy, *Central Statistical Office*
12. Mrs. Pascale Rauvel, *Executive Search*
13. The Hon. Thacoor-Sidaya, Mrs. I.S. (Minister) *Ministry of Women, Family Welfare and Child Development.*
14. Mrs Lily Tsang Man Kin, *Tamak Ltee*
15. Mrs Roselice Vencatachellum, *Soroptimist Mauritius*
16. Mrs Francoise White, *Currimjee Group*
17. Mrs Danielle Wong, *MEPZA*

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. What reasons would you personally attribute to the seemingly small numbers of women in senior management in Mauritius?

2. Would you agree that women in management in Mauritian organisations are more or less concentrated at middle management level? Why?

3. Do you think that top management/CEOs in Mauritius are ready and/or receptive to the idea of promoting the managerial careers of women?

4. What would you say were Mauritian CEO's attitudes on such issues as workplace sex discrimination, unequal opportunity in recruitment, training and promotion?

5. Would you say that Mauritian organisations are ready to consider the analysis of and subsequent changes to their corporate culture?

6. What would you say about the manager-subordinate relationship in cases where the manager is a woman? Are male subordinates supportive/uncomfortable/threatened? What about female staff?

7. What would you say about the male peers of female managers? Are they supportive, or would they feel threatened, and be negative?

8. What do you think about Affirmative/Voluntary action by top management in order to obtain, train, motivate and promote women through the ranks of management?

9. How do you view the 'Quota" system?

10. Do you believe that women managers require or would benefit from separate, special training in management, as women?

11. The literature places a lot of blame on the male informal network which disadvantages women, and prevents them from gaining the informal power to be competent in upper management positions. What is your view?

12. The literature also claims that most workplaces that are not family-friendly lose out on the competence of women, who prefer to minimise work-family conflict.

13. Do you believe that new legislation will expedite progress toward Equal Opportunity for women at all levels?

APPENDIX III

SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR DATABASE CONSTRUCTION

Information was obtained from different sources in order to construct the database of Mauritian organisations :

- Association des Hoteliers de L'Ile Maurice (AHRIM) for its list of members
- The Mauritius Export Directory, published by the MEDIA
- The Mauritius Employers' Federation, for its list of members
- The Mauritius Export Processing Zone Authority, for its list of members.
- The Ministry for Civil Service Affairs, for the list of Ministries and parastatal organisations.
- The Small and Medium Industries Development Organisation, for its list of members.
- The Yellow Directory
- IPSAE-Soroptimist for its list of members.

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS
FACULTY OF LAW & MANAGEMENT

Dean of Faculty
Associate Professor D. Gokhool
B.A. (Hons), MBA (Delhi)
MSc (Salford)

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E-Mail: dgokhool@dove.uom.ac.mu

Today's date

The Managing Director

Dear Sir/Madam

Research Project: Organisational Culture and Women's Progress in Management:
An Evaluation of The Mauritian Situation.

The abovementioned Research Project, funded by The Mauritius Research Council, is being coordinated by the undersigned of the Faculty of Law and Management, University of Mauritius.

The study aims at determining the degree of participation of women in the management of Public and Private firms of Mauritius, as well as at exploring any organisational factors that could explain the seemingly small numbers of women in key management positions.

The attached single-sheet Questionnaire is a preliminary Data Classification Excercise. The information gathered therefrom will enable me to develop a representative sample each of male and female managers, who will subsequently be contacted for the survey proper. It is therefore essential that a maximum number of the Classification Sheets be collected, and I strongly appeal to you personally to fully complete the sheet and return it to me using the enclosed envelope.

All responses will be kept **strictly confidential**; in order to ensure the utmost privacy, no mention is made in the questionnaire of the name of your organisation (as you may have noticed). Indeed, an identification code has been provided for each respondent, to be used only for any necessary follow-up procedures. The names, data and other information will not be available to anyone other than the Research Coordinator and Research Assistant.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Cordially

ANITA RAMGUTTY-WONG

Project Coordinator

Enc.

RESEARCH PROJECT: ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND WOMEN'S PROGRESS IN MANAGEMENT: AN EVALUATION OF THE MAURITIAN SITUATION.

DATA CLASSIFICATION SHEET

CODE [ ]

Year Organisation was established: _____
No. of employees at Present: _____

MANAGEMENT LEVEL	NAMES (optional)		AGE (tick one)						SEX		EDUCATIONAL LEVEL							Year joined the organisation and position		Present position/Title	No. of years in present position	Department/ section	Monthly Salary (optional) (Rs) (tick one)				
			<20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+	MALE/FEMALE	SC HSC Diploma	Degree 1ST	Masters	PhD				year	position				<5000	5001-10,000	10,001-20,000	20,001-30,000	30,001-40,000	40,001-50,000
TOP/SENIOR (e.g. Chairman, owner-partner, president, general manager, CEO, Permanent Secretary, Vice-chancellor, director, dean and assistant/s thereto.) (please turn sheet over if space is insufficient)	1																										
	2																										
	3																										
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	7																										
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	18																										
MIDDLE (Functional department head (e.g. advertising, sales-promotion, production, purchasing, personnel, engineering, public relations, brand manager, section manager, and the like, and assistant/s thereto.) (please turn sheet over if space is insufficient)	1																										
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JUNIOR AND FIRST-LINE SUPERVISOR (please turn sheet over if space is insufficient)	1																										
	2																										
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	10																										

RESEARCH PROJECT: ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND WOMEN'S PROGRESS IN MANAGEMENT: AN EVALUATION OF THE MAURITIAN SITUATION.

DATA CLASSIFICATION SHEET

CODE: _____

MANAGEMENT LEVEL	NAMES (optional)	AGE (tick one) <20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+	SEX MALE/FEMALE	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL SC	HSC	Diploma	1ST Degree	Masters	PhD	Year joined the organisation and position / your position	Present position/Title	No. of years in present position	Department/ Section	Monthly Salary (optional) (Rs) (tick one)

TOP/SENIOR
(e.g. Chairman, owner/partner; president; general manager; CEO; Permanent Secretary; Vice-chancellor, director, dean and assistant/s thereto.)
— rows 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31

MIDDLE
(e.g. advertising, production, sales-promotion, purchasing, personnel, engineering, public relations, brand manager, section manager, and the like, and assistant/s thereto.)
Functional department head
— rows 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38

JUNIOR AND FIRST-LINE SUPERVISOR
— rows 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38

Monthly Salary (Rs) ranges: <5000; 5001-10,000; 10,001-15,000; 15,001-20,000; 20,001-25,000; 25,001-30,000; 30,001-35,000; 35,001-40,000; 40,001-45,000; 45,000-50,000