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# **Gender Differences in Management:**

**A Study of Professional Staff in  
Registrar's Offices in Canadian Universities**

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By  
**Jane E. Brindley and Phyllis Frick**

**March 1990**

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## INTRODUCTION

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In Canada, women now make up 45% of the paid labour force (Statistics Canada, 1989), and are entering professional occupations in greater numbers than ever before. Despite these trends, few women rise to top management positions in either private or public organizations and generally women's salaries are much lower than those of men, even when they are working at the same level.

A number of studies has been conducted which look at the relative achievements of men and women in organizations, and the factors which might contribute to identified differences. In 1983, the Abella Commission was set up to "inquire into the most efficient, effective, and equitable means of promoting equal opportunities" (*Report of the Commission on Equality of Opportunity*, 1984). From the report of this Royal Commission, we not only know that women are much less likely than men to achieve management positions, particularly at the upper levels, we also have information about some of the factors which may contribute to the inequity.

In 1986, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada passed a "Statement on the Status of Women in Canadian Universities", which pointed out the need for universities as institutions of higher learning to assume a leadership role in ensuring equality for women in the workplace. Unfortunately, there is little evidence to suggest that Canadian universities have taken this responsibility seriously. Some action has occurred when budget considerations are involved, such as the acquisition of federal contracts which are now linked to the Employment Equity Program. This program requires that universities receiving contracts submit to audits on their success in hiring "disadvantaged minorities". In general, universities appear to be no farther ahead than other organizations in ensuring equity for women.

Studies of women in Canadian universities have focused largely on the situation of female academics, pointing out such facts as the huge gaps in faculty gender ratios compared to student gender ratios. At the University of Alberta, for example, 51% of undergraduate and 42% of graduate students are women, whereas only 16% of the faculty are women (*Alberta Report*, 1989). These studies have also identified inequities in hiring practices, salaries, advancement, tenure, and workloads.

Little attention has been paid to the gender inequities in university management other than to point out that a significant factor in the situation of women academics, support staff, and students, may be the lack of women administrators in universities. However, it is not difficult to see that, just as in other organizations, women very seldom make it to upper management levels in Canadian universities. The number who have become university presidents is few indeed.

This exploratory study attempts to address the lack of information about the situation of women educational administrators, by looking at one significant segment of Canadian university administration, namely professional staff of registrar's offices. A survey was

conducted of all professional staff in registrar's offices in universities across Canada to collect data about their career plans and aspirations, their salaries, authority, how they spend their time, what steps they take to advance their careers, who helps/hinders them, and their demographics. By comparing data across genders, we have identified what some of the major differences are between these men and women in their current work situations and in advancing their careers, and have made some initial suppositions about factors which may contribute to those differences.

It should be noted that the results of this survey are based on a 57% response rate, fairly high for surveys of this type. Checks have been done to ensure that the respondents do not differ in any significant way from the population surveyed. For example, all regions of Canada and varying sizes of institutions are well represented. As well, the relative proportion of women (63%) and men (37%) responding to the survey is fairly similar to the proportion of women and men surveyed. The findings, therefore, should be generalizable to the total group surveyed. Further study is needed in order to be able to generalize with certainty to university management groups other than those in registrar's offices, and to analyze better how single factors such as credentials or mobility interact to produce certain outcomes.

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## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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That women within organizations are disadvantaged is not news. Since Rosabeth Moss Kanter's definitive work, *Men and Women of the Corporation* (1977), there has been a growing field of literature which seeks to identify the characteristics of organizations that disadvantage women. The Abella Commission (1984) defined 'systemic discrimination' as:

A general employment condition, specific practice, or approach to hiring or promotion that applies equally to everyone at a workplace but that negatively affects employment opportunity or advancement for specific groups of people.

Abella points out that this is not a question of the motives of the perpetrator of discrimination -- few openly and deliberately undertake to discriminate against women -- but rather that organizational structure, procedures and policies have for the most part been formulated by men for men and that these often have the affect of discriminating against women. She states that:

What is needed to achieve equality in employment is a massive policy response to systemic discrimination. This requires taking steps to bring each group to a point of fair competition. It means making the workplace respond by eliminating barriers that interfere unreasonably with employment options.

It is not that individuals in the designated groups are inherently unable to achieve equality on their own; it is that the obstacles in their way are so formidable and self-perpetuating that they cannot be overcome without intervention. Simply to wait and hope that the barriers will disappear with time is both intolerable and insensitive. Equality in employment will not happen unless we make it happen.

Greenglass (1982) notes that in every occupational and professional field, women occupy lower status positions, have less power and control and are less likely to participate in major decisions.

A host of studies (Powell, 1987; Mills, 1988; Lipman-Blumen, 1983; Nieva and Gutek, 1985 to cite a few) identify characteristics resulting from the role men play as the 'gatekeepers' of the organization, which block women from achieving equality and equity in the workplace. Men are frequently the recruiters for an organization, and/or have predominant membership on selection committees. Because people will tend to seek others like themselves, women are disadvantaged in the selection process. (Powell, 1987; Morgan in Mills, 1988). Further, perpetuation of the trait theory of leadership, which sets out the characteristics of successful leaders, predisposes selection committees toward candidates who exhibit these traditional leadership qualities -- aggressiveness, dominance, self-confidence, self-esteem, emotional control and sound judgement -- qualities based on the study of male leaders (Putnam and Heinen, 1985). Since these are male characteristics, even if a female candidate does display them, it may be seen as behaviour incongruent with her femaleness and hence considered with disfavour. (Morgan in Mills, 1988).

If the woman professional succeeds at the selection committee level, she then faces the battle of task assignment. Will she be assigned the same tasks as a man would? Will she be given the

same authority? Will she be given the same responsibility? Or will she be asked to arrange meetings, take minutes, and generally play a subordinate role? Women tend to be assigned tasks consistent with their traditional sex-typed roles, and thus are presumed to have certain interests and abilities -- for example, in educational institutions, that of caring for students, being nurturers, and looking after details such as admission requirements and degree regulations. (Williams, 1985; Simeone, 1987).

Already disadvantaged in task and role assignment, the woman is also less likely to be objectively evaluated. Male supervisors are loathe to give frank, objective evaluations to women, and thus the woman is less likely to develop professionally. (Collins, 1985; Marshall, 1984).

The inequities based on gender in task assignment and performance evaluation are likely to jeopardize a woman's opportunity for promotion. The lack of available networks and mentors for women disadvantages them further. (Marshall, 1984).

Cannings (1988) conducted an empirical study on the effects of gender on managerial promotion. Her purpose was 'to estimate the extent to which gender affects career success within a managerial structure by analysing rates of promotion among middle managers in one large Canadian corporation'. Her conclusions were that female managers were significantly less likely to be promoted, and that this was not primarily related to such acquired attributes as level of education, but to their being born female.

There has been some consideration of the issues facing women who work in universities. An American study by Angela Simeone (1987) provides valuable insights into the systemic discrimination of women in universities. While she focuses on women academics, the factors which she identifies as blocking the careers of women academics appear to apply equally to women administrators. Men have more institutional support because the institutional system has been developed by men to serve their needs, and there has been the unspoken assumption that what serves their (white male) needs, serves everyone's needs. She also suggests that being married is advantageous to a man's career and disadvantageous to a woman's career because men receive support for their careers from their families, while women may receive discouragement. As well, women tend to be located in institutions which pay less, and they tend to start out at lower salaries, so even with equal treatment thereafter, they never catch up. Women are channelled into certain aspects of work -- nurturing, helping students, etc. -- which then works to their detriment in terms of career advancement. And women's contributions can be overlooked, simply because they are made by women. These subjective evaluations and decisions may often be made by women themselves. Lastly she notes that women's networks are treated with suspicion:

Some believe that to be associated with other women is harmful; women's affiliations may be viewed as suspicious, second-class, or subversive.

Andruskiw and Howes (1980) provide one of the very few studies of women as administrators in higher education. They undertook to 'identify and compare the attitudes of female and male administrators toward sex characteristics and sex-role images and to examine the relationship between administrators' attitudes and their evaluation of women and men as administrators.' The group examined was found to be more liberal than traditional in their attitudes toward sex characteristics and sex-role images and tended to evaluate women and

men administrators equally. This study thus suggests that the problems women encounter have less to do with attitudes, and more to do with what Abella calls systemic discrimination.

There have not been very many studies of women who work in Canadian universities. Vickers (1977) provided an interesting and informative consideration of the issues of education for women, women students, career opportunities and women academics. She noted that women are pressured into 'choosing' between family and a career. Those women who get a full-time job at university -- and here she was speaking of women academics -- "encounter lower salaries, slower advancement, less likelihood of being granted tenure and, in many cases, heavier workloads restricted to the undergraduate level." She noted that these women are tolerated and led to feel grateful they have a job at all.

Greenglass (1982) noted that women in universities are marginalized if they show too much interest in women's issues and may lose their credibility. However, her work dealt with gender roles in relation to a broad range of issues, employment being only one, and university employment being no more than a passing reference.

Like Vickers, Dagg and Thompson (1988) addressed a wide range of issues related to women and universities and had only one chapter on "Administrations, Professors, and Staff". This included considerable consideration of women academics and the systemic characteristics that impede their progress. They quote the AUCC "Statement of Women in Canadian Universities" passed in 1986:

As educational institutions, universities have a special responsibility to play a formative and exemplary role in shaping a society that enables women to pursue, as freely as men can, careers appropriate to their talents and inclinations. Universities must ensure that the principle of equal treatment for both men and women informs all levels of institutional decision-making.

Nonetheless, a subsequent AUCC survey revealed very few universities had established or were even studying the idea of employment equity policies.

Neither of the Canadian studies (Vickers or Dagg and Thompson) gives substantial consideration to the plight of women administrators. Dagg and Thompson do note:

A 1985-86 survey of Ontario universities showed that although 57 per cent of full-time non-academic positions were held by women, only 10 per cent of employees in upper-management and only 33 per cent of those in middle-management positions were women. An analysis of the middle-management group demonstrated that 59 per cent of the men compared with 24 per cent of the women received salaries of \$33,000 or more. (Council of Ontario Universities Committee News, May 1987 in Dagg and Thompson, 1988).

It is further noted that many of the women hold positions which can easily be terminated despite longevity.

While Vickers does infer that the lack of women administrators is a significant factor in the plight of women students, women academics and women support staff, it appears that no particular attention has been given to women administrators as a group. This is probably not because of lack of interest or because of any assumption that administrators do not face the same kind of difficulties as other female workers in academia, but rather the number of women administrators in universities is so small that attention has not been paid to their particular situation.

It is evident from the literature that women in organizations are occupationally disadvantaged, and that they suffer from the very difficult problem of systemic discrimination. Although there is little in the literature specifically about women administrators in Canadian universities--whether they are similarly disadvantaged and if so, what might be the contributing factors--it is not difficult to see that women are badly underrepresented in university management, particularly at the upper levels. If universities are to take seriously their special leadership role in gender equality and assume their responsibility to ensure the equal treatment of men and women in the workplace, more must be known about the factors which may be blocking women administrators from advancing their careers. By studying the characteristics of male and female university administrators, their plans and career decisions, institutions may discover some of the factors which are inherent in their systems and methods of operation which seriously disadvantage women.

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## METHOD

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The subjects for the study are registrarial professional staff in Canadian universities as recorded in the Association of Registrars of Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) membership list (1989). Rather than trying to take a sample of this population, all staff (332) who fall into this category were surveyed in an attempt to get the widest possible representation of the various professional levels, organizational structures, sizes of institutions and regions. (However, the differences between colleges and universities as working environments may have imposed further variables on an already complicated issue, so a decision was made to survey only university administrators at this time.)

Data about individuals were collected with a written mail out survey (see Appendix I) which was developed based on a review of the literature regarding major factors which affect the relative career development of men and women. The survey was pretested on a small number of professional staff at the authors' home institution, changes were made as a result, and then the survey along with a covering letter explaining the purpose of the study (see Appendix II) was sent to the 332 ARUCC members as described above. Survey respondents were given a three week deadline in which to reply.

In addition to the data collected from individual administrators, institutional information was solicited from registrars at 53 institutions by means of a separate written survey form (see Appendix III). The purpose of this information was to enable the authors to make gender comparisons about career advancement not solely based on individual characteristics, but also on institutional variables such as different governance and administrative structures, size of department, and level of autonomy of the department. The same deadline was imposed for this survey as for the individual one.

When the surveys were returned, the data were loaded into a computer in such a way that comparisons could easily be made between the genders using different variables such as demographics, credential level, salary, size of institution, and region. Comparisons were made by looking at the relative percentage of women and men who fall into various categories within the variables. Written observations about the findings have been made based on whether major differences between the genders or trends are evident from the data.

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## FINDINGS

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### AGE

The fairly large overall age difference between males and females in the total sample probably reflects the relatively recent trend for more women to enter professional and management occupations than was the case in the past. Of the total number of males surveyed, more than 67% are over the age of 40, whereas approximately 60% of the women are 40 and under.

Age also appears to be an important factor in other areas of gender difference revealed by the survey. For example, all males in the under 40 age group report aspiring to higher positions, as opposed to only two-thirds of males over 40. For women, aspirations appear to increase after the age of 40. As well, men in the 31-40 age group appear to feel less held back from achieving their aspirations, and more frequently than males or females in any other category, see job opportunities as being available.

For women, the situation is almost the reverse. Those in the over 40 age category feel less held back from achieving their aspirations than younger women. It is of note that no age category of women reports feeling the same apparently high level of optimism about achieving their aspirations which is expressed by men in the 31-40 age group.

Differences in mobility between men and women, as measured by number of position changes, promotions, different employers, and locations, vary among the age categories, with the most marked differences being in the 31-40 age category. Men under 31 show slightly more mobility than women of the same age, but in the 31-40 category, men show much more mobility than their female counterparts. In the over 40 category, mobility is about the same for men and women.

Age also appears to be a factor in gender differences related to taking steps to further one's career. Overall, women in all age categories report more frequently than do men, that they are pursuing or have pursued additional educational credentials and have taken on extra tasks at work. However, in the 31-40 age category, women much more frequently than their male counterparts, report taking a wide variety of steps to further their careers. So although women in this age group report feeling more held back from achieving their aspirations and see fewer job opportunities than men, they continue to work actively toward furthering their careers in very tangible ways.

Age and gender differences related to likelihood of participating in professional activities may indicate that women begin these activities later in their careers than do men. Women under 30 are much less likely than males in the same age group to belong to professional organizations and to participate in professional activities. This trend does not hold for women in the older age categories. Women over 30 belong to and participate in professional organizations and activities in about equal numbers to men in all but one way. Men in all age

groups make public presentations more frequently than women, with the greatest difference being in the over 40 age category.

Overall, women report spending more time in child/home care activities than do men; however, these differences are greatest for women under 30 and women over 40.

Some interesting gender differences emerge when comparing age groups in the categories of encouragement for and/or discouragement from applying for other positions. In the under 30 age category all men report being encouraged to apply for other positions, mainly by their supervisors and colleagues. Only 75% of women in the same age category report being encouraged to apply for other positions, with the main encouragement coming from their supervisors, and the rest being spread out fairly evenly among colleagues, family, and friends.

In the 31 - 40 age category, the percentage of women reporting having received encouragement to apply for other positions is 82% (twice that for men in the same category), and 90% of these women report receiving encouragement from their supervisor, 42% from their colleagues, with family and friends assuming less importance. Men in the 31-40 age category are not only less likely to report receiving encouragement to apply for other positions, the source of the encouragement shifts, with colleagues assuming much more importance. About 86% of men in this age group report receiving encouragement from colleagues compared with 41% of women in the same age category.

In the over 40 age category, men and women tend to be more similar in terms of encouragement received to apply for other positions, both in amount and sources.

As for discouragement from applying for other positions, women in all age categories report being discouraged by others more often than men, and the sources of discouragement are more spread out among supervisors, colleagues, family, and friends. The greatest difference, however, shows up in the over 40 age group where approximately 40% of women compared to 15% of men report having being discouraged from applying for other positions.

Age is obviously a factor when comparing gender differences. In this study, as well as there being a large overall age difference between men and women in the total sample, age appears to be important in making comparisons in a number of categories, particularly with regard to career aspirations, mobility, taking steps to further one's career, and participation in professional activities. It should be noted that at least part of the difference between age groups is probably due to comparing different cohorts who have grown up with different values regarding gender roles. However, it may be speculated that there are differing patterns for male and female career paths, and we can see these patterns emerging by comparing the sexes in different age groups on such factors as aspirations and professional activities.

### CREDENTIALS

In general terms, women professionals in university registrar's offices do have fewer credentials than their male counterparts. Indeed, 18% of them have less than a bachelor's degree whereas only 1% of men are in this category. Nearly two-thirds of the women offer a bachelor's degree as their highest credential, whereas only slightly more than half of the men do. And 45% of the men have a graduate degree, while only 16% of the women do.



A comparison of the responses of men and women with the same credentials yields some interesting results. A valid comparison at the 'less than bachelor's' level is not possible since there is only one male respondent in this category. Consequently, comparisons were made with only two groups: those at the baccalaureate degree level and those at the graduate degree level.

In both of these categories, the age difference noted above is apparent. In general, the men are older than the women, with a more marked difference at the higher education level. Fully 78% of the men with graduate degrees are over 40, compared to 47% of the women. At the bachelor's level, 62% of the women and 42% of the men are under 40.

There is a significant difference in career mobility between the genders associated with educational level. Women with a bachelor's degree are less mobile than men at the same educational level, whereas women with a graduate degree are markedly more mobile than men with the same credentials.

Men with bachelor's degrees have been in their current position longer than women at the same educational level, although with their current employer about the same length of time. The situation is considerably different for graduate degree holders, men having been in their current position longer than women but also with their current employer significantly longer than women. At both levels, women have held fewer positions and obtained fewer promotions than men with the same credentials. This may be due mainly to the overall age difference between male and female respondents, with the women being younger on average than the men.

Men and women with identical credentials appear to be treated quite differently in terms of assigned authority. At the bachelor's degree level, 60% of the women and only 26% of the men have no budget authority, while 22% of these women and 37% of the men have budget authority of \$50,000 or more. Interestingly, at the graduate degree level, the difference in budget authority between the genders appears to be marginal.

At both educational levels, women's salaries are significantly lower than men's. Women making less than \$35,000 amount to 16% for those holding a graduate degree, and 44% for those holding a bachelor's degree; there are no men holding a graduate degree making less than \$35,000 and only 18% of men with a bachelor's degree are in this category. At the other end of the spectrum 5% of women with bachelor's degrees and 26% of those with graduate degrees earn more than \$50,000, while 34% of men in each category earn more than \$50,000. This may imply that, at least at higher salary levels, education is not a factor for men but remains a factor for women.

The gender differences according to educational level with regard to commitment and aspirations are not great, although men at the graduate level are somewhat less likely to aspire to a higher position. However, the differences in perception of opportunity are significant. A full 84% of men at the bachelor's level believe that there are job opportunities for them to realize their aspirations, while only 67% of women do. These women also report feeling held back by lack of qualifications, inability to move, language and self-doubt in markedly greater proportions than do men. At the graduate level there is no difference in the perception of opportunity and women feel less held back than men in every factor.

Women at both the baccalaureate and graduate degree level report being more active than men in terms of taking steps to further their careers. This difference is much greater at the graduate degree level. It is interesting to note that women with graduate degrees are the only group which is more likely than men in the same category to give presentations at conferences, but even they are slightly less likely to attend conferences. Women at the graduate degree level stand out as a very active group. They appear to be the career oriented "superwomen" often discussed in the literature, who are active at home and in their careers. Yet, like other women, they have less authority and are paid less than their male counterparts.

In summary, while the women surveyed do have fewer credentials than the men, this difference in credentials cannot totally account for the very large discrepancies between the genders in financial responsibility and recognition.

## MOBILITY

Although women surveyed do not report much more frequently than do men, feeling held back from achieving their aspirations by an inability to move or reluctance to leave their institutions, it appears that they are, in fact, less mobile in their careers than their male counterparts. Mobility factors considered included number of years in current position, number of years with current institution, number of positions held, number of promotions, number of employers, and number of locations.

Age is an important factor in considering gender differences in career mobility. Men under 31 show slightly more mobility than women of the same age. They appear to make more lateral career moves, whereas women in the same age group report fewer position changes overall but a higher rate of change involving a promotion. Although a slightly higher percentage of women than men in this age group have changed employers between one and four times, 90% of the women under 30 as compared to 50% of the men have never changed geographical location. No men in this age group report feeling held back by an inability to move whereas 20% of the women do.

In the 31 - 40 age group, there are marked differences in mobility between men and women. Women have held fewer positions overall, and have had fewer changes which involved a promotion. Approximately 43% of women in this age group have never changed employers, and over 70% have never changed locations, compared to approximately 70% of men who report both having changed employers and locations more than twice at this point in their careers. Women in the 31-40 age group are somewhat more likely than their male counterparts to report an inability to move and a reluctance to leave their current institution as reasons which hold them back from achieving their aspirations.

In the over 40 age group, it appears that males are more likely to make a number of lateral career moves. While they are likely to have held a much greater number of positions than women in the same age group, they do not report being promoted significantly more often than do women. Women in this age category have changed employers and locations less frequently than men, but the gap is not quite as great as for those in the younger age groups. Women in the over 40 age group are no more likely than men to cite an inability to move and are less likely to cite a reluctance to leave their current institutions as factors which are holding them back from achieving their aspirations. Interestingly, people in this age category

who report being in the same position and in the same institution for over 15 years are more likely to be men than women.

Marital status and having children seem to be much more important factors in career mobility for women than for men. Married women are more likely than married men and more likely than single women to report feeling held back from achieving their aspirations by an inability to move. This is also the case when comparing women with children to men with children and to women with no children. Both married women and women with children feel more held back by their perceived inability to move. And in fact, they do not change positions, get promoted, change employers or locations as often as married men, men with children, single women, or women with no children.

Overall, the women surveyed appear to be much less mobile in their careers than the men, even though they do not, for the most part, see themselves as reluctant to leave their current institution or as being unable to move. Lack of mobility may have some negative effect on women's promotions and general career advancement. Although there are always many factors involved in individual career advancement, it is of interest to note that, in this study, there appears to be a positive relationship between position, employer, and location changes, and the number of promotions received.

#### ENCOURAGEMENT/DISOURAGEMENT/MENTORING

Overall, women more often than men report being both encouraged and discouraged from applying for higher positions. There are some variations by age group, but more in extreme, than direction. For example, when comparisons are made by age group, the under 30 men are the only group that report having received encouragement more often than women.

The perceived sources of encouragement and discouragement differ between men and women. Both men and women report that their supervisors or other management are the most frequent sources of influence in applying for higher positions. However, men are much more likely than women to be influenced by people at work (colleagues and management) than by family or friends. Women's main sources of encouragement and discouragement are their supervisors or other management, followed by colleagues, family, and friends. Generally, they are more influenced by their family and friends than are men. No men reported having been discouraged from applying for higher positions by family or friends, while a number of women reported having received discouragement from their families, and in at least one case, from friends.

The family as an important source of encouragement and discouragement for women is particularly interesting in light of the marital status distribution of the sample. Only 57% of the women surveyed are married compared to 83% of the men. It may be that women are more likely to be influenced by their families of origin than are men, or a very high percentage of the women who are married and/or have children receive feedback about their careers from them.

Age and marital status have an impact on encouragement and discouragement received, with the most marked differences between the sexes occurring between the ages of 31 and 40. In this age group, approximately 82% of the women report being encouraged to apply for higher positions, double the proportion of men. And over 27% of these women reported receiving

discouragement, compared to only about 6% of the men. Twenty-seven per cent of married women reported receiving discouragement from their families compared to 7% of single women and no married men. On the other hand, approximately 22% of both married and single women reported having received encouragement from their families compared to 15% of married men and 12% of single men.

There are no significant differences between the percentages of men and women who report having had a mentor. In the total group, about 56% of men and 60% of women report having had a mentor. One notable exception occurred in the 31 - 40 age group, where less than 50% of men report having had a mentor compared to about 59% of women.

#### ASPIRATIONS/CAREER PLANS

In comparing career plans and aspirations between the genders for the total sample, we see that men report aspiring to higher positions in only slightly greater proportion than women, and that the majority of both men and women surveyed report making registrarial work or post-secondary administration their long term career. Greater differences in aspirations and career plans appear when the sexes are grouped by age and credentials, and if other factors such as optimism and feeling held back are taken into consideration.

Looking strictly at the question of career aspirations, 100% of men in the under 30 age category and 100% of men in the 31 - 40 age category aspire to a higher position. This compares to 80% of women in the under 30 category and 67% of women in the 31 - 40 category. In the over 40 age category, the situation reverses, and 67% of men and 75% of women report aspiring to a higher position. It appears that men think about their career aspirations at a younger age than women, and perhaps as a result, either achieve some level of career satisfaction or lower their sights earlier in life.

In general, the men surveyed show more optimism than the women about achieving their aspirations, as measured by whether they think job opportunities existed and how often they report feeling held back in their careers by various factors. The most marked difference is in the age category 31 - 40. In this category, over 94% of men, compared to 61% of women, report a belief that job opportunities exist which would allow them to achieve their aspirations. This group of men is much less likely than women to report feeling held back by any of the factors listed. (The one exception to this general trend is the group of women with graduate degrees. They report much more optimism about their careers than their male counterparts. Interestingly, they have profiles similar to males in the 31-40 age group. See Summary and Discussion for further elaboration of characteristics of this group.)

Differences also emerge between men and women in the factors which they see as holding them back from achieving their career aspirations. Women are much more likely than men to report lack of qualifications and self-doubt as career blocks. Overall, men and women are fairly similar in terms of frequency of reporting other blocking factors such as family/home, inability to move, reluctance to leave institution, language, and fear of risk, although there are differences when the sample was sorted by age group and family status. For example, married women with children are much more likely than men in the same category to report feeling held back in their careers by family/home and inability to make a geographical move.

Although the women in the study appear to be less optimistic about achieving their aspirations than the men, they appear to be more likely to work actively towards furthering their careers in a number of ways. In particular, women are much more likely than men to pursue further credentials and to take on extra tasks at work. They also report more frequently than do men that they discuss career plans with their supervisor, family, and friends. Men more frequently than women report making useful contacts and discussing their plans with colleagues as ways of furthering their careers. Participation in volunteer work is reported with about equal frequency by men and women (although the type of volunteer work may differ).

Women tend to participate in professional activities much less frequently than their male counterparts. They are less likely to be members of professional organizations, attend conferences, and make presentations. When they do attend conferences, it is more likely a regional conference than a national conference. These differences are most apparent in the under 40 age categories.

Overall, it appears that the men and women surveyed have similar career aspirations--most plan to make a long term career in educational administration and most aspire to higher positions. However, the men appear to be aware of and achieve their career aspirations at an earlier age. Although the women have similar aspirations, they may not be aware of them until later in life. Men appear to be much more optimistic than women about achieving their aspirations, particularly in the age group 31 - 40. They see plenty of opportunities for themselves and do not appear to feel held back from career achievement in any serious way. It may be that this optimistic mindset inspires self-confidence since men report feeling held back by self-doubt much less frequently than women. Although women appear to be less optimistic about their careers, they continue to work actively toward achieving their aspirations, particularly by gaining credentials and by taking on extra tasks at work. These may or may not be effective methods since women's efforts do not necessarily appear to be reflected in promotions, salary levels, or budget authority.

#### **BUDGET AUTHORITY**

The literature states that women managers often have only 'apparent' authority, that is, there is no significant power attached to their positions. The survey included questions about budget authority as being the most readily quantifiable measure of authority. The results show a wide gap between men and women.

More than 50% of the female respondents have no budget authority (including one-third of female registrars); while more than 50% of the male respondents have budget authority of \$50,000 or greater.

In order to determine whether size of budget is a function of the size of institution, we identified large and small institutions using AUCC data. In institutions defined as large, 63% of the men have budget authority of \$50,000 or more compared to 40% of the women. And 61% of the women, but only 12% of the men, have no budget authority. In institutions defined as small, women have more budget authority than men: 32% of the men and 45% of the women have budget authority of \$50,000 or more while 53% of the men and 40% of the women have no budget authority.

Large and small registrarial departments were identified by size of departmental budget and staff, and further comparisons were drawn: 58% of men and 44% of women in large departments have budget authority of \$50,000 or more while 53% of women and 21% of men have no budget authority in large departments. In small departments 50% of men and 44% of women have budget authority of \$50,000 or more while 38% of women and 22% of men had no budget authority. This seems to suggest that women are more likely to approach equity in terms of authority in small departments and small institutions.

Controlling for age and level of education results in some interesting findings. In the under 30 age group, 50% of the male respondents and 85% of the female respondents have no budget authority; 33% of the male respondents have more than \$50,000 authority but none of the women have more than \$10,000. In the 31-40 age range, 29% of the male respondents and 53% of the female respondents have no budget authority; while 59% of the male respondents and 29% of the female respondents have budget authority of \$50,000 or more. And in the 41 and over age group, 21% of the male respondents and 44% of the female respondents have no budget authority, while 52% of the male respondents and 46% of the female respondents have signing authority of \$50,000 or more.

Of those with a bachelor's degree, 60% of the female respondents and 26% of the male respondents have no budget authority; while 26% of the female respondents and 50% of the male respondents have budget authority of \$50,000 or more. The discrepancy is not as great at the graduate degree level where 26% of the female respondents and 22% of the male respondents have no budget authority and 63% of the female respondents and 56% of the male respondents have budget authority of \$50,000 or more.

It appears from the data, that with very few exceptions, that the authority of women staff is consistently less than that of men and that this cannot be accounted for solely by differences in age or credentials.

#### **SALARY LEVELS**

Compensation continues to be a very strong indicator of gender inequity; and the salary discrepancies found between the genders in this survey are worthy of emphasis. The discrepancy in rates of pay between male and female respondents is very marked, even when factors such as age and credentials are considered.

In the total group of respondents, 10% of men make less than \$35,000 and 34% make more than \$50,000; 40% of women make less than \$35,000 and 8% make more than \$50,000.

In the 30 and under age group (in which it should be noted that males and females have identical levels of education), there are 50% of male respondents and 80% of female respondents who earn less than \$35,000. In the 31-40 age range, 12% of male respondents and 32% of female respondents earn less than \$35,000., and 12% of male respondents are making more than \$50,000 whereas none of the female respondents is (including the 16% with graduate degrees). In the 41+ age group, 46% of the male respondents and 21% of the female respondents are making over \$50,000 while 25% of the female respondents and no male respondents are making less than \$35,000.

There are similar salary discrepancies between men and women even when level of education is taken into consideration. Only 5% of women with a bachelor's degree are making in excess of \$50,000 while 34% of men with the same education are in this salary range. At the graduate degree level, there are still 16% of women who make less than \$35,000.

Although there appears to be more gender equity in budget authority in small institutions than in large ones, the same does not hold for compensation equity. While there is little difference in the relative proportions of men and women in small institutions making \$50,000 or more, 26% of the men and 65% of the women make \$35,000 or less. This discrepancy at the lower end of the scale is narrowed in large institutions where 5% of the men and 33% of the women make \$35,000 or less. However, the gap between those at the upper end of the scale is wider, with 47% of men and only 8% of women making \$50,000 or more.

When we compare salaries by gender across the regions, we see that while there is some small variation, in general, male respondents earn more than female respondents across the country.

## REGISTRARS

Professional positions in registrar's offices require a wide range of skills and abilities, and some of the discrepancies between the genders which have been identified might be explained because men tend to be the more senior professionals in departments. Therefore, we decided it would be useful to look at the characteristics of those persons who list their job title as Registrar. Only 24 out of a total of 61 registrars responded to the survey. However, the gender breakdown of those who responded is similar to that among the 61 registrars, ie. over 60% are male. This figure is of note in itself when compared to the gender split among the total professional staff respondents. Although over 60% of professional staff in registrar's offices are women, considerably fewer than 40% of registrars are women.

The majority of registrars who responded to the survey fit the following profile. They are male, 41 or older, married with one to three children at home, and hold a graduate degree. They have budget authority in excess of \$50,000, and have been in their current position less than 5 years but with their current institution more than 15 years. They earn more than \$55,000, and are considering a long term career in registrarial work. They have held up to four different positions and had at least two promotions. Almost 40% has had only one employer while another 40% has had two or three. Most have not changed location more than once.

The female registrars tended to be somewhat younger than their male counterparts, and only 44% had graduate degrees compared with 73% of the male respondents. The majority of the female respondents are single, and they are more than twice as likely as men to have no children in the home.

Women are more likely to have been in their current position a shorter period of time (78% less than five years), as well as having less time with their current institution. They also have held fewer positions, have had fewer promotions and have had fewer employers in fewer locations. This lack of mobility does not appear to be due strictly to the women being younger than the men. It may suggest that their careers were interrupted, a point which needs further study.

Fully one-third of the women registrars have no budget authority, although the remaining two-thirds have budget authority of more than \$50,000. The difference in budget authority between male and female registrars, although present, is much less than for respondents as a whole. Salary differences are more obvious. Twenty-two per cent of the women, and none of the men, earn less than \$35,000. Forty-seven per cent of the men and only 11 per cent of the women earn more than \$65,000.

Women registrars are more likely than men to aspire to higher positions, and two-thirds of them believe the job opportunities are there (a similar proportion to the male respondents). In substantially greater proportions than men, women feel held back by lack of qualifications, family/home responsibilities and inability to move. Interestingly, more male registrars than female reported feeling held back by reluctance to leave their institution, self-doubt and fear of risk.

Overall, women registrars, more than men, reported being more active in taking steps to further their careers. Specifically, they reported in far greater numbers than men that they were acquiring additional credentials, taking on extra tasks and making useful contacts. Male registrars reported taking on volunteer work and discussing career moves with their supervisor and colleagues in greater numbers than did women.

All registrars are actively involved in professional activities, although men are much more likely than women to give presentations and slightly more likely to attend conferences. Travel to conferences may be associated with budget authority or other financial considerations. Although most female registrars are single and most have no children, a good portion still spend a considerable amount of time engaged in home/childcare activities. Twenty-two per cent of the women, compared with 7% of the men, spend in excess of 20 hours per week in home and child care.

Women registrars are more likely than men to have been encouraged to apply for higher positions, and are significantly more likely to have been encouraged by family and friends. While only a very small proportion of men have been discouraged from applying for a higher position, one-third of women have, again by family and friends.

The institutional data were reviewed to determine if there are different characteristics to the institutions/departments which have male and female registrars. More than half of the female registrars are in institutions where the university operating budget is less than \$17M, faculty and staff number fewer than 500 and there are fewer than 5,000 students. A similar proportion of male registrars are in institutions where the operating budget is \$50M or more, the number of faculty and staff exceeds 1,000 and the number of students exceeds 10,000. The majority of male registrars have a departmental budget of \$750,000 or more, while the majority of female registrars have a departmental budget of less than \$500,000. Male registrars have an average staff size of 24 while female registrars have an average staff size of 8. The proportion of male and female staff does not differ significantly between male and female registrars.

It is not difficult to see that the difference in salary levels between male and female registrars is at least partially accounted for in the size of the department, the size of the operating budget, and the size of the university in which they are registrars. However, it does not seem to be an accident that over half of the female registrars work in smaller institutions. The survey results seem to suggest that women have a much greater chance of being appointed

registrar at smaller institutions. It is quite possible that in these smaller institutions the responsibilities of the registrar are perceived to be less onerous than in a large university and consequently the risk associated with hiring a woman may seem less. As well, these institutions, depending upon their location, may have more difficulty in recruiting staff and may be more willing, therefore, to hire a woman.

## REGIONS

In order to see if regional factors could be identified as contributing to gender differences, respondents were sorted by region -- Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario and the West -- and the results were compared.

Most of the gender differences identified apply more or less across Canada, but the discrepancies between men and women are greater in some regions than others. Discussion of a few factors will serve to illustrate this.

Budget authority has been a recurring theme. In every region of Canada more than 50% of the women respondents have no budget authority; whereas male respondents with no budget authority ranged from 0% in Quebec to 37% in Atlantic Canada. As well, in each region male respondents had significantly greater budget authority (more than \$50,000); from 31% in Atlantic Canada to 45% in Ontario. Women with this size of budget authority ranged from 12% in Quebec to 33% in Western Canada.

In every region there is considerable discrepancy in salaries paid to male and female respondents. The most extreme is in Quebec where 50% of the female respondents and none of the male respondents earn less than \$35,000; and none of the female respondents and 66% of the male respondents earn more than \$50,000. The Atlantic Region was the most equitable at the top end of the scale with 19% of the male respondents and 14% of the female respondents earning more than \$50,000; however, they had a wide variation at the bottom of the scale with 6% of the male respondents and 57% of the female respondents earning less than \$35,000. Ontario was more equitable at the lower end of the scale with 5% of the male respondents and 23% of the female respondents earning less than \$35,000 but the proportion of men earning more than \$50,000, is almost four times greater than that of women. The West was closest to what one might call a normal distribution for the male respondents with 19% making less than \$35,000 and 23% making more than \$50,000. However, 48% of the female respondents are making less than \$35,000 and only 2% are making more than \$50,000.

There are some other interesting regional differences. Across the country, men in registrar's offices are older than women. The oldest group of men are in Quebec and women are the oldest in Quebec and Ontario. Men and women are both younger in Western Canada, which may partially account for the higher proportion of men earning below \$35,000. Men have higher credentials than women in every region, but only marginally so in Quebec, where the salary discrepancy is the greatest. Thus a quick look at these two factors does not explain the salary and authority discrepancies we have identified earlier.

Aspirations are remarkably similar across the country, but respondents from Quebec were far more pessimistic about job opportunities to realize those aspirations. Respondents from the various regions are similar in the factors which held them back, with one exception. Fully 75% of the women who responded from Atlantic Canada feel held back because of language.

With the exception of Ontario, more women than men are encouraged to apply for a higher position. In Ontario, a higher proportion of men than in the other regions, and a lower proportion of women are encouraged to apply. The proportion of women discouraged from applying for a higher position is greater in Ontario, but greatest in the West.

Despite interesting regional variances reported here, there are trends in gender differences which are common to all parts of Canada. Regional differences tend to be more in degree than in kind.

## INSTITUTIONS

To determine if some gender differences are due to institutional/work environment factors, a second questionnaire was sent to all registrars requesting information concerning the institution, the community, the registrar's office, and the position of the registrar. Thirty-three out of 52 institutions responded to the survey. The data from these institutions provide an interesting composite of the environment in which registrarial staff work.

More than half the respondents report a university operating budget of \$50M or more, faculty and staff of 1000 or more, and total students of 10,000 or more. At the same time, 9% report a budget of less than \$10M, 18% had faculty and staff fewer than 250; and 15% had a student body of less than 2000. Certainly, the small institutions are in the minority of respondents. Of the institutions surveyed, 38% could be said to be small and 46% large. Thus, large institutions are slightly over-represented in this survey, and small institutions are significantly under-represented.

The size of community of the reporting institutions varies from 6% with a population of less than 10,000 to 24% with 500,000 or more. The largest group (33%) of institutions are in communities with populations in the 100,000 to 500,000 range.

If we can generalize from the 33 reporting institutions, it appears that the staffing profile of offices of the registrar is remarkably similar regardless of institutional size. More than 80% of the 844 staff represented in the data from the institutional survey are female (63% at the support level and 18% at the professional level). There are very few male support staff (5%) and the remainder of the staff (14%) are male professionals. However, although the pool of male professionals is much smaller, it appears that they have a much greater chance of becoming registrars. While there are 30 per cent more female professional staff than there are male professional staff, 63% of the registrars are male.

Approximately half of the department budgets exceed \$1M, while more than 20% are less than \$250,000. More than 60% of the registrars report to the vice-president academic, with another 25% reporting to the president and/or other vice-presidents. The one exception to this appears to be the multiversity model where individual faculties have their own registrar who may report to a dean.

No registrar is an ex-officio member of the university board, but 79% of registrars are ex-officio members of the senate. More than 50% have involvement in strategic planning and two-thirds are heavily involved in academic policy development.

In summary, with the exception of a few slight regional differences, institutional profiles, with the obvious exception of size, are fairly similar across the country. Consequently, institutional variables such as governance structure and reporting lines do not appear to be significant to any great extent when examining gender issues. However, when the individual respondents' data are sorted by size of institution, some interesting differences are apparent.

Firstly, the overall gender ratio among staff appears to differ according to size of institution. Fifty percent of the respondents from small institutions are female whereas approximately two-thirds of the respondents from medium and large institutions are female. This may be because in the larger institutions there are more positions at lower professional levels which provide employment for women.

Certain trends seen in the overall data are consistent, irrespective of the size of the institution. Women are younger than men in all groups, are less likely to be married, and more likely to have no or fewer children at home. As well, generally the women do have fewer credentials than men.

There is, however, a wide variation in budget authority dependent on the size of institution. In small institutions, fewer women than men have no budget authority, 40% compared with 53% for men, and more women have authority of \$50,000 or more, 45% compared with 32% for men. Men and women in medium-sized institutions appear to have an equal likelihood of having no budget authority, (approximately 40%); however, 40% of the men, compared with 25% of the women, have budget authority of \$50,000 or more. Women in large institutions are least likely to have any budget authority, 61% compared with 12% of men, and 53% of men have budget authority of \$50,000 or more compared with 28% of women. Women then are likely to have more budget authority in small institutions; and less in large institutions.

Women appear to be more likely than men to attain high salary levels (> \$50,000.) in small institutions; however, the numbers in these categories are very small and this makes comparisons difficult. At the lower end of the salary scale, 65% of women and 26% of men in these small institutions have salaries of under \$35,000. In medium institutions, no men earn salaries of less than \$35,000 but 17% of women do; and in large institutions only 5% of men are in this low salary group while 33% of women are. As one would expect, 40% of men in medium institutions and 47% of men in large institutions earn salaries of more than \$50,000 while the respective figures for women are 17% and 8%. Again, women seem to fare somewhat better in the smaller institutions, but the discrepancy between men's and women's salaries, particularly at the lower end of the scale, is still substantial even in these universities.

There seems to be a definite relationship between mobility differences between the sexes and the size of the institution. Men in small institutions have held more positions, earned more promotions and had more employers in more locations. Women in medium institutions have actually held more positions, but men have had more promotions and they have a similar number of employers and locations. While men in large institutions have held more positions, they have had a similar number of promotions, employers and locations. It is interesting to note that mobility differences between the sexes are most apparent in the small institutions, where the salary and budget authority discrepancies between men and women seem to be the least. This may suggest that in small institutions, mobility is not a factor in explaining any apparent discrimination.

Men in large institutions are least likely to aspire to higher positions (70%), perhaps because they have already achieved their goals. Men in medium institutions are most likely to do so (100%). There is less variation among the women with approximately 70% of women in both small and large institutions aspiring to higher positions and only 58% of the women in medium institutions having such aspirations. Women are less likely to perceive opportunities to achieve these aspirations, and this is consistent irrespective of the institution, but women in small institutions perceive the most lack of opportunity, possibly because they are nearer the top of a rather short ladder.

In small institutions, women feel more held back from achieving their aspirations than men on every factor listed in the survey, except inability to move. In large institutions, they feel more held back on every factor, although there is little difference between men and women on the factors of family/home responsibilities and reluctance to leave the institution. However, in the medium size institutions men feel more held back on every factor except lack of qualifications. This may be because the men in these institutions have the highest aspirations.

A greater portion of men than women in medium institutions are taking each of the steps identified to further their careers. In small institutions, women are doing more on each factor listed, in most instances markedly so. The same is true in large institutions, except women and men are approximately the same in the extent to which they seek advice from a consultant and participate in volunteer work.

Men are consistently more involved in professional organizations than are women. The largest discrepancy is in attendance at national conferences where 74-80% of the men of all three groups attend while only 40% of the women from small and medium institutions and 58% of the women from large institutions attend. Women in small institutions are one of the few groups who are more likely than men in the same group to make presentations; but they are still less likely to do so than men in the medium and large institutions.

Men in medium institutions are the most likely to have been encouraged or discouraged from seeking advancement. (As members of this group have the highest aspirations, they may be more likely to seek feedback.) However, women in the medium institutions were least likely to have been encouraged or discouraged from seeking advancement. Women in small and large institutions had a similar likelihood of receiving encouragement while women in small institutions were the most likely to receive discouragement. In all institutions, and with both genders, most of the feedback was likely to come from the supervisor or other management while women were more likely than men to receive encouragement and discouragement from family and friends.

In summary, the data appear to support the general conclusion that women are likely to achieve greater equity in small institutions, although the discrepancy in salary between men and women, particularly at the lower end of the scale, is still very large, and overall, small institutions tend to offer lower salaries. It is also interesting to note that some of the factors such as mobility which may figure into discrimination do not appear to be as significant within the context of smaller institutions. Ironically, it may be that other factors such as difficulty in recruitment and lower overall salaries may contribute to a more equitable situation for women in smaller institutions. Frequently, the experience in medium size institutions appears to be at variance with the small and large institutions, but this may be largely explained by the very small sample of responses, five men and 12 women.

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## DISCUSSION

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This project was undertaken to determine if the gender inequities which exist in organizations, and in university academic ranks, also exist in university administrations, and in particular, in registrar's offices of Canadian universities. The data clearly indicate that inequities do exist in the group studied and these inequities include lower overall salaries for women, greater budget authority for men, and an over-representation of men in top management positions. As well, the survey data reflect a number of current sociological and workforce trends apparent in the larger Canadian context, such as larger numbers of women entering professions than was the case in the past, delayed marriages, smaller families, and gender inequities in time spent in child and home care activities.

Although the study shows that women are disadvantaged in the workplace in a number of ways, overall there are more women than men working in professional positions in registrar's offices in Canadian universities. This is probably at least partly due to registrarial work, (although perhaps not the position of registrar), being seen as "appropriate" work for women, as opposed to less traditional kinds of occupations; for example, in the sciences or engineering. That there are more women than men within the professional ranks of registrar's offices is probably also a reflection of the fact that Canadian women are entering professional occupations in much greater numbers than was the case in the past. This relatively recent trend appears to be represented in the gender breakdown of the respondents to the survey, (63% female, 37% male), and the overall age difference between males and females, (67% of males are over 40, 60% of women are 40 and under).

Another societal trend reflected in the survey data is that many professional women are either delaying or choosing not to marry and/or to have children. Only 47% of the total number of women (compared to 83% of men), are married and 61% (compared to 38% of men), have no children at home. These lifestyle differences do not appear to be strictly due to the overall age difference between the male and female respondents. In all age categories, men are more likely to be married and to have children. It appears that the men are also more likely to have larger families, that is, more than one child at home. However, not surprisingly, all single parents in the survey are women. It may, in fact, be that while having a spouse and family may enhance a man's career, the opposite may be true for a woman. This needs further study.

Although the women surveyed are much less likely to be married and have children than the men, they report spending many more hours each week in child and/or home care. This discrepancy is greatest in the "married with children" category, in which 85% of women report spending over 15 hours each week in child and home care compared to only 34% of men. However, even in the case of singles, and those with no children at home, it is clear women spend many more hours each week in home care activities. Although women are entering professional positions in greater numbers, it appears that their home responsibilities have diminished little, if any.

As well as having more family responsibilities than men, women appear to be much more influenced by their families with regard to their careers. Women are more likely than men to receive encouragement and discouragement from their families regarding their careers. It is interesting to note the greater role of family influence reported by women than men in a sample where close to half of the women are single and the majority have no children at home. Some may have been referring to their family of origin and/or those who are married are much more likely than married men to be influenced by their spouses.

Overall, women much more frequently than do men, report receiving encouragement and discouragement for applying for higher positions. It is difficult to say how much encouragement, discouragement, and mentoring is real and how much is perceived. It may be speculated that women perceive themselves as receiving more encouragement and discouragement and/or men perceive themselves as receiving less than is the actually the case. We know from research that women, more often than men, attribute their performance, particularly their successes, to sources outside of themselves. As well, women, more than men, may seek encouragement on their career aspirations, since they report much more frequently than men, being held back by self-doubt and lack of confidence. These factors, could account for at least some of the reported differences between men and women.

Although the absence of mentors for women is often cited in the literature as a factor which has had a negative influence on women's careers, this study turned up no significant differences between the percentages of men and women who report having had a mentor. One exception was in the 31-40 year old age group where less than 50% of men report having had a mentor, compared to about 59% of women. Again, it is difficult to say how much of this is real and how much is perceived. Within this age group of men, we also find the highest amount of optimism, greatest ambition, and highest level of confidence which may contribute to the idea that they are very much in control of their own destiny--and that they have not had nor do they need a mentor.

The absence of mentoring as a significant factor in this study may also have something to do with the nature of this particular occupational group. Registrar's offices can be somewhat isolated from the rest of the institution and consequently contact with senior administrators and faculty may be limited. As well, it may be that there are simply not enough professionals within the department to have mentoring occur naturally.

To a certain extent, the women surveyed appear to fit the stereotype of not being as mobile in their careers as men. Although in general, women do not see themselves as being held back from achieving their aspirations by a lack of mobility, they do not change jobs, employers, or locations as often as men. This is true even when comparisons are made by age group. It may be that women do not report feeling held back by a lack of mobility because their decision to make home and family a priority may be an unconscious one. Certainly, marriage and family appear to be much more important factors in mobility for women than for men. Married women and women with children are the least mobile groups in comparison to married men, men with children, single women and women with no children. Women's apparent lack of mobility is of concern because it may work against their career advancement since there appears to be a positive relationship between mobility and promotions received.

Career patterns of men and women may still be somewhat different despite delayed marriages and children. It appears that men are aware of their career aspirations at an earlier age, feel optimistic about achieving them, become more mobile in their careers and get involved in

professional activities earlier than women, and then become less mobile and optimistic after the age of 40. For women, it appears almost the reverse is true. They appear not to have high career aspirations, optimism, or mobility until later in life. In the 31 - 40 age group, men appear to be at their peak in terms of optimism and mobility, while for women, the peak time appears to be after 40. This pattern may work against women in a society where older employees are not necessarily valued, particularly if they are women.

Further study is required in the area of differing career paths, aspirations, and levels of optimism between men and women and the relative impact which these factors have on career outcomes. Particularly in the age group 31 - 40, it is clear that men have much higher career aspirations and optimism about achieving their goals. It may very well be that career blocks do exist and that job opportunities are scarce, but this group of men appears to be totally optimistic about their opportunities and believe that little, if anything, is holding them back. Women, by comparison, are much more cautious, see fewer opportunities and more barriers, and report much more self-doubt and lack of confidence. The apparent difference in mindset may have a great deal to do with outcomes. We need to know more about the kinds of factors which contribute to this mindset, and how it affects behaviour.

Overall, the male respondents are better qualified than the women. Only 1% of male respondents have less than a Bachelor's degree and 45% have graduate degrees compared to 18% and 15% of women respectively. Part of the overall discrepancy in credentials can probably be explained by women who have moved up through the ranks from the very large pool of female registrarial support staff, most of whom do not have degrees. Not surprisingly, very few males occupy support staff positions. It appears that men engaged in registrarial work are much more likely to begin their careers by entering professional positions directly, after having received a degree. This difference between men and women may change with time. The data also indicate that of those women who do have degrees, very few received them at a later age. In fact, overall the women respondents received their degrees at a younger age than did the men. This may be an indication that it is becoming more common for women to follow a career path similar to men, that is completing their degrees and entering a professional position directly as opposed to moving up through the support staff ranks.

Although credentials may have some small impact on salary level when taken into consideration with other variables, it does not appear that they are important as a single factor in determining differences in level of remuneration between men and women. In fact, for men, educational level does not seem to be a factor in determining salary level. Similar percentages of men (over 30%) at both the bachelor's and graduate degree level make over \$50,000 per annum.

For women, credentials appear to have some bearing in moving into higher salary levels. There is a higher percentage of women with graduate degrees than with bachelor's degrees who earn more than \$50,000, (although the proportion is still lower than the percentage of men making over \$50,000 at any educational level). Unfortunately, the numbers of women who have reached high salary levels are too few to come to any firm conclusions in this regard. However, it is interesting to note that women in all categories reported feeling more held back by lack of credentials, and to be working on getting more credentials than did men. It may be that they feel held back by lack of credentials because through experience, they have learned that this is just another way that they must prove themselves in order to reach the same level of achievement as their male counterparts.

Those women who have attained graduate degrees may fall into the category of high achievers or "superwomen", as they are popularly called. They are more likely than their male counterparts to have long term career plans and high aspirations, and to see job opportunities for themselves. They feel less held back than men with graduate degrees from achieving their goals, and they report far less self-doubt than men or women in any other category. With regard to optimism and mobility, they have profiles similar to men in the 31 - 40 age group. However, there are differences.

Women with graduate degrees appear to be much more active both in furthering their careers and at home, than males in any category. These women report taking a variety of actions to advance their careers including taking on extra tasks at work, acquiring further credentials, and participating in volunteer work and all forms of professional activities, and overall, still spending many more hours in child and/or home care activities than their male counterparts. These women appear to have received similar numbers of promotions and have equivalent levels of budget authority as equally-qualified men. However, their salaries still fall below those of men with the same qualifications. It is interesting to note that 47% of these women with high achievement profiles (compared to 12% of men with graduate degrees), report having received discouragement from various sources regarding career aspirations. It may be that this reflects the pressure which still exists today for women to conform to more traditional sex-typed behaviour.

Although there are many more women professional staff than men in registrar's offices, there are far more male registrars, and a far greater proportion of male professionals with substantial budget authority. Further study is required to compare career paths between the genders at the top levels of administration. There is some indication that it may be easier for women to become registrars and have greater budget authority in smaller institutions. We can speculate a number of reasons for this. There may be less risk associated with giving a woman management responsibility in a smaller institution, the salaries at these institutions may not be as competitive as at the larger institutions, and they may be more isolated geographically, making it more difficult to recruit staff.

In general, it can be said that the regional and institutional factors which were speculated as possibly being significant in gender inequities, were found not to be. There were some slight regional differences as reported in the findings, but these were more in degree than in kind. Institutional factors such as governance structures and reporting lines were found to be similar enough across institutions that these are not thought to be significant factors either. Size of institution did have some bearing on gender differences. In particular, there is some indication that women may have a better opportunity to reach higher salary levels, higher management levels, and have greater budget authority in smaller institutions. Reasons for this are speculated above.



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## SUMMARY

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This study clearly shows that inequities between the genders which exist in other organizations are also present in administrative occupations in Canadian universities. In particular, the results show that women are disadvantaged in the following ways: lower overall salaries for women, greater budget authority for men, an over-representation of men in the top management positions, women spending more hours in child/home care activities than men, and women receiving more discouragement regarding their career aspirations than men.

Although we have made some suppositions about factors which contribute to gender inequities, further study is required in order to define these more clearly, and to analyze better how single factors such as optimistic beliefs about career or mobility interact to produce certain outcomes. The goal of any research which points out inequities in society should be to inform, and ultimately, to change the situation for the better. We believe this study is a step in that direction.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE

### Individual Data

Please ensure that each professional staff member in the Registrar's Office (and/or Admissions Office) has an opportunity to complete this questionnaire. Please forward completed questionnaire by September 30, 1989 to:

Research  
Office of the Registrar  
Athabasca University  
Box 10,000  
Athabasca, Alberta  
T0G 2R0

- (1) Gender\_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Age\_\_\_\_\_
- (3) Marital status:  
married/living together  
single
- (4) Number of children in home\_\_\_\_\_
- (5) Highest educational credential obtained\_\_\_\_\_
- Age at which obtained\_\_\_\_\_
- (6) What is your current position title?\_\_\_\_\_
- (7) To which position do you report?\_\_\_\_\_
- (8) How many positions do you supervise?\_\_\_\_\_
- (9) Do you have budget signing authority?  
Yes No  
If yes, up to \$5000.  
\$10,000.  
\$20,000.  
\$50,000.  
over \$50,000

- (10) Number of years in current position\_\_\_\_\_
- (11) Number of years with current institution\_\_\_\_\_
- (12) Current salary level\_\_\_\_\_
- (13) Do you consider yourself to be making a long-term career in registrarial work and/or post-secondary administration?  
Yes No
- (14) Number of positions which you have ever held at the professional level\_\_\_\_\_
- (15) Number of position changes which involved a promotion\_\_\_\_\_
- (16) Number of position changes which involved a change to a different employer\_\_\_\_\_
- (17) Number of position changes which involved a change in geographical location\_\_\_\_\_
- (18) Have you ever aspired to a position higher than or different from that which you currently occupy?  
Yes No
- (19) If yes to previous question, what is the highest position to which you aspire? Please specify:
- (20) Do you believe there are job opportunities available in which you could realize your aspirations?  
Yes No
- (21) Do you feel held back from realizing your aspirations by (check as many as apply):
- lack of qualifications
  - family/home responsibilities
  - inability to move from current geographical location
  - reluctance to leave current institution
  - language skills (French, English)
  - self-doubt regarding abilities
  - fear of risk involved

- (22) What steps have you taken, if any, to prepare yourself for career moves/position changes?
- none
  - discussion with supervisor
  - discussion with colleagues
  - advice from professional consultant
  - further study/obtain additional credentials
  - discussion with family
  - discussion with friends
  - volunteer work to gain experience
  - taking on extra tasks at work
  - making useful contacts
- (23) In which of the following professional activities do you engage:
- member of professional organizations; i.e. ARUCC
  - attend national conferences
  - attend regional conferences
  - make presentations at conferences
  - none of the above
  - other, please specify\_\_\_\_\_
- (24) In which of the following extra-curricular activities do you engage? Please check as many as apply and check the second column if you think that engaging in a particular activity has helped you in your career.
- |  | Yes, has<br>helped<br>career | Hrs/Week |
|--|------------------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> reading   | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> movies  | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> gardening   | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spectator sports  | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> home/household related activities                             | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> community service clubs (Rotary, Lions, Kinsmen)              | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sports/physical fitness                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cultural activities/organizations (music, theatre, dance etc) | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> church activities   | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> volunteer work with organizations for children                | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other, please specify_  | <input type="checkbox"/>     | _____    |
- (25) How many hours per week do you spend engaged in childcare and/or homecare activities?\_\_\_\_\_

Appendix II

September 5, 1989

(26) Have you ever been encouraged/invited to apply for higher positions or had a higher position offered to you without competition?

Yes  No

If yes:  by supervisor or other management  
 by colleagues  
 by family  
 by friends

(27) Have you ever been subtly or overtly discouraged from applying for a higher position?

Yes  No

If yes:  by supervisor or other management  
 by colleagues  
 by family  
 by friends

(28) Have you ever had someone who you considered a mentor who helped you with your career?

Yes  No

Thank you for your time.

Dear Colleague:

We are seeking your cooperation and assistance in providing information on the enclosed questionnaires which will enable us to look at the relative career opportunities and achievements of men and women in Registrars' Offices in universities in Canada. This research is being conducted jointly by Jane Brindley, M.A., Counsellor and Manager of the Northern Regional Office, Athabasca University, and by Phyllis Frick, B.A., P. Admn Cert., Registrar, Athabasca University.

There is a considerable body of literature which speaks to the relative achievements of men and women in organizations, and provides information on the organizational factors which may contribute to identified differences. This project seeks to relate these findings to the current situation in Canadian universities, and more specifically, in Registrars' Offices. A quick count in ARUCC's *Academic and Administrative Officers at Canadian Universities, 1988-89* yields nine universities where the Registrar is a woman. Why are there so few? Why are there many more women at the Assistant Registrar level? Do women and men really have different opportunities? Or, do women not aspire to higher levels of management? What are some of the factors which may hold women back?

These are some of the questions we expect to answer with your assistance. We would very much appreciate it if you would take twenty minutes or so to complete the enclosed questionnaire. This questionnaire is being sent to all professional staff in Registrars' Offices of Canadian universities, as identified by the ARUCC membership list. If not all your professional staff are ARUCC members, please duplicate this questionnaire so that they, too, may respond - or telephone us collect at (403) 675-6157 and we will forward copies to them. Please note that the Registrar at each institution has received a supplementary questionnaire which solicits contextual information regarding the university, the community, and the department. Only the Registrar is requested to complete this extra questionnaire.

All information will be kept strictly confidential, and will be used only for the purposes of this research as outlined. The questionnaires are anonymous and are coded by institution only so that individual responses can be matched with institutional and departmental data. All data will be reported in batched format only, with no names attached and no references will be made to specific institutions.

Results of the survey will be reported in a paper to be presented at the ARUCC Conference in June of 1990. Copies of the paper will be available for distribution after that date.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation. Should you have any questions or comments regarding the survey, please feel free to contact one of us.

Please reply by September 30, 1989.

Sincerely,

Jane E. Brindley  
Manager  
Northern Regional Office

Phyllis Frick  
Registrar

## Appendix III

### QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Institutional/Departmental Data

The Registrar, or designate, is asked to complete this information and forward it by September 30, 1989, to:

Research  
Office of the Registrar  
Athabasca University  
Box 10,000  
Athabasca, Alberta  
T0G 2R0

#### A. INSTITUTION

(1) What is the size of your university's operating budget?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> less than \$10M | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 - 39.9M  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 - 19.9M    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 - 49.9M  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 - 29.9M    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50M or more |

(2) What is the total number of faculty and staff employed by your university?

- less than 250
- 250 to 499
- 500 to 999
- 1000 or more

(3) What is the total number of students (FTE) at your university?

- less than 2000
- 2000 to 4999
- 5000 to 9999
- 10,000 to 19,999
- 20,000 or more

(4) What is the population of the town/city in which your university is located?

- less than 10,000
- 10,000 to 49,999
- 50,000 to 99,999
- 100,000 to 499,999
- 500,000 or more

B. OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

(1) Please provide the following information re gender and level of your staff:

Number of professional staff who are men \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of professional staff who are women \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of support staff who are men \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of support staff who are women \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

(2) What is the size of your departmental budget, including salaries?

- less than \$250,000
- \$250,000 to \$499,999
- \$500,000 to \$749,999
- \$750,000 to \$999,999
- \$1,000,000 or more

(3) To whom does the Registrar report?

- President or equivalent
- Vice-President (Academic) or equivalent
- Vice-President (Administrative) or equivalent
- Vice-President (Student Services) or equivalent
- Director of Student Services or equivalent
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

(4) Is the Registrar an ex-officio member of the university board?

- Yes  No

(5) Is the Registrar an ex-officio member of the Senate or senior academic body?

- Yes  No

(6) To what extent does the Registrar at your university participate in institutional long-range and/or strategic planning? Does the Registrar have an opportunity to participate in initial preparation of institutional plans (5), comment on them before adoption (3), or is the Registrar informed of them (1)?

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

Participate fully

Little or no participation

(7) To what extent does the Registrar at your university participate in the development of academic policy? Does the Registrar initiate and develop policy proposals (5), comment on them (3), or is the Registrar informed of them (1).

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

Participate fully

Little or no participation

(8) Please list the Committees/Task Forces/etc on which the Registrar, or designate, sits in an ex-officio capacity:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(9) Please provide any additional information you think would be useful to this study:

Thank you for your time.