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PART-TIME WORK IN NEW ZEALAND

Alison Clark

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Part-Time Work in
New Zealand
By: Alison Clark

Council

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The Planning Council of New Zealand
assisted her in her research.



I.G. Douglas
Chairman

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FOREWORD

This study of part-time work by Alison Clark, a member of the Planning Council secretariat, has been undertaken as part of the Council's continuing commitment to employment issues.

Researching the subject of part-time work quickly identified that in its present form it is essentially about women in the workplace. It reflects major concerns about women's employment - the increasing duality in the labour market, the burden placed on working mothers who represent a high proportion of the part-time labour force, and arguments about freedom of choice and flexibility in the market.

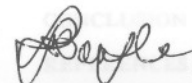
It also raises questions concerning maximisation of potential in the labour force. The study shows that many women are working in jobs below their levels of qualification and ability because of the narrow range of opportunities available on a part-time basis.

The huge growth in part-time work over the past 20 years shows that a fundamental change is occurring in the structure of the labour market. Does it mean entrenchment of a worrying duality, or is it the leading edge of a positive new approach to greater flexibility, offering both economic and social advantage? This study does not claim to answer that question, but it points to the need for the community as a whole to address urgently the social, economic and equity issues involved.

Alison Clark has been helped in producing this study by an informal network of discussants from union and employer organisations, from the universities and government departments and from the Planning Council's multidisciplinary secretariat. Demographic and economic monitoring already undertaken by the Council through its Population Monitoring Group and its National Sectoral Programme have identified the late 1990s, little more than a decade away, as initiating a period of structural labour shortage. Our attention to the many problems and opportunities pointed up by the part-time market will be an important element in our capacity to address successfully the challenge of this medium-term structural change.

Alison Clark has seen part-time work in her own experience, both from an employee's and an employer's perspective. As a working mother, she has a practical insight into the problems facing that substantial element of the part-time workforce.

The Planning Council is grateful to her for this study and also to all those who assisted her in her research.



I.G. Douglas
Chairman

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CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES	2
INTRODUCTION	3
What is Part-Time Work?	4
The Size of the Part-Time Workforce	5
Who Works Part-Time?	6
Characteristics of Part-Time Work	11
Patterns of Part-Time Work	12
THE GROWTH IN PART-TIME WORK	15
Social Factors	15
Economic Factors	15
Population Growth	16
The Growth of the Tertiary Sector	16
Technological Change	16
Decentralisation and Self Employment	17
THE ISSUES	19
Legal Protection	19
Part-time Workers and the Trade Unions	19
Accident Compensation	20
Costs	20
Training and Career Opportunities	21
Family Responsibilities	22
Childcare	22
- availability	23
- cost	23
- school holidays	24
- choice	24
PART-TIME WORK - TOWARDS A DUAL LABOUR MARKET?	25
CONCLUSION	27
REFERENCES	32
APPENDIX (i) Marital Status of Part-Time Workers	35

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LIST OF FIGURES

		Page
Figure 1	Labour Force Growth 1966-1981	3
Figure 2	Hours Worked Per Week	5
Figure 3	Age Distribution of Part-Time Workers	6
Figure 4	Number of Part-Time Workers by Marital Status and Sex	7
Figure 5	Part-Time Labour Force Participation Rates by Marital Status and Sex	8
Figure 6	Women's Labour Force Participation Rates by Age of Youngest Resident Child	8
Figure 7	Mothers' Working Hours According to Ethnicity	9
Figure 8	Percentage of Workers in each Industrial Division	11
Figure 9	Percentage of Workers in each Major Occupational Group	12

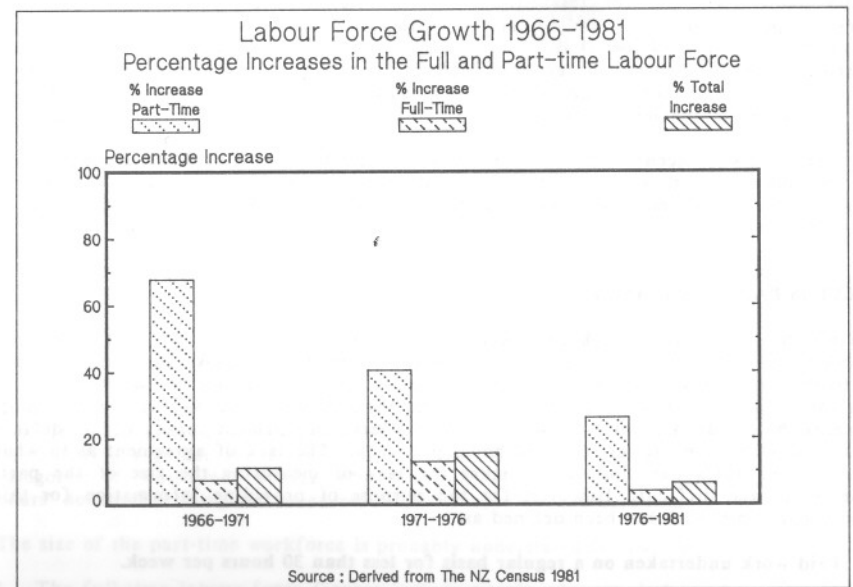
INTRODUCTION

Part-time work, as a modern method of working, arose in response to labour shortages in the 1950s and 60s when married women were a major untapped source of labour.

In New Zealand, part-time work is now an established feature of the labour market. The growing importance of the tertiary, or service, sector of the economy which employs so much of the part-time workforce means that part-time work is becoming a vital component of the New Zealand labour market mix. This is both from the viewpoint of employers, where the use of part-time workers can help management to streamline its labour needs to output variations, and from the viewpoint of employees who may wish to combine paid work with some other form of activity to an extent that is not possible when working the traditional 40 hour week.

There has been a phenomenal growth in part-time work in New Zealand during the last fifteen years. In fact, there was a 198% increase in the part-time labour force compared with a 26% increase in the full-time labour force between 1966 and 1981, although the rate of growth has slowed since 1971 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1



The growth is predominantly a female phenomenon characterised by large numbers of women with children entering the labour market.

This growth brought New Zealand, in 1981, to the point where just over 13% of the workforce was part-time. This compares with around 20% in Britain, 16% in Australia, 15% in the United States and just over 10% in the European Economic Community. However, these comparisons must be viewed with some caution as data collection procedures and definitions are not uniform in the above countries.

It is interesting to observe that the incidence of part-time work both in New Zealand and overseas, has tended to increase faster during a period of economic growth accompanied by full employment (1950s to 1970s) and grow at a slower rate during a period of recession (1976-1984).

The initial motivation for studying part-time work was to ascertain if it had a role to play in alleviating the problem of unemployment. However, steady growth in part-time work in many of the European countries has not been accompanied by any observable decrease in unemployment, despite deliberate policy moves in those countries to encourage part-time work. Perhaps part-time work is tending to grow at the expense of full-time work. Indeed some see the value of part-time work being in its ability to enable labour force reductions to be made in a "smoother" and more socially acceptable manner (OECD 1984).

A possible explanation for this failure to alleviate unemployment is that part-time work appears to suit only certain situations and people with particular characteristics. It will be shown that the vast majority of part-time workers are married women with young dependent children. Married women who are not in the paid workforce generally do not register as unemployed even when seeking paid work and so do not appear in the unemployment statistics.

This report sets the scene of part-time work in New Zealand showing what part-time work is, who does it, and where it is done. It discusses some of the complex issues that arise around the subject, and finally attempts to draw some useful conclusions from the available data.

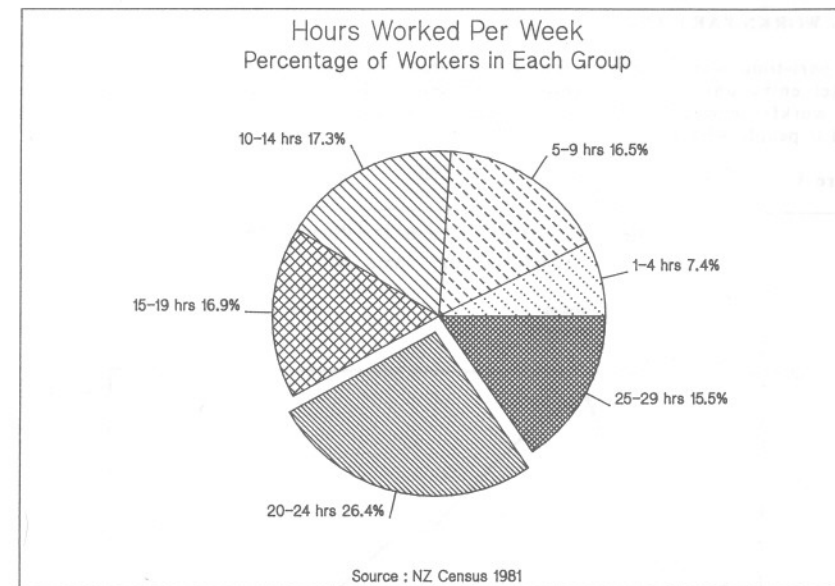
WHAT IS PART-TIME WORK?

Definitions of part-time work can be as varied as the nature of work itself. Logically, it comprises work carried out for less than the "normal" number of hours for the particular occupation - in New Zealand between 37.5 and 40 hours per week. The New Zealand census deems work undertaken for less than 20 hours per week to be part-time, whereas the Department of Labour, in their quarterly employment survey (QES), defines part-time work as being less than 30 hours per week. The lack of agreement as to what exactly constitutes part-time work makes the task of measuring the size of the part-time workforce difficult. However, for the purpose of providing information for this report, part-time work has been defined as:

Paid work undertaken on a regular basis for less than 30 hours per week.

In New Zealand the largest group of part-time workers work for between 20 and 24 hours per week (see Figure 2).

Figure 2



THE SIZE OF THE PART-TIME WORKFORCE

In order to measure the size of the New Zealand part-time workforce and to see how it has changed over time, the figures used in this study are drawn from New Zealand census data, adding together the figures for part-time work (1-19 hours) and the bottom two categories of "full-time" workers (20-24 and 25-29 hours) thus equalling an "up to 30 hours" definition. Using this measure, 194,790 people worked part-time in 1981.

The size of the part-time workforce is probably understated for two reasons:

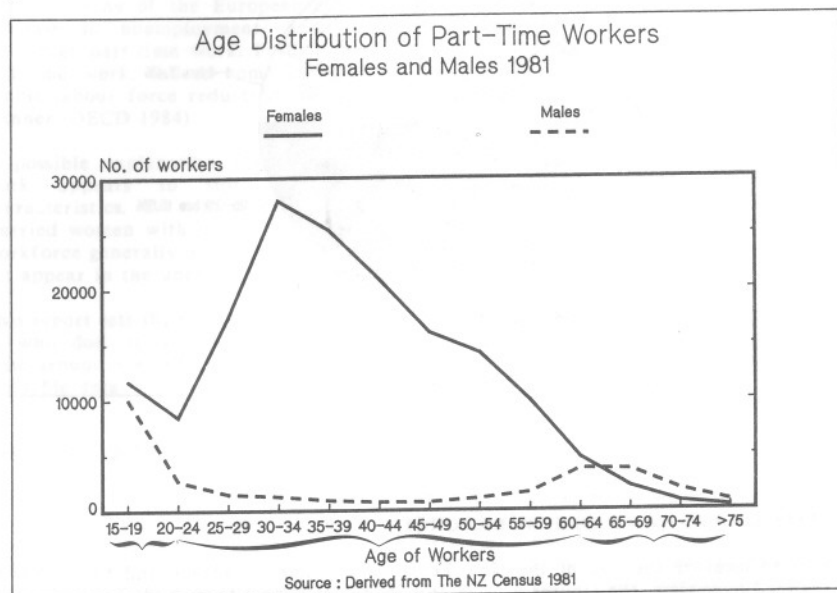
1. The full-time labour force figures include people who are registered as unemployed and looking for work. However, the part-time labour force figures do not include the unemployed. People who are unemployed and seeking part-time work rarely register as unemployed even though the facility is there for them to do so.
2. New Zealand census figures only include those in part-time/full-time employment on census night. As part-timers tend to have longer spells between jobs the figures may exclude numbers of part-timers who are simply between jobs (Bowie:1983).

Some of these measurement problems will be overcome with the introduction of the quarterly household employment survey in November 1985 and the 1986 census which has re-defined part-time work as being less than 30 hours.

WHO WORKS PART-TIME?

The part-time workforce fits into three categories (see Figure 3). First is the labour market entry unit made up largely of students. Second is the great bulk of the part-time workforce which is made up of married women with young dependent children and third is people who are moving into retirement.

Figure 3



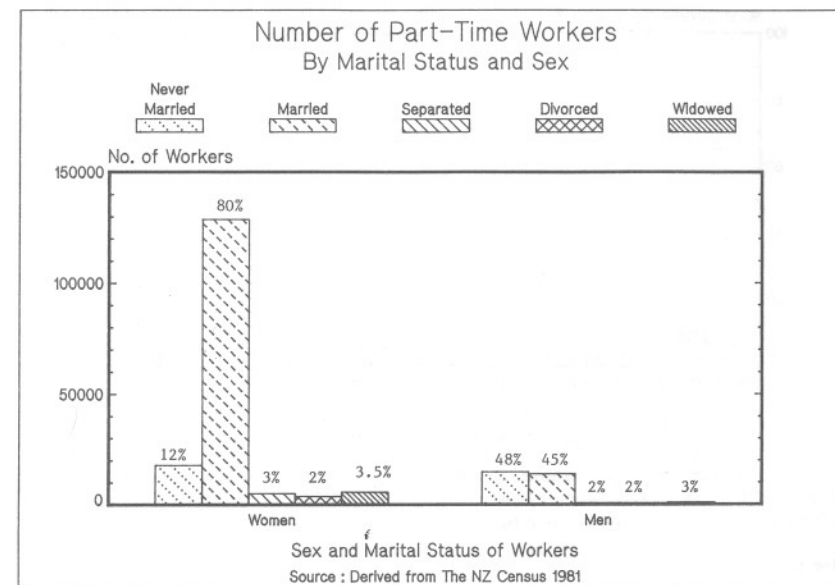
Vince Catherwood, in his study *Young People, Education and Employment*, (Catherwood: 1985), found that of the teenage part-time workforce, 92% of the males and 84% of the females were students. That tertiary students rely on part-time or casual work to finance them through their period of study has become an accepted fact of New Zealand student life, evidenced by the special efforts made by both national and local government and the private sector to provide such work for students during holiday periods, and at suitable times throughout the term.

There are no figures on the remaining teenagers who are working part-time to reveal whether they are doing so by choice or because they are not able to obtain full-time employment. However some of them are mothers of young children.

The second category, which includes people between the ages of 24 and 64, shows that males and females present very different profiles in the part-time labour market.

The vast majority of part-time workers are married women (see Figure 4). In 1981, 84% of part-time workers were women, with eight out of ten of these women being married.

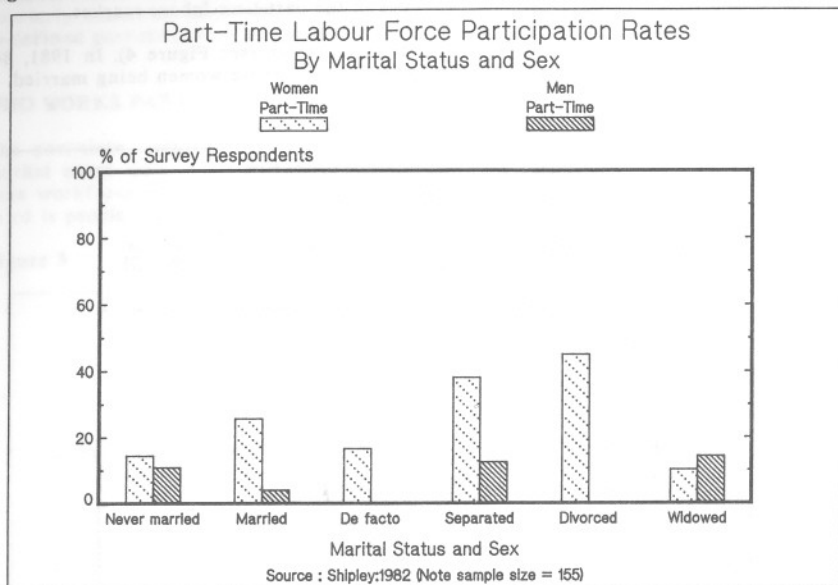
Figure 4



The most useful data illustrating the characteristics of female part-time workers have been collected by Susan Shipley in *Women's Employment and Unemployment*. The study consisted of a labour force survey of a random sample of 750 households in Palmerston North City in 1981. All people aged 15 years and over in the sample households were interviewed about their actual workforce related activity during the preceding one to four weeks. The central theme of Shipley's study was the inter-relationship of women's paid work in the labour market and their domestic roles as housewives and mothers.

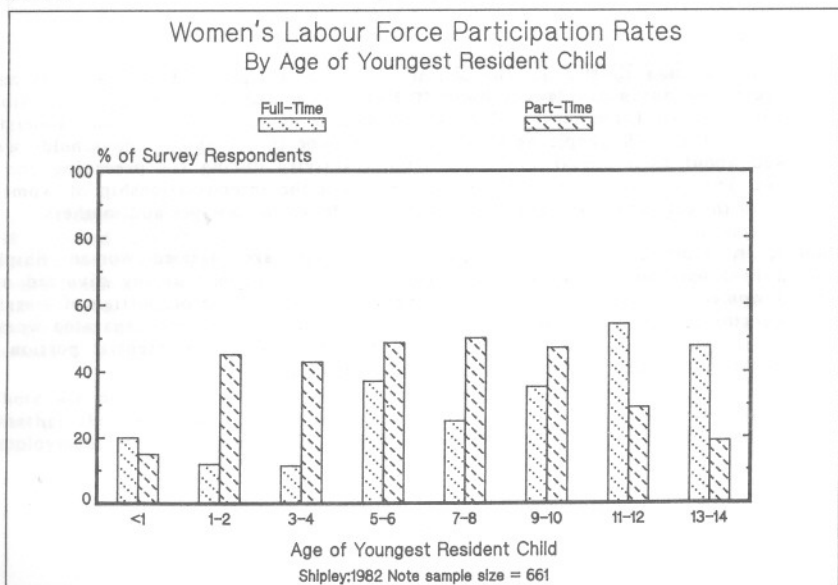
Although, in numerical terms, most part-time workers are married women, Shipley indicated that part-time workforce participation rates are highest among divorced and separated women, with married women in third place. (That is, the proportion of married women working part-time is lower than the proportion of divorced and separated women working part-time (see Figure 5).) Part-time work may provide an essential portion of the household income, especially for single parent families.

Figure 5



Taking the female part-time labour force participation rate by the ages of the youngest resident child, it is clearly women who have young dependent children who dominate the part-time labour market (see Figure 6).

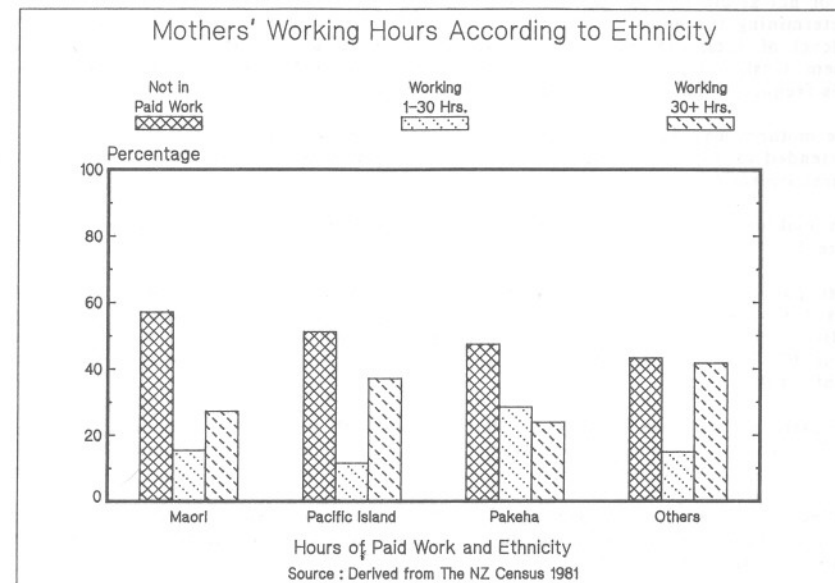
Figure 6



Maori and Pacific Island Mothers* of Dependent Children

There are considerable differences in the labour market behaviour of mothers depending upon their ethnicity (see Figure 7).

Figure 7



Maori mothers are the least likely to engage in paid employment at all, but when they do they are more likely to work full-time than part-time. Pacific Island mothers are more likely to engage in paid employment than Maori mothers and, once again they are more likely to work full-time. Pacific Island mothers have the lowest proportion working part-time. Women in the "others" category, which includes Indian and Chinese women, demonstrate almost equal tendencies to work either full-time or not at all. They are also the most likely to undertake paid employment. Pakeha or New Zealand European mothers are the most likely to work part-time, indeed they are more likely to work part-time than full-time.

* The information about mothers was obtained from a 10% sample of the 1981 Population Census. A *mother* is defined as a woman with one or more dependent children. A *dependent* child is defined as a child aged up to and including 15 years who is still living at home, or a child aged up to and including 18 years who is still living at home and enrolled in full-time schooling. (Refer to *From Birth to Death*, New Zealand Planning Council, p.135)

Whilst there is no concrete evidence as to why these variations occur there are a number of probable reasons.

Maori and Pacific Island families are more likely to be disadvantaged in terms of income (SMG:1985) and therefore have a greater need for both partners to undertake full-time jobs. High unemployment rates for these groups may mean that they work full-time or not at all. Family size and extended family commitments may also be significant in determining the need to earn. The number of hours these mothers work may relate to the level of their marketable skills and the type of work that is therefore available to them. Unskilled production work for example is often done by women in these groups and is frequently only available on a full-time basis.

These mothers may also find it more convenient to work full-time if they have access to an extended family network or to a Kohanga Reo which is often full-time and meets their cultural aspirations.

When looking at the 64+ age group it can be seen that the picture alters again (see Figure 3).

Whilst participation in the part-time workforce after the "entrant" stage is low for males for most of their working lives, male part-time workforce participation rises steadily with each successive year from age 50 to 67. Nevertheless, even at the peak age of 67, less than 8% of all 67 year old males are in the part-time labour force (Rochford:1985).

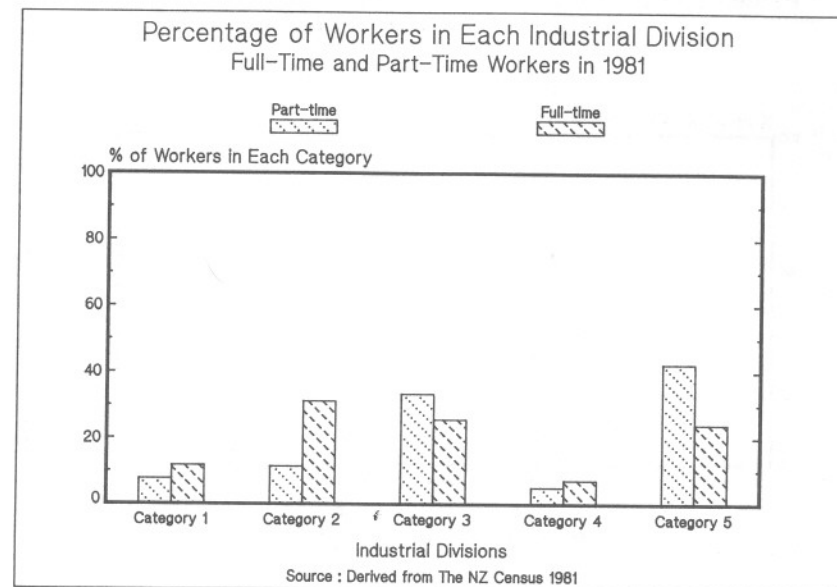
Male participation rates in Shipley's Palmerston North study, were highest for widowed men followed by divorced and separated men and then single men - almost the opposite picture from that of women.

As Figure 3 shows, female participation at the retirement end of the part-time work lifecycle drops off significantly to the point where male participation overtakes female participation at age 62.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PART-TIME WORK

From the census industrial classifications (see Figure 8) it can be seen that community, social and personal services is the largest category of part-time workers, followed by wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels.

Figure 8

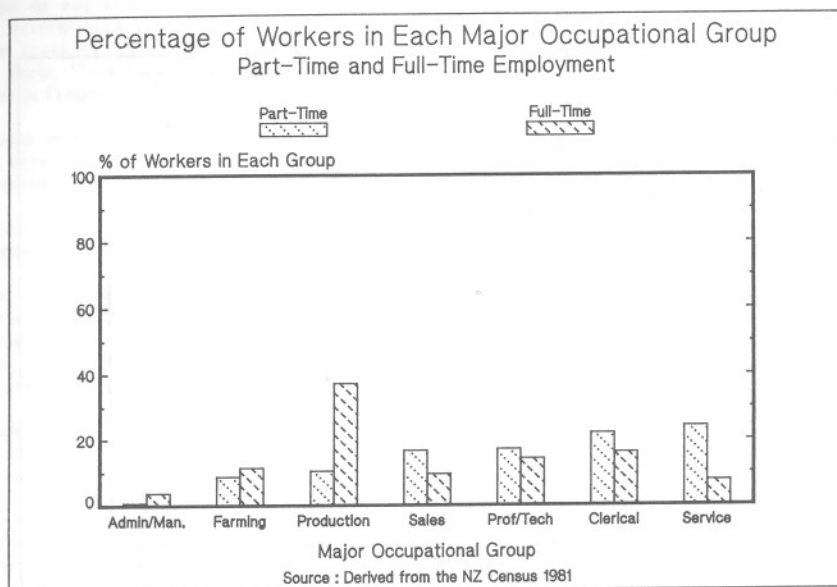


Key to figure 8

- Category 1 - Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing, mining and quarrying.
- Category 2 - Manufacturing, electricity, gas and water, building and construction.
- Category 3 - Wholesale and retail trade, restaurants, hotels, transport, storage and communication.
- Category 4 - Finance, insurance, real estate and business services.
- Category 5 - Community, social and personal services.

Most part-time work is concentrated in the lower paid, lower status and less skilled occupations. As illustrated in Figure 9 below, the service and clerical groups dominate the part-time labour market.

Figure 9



Susan Shipley's study provides a more detailed breakdown of the occupational groups where part-time work occurs. She found that female part-time work is concentrated in the clerical, caretaking and cleaning, cooking, waitressing and bartending occupations. Male part-time work is dominated by teaching followed by cooking, waiting and bartending (Shipley:1982).

PATTERNS OF PART-TIME WORK

There are a number of different patterns of part-time work. Some is worked during "unsocial hours" i.e. before 8 a.m. and after 6 p.m. and during the week-ends and public holidays. Some is worked mornings only, afternoons only, or through the middle of the working day. Other part-time work is undertaken for a full day but for two or three days a week. Some is done at home, squeezed in between household and childcare duties.

Many part-timers opt for work during "unsocial hours" which has become available in both the service and clerical groups, for example cleaners and data processors. In a study of nightworkers (Barnes:1981) it was found that more than 90% of the permanent nightworkers said they worked at night to solve childcare problems.

Clearly too, there is a large amount of part-time work being offered during school hours. This helps to explain the number of women with dependent school-age children working part-time. At the time of the 1981 census banking hours coincided with school hours for example, and banks routinely employ female tellers on a part-time basis. These hours also cover peak periods in many office and shop work positions.

Shipley found that women with children aged 0-4 were concentrated in the service occupational group, where unsocial hours of work are common. Women with children aged 5-9, who are able to work during school hours, were concentrated in the clerical group (Shipley:1982). This is consistent with the major demand for clerical work coinciding with school hours. Much clerical work is not tied to specific times but can be scheduled for processing when labour is available.

Without a longitudinal study it is not possible to discover whether the same women switch from service work to clerical work as their children grow older, or whether they are two different groups of women who enter the workforce at different times. Such a study would also usefully show the types of jobs women move into when their family responsibilities decrease enough for them to take on full-time work.

THE GROWTH IN PART-TIME WORK

There are a number of factors influencing the decision whether to seek part-time work from the point of view of the employee, and whether to offer part-time work from the point of view of the employer.

Social Factors

The first report of the Social Monitoring Group, *From Birth to Death* (SMG:1985) showed that there have been significant changes in the structure of families. The increase in the number of one parent families means that more parents are having to carry the whole load of parenting and domestic duties, as well as provide an income.

Young children are very demanding and where single parents have the sole responsibility for young children they may not have the time and energy available to work full-time. This would explain the higher participation rates of divorced and separated mothers in the part-time workforce found by Shipley (Shipley:1982).

Slowly changing social attitudes towards working women and a greater need for "independence" on the part of some women cannot be ignored as factors which have encouraged women into paid work. The companionship, sense of doing something of one's own and simply of getting out of the house can all combine to make part-time work seem relatively attractive. Indeed, Humphries, in her studies of British part-time workers, notes that there is ample evidence that part-timers are able to sustain tedious work well below their level of competence and demonstrate great good humour and cheerfulness in so doing (Humphries:1983).

In the Christchurch study, *Jobs, Children and Chores*, (SROW:1984), 78% of the women interviewed said that they were working for financial reasons. However, it was also clear from the responses to questions on job satisfaction that social contact in their place of work, though ancillary, was also very important to many women. Some women, anxious not to lose marketable skills that they acquired prior to becoming mothers, elect to work part-time when employers are keen to retain them, rather than drop out of the workforce altogether. Other women who have built strong links with voluntary or community groups while raising their children decide to work part-time in order that they can continue their voluntary activity whilst at the same time supplementing the family income or simply broadening their experience and circle of friends.

Economic Factors

A major influence on the growth in the supply of labour to the part-time labour market has been the requirement for many women to find a way of combining the unpaid duties of housewife and mother with some form of paid activity.

The rising cost of living has meant that many families are no longer able to maintain what they perceive as a reasonable standard of living with one "breadwinner" supporting a wife and children. The first report of the Social Monitoring Group, *From Birth to Death*, points out that the single supporting breadwinner concept is now true for only 38% of families (SMG:1985).

The report went on to suggest encouragement to employers to make part-time work, flexible work hours and job sharing more easily available, as such a move would assist parents in low income groups.

Population Growth

A feature of the growing supply of part-time labour since 1961 is the actual growth in the number of people of working age during this time. The Population Monitoring Group points out that peak growth in the full-time labour force occurred in 1961-66 and 1971-76, (PMG:1984), both of which were also periods of dramatic increase in the part-time labour force. However, the 26% increase in the full-time workforce between 1966 and 1981 is small when compared with the 198% increase in the part-time workforce.

The Growth of the Tertiary Sector

One reason for the growth in part-time employment is the change in the occupational and industrial structure of the New Zealand labour force, reflecting the faster growth of white collar employment relative to manual, and the growth of the tertiary sector, which includes the service and financial industries, relative to other sectors in the economy.

Much of the growth in female employment has been channelled into traditional female occupations. About two-thirds of the increase in the female workforce has been taken up by the white collar sector with the result that, in 1981, women accounted for about half of all white collar workers (Smith:1985).

David Smith, in a study of occupational segregation amongst white collar workers in New Zealand, suggested that women tend to predominate in those occupations which are of a helping or serving character. Many of them are occupations which require a good general standard of education, and such vocational training as is necessary is often acquired before employment commences. These occupations need little career continuity - they can be broken off and returned to in accordance with the requirements of raising a family without major adverse effects upon employability. Finally they are occupations which are already established throughout the economy in large numbers and are widely dispersed geographically, thus requiring little or no mobility on the part of their incumbents (Smith:1983). This type of work is obviously attractive to women who may have spells in and out of the workforce whilst they are raising children or who are expected to move around the country in accordance with the demands of their husband's jobs.

Technological Change

One of the most significant aspects in the growth of part-time work has been technological change and the trend towards creating discrete specialised and simplified jobs in many of the occupations which employ women in large numbers - both full and part-time. This trend has led some observers to talk of the "deskilling" effect of the new technology (Braverman:1974). It has meant that some employers are able to organise these discrete jobs to coincide with the times of day or night that are convenient working times for large numbers of women. Importantly, these employees require minimal investment in terms of training, and downturns in requirements for labour can easily be handled by natural attrition. This type of workforce can be more effectively managed and controlled than a full-time multi-skilled workforce who have expectations of training, promotion and job security. This type of labour management is evident in the retail sector, the banking industry and is gaining popularity throughout the clerical/service sectors.

For example, some legal offices are now operating a shift system for word processor

operators. Increasing numbers of part-time opportunities are arising now that employers wish to obtain maximum use from expensive new technology, and have identified a pool of labour willing to use it, outside or for less than, "normal" working hours.

There are important links between the use of new technology, task specialisation and feminisation. According to a recent report from the International Labour Organisation (Werneke:1983) increased specialisation can result in work being organised around manual rather than intellectual tasks - despite giving the appearance of moving from a blue collar to a white collar occupation. A disturbing observation made in the ILO study, which examines the impact of the "chip" on women's employment, is the tendency for predominantly male occupations to become predominantly female when technology is introduced that increases the specialisation and simplification of the job. Once an occupation becomes feminised (that is one which employs a disproportionately high number of women) it faces pressure to provide part-time work. In New Zealand, in each of the six occupations that employ 50% of the female workforce - clerical 14%, sales 7.8%, teaching 7.5%, medical 7%, typing 7% and bookkeeping 6.6%, (Department of Statistics 1981) - part-time work has become commonplace.

Decentralisation and Self Employment

The trend towards decentralisation and contracting out work, particularly work which it is no longer profitable to do on site, has been attracting the attention of business analysts in recent times. This has arisen largely because of the increased cost of overheads and has resulted in smaller organisations putting more and more of their fringe activities out to contract. It is cheaper to use specialist talent in this way. Many of these "contract" jobs are done by people who are self-employed on a part-time basis. Some of this work is highly paid, such as computer systems analysis. However some of it lies at the other end of the job market and can involve "outwork" such as machining clothes etc. in the worker's own home at extremely low rates of pay.

Homeworking, as distinct from self employment, is an aspect of work organisation that will require increasing attention. Some observers predict that the use of remote terminals is likely to increase substantially in the next decade. Whilst some see homeworking as advantageous for the working mother by allowing her to combine paid work with family responsibilities, there are a number of dangers that must be kept in mind. For example the absence of social and business contacts and the lack of exchange of ideas. Insufficient attention to health and ergonomic aspects of a home VDU may be damaging socially, physically and professionally to women. Difficulties faced by trade unions in trying to unionise homeworkers add to the risk of exploitation for this group.

Although there are no figures available yet it seems as though numbers of women, particularly those whose domestic responsibilities preclude them from fitting into the "regular" workforce, opt to become self-employed. Increasing numbers of women are heading up small and medium sized businesses which began as part-time, homeworking ventures.

There is another form of decentralisation under way which has assisted the growth of part-time work: that is the growth of suburban shopping malls and business areas. It is far more convenient for part-time employees to work close to home. Lengthy travelling time to a workplace or difficulties with parking, etc. can act to negate any of the benefits of shorter working hours by requiring the employee to travel during hours she has to be available to her children. It can also cut into the hours that she has available for work.

THE ISSUES

LEGAL PROTECTION

The level of protection available to part-time workers under industrial awards and voluntary agreements

A major industrial relations problem is to reconcile the opposing interests of employers who see part-time work as a mode of lowering the cost of the labour input in the production process, and workers who are trying to come to grips with the problems of erosion of working conditions (Clarke:1981). One way of effecting this reconciliation is through negotiation within the structure of industrial awards and voluntary agreements.

In 1983, at the request of the National Advisory Council for the Employment of Women, the Department of Labour produced a part-time work study (Department of Labour:1983). This was essentially a descriptive study of part-time work (casual work was not included) based on available statistics and on a search of the awards. Most of the findings of the award search are still relevant since the price and wage freeze of the early 1980s precluded any changes to them. A short round of pay negotiations was held in late 1984 to increase pay levels. Other matters were generally left unchanged.

Out of almost 1,100 awards examined in the study, 233 contained a part-time work clause. Only 10 of the 233 stated specifically that other provisions in the award (apart from the part-time clause) also apply to part-time workers. The majority of these 233 awards therefore, contained a fairly narrow range of specific provisions for part-time work. These refer to hours, payment, sometimes sick leave, and usually a requirement to notify the union of part-time work. Other matters - such as possibilities for overtime; other sorts of leave such as bereavement, domestic, jury service; meal allowances; clothing allowances, etc. are not mentioned in the context of part-time work, even when there is a provision for part-time work in the award. Many of the awards which contain provisions for part-time work put limits on the number of hours that part-time workers may work, e.g. "up to 30 hours" or "up to 20 hours".

These are, however, matters of interpretation. The awards themselves are produced by the Arbitration Court and their interpretation is a judicial matter. It is to be expected that individual employers and unions may well have differing opinions on whether the provisions of individual awards, outside the part-time clause, apply to part-time workers or not. Indeed there is some disagreement between employers and unions in the basic area of whether or not part-time work is possible unless specifically stated in the award.

PART-TIME WORKERS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

The conflict of interest experienced by the trade union movement which is trying to protect the interests of two opposing groups.

Rapid growth of part-time employment has caused problems for collective representation, particularly in the service industries where units of employment may be small and scattered with a mainly female, low-skilled and low paid workforce. Moreover it is only recently that trade unions have started making sustained efforts to further the interests of their female members.

Part-time working hours combined with the domestic responsibilities of mothers, largely

preclude such part-timers from taking an active part in union affairs. It is also less usual for employers to allow part-timers to take time off to attend union meetings, and some part-timers experience difficulty because of lack of union representation during their working hours.

In addition to the endemic organisational problems encountered by unions in relation to the female labour force, a major influence on trade union attitudes to part-time work has been the contention that its expansion will adversely affect the general trend toward a reduction of working time for all employees. Further reductions of working time, and in particular to the length of the full-time normal working week without any decrease in pay, is an important part of union policy. This has been accorded increasing priority in the contemporary context of high unemployment rates and technological advance (IRJ:1984).

ACCIDENT COMPENSATION

The importance of earnings from part-time work to the family budget

Accident Compensation levies, paid by the employer, are based on the gross earnings of employees. There is no difference whether the employee is employed part- or full-time. The system applies the same rule to both groups. With regard to the payment of compensation, however, part-timers are treated a little differently. A minimum entitlement is provided to full-time workers but not to part-time workers. Both groups are entitled to receive 80% of their normal earnings. However, for some full-time employees in very low wage brackets, but not for part-time workers, this percentage is increased to 90%. The implication here is that part-time work is not expected to provide a living wage.

COSTS

The relative productive efficiency of employing part-time labour.

There is a popular feeling that part-time workers tend to be more productive than full-time workers (DOL:1980). This could arise because many part-time workers are employed at times of peak workload only and therefore do not have the periods of "idle time" that full-time workers do. However, it is frequently argued by employers that it is more costly to organise work on a part-time basis. Additional selection, recruitment, training, supervision and administration costs can be incurred.

To the extent that part-timers work on a simultaneous rather than a consecutive basis, additional investments in equipment and space are normally entailed. Even where there are consecutive working arrangements there may be certain items like protective clothing that cannot be shared. Reference is commonly made to increased costs arising from the lack of continuity in the performance of certain tasks. This is apparently more evident in jobs requiring a higher degree of skill. In a Christchurch study (SROW:1984) a number of male managers said that they had found it unprofitable to work out rosters, and so did not allow work patterns which needed them.

There are obviously some industries that, because of the nature of the work, lend themselves to using part-time or casual labour. The growth of part-time employment in the retailing, restaurant and hotel trades owes much to the increased use of part-time staffing during peak periods and extended business hours. Part-time work also facilitates the scheduling of staff in industries where services must be provided on a

24 hour basis such as health and hotel services.

These findings may indicate that the practice of defining work as either *part-time* or *full-time* should be examined. Most potential cost advantages arise from the realisation that, in seeking the efficient use of labour, the normal 35-40 hour weekly packages of labour service purchased from employees may not always be the most appropriate.

TRAINING AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Constraints on the training and career development of part-time workers arising from myths about the level of commitment likely to be demonstrated by part-time workers.

Many part-time jobs utilise skills that women have already acquired such as cooking, cleaning, housekeeping etc. For this reason little investment in training is required. As most part-time work lacks any form of career structure, further training is rarely offered. Many employers also try to recruit those who were previously trained in the particular skills that meet their needs. For example banks try to recruit part-time tellers who, prior to becoming mothers, were bank employees. These employees then only require minimal retraining. However some very interesting recent initiatives are being proposed by the banking industry to create a system of "streams and bridges". This system will enable employees to select a career in a "stream" which suits their needs at a particular time, say when they are caring for young children. When these commitments ease off, they may cross a "bridge", provided in the form of career counselling and training, to a different "stream" which meets their rising career expectations. This programme deserves careful monitoring in order to discover whether it can be adapted for other industries which carry similar risks of developing a large contingent of secondary labour market workers.

An increasing number of women whose study plans may have been interrupted by the arrival of children or who seek to pursue a different career when their family has grown older are opting to use the period when they are home with young children to further their tertiary education part-time. The popularity of creches at universities, polytechnics and teacher training colleges bears testimony to this. Many women who elect to follow this course are also required to take on part-time jobs to meet the cost of creche fees, books, tuition fees etc., if they are not eligible for the standard tertiary bursary or childcare subsidies, or if these are insufficient.

Many myths have arisen through employers and employees believing that part-time work and part-time workers are "inferior" to full time workers. These attitudes have made it more difficult for part-time workers to obtain access to managerial positions, fringe benefits and other career opportunities including training and development. This seems to arise from beliefs about the level of commitment that can be expected from part-time workers, many employers persisting in the belief that someone who is committed to the job will work full-time.

This attitude has been particularly prevalent in public service organisations throughout the western world - although the South Australian Public Service is changing in this respect. Legislation to allow permanent part-time work in the public service in New Zealand was finally put before Parliament in 1985, seven years after negotiations between the State Services Commission and the Public Service Association commenced.

A Department of Labour report on a pilot scheme run by the New Zealand Public Service

in 1978-79 indicated that, for the hours contracted, part-time work involves no less a commitment than does full-time work. Indeed part-time workers may well manifest more commitment (DOL:1980).

Employer beliefs about the inferiority and lack of commitment of part-time workers appear to be unfounded. The Department of Labour report (referred to above) found that supervisors sometimes underestimated the part-timer's flexibility. Given sufficient notice, most part-timers expressed a willingness to change their hours or even to go full-time for travel or training.

Purely in terms of the level of commitment that can be expected from a person working part-time for a particular organisation, it is noteworthy that employers do not seem to have the same concerns about hiring expert "consultants" who are rarely working full-time for a particular employer. In fact these consultants may be working for several employers who are competitors in the marketplace.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

The major responsibility for childrearing rests with women. This affects the hours that women with family responsibilities have available to undertake paid work.

Despite changing social circumstances it seems clear that childrearing is still primarily the responsibility of women and that other activities are seen as secondary to that.

Indications that "family conscious" hours of work are important for women in New Zealand were found in the Christchurch study, *Jobs, Children and Chores* (SROW: 1984).

- In 75% of the families with school aged children, either the woman or her partner was available to the children after school. The women were already making a considerable effort to fit their jobs around their family commitments;
- the women's response to a question on job preference indicated that a quarter of the total sample were not in their preferred job because of unsuitable work hours and problems with the care of children during school holidays;
- the answer most frequently given by women in part-time jobs to the question, "why are you in part-time employment?" was "to be home with the children";
- nightworkers saw working at night as a means of combining their jobs and family responsibilities.

The authors concluded that most of the women in the survey were not seeking radical changes; they were often happy to be both mothers and paid workers, but they were interested in moves to make it easier for them to combine their roles at home and in the paid workforce (SROW:1984).

CHILDCARE

The question of childcare is related to the whole spectrum of employment opportunities for women, not just those in part-time work. There are two recurring themes in any discussion of childcare - availability and cost.

Availability

There is a variety of childcare available in New Zealand, however it is not all available to all families. This may be because of geographical location, lack of knowledge about the services available, or inappropriateness of available services. The concerns that many women have about leaving their children in the care of others who are not family members is also a limiting factor in the use of childcare facilities.

The main formal types of childcare available are:

Full day care - frequently provided by private day creches and some community and technical institutes, and some employer provided facilities. Overall, however, there are limited places available. This is most marked for children under two years of age as high adult:child ratios are required by law.

Culturally specific day care - such as Kohanga Reo which is frequently full day care.

Kindergarten - this is usually provided for three afternoons per week moving on to five mornings per week in the year before the child is due to start school.

Playcentre - this is a family co-operative pre-school which has a maximum of four two and a half hour sessions a week available, with a substantial amount of parent help required.

Family Day Care - this is care of pre-schoolers, and some before and after school care, provided by women in their own homes for other people's children. The hours are negotiated between the carer and the parent to suit.

Whilst this may seem to be a wide range, neither Kindergarten nor Playcentre provide sufficient hours of care for many mothers to undertake paid work during session times. It is also difficult for mothers wanting to work part-time to get part-time places for their children in "full-time" creches. They are often required to pay for hours that they do not wish to use.

There are also many forms of "informal" childcare. Whilst this can simply be informal arrangements between families and friends, which can be good and appropriate, there are pre-school children in New Zealand locked alone in the house when their desperate parents cannot find childcare, others are left in cars outside factories with a parent going out to them at morning and afternoon tea and lunch time (*NZ Listener*, Nov. 30 1985).

Cost

The cost of childcare is obviously a significant factor to women many of whom work in low paid occupations. The NZIER estimates that a woman must be earning above the average wage in order to afford childcare (*NZ Listener*, Nov. 30 1985). This acts to encourage them into unsocial hours of work, such as nightwork so that their husbands or older children can look after the younger children.

The fact that the cost of childcare is forcing women to undertake "unsocial hours" work (which is mainly available in the service sector and generally comprises cleaning, shelf filling, waitressing and, more recently, data processing) must give cause for concern on two counts:

- Mothers are doing a full-time job during the day raising young children and doing household duties and then having to go out and do paid work at night. This could have profound implications for the health of mothers of young children, and the standard of care that tired women are able to provide for their children.
- Mothers who have skills that could be better utilised in the labour market, with higher returns both to themselves and the economy as a whole, are doing unskilled work primarily because this is the only work available at a time when suitable childcare is available to them.

It is necessary to remember that while the provision of childcare is also an important employment *opportunity* for women, it is also a very low paid occupation. Part of the reason for this must be that low earnings of women generally do not allow them to pay a great deal for childcare. Any expansion of childcare facilities must ensure that childcare becomes an adequately rewarded and valued occupation, rather than trying to keep childcare affordable by lowering labour costs.

School Holidays

It is often easier for mothers who have access to full-time day care to hold down a full-time job when their children are pre-schoolers than it is when schooling begins. Most pre-school daycare centres run all day and all year, unlike schools, playcentres and kindergartens.

Advertisements offering part-time work often stipulate that the incumbent must work during the school holidays. Obviously when part-time work appeals mainly to married women with young dependent children, this requirement causes them considerable difficulty. Mothers of school children also experience problems because they generally have to be available by 3 p.m. every weekday.

Whilst there has been some movement in the direction of providing "after school" care and holiday activities, mainly by local authorities and the YMCA, this is still an area of major difficulty for many parents. The wider availability and acceptance of structured after-school and holiday programmes, possibly using school buildings, that fit in with parents' working hours would greatly alleviate this problem.

Choice

An important aim must be to provide greater choice for women; to provide an appropriate range of income and employment opportunities without overlooking the needs of those mothers who wish to stay at home and care for their own children but cannot afford to do so. Some mothers may be requesting greater access to part-time work and/or high quality childcare, because they believe it is only through such means that they can achieve a reasonable standard of living for themselves and their families, status in the community, and social contact and support.

PART-TIME WORK - TOWARDS A DUAL LABOUR MARKET?

One of the issues that arises in the context of part-time work is whether or not it may contribute to the development of a dual labour market in New Zealand.

A dual labour market, as defined by Barron and Norris (1976) has the following features both within and across organisations:

- i) Division between higher and lower paying sectors
- ii) Restricted mobility across the boundary
- iii) Promotion ladders in the primary sector
- iv) Stability of employment in the primary sector only.

Several writers have examined part-time work within this model. Most notable, in the New Zealand context, was Susan Shipley (Shipley:1982). She found that:

- The full-time employed and part-time employed were two distinct segments of the workforce; they presented distinct profiles according to every employment variable examined.
- Part-time workers were predominantly female. They were more likely to be homeworkers, less likely to belong to a trade union or professional association, and had held their jobs for a shorter period than full-time workers. All these attributes are characteristic of the secondary sector.

It must be acknowledged that the theoretical concept of a dual labour market is, in this context, used only as a "benchmark" against which to assess the opportunities available to certain groups in the labour market. It is also useful to provide a theoretical framework within which to observe and attempt to explain the employment experience of these groups.

In reality, it is unlikely that a pure "secondary" labour market exists. However, working women in general and part-time working women in particular, have a markedly different employment experience from their male counterparts. This study has highlighted the areas where these differences occur.

- Part-time work tends to occur disproportionately in labour markets characterised by low pay, poor working conditions, low status, instability, little chance of advancement, little training or skill investment and a lack of formalised grievance procedures.
- The vast majority of part-time work is done by married women with young dependent children and domestic responsibilities which preclude them from any other pattern of work activity.

Thus some part-time work appears to be taking on the characteristics of a secondary labour market, and it is primarily women who will feel the effects of this. The development of a dual labour market with large numbers of women falling into the secondary sector has profound implications for any efforts to ensure equal opportunity for women in the workplace.

One of the main tenets of dual labour market theory is the restricted mobility from the secondary sector to the primary sector. The practical result of this is that workers become "trapped" in the secondary sector for the following reasons:

- a) There is little motivation for, or encouragement of, employees to increase their promotion and earning potential through training.
- b) Changes in the nature of work (discussed under the section on technological change) are making it increasingly difficult for workers to demonstrate a capability for increased responsibility and thus promotion.
- c) Institutional factors biased towards maintaining an employment situation which favours providing work for breadwinning men, restricts access to employment for women who bear the major responsibility for childcare.

Arising around the question of a secondary labour market is obviously the question of marginality. Because the majority of part-time workers, being women who are not eligible to claim unemployment benefit, do not register as unemployed it is difficult to gauge just how "casual" much part-time work is. However some British evidence from the results of the *Women and Work Survey* commissioned by the joint Equal Opportunities Commission/Social Science Research Committee Panel suggests that there may well be some concern about the nature of part-time employment; one of the reasons given was the likelihood that part-timers were used as an "auxiliary labour pool" pulled into employment as the labour market tightens and then discarded when the labour situation eases (IRJ:1982) The Department of Labour report on the part-time work pilot scheme (DOL:1980), highlighted the sense of insecurity of tenure apparent among part-time workers.

CONCLUSION

The major findings of this study of the part-time labour market in New Zealand are:

- There has been phenomenal growth in part-time work over the last 20 years.
- The majority of part-time workers are women with family responsibilities.
- Most part-time work is concentrated in low paying, low status occupations.

Growth

This study suggests a number of possible factors influencing both the supply and demand for labour in the part-time market. Growth of the scale observed could not have occurred without the influence of both.

In earlier years (late 1950s to mid 1970s) much of the pressure for growth came from the demand side. Employers, seeking to overcome labour shortages, acted to attract housewives into the labour force and made changes to working conditions to accommodate them, in the form of part-time working hours and employer-provided creches. In later years, which were characterised by economic recession and unemployment, the emphasis shifted to the supply side as economic necessity encouraged women with family responsibilities to seek to supplement the family income by working part-time.

Supply side pressure was also encouraged by social factors including changes in the composition of families resulting in increasing numbers of single parent families. There has also been increasing awareness amongst women that their talents are not necessarily confined to housework and childrearing, but that they also have a right to equal participation and opportunity in the paid workforce - a fact recognised in current government policy.

Demand side pressures include technological change which is not only changing the nature of work, but also the levels of skill of those employed to do the work, and previously male dominated occupations are becoming female dominated. Considerable work has been done in New Zealand on the influence of new technology on employment, particularly in the banking, meat and newspaper industries (NZJIR:1984). Empirical studies investigating the possible links between the introduction of new technology, task simplification, feminisation and part-time work would usefully illuminate this area further.

Constraints on Growth

Considering the strength of the factors leading to the growth in part-time work, it may seem that the growth should have been even higher. However, constraints on this growth in the form of industrial legislation, trade union views and attitudinal factors were identified in the report. There is legislation in place in the form of industrial awards and voluntary agreements both to protect part-time workers, and to protect full-time workers from the extension of part-time work opportunities.

Many women working part-time are unaware of their rights under the awards. Some women working part-time also appear to resent the requirement for them to join the union. The trade union movement itself is placed in an extremely difficult position on the issue of part-time work. Whilst seeking to protect the interests of their full-time members and pressing for the general introduction of the shorter working week, they are also made aware of the needs of women with family responsibilities who need part-time work.

Strong unions can provide valuable protection for part-time workers but this requires that part-time workers themselves are motivated to become committed members of their union. Considerable effort will be required from the trade union movement to convince part-time workers of the importance of active union membership. A leaflet recently produced by the Department of Labour in conjunction with the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (NACEW) (DOL:1986), sets out the rights of part-timers and encourages them to become active members of their union. This leaflet has been widely distributed and should help to clarify the position for those women who may have previously believed that they had no protection under the law.

Unemployment

Part-time work opportunities have become available, almost exclusively in occupations that contain disproportionately high numbers of women. For this reason the growth in part-time work has not been accompanied by any parallel decrease in unemployment. Married women with family responsibilities very rarely figure in the statistics of registered unemployed. The availability of part-time work acts to draw into the labour market those whose family responsibilities preclude them from taking part in the full-time workforce. Many of these women form the "invisible" unemployed, those who are looking for part-time work, or even full-time work but who do not register because they are not eligible for any unemployment benefit. Part-time work, as it is currently done, does not appeal to the registered unemployed who are a very different group of people, with the possible exception of some young labour market entrants. Recent high levels of youth unemployment have fueled suspicions that part-time work is increasingly becoming the only work available to some young labour market entrants.

Choices for Women

Part-time work is particularly attractive to people who wish to combine paid work with family responsibilities. These people are generally women. The high priority given to requests for the provision of more part-time work at the 1984 Women's Forums testifies to the popularity of part-time work amongst women with family responsibilities.

It is necessary to remember that women who work part-time do so for different reasons:

Some women may prefer to work full-time but are prevented from doing so by:

- unavailability of childcare
- social and managerial attitudes
- wage inequalities which decide that the mother rather than the father must take primary responsibility for childcare

Some women may prefer to stay at home and look after their own children but are forced into paid work by:

- sole responsibility for the family's income and care
- inadequacy of the man's income.

Some women wish to both raise a family and maintain workskills and knowledge and some independent income.

It is difficult to assess the benefits of growth in part-time work for women without more detailed research into their goals and preferences. For some, the greater

availability of part-time work may be a welcome accommodation to their desire to combine family responsibilities with the opportunity to maintain income and a place in the paid workforce. For others it may be very unsatisfactory and damaging.

The problems of women who are working unsocial hours must not be underestimated. Many do this work to avoid the high costs of good quality childcare, others because they don't believe high quality childcare can be provided by anyone other than parents. There is a wealth of documentary evidence that women in the age group, where this type of work is common, are suffering from poor mental and physical health. The full-time care of children differs significantly from other high-stress occupations in that it is unpaid. It would be very useful if a way could be found to adequately value the contribution that childcare and domestic duties make to the economy.

The major constraint on women's employment, whether full or part-time, is the traditional requirement for mothers to bear the major responsibility for childcare. The whole subject of childcare in the context of women's employment is problematic. Some people hold the traditional belief that a mother's place is in the home caring for her young children, and that even when the children reach school age, she must be available after school and during school holidays. In addition, factors of cost and availability were identified as major difficulties for mothers seeking high quality childcare in order that they might undertake paid employment. These constraints can apply equally to those mothers who are not seeking paid employment but simply some relief from the 24 hour responsibility of childcare.

There is also the problem of structural rigidities that have developed in the female labour market. Childcare is frequently considered in isolation, with micro concerns about the internal aspects of childcare taking precedence over the place of childcare in the total employment system. The belief that mothers should stay at home and care for their own children means that approximately half of the potential workforce is effectively barred from the labour market for a period of their working lives. Because women's employment is confined to such a narrow range of occupations, any moves to substantially improve the cost or availability of childcare could act to depress wages and conditions in the female labour market still further - at least in the short to medium term. Thus it is of critical importance that a holistic approach is taken in any policy moves to increase the provision of childcare. This must not be seen as the only serious weapon in the fight for women's equality in the workplace.

Despite moves to encourage women into "non-traditional" occupations, the appointment of Equal Employment Opportunity officers and other moves to try and redress the imbalance in the types of work done by men and women, it remains a fact that 50% of women are employed in six occupations: clerical, sales, teaching, medical, typing and bookkeeping.

There is a significant difference in the average hourly earnings of men and women. Even after adjustment for differences in working hours the average hourly earnings of women are slightly less than two-thirds of the average hourly earnings of men. Recent statistics give no indication that there has been any closing of the gap.

Without serious attempts to come to grips with the issue of "equal pay for work of equal value" there is likely to be slow progress towards seeing parity between men's and women's wages. Until such parity is achieved families will continue to make the sensible economic decision and keep the higher income earner working longer hours. As long as this situation continues most part-time workers will continue to be women with family responsibilities.

However, this report has also identified other groups for whom part-time work is important. Among them, young people who are either students or possibly testing employment options before deciding on a career, and men who are approaching retirement or who have officially retired from full-time employment but continue to work part-time. For the younger members of this group, the decision to work part-time may be a "lifestyle" decision to trade off income against leisure which allows them to pursue hobbies and sporting interests while they still have good health and energy.

Better health and improvements in life expectancy (PMG:1986), may also encourage men to remain in part-time employment for many years after they have officially retired.

A Dual Labour Market?

Finally, it was necessary for this study to confront the issue of whether or not part-time work is contributing to the development of a dual labour market in New Zealand. In this theoretical context part-time workers are seen as "shock absorbers" placed to protect both employers, and employees in the primary labour market, from the uneven effects of changes in economic circumstances. It is argued by dual labour market theorists that part-time labour can be brought into the market when labour is scarce and easily discarded when the market tightens.

The use of part-time labour can certainly help management avoid the scheduling problems that arise in industries where services must be provided at peak times, or throughout a 24 hour period. In some industries this has also helped management avoid the high wage costs that would flow from having to employ full-time workers when full-time cover is unnecessary, and to pay high overtime rates for working unsocial hours. In some cases trade union pressure, or the intervention of professional associations, have ensured that the wages and conditions of part-time workers are not significantly different from those offered to full-timers. Nursing is an example. However in many other industries and occupations part-time workers are employed during unsocial hours or holiday periods on very low rates of pay in comparison with the average wage, and with low levels of job security.

Part-time workers are not employed exclusively in low pay, low status areas. However it seems that even when part-timers work in highly skilled professional occupations they are frequently treated as "second class" members of the profession. Some of these people are not prepared to risk the loss of status and skill that would result from switching to part-time work when they take on family responsibilities, so they continue to work full-time. Others drop out of the workforce altogether for a period of years, believing that to work part-time can be professionally damaging. For this group the lack of appropriate employment opportunities in their areas of expertise, are more of a problem than poor wages and conditions. Attention should be given to measures aimed at helping members of this group overcome managerial bias.

Some women frustrated by the inability of the regular system to meet their needs for both fulfilling careers and families, opt to become self-employed. Support from professional associations and special help for those who wish to set up their own practice or business would be useful and further work in this area should be a high priority.

Investigation of a particularly worrying feature of the dual labour market thesis - the inability of workers in the secondary market to move into the primary market - is problematic without a longitudinal study of employment patterns of part-time workers. It is not possible to ascertain the extent to which a woman who has taken on part-time

work, because it suits her domestic situation at a particular time, thereby damages her chances of returning to the primary labour market when her family circumstances change. New Zealand studies have documented evidence of women having to take on jobs well below their level of ability when they want part-time work (Shiple:1982) (SROW:1984). The ensuing loss of skills and confidence means that many may never regain their previous positions, let alone aspire to higher ones. This may help to explain the slow progress of women into high level professional and managerial positions.

The Future

So, where to from here? Is part-time work set to contribute to the development of a dual labour market which could see large numbers of women confined to the secondary market? Or, is part-time work at the leading edge of a new way to work?

There is no doubt that the flexibility offered by part-time work is increasingly attractive as economic growth and the appropriate use of new technology offer some people the opportunity to make choices between income and leisure.

Part-time work can enable both parents to enjoy childcare and a career. It can offer people the chance to switch to different careers by allowing them to phase out of one career at the same time as they phase into another one.

The social and economic payoffs of greater flexibility in working hours are considerable *provided* adequate safeguards are in place to protect the powerless members of society who are most at risk. The direction that part-time work takes will depend on a number of things - the rate of economic growth and technological change which determines the number and nature of jobs to be filled; the commitment of society to the right to equal participation in all spheres of life for all New Zealanders; and the effectiveness of policies designed to provide and protect this right.

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MARITAL STATUS OF PART-TIME WORKERS
UNDER 30 HOURS PER WEEK DERIVED FROM THE 1981 CENSUS

	NEVER MARRIED			MARRIED			SEPARATED			WIDOWED			DIVORCED		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Professional, Technical and Related Workers	1413	3114	4527	2703	22404	25107	132	783	915	105	747	852	135	555	690
Administrative and Managerial Workers	21	18	39	576	720	1296	12	17	30	30	54	84	18	9	27
Clerical and Related Workers	675	1848	2523	1455	34056	35511	39	1158	1197	108	1152	1260	33	843	876
Sales Workers	4530	4692	9222	1293	18339	19632	51	759	810	93	1023	1116	54	576	630
Service Workers	2403	5346	7749	1599	30150	31749	105	1701	1806	147	1944	2091	102	1254	1356
Ag. Animal Husbandry and Forestry Workers, Fishermen and Hunters	1836	756	2592	2079	10956	13035	72	153	225	153	234	387	72	105	177
Production and Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators and Labourers	2853	1218	4071	3567	10044	13611	234	417	651	216	402	618	183	333	516
Workers reporting Occupation Unidentifiable or Inadequately described	219	129	348	240	603	843	12	36	48	24	33	57	18	24	42
Workers not reporting any occupation	933	750	1683	480	1548	2028	39	57	96	30	129	159	24	54	78
TOTAL	14883	17871	32754	13992	128820	142812	696	5082	5778	906	5718	6624	639	3753	4392

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