

Volume 3

**Management
Development for
Women in Higher
Education**

Ancillary Material



Commonwealth Secretariat



Association of Commonwealth Universities

Copyright © 2000 Commonwealth Secretariat/Association of Commonwealth Universities

This work is copyright. It may be reproduced, in whole or in part, to a reasonable number of copies for study or educational purposes, subject to the inclusion of an acknowledgement of the source and no commercial use or sale. Other than for the purposes indicated above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the permission of the publisher.

The views expressed in this document are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or policy of the Commonwealth Secretariat/Association of Commonwealth Universities.

The management development materials supplied in this volume are for the use, at their own risk, of educators and staff development personnel in management and related fields. Neither the authors nor the publisher are responsible for any loss, damages or legal action arising from the use of these management development materials.

Additional copies may be obtained from:

Commonwealth Secretariat
Education Department
Human Resource Development Division
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX
United Kingdom

Association of Commonwealth Universities
John Foster House
36 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PF
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)207 747 6292

Tel: +44 (0)207 380 6700

Fax: +44 (0)207 747 6287

Tel: +44 (0)207 387 2655

E-mail: a.girdwood@commonwealth.int

E-mail: d.garland@acu.ac.uk

Website: <http://www.thecommonwealth.org>

Website: <http://www.acu.ac.uk>

Published by the Commonwealth Secretariat/Association of Commonwealth Universities

Designed by The Open University

Printed in the United Kingdom by Hobbs the Printers, Brunel Road, Totton, Hampshire.

Wherever possible, the Commonwealth Secretariat/Association of Commonwealth Universities use paper sourced from sustainable forests or from sources that minimise a destructive impact on the environment.

Contents

Preface	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Introduction	vii
Ancillary Material A Research Papers	i
Ancillary Material B Case-studies	53
Ancillary Material C Workshops	95
Ancillary Material D Cases	121
Ancillary Material E Biographical Notes	163

Preface

Over recent years, the demands made of academic and professional staff in tertiary education institutions have increased greatly. Rising student numbers and changing student populations, coupled with diminishing resources and increased pressure to meet quantitative targets, have confronted staff in all parts of the Commonwealth. At the same time, staff frequently have little or even no formal training or professional development to support them in coping with new and increasing demands.

Within this demanding environment, women have often been an untapped resource, often confined to more junior positions with little management responsibility, for a variety of reasons. This still remains the case too often, despite the extremely high calibre of those women who have managed to gain senior appointments in a range of Commonwealth countries. The Commonwealth Secretariat and the Association of Commonwealth Universities have therefore sought to recognise this wealth of potential, and to address it by increasing the positive support available to women, through a series of training programmes, and particularly by the production of these volumes. We see these as a positive contribution, not only of benefit to those in institutions of higher education who may be poised to reach senior positions of academic leadership, but also to the institutions which will gain from their experience and leadership.

The Management Development for Women in Higher Education Programme was developed over several years and was produced under the auspices of the Commonwealth Higher Education Support Scheme (CHESS), a programme developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1991 to identify those strategic inputs which would serve as catalysts for the improvement of higher education across the Commonwealth. This publication resulted from a programme focused on institutional capacity development, a programme regarded as a priority area because it addressed two of the three focal areas for CHESS – management and staff development. The purpose of these three volumes is to provide much-needed resource material to foster the staff development of women academics and administrators. Its production has been the result of a unique Commonwealth-wide series of workshops and seminars – through this iterative process the preliminary material was refined and strengthened to take account of the lives and experiences of participants from across the Commonwealth, and we hope it now reflects this richness and diversity.

I commend these carefully developed resource materials to the senior management and staff development personnel (and their clients) at all Commonwealth universities.

Professor Stephen A. Matlin
Director, Human Resource
Development Division
Commonwealth Secretariat

Ms Dorothy Garland
Director of External Relations
and Deputy Secretary General
Association of Commonwealth
Universities

Acknowledgements

The Management Development for Women in Higher Education Programme is the result of several years of co-ordinated work and effort by senior women in Commonwealth universities.

The problem of women's under-representation in higher education management was identified and explored by the late Dr Elizabeth Dines (Dines, 1993). The issue was taken up in that year by senior women managers who formed a Steering Committee and initiated the development of the present programme (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1993). Themes important in management development for women were identified, and the present programme of modules and ancillary materials developed from that beginning.

The modules and ancillary materials were for the most part initiated by one or more Commonwealth universities as part of its/their staff development programme. They were then tried out in a number of regional workshops to assess transportability across differing cultures and organisations. In the last two years, groups of senior women from Commonwealth universities in all regions met to consider the materials and provide advice on their development and use. Finally, a meeting of module writers considered and agreed upon the structure and presentation of the materials, and their presentation in three volumes.

The Association of Commonwealth Universities and the Commonwealth Secretariat provided practical and financial assistance over several years. Other benefactors provided financial support for women to attend workshops. These included UNESCO, the German Foundation for International Development, the Australian Agency for International Development, the British Council, the European Union, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Forum for African Women Educationalists. The Universities of Cape Town and of Papua New Guinea, and the PNG Institute of Public Administration hosted international workshops, and together with Victoria University Australia, provided administrative support. Other institutions such as the Higher Education Commission Sri Lanka, the University of the South Pacific and the University of the West Indies hosted and supported regional workshops.

The late Dr Elizabeth Dines with Dr Hena Mukherjee suggested the concept and design of the project, and commissioned the first papers. From the beginning, many women from higher education systems in Commonwealth countries contributed their ideas and assistance to the project, through workshops and personal discussions and writings. Writers succeeded in the unenviable task of synthesising the many ideas and bringing them forward into the present programme.

The concept and the advancement of the project owe much to Dr Jasbir Singh, who supported and guided the project from its early days, arranging and co-ordinating the regional and international workshops, obtaining resources, and supporting and continuing to enthuse the many people involved in the preparation of these materials, and undertaking preparatory work with many of those who will use the modules.

All other editorial work was undertaken by Dr June Gleeson.

Writers were at all times responsible for their own content and writing. Throughout, the materials have been developed in a process of group consultation and support, and many excellent suggestions were made and received by all the writers.

.....

It has been a great privilege and a pleasure to work with so many eminent women on such an innovative project. My deepest thanks are extended to all those who contributed so willingly. I hope many future academic leaders will benefit from and enjoy this work as much as its authors and editors have already done.

Professor June Gleeson,
Victoria University of Technology
Melbourne, Australia

References

Commonwealth Secretariat (1993) *Women Managers in Higher Education: Summary Report of the ACU-CHESS Steering Committee Meeting*, London, 25–27 May 1993.

Dines, E. (1993) 'Overview' in UNESCO-Commonwealth Secretariat, *Women in Higher Education Management*, Paris, UNESCO Press, pp. 11–17.

Introduction

The Management Development for Women in Higher Education Programme offers materials that provide a progressive development programme for women in higher education with a focus upon institutional and systemic capacity development.

The programme is presented in three volumes. The first two volumes, Modules 1–3 and Modules 4–6, include a facilitator's development module, 'Management Development for Women: A Facilitator's Handbook', and five management development programmes. The levels of knowledge and skills represented by 'Management Development for Women: A Facilitator's Handbook' are deemed to be essential to the presentation of the programme. Volume 3, 'Ancillary Materials', provides additional items for reference and discussion, workshops and cases.

Each module contains an introduction, facilitator's notes, a detailed workshop programme, support materials, a list of references and additional reading, and in some cases, Editorial Notes. It is recommended that the material be adapted or customised, for example in terms of culture, language, or provision of locally relevant data. The objective is to understand the requirements of the organisation, and the homogeneity and the degree of diversity likely to be present in the programme participants. Facilitators may then adapt the material to meet better the needs of the organisation and the programme participants.

Facilitators need to possess both knowledge and teaching–learning process skills. Use of a team is recommended to provide the most flexible and sensitive presentation of the modules. The management development team should be diverse – culturally, by disciplines, and by gender.



Ancillary Material A

Research Papers

Contents

Didn't I just say that? The gender dynamics of decision making	3
By Julie Roberts	
Feminism and research	39
By Gaby Weiner	

Research Paper I

Didn't I just say that? The gender dynamics of decision making

By Julie Roberts, BA

A research project on effective communication and decision making in committee meetings funded by the Affirmative Action Agency under the Model Directions Programme. This paper is reproduced with permission from the Australian Government Publishing Service.

About this research paper

This research paper gives the results of a research study into the processes of committees at a university in Australia, and analyses the differing modes of communication used by women and men on those committees. The research paper would be of interest to those using the modules 'Women and Governance in Higher Education', 'Managing Personal and Professional Roles' and 'Academic Leadership', and for those interested in the processes of university research committees and the operations of gender-inclusive research teams.

How to use this publication in your organisation

'Didn't I just say that? The gender dynamics of decision making', identifies the different ways men and women communicate in committee meetings, where more effective and efficient interaction and decision making can enhance an organisation's ability to achieve real outcomes and maximise the talents and skills of senior female staff.

As more women join senior management ranks their communication style may be different to the prevailing masculine norms, therefore wider cultural change, not just an increase in numbers, may be necessary for them to contribute in key decision making forums.

Who can use 'Didn't I just say that? The gender dynamics of decision making'?

This publication draws on research in the higher education sector; however, the issues are equally applicable to all management cultures. Those who will find it most useful include:

- EEO/AA co-ordinators
- human resources managers
- chairpersons
- committee members
- managers
- consultants
- change agents.

'Didn't I just say that? The gender dynamics of decision making' contains examples of:

- different communication styles
- factors influencing decision making
- perceptions of satisfaction with process
- behavioural and attitudinal changes
- networking strategies
- structural barriers to women's participation.

The objectives of 'Didn't I just say that? The gender dynamics of decision making' are to help identify barriers to women's participation and act as a discussion-starter for workshops to inform the strategies for change which your organisation develops.

By using this research paper in your organisation you will be able to identify the issues which inhibit participation in committee meetings and cause frustration. Strategies can be then be designed and implemented to make the structures and processes of decision making more accessible, equitable and effective.

Foreword

Most universities throughout Australia invest considerable time and resources in their committee structures. The establishment and use of committees is intended as an effective way of promoting democratic decision making and ensuring that various constituencies within the university community are represented. However, since membership to key decision making committees is in a large part determined by virtue of position held within the university hierarchy, influential university committees have traditionally been male-dominated, reflecting the paucity of women within senior university ranks.

This research paper looks at how committee processes and behavioural patterns have evolved to reflect and accommodate a male gender bias. It examines the different ways in which men and women participate in decision making processes, identifies the problems women encounter in effectively contributing to the work of committees, and looks at how these problems impede the efficient operation of the university.

This publication is the result of a project undertaken by the Victoria University of Technology (VUT) with the support of a Model Direction grant from the Affirmative Action Agency. While the findings and recommendations are specific to higher education institutions, I believe the research sheds light on the gendered patterns of behaviour that influence key decision making processes in many other types of organisations as well.

I hope that this publication will encourage other organisations to observe their own meeting procedures and processes in an effort to develop strategies which will enable both men and women to maximise their contributions, and promote a more productive and equitable workplace.

Catherine Harris
Director of Affirmative Action

Acknowledgements

There are a number of people without whom this project would not have progressed and who deserve special acknowledgement.

The Affirmative Action Agency for providing the funding under its Model Direction Programme, and the supporters of the proposal, Ms Fay Marles and Ms Liz Anderson, for believing this to be a worthwhile area of study.

Thank you to the research assistant to the project, Mr Louie Petrou, who co-collected the data. In addition to processing all the questionnaire and correlation variables, he gave invaluable insights and advice on the development and analysis of the project material.

Thank you to Professor June Gleeson and the members of the Reference Group at Victoria University who encouraged the development of the research proposal; Associate Professor Ross Williams, the Head of Psychology Department who gave generously of his time and expertise, particularly in the development of the research instruments and methodologies; Dr Norma Grieve who assisted with the preliminary analysis of the questionnaire and development of follow-up interview questions; Wendy Short, Rodney Diggins and Phillip Siggins from the University Secretariat who were unfailingly helpful and cheerful in anything that was asked of them.

Thank you to all members of Council, Academic Board and the Board of TAFE during the research period, Semester Two 1994, for their co-operation with filling in the questionnaire, and a special thanks to those who permitted a follow-up interview and gave of their time and views generously.

Introduction

There is an extensive literature on how power in organisations can structure perceptions of merit by incorporating values, processes and attitudes which appear gender neutral but sustain a climate more favourable to some groups than others, generally in favour of those who have been better placed to define value and processes. ... For these reasons, organisations continue to reproduce gender inequity unless there are concerted and thorough efforts to understand and transform the ways men and women can participate in organisation life and processes.

(Affirmative Action Agency, Quality and Commitment, AGPS, 1992, p. 59)

This research project explores and attempts to identify behavioural patterns and attitudes which reinforce or impede women's abilities to participate in key decision making committees. In particular, it aimed to look more closely at the decision making processes of the Victoria University of Technology and ways in which they might need to be transformed so that men and women can participate equally.

It is informed by the work of Dale Spender, Deborah Tannen and others who, in their different ways, have shed light on the ways in which men and women gain and maintain their positions in organisations and, in particular, the ways in which behavioural and verbal patterns of communicating contribute to a paradigm which reinforces existing gender profiles within most organisations. Of particular interest was the ritual of decision making processes within which learned patterns of behaviour evolved and become maintained and reproduced within the university culture.

The research complements other equal employment opportunity and affirmative action strategies emanating from a recognition of a general problem that has become increasingly evident since women began to play a greater role in organisational decision making. While the inclusion of women in key committees has been an important development, much of its effectiveness has varied because of well-defined and recognised problems such as tokenism, lack of seniority and exclusion from established networks.

Gendered interaction and communication styles

Perhaps of even greater significance has been the less well understood influence of gendered communication styles and strategies. Overcoming possible discriminatory factors such as voice differences and speaking patterns, learned sex roles and differing levels of self-confidence are all essential to successful female participation in decision making.

Like most other large Australian organisations, the university has evolved with men dominating positions of seniority and power. The male style of interaction has, therefore, become established as the norm.

Women and men were finding that those who sought to challenge some of the prevailing masculine styles of behaviour, in particular confronting and aggressive styles of communication at meetings found that 'individual men and women who speak in ways associated with the other gender will pay a price for departing from cultural expectations' (Tannen, 1994, p. 16) For example, women who seek to raise a different perspective are often the subject of subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) put-downs. Similarly, softly spoken males, or those from a different ethnic background, are considered 'weak' when contrasted with their opposites.

... open, sharing behaviours only become 'weak' when another person in an interaction refuses to reciprocate them. Being sensitive to another's need, inviting them to take turns to talk, drawing out the topics they raise, is heard as ineffectual only when this sensitivity is not reciprocated. The 'powerlessness' of the speech patterns women more often use, exists only relative to the power of so-called masculine patterns. When only women are told to change their behaviour, and essentially to adopt 'male forms', the characteristics of male speech are ignored and the assumption of power as domination is reproduced.

(Thorne, Kramarae, Henley, 1983, p. 19)

Background to the research project

The impetus for undertaking the research project came from a number of factors converging at the one time. Like many other universities, Victoria University of Technology resulted from an amalgamation of two pre-existing institutions, namely the Footscray Institute of Technology and the Western Institute. Both institutions had well-developed but not necessarily compatible organisational ethos. The amalgamation was complemented by an active recruitment programme at all levels of the university. The result was an organisation in which policies, procedures and practices were in a state of flux and open to a variety of interpretations; an opportunity was available, though difficult, to provide a unifying ethos throughout the university.

The university's Affirmative Action reports consistently reported upon the gender composition of committees, but for the first time in 1993 the report was taken to the Academic Board and discussed in depth by the Board and the University Council. This meant that senior members of the university became aware of the overall university staff profile and the paucity of women at the senior level. The legal framework for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action, together with the external report requirements, in particular the monitoring of performance, became more widely understood and accepted, albeit at times reluctantly. A concerted effort was made to give real meaning and substance to the concept of setting targets and implementing strategies that would give effect to affirmative action for women.

Consultations occurred across the university, through key decision making committees, about the compendium of equity and social justice policies and procedures, culminating in the acceptance of an integrated Equity and Social Justice Policies package by the University Council. In addition, increased representation of women in decision making became one of the matters for discussion and negotiation within enterprise bargaining.

Dissatisfaction with current practices and communication styles within committee meetings initiated numerous requests for staff development activities in meeting procedures, chairing meetings using inclusive practice, team building and leadership.

Finally, action was precipitated by women reporting the increasing occurrence of non-productive and unsatisfying committee meetings. It was thus becoming increasingly difficult to interest women in standing for election to committees to maintain the fragile gender balance now achieved.

Two of the main aspects of the package to address the imbalance of male/female satisfaction/effectiveness on academic committees were:

- staff development seminars on meeting processes and procedure designed as a series of three workshops: effective participation in decision making, team building and leadership in committees and chairing meetings: inclusive practice.
- formalisation of processes for university committees, including the acceptance of Standing Orders and greater attention to election procedures.

In addition, the following mutually-reinforcing strategies complemented the focus on committee processes. This included:

- an 'active research' approach to affirmative action strategies which had the effect of providing a feedback loop through which individuals had some positive response to their suggestions and the impact of strategies could be more carefully evaluated;
- expansion of the University Women's Network to form a Women in Senior Academia group (WISA), members of which provided the feedback and advice which gave rise to the research project;
- staff development seminars, not only on meeting processes and procedures but also on career planning for women, preparing applications for promotion and professional development opportunities, e.g. outside study programmes and interview skills;
- the development of formal guidelines and briefing sessions on merit-based selection for promotion and other selection panel members.

Project methodology

Development of the research methodology

A Research Advisory Committee was established to refine the issues that had been raised by women currently serving on the committees outlined above, together with the outcomes of the staff development seminar programme which was run in the first semester of 1994.

This led to the development of the Research Project, funded through the Affirmative Action Agency under its Model Direction Programme, which took as its main purpose the observation of behaviours at the key decision making committees of the university during the second semester of 1994. It was further hoped to find out whether the perception of dissatisfaction with meetings was different for the men and women on university committees.

In the first semester, three committee meetings were attended by the researchers, to devise and refine the assessment methodology. During the second semester a total of 15 formal meetings (and several working parties) were attended. Further consultation across the university also contributed to the development of research instruments, which enabled:

- structured observation of the meetings to identify behaviours that may encourage or inhibit participation (attached at Appendix 3);
- a questionnaire to be completed immediately after each meeting to elicit participant feedback on their experience and perception of the meeting (attached at Appendix 4);
- follow-up interviews inviting reflective comment and an opportunity to consider the research findings to complement the observation and questionnaire methodologies (attached at Appendix 5).

I Analysis of findings

I.1 Gender profile of committees

Efforts to increase the participation of women on key decision making committees of the university, as described above, yielded the following gender profile at October 1994:

	Female %	Male %
Council	47	53
Academic Board	38	62
Board of TAFE	45	55

While this project was being undertaken, the three key decision making committees of the University, Council, Academic Board and the Board of TAFE were chaired by women. This is a significant factor which raised issues that were discussed in more detail during the follow-up interviews. Since each woman had a male predecessor, there were perceptions of a gendered style of chairing meetings that became clear during the interview process. While there were no male chairpersons during the period under research, two of the previous male chairpersons were interviewed.

A further analysis of committee membership shows that elected membership is more likely to increase the representation of women than membership by nomenclature or appointment. This is particularly striking at Academic Board where the membership is representational by level and clearly shows that males dominate membership by appointment (0% female at Vice-Chancellor to Dean levels) whereas women are more likely to be represented in those categories elected by peers:

	Female %	Male %
Vice-Chancellor (1)	0	100
Deputy Vice-Chancellors (3)	0	100
Directors of TAFE (1)	0	100
Deans of Faculties (5)	0	100
Heads of Departments (3)	33	67
Elected Members Footscray Campus (2)	50	50
Elected Members Western Campus (2)	50	50
Elected Members by the Academic Staff (16)	44	56
Elected Members by the PACCT*		
Staff (4)	100	0
Postgraduate Students (1)	0	100
Undergraduate Students (3)	33	67

* PACCT = Professional, administrative, clerical, computer and technical

1.2 Structural factors contributing to the imbalance of representation

At Academic Board the membership can also be seen, perhaps not surprisingly, to reflect the gender profile of the university, where the senior levels are dominated by males and the representation of females in committees comes from the more junior levels of academic staff, professional, administration, clerical, computer and technical (PACCT) staff and students, all of whom are elected by their peers.

This is a systematic and structural issue associated with traditional eligibility for committee membership as well as confirming the variation associated with 'election or appointment' status.

In earlier research by the Equal Opportunity Unit at the University of Melbourne, it was observed that there appears to be an assumed, unchallenged (and untested) positive correlation between scholarship, wisdom and decision making. In other words, it is assumed that the more distinguished a scholar you are the greater the contribution you can make in more general decision making. There is little to support this assumption beyond the relationship between scholarship and an academic career path that eventually leads to positions of leadership and senior management. The pressure for wider representation on committees in part challenges the status and gender blindness that characterised most university committees of the past, but there is still a way to go before gender balance is fully recognised as important in meeting the objectives of the university, as well as meeting affirmative action legislation reporting obligations.

The gender profile of most universities, where men continue to hold the majority of senior, tenured positions, suggests that membership eligibility based on nomenclature offers little potential to redress the inherent power imbalance between men and women for either academic or PACCT staff. This may have a significant impact on the effectiveness, if not actual liability, of women to participate.

It was evident through the follow-up interviews that the level of security and confidence to contribute to decision making without fear of reprisal (however subtle the form may take) affected members of staff differently. It was related to issues of tenure as well as gender or seniority, although of course these variables are not entirely unrelated. This is an area worthy of further research.

2 Analysis of meeting attendance

A comparison between formal gender representation and actual attendance during the period researched reveals that males dominated speaking time relative to their level of attendance:

■ Council

formal representation was 53% male

actual attendance ranged from 52% to 63% male

male speaking time ranged from 58% to 66% of members' speaking time

■ Academic Board

formal representation was 62% male

actual attendance ranged from 58% to 64% male

male speaking time ranged from 67% to 86% of members' speaking time

■ Board of TAFE

formal representation was 55% male

actual attendance ranged from 50% to 58% male

male speaking time ranged from 64% to 72% of members' speaking time

3 Analysis of speaking time at meetings

At all levels of decision making, men appeared to dominate speaking time relative to their level of representation. The number of times someone made a contribution to the debate, large or small, was recorded. Men dominated the debate across the following range:

At Council, men represented 52% of the membership but their speaking times ranged from 58% to 66% of members' speaking time (exclusive of the Chair).

At Academic Board, men represented 62% of the membership but their speaking times ranged from 67% to 86% of members' speaking time (exclusive of the Chair).

At the Board of TAFE, men represented 55% of the membership but their speaking times ranged from 64% to 72% of members' speaking time (exclusive of the Chair).

The role of the Chair at each level appeared to follow a similar pattern, making a number of short observations, invitation for further comment before 'moving along' statements, introducing agenda items, and providing some background context for committee members.

4 Analysis of speaking patterns at meetings

In addition to gendered use of speaking times, there was an observed gendering of speaking patterns. It was also observed that the speaking patterns changed according to the type of committee and meeting structure.

4.1 Council

The most formal of the committees, the Council followed a pattern of short exchanges punctuated by longer reports. Since formal reports, usually presented by the chairs or convenors of working groups, were male, this in part explains the domination of speaking times. Speaking time was recorded on a range of approximately one to four minutes. Most statements and responses formed part of an interactive dialogue and were recorded around the one-minute length. However, there was an observable pattern of some males opting for a longer speech, around three to four minutes, that was not confined to formally giving reports. It became noticeable, over time, that some males participated by delivering a statement giving their point of view on a topic, that appeared to bear little relation to the dialogue around the table, nor responded to points of view previously put. It was, then, a 'stand alone' statement or speech rather than forming a part of the dialogue or interaction of the committee.

Females, on the other hand, consistently put measured points of view that took an observed (one to two minute) length. Responses were more likely either to expand on a view already put, or to question it, or seek clarification. In rare cases did females speak for longer than three minutes.

The pattern of exchange on a topic at Council looks fairly restrained and rather dignified. It is a measured pattern of committee members taking their turn to say a few words before moving on to the next item with little to-ing and fro-ing. However, it became clear that some individuals regularly and consistently made more and longer contributions than others. There were also a small number of committee members who regularly attended but consistently made no verbal contribution at all at the meeting.

4.2 Academic Board

On the other hand the Academic Board looks like a frenzy of activity with a topic being tossed around like a ball between a few players. The pattern of the 'four-minute monologue', beyond the need for formal reporting by some males, and the occasional interjection by other males and females, is consistent with the pattern of Council meetings but the dialogue is faster and tends to be concentrated between fewer members. During these debates it becomes observably more difficult for 'outsiders' to enter the fray, and women especially have a hard time being noticed as indicating that they wish to speak, even though their frustration and annoyance at being ignored is clearly observable.

It could be observed, over time, that some individuals regularly and consistently made more and longer contributions than others. There were also a significant number of committee members who regularly attended meetings but consistently made no verbal contribution at all.

4.3 The Board of TAFE

This Board has a similar pattern of a 'four-minute monologue' by some males, beyond the need for formal reporting, but there was a wider distribution of participation among committee members, with longer speaking times generally for most members. The style of debate was also observably different from Academic Board in that there was a greater degree of information giving, sharing, and open discussion. There appeared to be a greater willingness for decisions to evolve rather than become a battle over prevailing or pre-determined views.

Although it could be observed over time that some individuals regularly and consistently made more and longer contributions than others, the number of committee members who regularly attended meetings but consistently made no verbal contribution at all was far less than at Council or Academic Board.

5 Factors influencing effective communication

5.1 Inclusiveness

Although invitations by the Chair to add further comments did not always elicit a response, the follow-up interviews clearly indicated that it was appreciated and welcomed. It seems self-evident, but worth noting

nonetheless, that an invitation to speak, accompanied by eye contact and open body language, was more likely to result in someone taking up the offer. For example, 'would anyone like to add anything before we move on to the next item on the agenda', or 'is it the wish/feeling of the meeting that we agree on ... and move to the next agenda item?', accompanied by looking at members of the committee with anticipation of some signal. This was understood to be more welcoming of continuing the debate than the same words spoken whilst looking through the papers, or moving through to the next agenda item without giving anyone time or space to respond.

5.2 Body language

Eye contact and nodding appeared to be the most common and best understood signals between the Chair and members of the committee, and between committee members themselves. At times the tone of voice seemed to remain tentative until the speaker had received confirmation that what they were saying had been understood, with signals being a series of nods around the table, sometimes, but not necessarily, accompanied by audible affirmation such as 'yes' or 'mmm'. In follow-up interviews this affirmation seemed particularly important to women.

Other body language, such as winks, smiles and frowns, was open to interpretation. It was observed to be effective, in that it appeared to modify behaviour, either making the recipient feel affirmed or more nervous.

5.3 Divided loyalties/dual roles

Follow-up interviews revealed a complexity that reflected the dual roles many staff have on committees. For example, PACCT staff are elected by their peers yet play a strong support role in a faculty or department. Decisions may impact on both, but in different ways. This introduces conflicting loyalties which are not easily reconciled, especially in a committee meeting situation. Since women are more likely to be drawn from the elected membership, this conflict has a gender dimension. The elected membership, in turn, has a high number of untenured or junior members of staff so there is also a power dimension inherent in this conflict.

Gender, power and status are a powerful combination which, on occasion, presents a formidable obstacle to effective participation. Despite the representative nature of committee membership, and the commitment to the collegial process, there is an inherent 'career limiting' risk in a junior member of staff putting a point of view that is known to be inconsistent with that of more senior members.

5.4 Experience

Follow-up interviews also suggested that the better a person knew the other, or felt 'in tune' with the politics of the situation, the more likely they were to either feel comfortable and positive about the body language and/or understand the significance of the nuances. In this respect there was a positive correlation between comfort and experience. In other words, the longer a person had been involved with a committee or decision making at a particular level, the more likely they were to feel confident about their understandings of that shared history and ways of knowing how to interpret others' behaviour.

The extent to which shared history and understandings serve to modify or constrain behaviour in a committee context is, again, worthy of further research. There is a growing literature on group dynamics that has

identified the problems associated with reluctance to identify different perspectives, e.g. 'group think'. To what extent this is connected with conflict of interest or divided loyalties in a university context would be interesting to analyse.

6 Analysis of questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered immediately after collecting the observation data of each meeting of Council, Academic Board and Board of TAFE meeting in Semester Two, 1994. There was a high co-operation rate and returns averaged around 80 per cent.

The following is an analysis of the affirmative responses to each question asked in the questionnaire. It was designed to elicit immediate responses to the meeting, without much time for de-briefing or consultation with colleagues. It therefore complements the follow-up interviews which offer an opportunity for reflection over a longer period of time.

Q.3 Did you feel your contributions were listened to today?

Council	Males 94%	Females 97%
Academic Board	Males 88%	Females 80%
Board of TAFE	Males 92%	Females 96%

Q.4 Did you feel ignored by the Chair today?

Council	Males 0%	Females 0%
Academic Board	Males 0%	Females 14%
Board of TAFE	Males 0%	Females 28%*

Q.4a Did you feel ignored by other committee members today?

Council	Males 9%	Females 0%
Academic Board	Males 0%	Females 12%*
Board of TAFE	Males 12%	Females 0%*

Q.5 Do you think the committee worked as a team today?

Council	Males 88%	Females 84%
Academic Board	Males 64%	Females 76%
Board of TAFE	Males 85%	Females 92%

Q.6 Did some individuals dominate the meeting today?

Council	Males 40%	Females 20%
Academic Board	Males 55%	Females 48%
Board of TAFE	Males 35%	Females 16%

A follow-up question was asked of those participants who answered 'yes' to nominate which group they thought had dominated the meeting today. However, it was not answered consistently enough to be reliable, and has been omitted from the analysis.

Q.8 Did you feel personal satisfaction with committee decisions today?

Council	Males 81%	Females 71%
Academic Board	Males 79%	Females 76%
Board of TAFE	Males 81%	Females 72%

Q.9 Did you participate in debate today?

Council	Males 72%	Females 84%
Academic Board	Males 62%	Females 44%
Board of TAFE	Males 76%	Females 80%

Q.10 Were a range of conflicting views put in today's meeting?

Council	Males 70%	Females 74%
Academic Board	Males 50%	Females 60%
Board of TAFE	Males 77%	Females 84%

Q.11 Did debate become personal or aggressive today?

Council	Males 0%	Females 15%*
Academic Board	Males 0%	Females 26%*
Board of TAFE	Males 0%	Females 12%

Q.12 Did the Chair encourage participation today?

Council	Males 94%	Females 100%
Academic Board	Males 94%	Females 88%
Board of TAFE	Males 96%	Females 100%

Q.13 Did committee members encourage participation today?

Council	Males 82%	Females 84%
Academic Board	Males 68%	Females 76%
Board of TAFE	Males 81%	Females 88%

Q.14 Did you feel confident addressing the meeting today?

Council	Males 78%	Females 74%
Academic Board	Males 82%	Females 52%*
Board of TAFE	Males 81%	Females 72%

Q.15 Did you feel intimidated addressing the meeting today?

Council	Males 15%	Females 16%
Academic Board	Males 9%	Females 28%*
Board of TAFE	Males 5%	Females 12%

Q.16 Did you say what you really wanted to today?

Council	Males 82%	Females 65%
Academic Board	Males 79%	Females 52%*
Board of TAFE	Males 85%	Females 68%

Q.17 Did you feel satisfied with your contribution to the meeting today?

Council	Males 82%	Females 58%*
Academic Board	Males 76%	Females 69%
Board of TAFE	Males 85%	Females 56%*

Q.18 If not, why not? This follow-up question was not answered consistently enough to enable any reliable analysis.

Q.19 To what extent, in a range from 1 to 4, do you think the following assist effective participation in meetings? Open-ended questions/laughter/nod of appreciation/personal invitation to speak/knowledge of topic/knowledge of meeting procedure?

Aggregated behaviours that assist effective participation

Council	Males 10.97	Females 9.84*
Academic Board	Males 12.36	Females 10.78*
Board of TAFE	Males 11.09	Females 10.85

Q.20 To what extent, in a range from 1 to 4, do you think the following inhibit effective participation? Side conversations/request to repeat or clarify your comments/no response to comments/blank faces/laughter/no knowledge of topic/no knowledge of meeting procedure?

Council	Males 14.23	Females 13.13
Academic Board	Males 15.50	Females 14.72
Board of TAFE	Males 15.64	Females 14.36

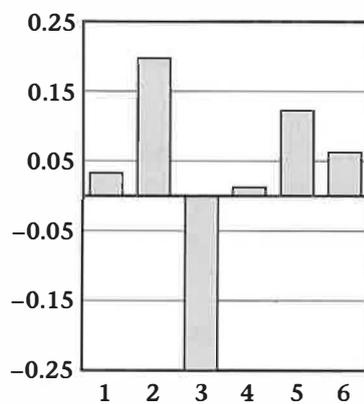
NB: For Questions 19 and 20 the higher the score the more the group disagrees with the statement; the lower the score the more they agree.

*Variables marked with * indicates a statistically significant result, i.e. a 95% accuracy rate given the size of the sample.*

7 Analysis of correlations

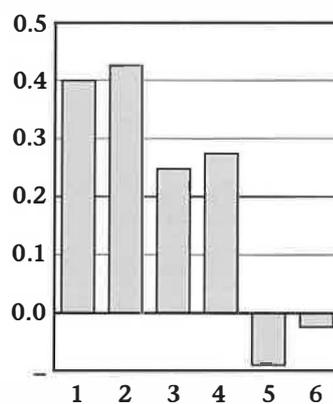
Correlations were run to see whether there was any significant relationship between level of experience on key decision making committees, and other variables that might confirm anecdotal evidence, or explain why some members felt more intimidated or less confident than others.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the research clearly demonstrates that the less experienced a committee member is, the more likely they are to feel intimidated. Similarly, the more experienced a committee member is, the more likely they are to feel confident, participate in debate, and say what they want to say.



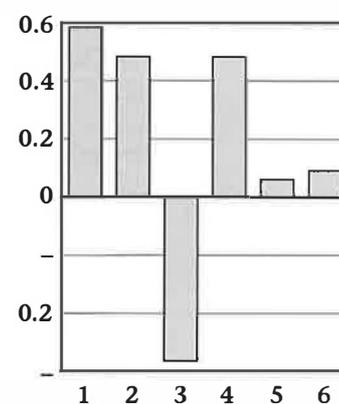
Council

1. Level of experience with participation in debate: .03 (not a significant correlation)
2. Level of experience with confidence felt: .19 (not a significant correlation)
3. Level of experience with intimidation felt: .25 (significant correlation, less experienced members felt more intimidated)
4. Level of experience with saying what you wanted to say: .01 (not significant correlation)
5. Level of experience with personal satisfaction: .12 (not a significant correlation)
6. Level of experience with feeling that the committee worked as team: .06 (not a significant correlation)



Academic Board

1. Level of experience with participation in debate: .40 (significant correlation, more experienced members participated more in debate)
2. Level of experience with confidence felt: .43 (significant correlation, more experienced members felt more confident)
3. Level of experience with intimidation felt: .25 (significant correlation, less experienced members felt more intimidated)
4. Level of experience with saying what you wanted to say: .28 (significant correlation, more experienced members said what they wanted to say)
5. Level of experience with personal satisfaction: -.09 (not a significant correlation)



Board of TAFE

1. Level of experience with participation in debate: .60 (significant correlation, more experienced members participated more in debate)
2. Level of experience with confidence felt: .50 (significant correlation, more experienced members felt more confident)
3. Level of experience with intimidation felt: .54 (significant correlation, less experienced members felt more intimidated)
4. Level of experience with saying what you wanted to say: .50 (significant correlation, more experienced members said what they wanted to say)
5. Level of experience with personal satisfaction: .06 (not a significant correlation)
6. Level of experience with feeling that the committee worked as a team: .09 (not a significant correlation)

The significant correlation issues are picked up in the analysis of the interviews.

8 Analysis of follow-up interviews

The Chairpersons of the committees observed were interviewed, together with six men and six women drawn from across the membership of the committees observed.

8.1 Differing perceptions of effective participation

(a) Consultative style

This question prompted an instant gendering of context from which much discussion seemed to flow. In general, women described effective participation as meaning an opportunity to hear what others had to say in order to come to some common understandings about underlying principles or values upon which to base decisions or move forward. The assumptions upon which decisions are made appeared to be as important as the decisions themselves for several women. Women reported their behaviour at meetings was designed to achieve this. In other words, their questions were framed in a way that would elicit dialogue rather than identify their own views upfront. Their preparation for meetings also identified a strong pattern of promoting dialogue and the views of others rather than their own. However, women also reported that these strategies and their particular way of using the meeting process to achieve a consensual (or at least informed) way of moving forward was often dismissed or undermined by the men.

There was a sense of frustration felt by the women that they used language and process in different ways to men:

We [women] don't ask questions because we don't know the answer – sometimes we don't want 'an answer' as such at all but raise questions to seek and understand the view of others in shaping our own views on the issue.

Women tend to want to explore ideas; men just want to 'get on with it' and end up taking it up: women's flexibility is misunderstood, misplaced.

Many women choose not to disclose their views at the committee because of what was described as 'fragility of voice'. The powerlessness derived through a combination of lack of sufficient status, insecurity of tenure and being in the minority or 'different' means that women often cannot afford to say what they want to say publicly at the meeting and choose to make known their point of view and seek to influence outcomes privately, after the meeting.

It was recognised by several women that this issue is a political as well as a structural issue, in terms of how power and control is exercised in the collegial process. It seems that despite the gains made in increasing the representation of women and minority groups on committees, the collegial process obscures rather than exposes the political and gender dimensions of decision making.

One man made the comment that 'men cannot empathise well with powerlessness, they assume that their perception – usually secure, usually senior – is a universal one'. This comment was found interesting because it assumes that holding a different view and/or failing to put it can be interpreted as a form of powerlessness.

A minority of men interviewed shared the view that dialogue was important, especially the sharing of views and perspectives before reaching a final decision. However, men were more inclined to see this as the role of the Chair rather than the responsibility of participants.

(b) A linear process – effectiveness and efficiency

The majority of men (and some senior women) saw effective participation as part of a linear, task-oriented process, and the committee meeting as a forum for making a statement; making your views known; moving forward and making decisions. It was also reported to be an opportunity, almost a responsibility, for carrying forward the outcomes of discussions from other forums. This is consistent with the observed behaviour and may explain the preference for the 'four minute monologue' style of participation.

Men were more inclined to link effectiveness to efficiency, noting that ideally only a few needed to be there to be effective. Some men interviewed struggled with the fact that 'participation and the opportunity for everyone to be heard is not the same as being effective'.

What are we trying to achieve here? Is it to exchange ideas, come up with different answers and points of view? It is all incredibly inefficient.

It was also observed that effective participation meant (having an) 'opportunity to express relevant points of view'.

(c) Purpose of networking

Women were more likely to see networking as a way of informing themselves of the views of others, in order to develop or refine their own view and ultimately their decision on an issue. Men, on the other hand, were more likely to see networking as a way of influencing others, to be aware of obstacles or different views in order to refine their argument and ultimately get the decision through the committee.

There was a view held by some women that 'women need to work harder to earn their place' and that this was an additional pressure on the few women who were eligible for committee membership through nomenclature. Those who were elected by their peers felt that there was 'a lot hanging on their membership' in that they had to speak for women or a representative group rather than just for themselves, and that those who had elected them expected something in return, that 'they would do/say the right thing' which raised the political issues of self-preservation discussed earlier.

The phenomenon of the 'professional meeting-goer' seemed to be well identified with by senior members of staff – men and women alike – who, by virtue of their position, are privy to the same issue being discussed at a number of different levels. They wear different 'hats' at each forum and can gather up a wide and diverse range of perspectives on which they can advocate. Women appeared more comfortable with this than men, one male noting that 'a range of views need to be put, and they can be put quite effectively by one person'. Conversely, the view was put that networking at the senior level was about seeking a range of views before coming to a decision: 'I've spoken to a few people about this, and my view is'. In either case, it seemed implicit that where one person's view was to prevail (based on the knowledge of others' views or advocacy on their behalf) it would need to be theirs.

Indeed, one man made the comment that this was the prime purpose of networking at the senior level; 'collegiality often means having a cast of thousands, resulting in committees that are too big, too unwieldy. The same result can be achieved more efficiently by using good advocacy ... through a few people representing various constituencies.'

(d) Clarification of role of committee members

In the above comments it seemed that the men interviewed were touching on a very important point: that university committees rarely offer an opportunity for members to reconcile their own sense of purpose for being on the committee with that of others, or indeed the formal terms of reference. There is little attention paid to mechanisms for determining, as a group, the process that the committee would employ to define what is relevant, what its aims and goals are individually and collectively, and against what criteria it might establish these.

The role of the Chair was cited as critical to both men and women in terms of achieving effective participation, women were more inclined to perceive it as a shared responsibility.

8.2 Satisfaction with meeting process and outcomes

(a) Measuring perceptions of personal satisfaction

Since committee members came with different expectations and perceptions of effective participation, their satisfaction was measured by the extent to which that was achieved. Men, therefore, tended to make comments like:

'When I have a point to make I make it and when it sways someone or gets something moving, that is a good feeling.'

'The meeting as a whole has thought about the issue, I've had input and my input has led to a good outcome.'

'We got somewhere; the cause was progressed.'

'Achieved outcomes against the agenda: committees that cannot work together are ultimately ineffective.'

'If there was some conflict around the table that ended up in consensus, then everyone is reasonably happy with the outcome.'

'If I've stirred a few people up a bit and cut the waffle.'

Whereas women made comments like:

'If items were resolved and understood.'

'If the right decision was made.'

'If, during discussion, a further dimension to an issue is raised, or people move from their position based on that new information to them as a result of hearing from others.'

'It is really important that things don't get passed routinely.'

'Being heard is so important.'

Several made comments about measuring their satisfaction with meeting outcomes based on what happened to the decisions after the meeting. It was commented upon, particularly by women, that committee decisions were only as good as the way in which they would be implemented. It was observed that committees may well have decided that a course of action would be adopted, but relied on individuals, often not privy to the committee discussion, to implement the decision in the spirit in which it was intended.

(b) Measuring perceptions of satisfaction with process

It was noted by all participants, male and female, that while the focus of the research was on the key decision making committees of the university – Council, Academic Board and Board of TAFE – the structure and process of the sub-committee or working groups of those committees were different and more satisfying.

All participants talked about the satisfaction of participating at the working party level, where it was reported ‘the real work’ or the ‘real debate’ takes place under ‘classic brainstorming conditions where there is no pre-caucused view, no known solutions and where all members participate’, as one man described it.

It appeared that a great deal of energy and focus was invested at this level, and the results of the process and outcomes were considered to be well worthwhile, by men and women alike. It was found to be an enjoyable experience rather than a trial, by most interviewed, because of, rather than despite, the process, which was described as much more participatory, less formal, more challenging and harder work because of the smaller numbers – but more rewarding. Importantly for women it was considered to be a forum where ‘there is a real mixture of status and because it is smaller and more informal, because people are on it because they are interested in the issues, there is an opportunity to challenge male authority figures, challenge their thinking and assumptions’. Another woman observed that the ‘status levelling’ effect at the sub-committee level ‘means that the more experienced cannot be so destructive of novices’.

The perception of difference in terms of participation and satisfaction between the key committee and its sub-committees or working groups was marked for both men and women. Therefore there would appear to be some merit in undertaking further work on the difference structure and process can make.

(c) Measuring perceptions of agreement or consensus

Formal voting is rare in university decision making. Indeed, all the Chairpersons interviewed reported that they went to some lengths to avoid a formal vote. In the absence of such an open mechanism to test or determine the level of support for a decision, the process by which a committee believes it has reached agreement or consensus is intriguing. Does the absence of dissent mean consent or approval? If no one says ‘no’ or offers a different perspective, does that mean ‘yes’ and the (unspoken/ unidentified) universal view or experience is held by all members?

It was observed that there was much scope for manipulation and subversion of committee decisions.

8.3 Preparation for meetings

It was observed by one woman that ‘the way the agenda was framed in part prepared the way in which decisions could be made’. The order and selection of agenda items was part of the preparation process that only a few members of the committee took any part in yet in many ways they determined the outcomes.

Chairpersons all believed they radiated accessibility and that access to the agenda setting was not problematic. The perception of committee members varied. Similarly, it was observed that the way minutes are

written (or re-written) has the capacity to construct a version of events that coincides with one viewpoint only, with another woman making the comment that 'there are too many lobby groups for one view to prevail' so, in effect, the dominant view will be the one that does.

Men were more likely to be pragmatic about it, commenting that 'yep, some items get knocked on the head before they get off the ground' and that 'It is an absolute necessity, otherwise we'd never get anything done'. Women were more likely to see an aspect of fairness in it, with comments such as 'it is part and parcel of internal politics – if meeting processes are fair and consistent then each member can prepare and participate accordingly'.

Another (male) member noted that 'discussion at Academic Board was the public consumption of a pre-caucused view where "free" debate takes place'. That this is such an accepted part of the process by all participants means that committee members must factor it into their own preparation and conduct at meetings. This was particularly so when, as one male observed, 'things are put up almost as a "fait accompli" and it can get a bit aggressive if questions are asked or it looks as if it might get knocked off'. Again, issues of power and gender tend to go together and exclusion from well-established networks outside the committee was 'a fairly effective way of marginalising the student voice', as one woman summed up.

8.4 Who has the idea and who gets recognised

(a) Status adds weight

The issue of women having the ideas that were eventually taken up, or translated into action by men, seemed to be bound up with several previously discussed matters: (1) the committee process is sometimes used to convert ideas that have been previously canvassed into decisions – ownership of ideas thus becomes blurred in the eyes of some. In fact, one woman made the comment that 'when men endorsed women's views it is validating, satisfying'; (2) women process contributions or participation differently and some see the raising of ideas or a different perspective as their contribution and translating them into action as the contribution of others – in other words, this is effective teamwork not subterfuge; and (3) the different status of individuals means senior members have more formal authority, both in terms of relative credibility as well as practical resources at their disposal, giving an enhanced ability to translate ideas into action. In other words, holding a relatively senior position with an office and staff to delegate to, makes a difference.

The perception of participants confirms that the ideas of women being taken up and translated into action by men, is an observed and recognised practice which continues to maintain the power imbalance between men and women in the university. Whether this is rationalised as useful and constructive or otherwise, does not diminish the damage it does, quite unintentionally, to redressing the disproportionate authority that appears to be conferred on men rather than women, simply on the basis of a gendered way of participating in the decision making process. When considering the structural barriers of formal power and tenure status discussed earlier, it would seem imperative that a greater awareness be raised about the ways in which this subtle form of behaviour contributes to dichotomising the different and apparently gendered approaches to decision making.

(b) Recognising difference

Conversely, men described difference, be it ideas, perceptions or a style of communicating, as 'a comment from left field – entirely unexpected and not quite sure what to do with it!', indicative of an 'obstructive agenda' or simply 'a wonderful example of an idea from nowhere'. This appeared to apply to women and equally to men who apparently did not exhibit nor subscribe to the prevailing male norms.

For some men then, ideas and contributions that are different are simply incomprehensible. This fact has not escaped the women (and some men) who attend some university committees. However, decision making through processes that women feel comfortable with –questioning, information exchange and incorporation of difference through dialogue – is equally as valid as the styles that men feel comfortable with. It needs to be recognised that these processes are not merely exploratory, preliminary or complementary to other forms of decision making more commonly associated with male norms of behaviour.

8.5 Inappropriate behaviour or robust debate?

(a) Personal aggression

A questionnaire outcome of some significance was that only women reported noticing anything personal or aggressive in the meetings. Personal and aggressive behaviour and comments were clearly observed and noted through the structured observations, so the questionnaire responses were puzzling.

The follow-up interview responses were interesting – and again revealed a gendered perspective. Women mainly viewed personal or aggressive behaviour as inappropriate and therefore noticed it, and noted it in their questionnaire responses. Men, on the other hand, considered aggressive behaviour par for the course and therefore not noteworthy. Men, however, tended to draw a distinction between personal and aggressive. They were more ambivalent about the appropriateness of personal comments or behaviour but less clear about where and how these boundaries might be drawn.

Similarly, men think that women have a different attitude to a strong argument: 'we were tearing strips off each other – we [men] thought it factual, they [women] thought it personal'. It was felt that 'some women go out of their way not to be personal or aggressive; some people (perhaps men) bring antagonisms into a meeting and take it out on others, whereas others (perhaps women) give vent to their antagonisms in different ways'.

(b) Is biology still destiny?

Men, it seemed, were much more concerned with being, or being seen to be, incisive rather than consultative in their approach to decision making which involved, for them, a more robust attitude to debate around the table with one man observing that 'you're in the debate to win, this sometimes means going for the jugular'.

Men's thoughts about women's behaviour and attitudes in this respect and vice versa were interesting. In part, it reflects the earlier comment about some men believing their view is a universal one – what flows from that is that men believe their attitudes are universally (and unconditionally) valid, against which women are seen as different, something other than male, therefore something other than universal or valid. Examples were given of belittling comments and childish gestures and expressions

exchanged between two senior males when certain women spoke. It was humiliating for the women, but probably revealed more about the males. One woman made the comment that 'it is only when other males are prepared to censor this kind of behaviour that women will feel an accepted rather than a tolerated part of the decision making process'. Others felt that it was part of a camaraderie, of shared histories and alliances that almost promoted the kind of group behaviour where the attitude of the group becomes larger or more exaggerated than any of the individuals within it. 'The bantering is expected, it's part of the boys' club cultural norm' and 'men think tough decisions require tough behaviour – but they are so literal'.

It was interesting that several men made the observation that they thought personal or aggressive behaviour by women would be quite inappropriate, although an acceptable part of the game for men. It was 'in the genes – men tend towards the more aggressive, dominating role, therefore a complementary role is needed to balance things up a bit'. Again, the mindset that the male role is the norm against which women provide 'balance' threads through the underlying explanations people have for behaviours which could be gender-neutral at an objective level, but are attributed in gendered terms at the subjective level. However, the resilience of the outdated 'biology is destiny' way of thinking is worrying, and especially so if such thinking is informing decision making at the tertiary level.

8.6 Behaviours that encourage or inhibit participation

Across all levels there was a strong endorsement by men and women of the behaviours considered to be encouraging or inhibiting of effective participation. However, several made the point that this varied with the context. For example, laughter was encouraging if you thought people were laughing *with* you, but inhibiting if you thought people were laughing *at* you. The perception would depend on either the circumstances, how well you know other committee members, or both, and as one participant put it, 'your level of introspection'.

Women generally felt that knowledge of topic and meeting procedure was encouraging of participation, mainly because they worried about the risk of appearing foolish through ignorance. In many ways for women this lack of knowledge contributed to feeling intimidated about saying what they really wanted to say, even though they felt that formal meeting procedure was not really used anyway. The comment was made that 'women tend to evaluate everything they say, whereas men just say it'.

Because perceived, as well as formal, authority (and therefore assumptions of credibility or superior knowledge) is conferred on men disproportionately to women, the views expressed by men are taken more seriously or acted upon with less challenge. This can be a self-maintaining cycle. 'The more men are made to feel important by virtue of what they say, the more likely they are to feel that what they say is important' is how one woman expressed it.

It appears that the observed and experienced personal aggressive nature of some meetings was outweighed by equally well observed and experienced benefits of participation. The level of inhibiting behaviours was minimal compared to encouraging behaviours, and Chairs went to some lengths to encourage debate and recognise contributions. This was endorsed enthusiastically for the meetings observed, but felt most strongly about the working party or sub-committee meetings, especially those of Academic Board.

9 Analysis of interviews with Chairpersons

The Chairpersons of Council, Academic Board and Board of TAFE meetings during the period researched were all women, two of whom had recently replaced male Chairpersons and one who had been in the role for a year.

The Chairperson of Council was Acting-Chair of Council following the resignation of the Chancellor. The Chairperson of Academic Board had just been elected, and the Chairperson of the Board of TAFE had been in the position for a year.

9.1 The role of the Chair from a female perspective

Each saw themselves as an objective facilitator, disinterested in the pure sense in that, as far as possible, personal interest or investment in outcomes was separated from the process of facilitating the meeting towards making decisions. The Chairperson's responsibility for the outcomes or decisions of the meeting was, therefore, viewed in the 'third person', i.e. not responsible as an individual but responsible for carriage of the collective outcomes. This was reported to be easier for external members of the university community than it was for members of staff.

Preparation for the meeting ranged from careful reading of background papers, following up on previous decisions, seeking assistance from the Secretariat on procedural matters, to consulting with colleagues or making an extra effort to be accessible, especially to students.

It was reported that the role of Chairperson was perceived to be about more than management of the decision making process. Meetings served a number of functions: a conflict identification and resolution process; an information exchange process; an opportunity to 'know where everyone is coming from'; therefore, it was important to be 'mindful of the psychology of the meeting'.

For those interviewed, chairing meetings was also about time management, making sure agenda items were 'processed' and using formal authority to ensure everyone had an opportunity to speak through direct invitation if necessary. The Chairpersons interviewed all mentioned environmental factors that can exhibit participation – acoustics, and seating that does not allow comfortable communication to take place. In particular, the ability to pick up body language and the other nuances that 'mean the difference between hearing and listening'.

The signals that Chairpersons looked for to close off debate included members repeating comments and no further dimensions coming from discussion.

They responded to their observation that the debate was becoming redundant by asking questions directly, whether there were further points that members wished to add or seek clarification on. All used a form of words to invite the committee to indicate that they had reached agreement, e.g. 'are we agreed on this ...?' followed by pausing and eye contact to confirm the wish of the meeting. All Chairpersons interviewed avoided the use of formally voting to indicate agreement or approval.

All Chairpersons made the point that it was important to try to get to 'know' people; observe new people; be aware of speaking patterns and the role people played on committees. In addition, it was important to try and get to know people beyond their role on the committee. For the Chairpersons interviewed, this was a fundamental part of being equally accessible to committee members to include agenda items and follow up on the implementation of decisions.

The task of shepherding decisions through the formal processes of the university was cited as particularly onerous for two Chairpersons since 'there are some who simply do not want to hear the concerns of others, but the role of the Chairperson is to put those views of the meeting, whether you agree with them yourself or not'. Knowing when to push for something and when to back off was considered part of the strategic process that comes with experience.

9.2 The role of the Chair from a male perspective

Two male former Chairpersons were interviewed, and their views of the role resonated with that of their female colleagues, however their perception of responsibility was much more individualised than the responses of the female incumbents. For example, the male chairpersons interviewed were more likely to perceive taking responsibility for the decisions of the meeting by guiding the debate in a particular direction, rather than facilitating it in an objective manner.

Those interviewed also viewed conflict and difference differently – competitive rather than relational – with comments such as 'opposing views is a good thing rather than conflict, but people come with a pre-determined position, lobby the numbers and the meeting is the "showdown" and 'the worst meetings are where the battle lines are drawn and individuals or groups posture on their set positions'.

Generally, males tended to find that raising issues or views after the meeting was most unhelpful. However, one male understood the difficulties and tensions involved in 'observing that there is an issue there for a committee member, but [they are] not prepared to raise it – I can understand the element of risk/exposure at some of these meetings'.

9.3 The role of the Chair – participants' perspectives

Generally, participants appreciated the improvement in meeting process (largely attributed to the discussion generated by the passage of the revised Standing Orders) and appreciated for the approach taken by female predecessors. However, one male did make the comment that 'meetings were a bit all over the place at the moment, but no doubt that will come with experience!', whereas women commented that 'the process has really improved from rubber stamping'. It was noted that some women felt they had a real investment in the success of the female Chairpersons: 'I have put a lot of effort into helping the female Chairpersons be successful and purposefully sought the support of key men [in this]. As a result, I think meetings are now more peaceful, more respectful and being listened to is, yes, more satisfying.'

10 Summary of findings

Based on the structured observations and a response rate to the questionnaire of around 80%, findings are consistent with the literature: that despite increased representation of women on committees, men continue to dominate meetings, taking up between 58% and 86% of the speaking time – well in excess of their level of representation.

The analysis of meetings observed also revealed a distinct speaking pattern that showed men favouring a ‘four minute monologue’ while women tended to make short, succinct comments. This level and type of meeting domination, designed to assert their presence and their own point of view, is only partially explained by seniority or status.

Other significant factors identified by the research are consistent with the existing literature and confirm the anecdotal experience of the majority of women. In summary:

- women perceive their role on committees as being representatives of constituencies and having a responsibility to put forward a range of views, in order to reach a satisfactory outcome for all; men perceive their role differently;
- women report themselves to feel, and to a significant extent are observed to be, more likely to be ignored by the Chair and their colleagues around the committee table than are men;
- women appear to be more likely to raise ideas and questions which lead to informed debate and decision making, but are less likely to have their contribution acknowledged;
- women report that they notice, and are inhibited by, the inappropriate personal and sometimes aggressive nature of committee debate, whereas men do not;
- women report themselves to be, to a far greater extent than men, more sensitive to behaviour that inhibits and/or encourages participation, including paternalism and trivialisation of their presence;
- women report, to a far greater extent than men, feeling less confident and more intimidated in addressing the meeting;
- women report, to a far greater extent than men, being unable to say what they would really like to and being less likely to feel satisfied with their contribution;
- levels of confidence, intimidation and participation in debate all appear to be related, to some extent, with position in the hierarchical structure, and level of experience in meetings.

11 Positive change over time

The majority of those interviewed, men and women, acknowledged that over their period of committee membership, change has been for the better. In particular, the clarifying of the role of Chair and introduction of Standing Orders were cited as having a positive effect on the atmosphere and conduct of meetings.

Some (female) participants had attended the workshops conducted by the Equity and Social Justice Branch and had found them most useful in identifying ways in which they could address issues or behaviours which contributed to unsatisfactory experiences in meetings. Again, information

on formal meeting procedures – even if it was hardly ever used – was found to be confidence-boosting. Women found that sharing experiences and discovering that others responded to the same things in the same way was empowering; 'At least it's not just my inadequacy' commented one. As important to most was the opportunity to discuss different as well as shared experiences, including different perspectives on the same behaviour.

Several commented on the satisfaction of being more involved in the university, of knowing what was happening beyond the boundaries of their office or area. Some valued the opportunity to challenge the thinking and assumptions of others and that, over time, this produced more thoughtful outcomes.

Comments that reflected the period of change and turbulence that the university had been through, in establishing a sense of identity, were also threaded through some of the comments from participants. There was some nostalgia expressed for the traditions associated with past institutions, but also some satisfaction in drawing on the best of each to move the new university forward.

The majority of participants found their membership of the committee on which they had served, a satisfying and rewarding one on reflection. If a further term was no longer being sought, it tended to be because of time commitments, being no longer eligible, or a genuine belief that a change of membership was a good thing. One (male) commented that it was most important to encourage other people to participate since 'it is sometimes hard to let go, but that can sometimes be the biggest barrier to change'.

11.1 Conclusions

Despite the limitations of the research, which is necessarily confined to the perceptions and experiences of a number of participants over a relatively short period of time, conclusions may be drawn that confirm other research in other times and places and which add to our overall understanding of the gendered dynamic and culture of the decision making process.

Eleanor Ramsay has commented on the importance of naming behaviours, for example sexual harassment, that marginalise women managers because

while it is men's behaviour which is the problem, without the words to describe, objectify, analyse, discuss and understand this behaviour, and its effects, it is women's reaction to this behaviour which becomes the observable phenomenon; hence the body of management literature which explores women's 'difficulties' with senior management. And the inability to describe and analyse men's behaviour in this context, and its effects on women, contributes to the construction of meaning and interpretation ... which posits men's behaviour as the norm against which women's reaction is the aberration. Finally, this leads to women accepting the situation as inevitable and as arising from their own limitations and inadequacies as participants.

(Ramsay, 1993, p. 49)

In much the same way, the structural and institutional power that is derived by the convergence of status, tenure, expectations of gender roles and behaviours that fulfil those expectations, produce the 'fragility of voice' that is the observed experience of women on committees. Dale Spender comments that 'when women's experience of the world and of themselves is different from the male definitions of the world and of

women, there is no conceptual space to accommodate women's experience' (Spender, 1981 in Ramsay, 1993, p. 48). Not only should the reported fragility of voice exercise our minds, but also deconstructing, exposing and eliminating the powerful and, at times, overwhelming elements that create and maintain the environment in which that fragility will flourish and women's voices remain unheard.

To speak but remain unheard is not only a most frustrating experience for the individuals concerned, but one where the institution as a whole suffers. The opportunity to acknowledge difference, and the capacity to negotiate space in which those differences can be heard across, as well as between, gender and groups, is essential to overcoming the stereotypes that relate to no one but lock everyone into a fragile (im)balance of power.

It seems clear from this research and elsewhere, that each individual brings to the decision making process a unique and valuable set of experiences and perceptions that shape and inform the values which underpin outcomes. The extent to which outcomes can vary, participation is encouraged or inhibited by a strategically raised eyebrow, cough, eye contact or the like, renders the process highly capricious, captured by time, space, context and the dynamic of the moment. It suggests that the decision making process is cast within a subjectively experienced, gendered culture that seeks to rationalise the objective by dismissing or dichotomising the subjective. To respond, we must develop strategies that will foster a more mature approach to the decision making process: one that is more respectful to those who bring a necessarily diverse and subjective experience to it, and is capable of accommodating difference without compromising the integrity of the outcomes. The individuals that make up university committees are asking for nothing more, and the decision making processes of the university deserve nothing less.

11.2 So, where to from here?

The research suggests that a range of programmes aimed at improving individuals' understandings of their own and others' communication styles, patterns of access, etc., would be useful in improving the decision making process. In that regard, programmes that target the structures of the university, university community, and women only, should be continued. These programmes might include:

(a) The structures of the university

- A practice of ensuring that meetings begin with common understandings about the terms of reference by providing an opportunity for members to discuss their role and responsibilities; the way in which they will conduct themselves to achieve agreed objectives using university Standing Orders; de-mystifying the role of the Chair and Secretariat; inviting access to agenda-setting rather than assuming all members know or feel equally comfortable initiating discussions.
- The development of performance indicators and appraisal that addresses the role of management in valuing diversity, particularly in terms of meeting EEO/AA goals and objectives for all managers and supervisors.
- Greater accountability in the election process, including the filling of casual vacancies.
- Consideration of providing for co-option or observer positions to provide experience on committees for women and others who may be reluctant to either put themselves forward or who would be nominated under the eligibility rigidity.

- Encourage universities to consider process and structural issues in questions 1.8 to 1.10 of the Affirmative Action Report and elsewhere in the report that might encourage consideration of how decisions are made, as well as reporting on outcomes.

(b) The university community

- Workshops to develop better gender relations across the university, which are more respectful of difference in style and contribution, particularly in decision making forums.
- Continue to offer workshops with a strong interactive focus on:
 - effective participation in decision making;
 - team building and leadership; and
 - chairing meetings, inclusive practice.
- Address issues of communication skills, styles and gender relations in all professional development and training programmes run by the university, particularly in management and supervision courses, including assertiveness not aggressiveness.

(c) Individual development programmes for women

- Women-only focus groups to share strategies on boosting confidence to participate, lobby and network with influential people (which often means men).
- Assertiveness training for women.

References

Affirmative Action Agency Final Report, AGPS (1992) *Quality and Commitment*.

Blackmore, J. (1993) 'Towards postmasculinist institutional policies' in D. Baker and M. Fogarty (eds) *A Gendered Culture: Educational Management in the '90s*, VUT, Published Papers.

Marshall, J. paper given at the Women in Leadership Conference, Perth, December 1994 (in publication).

Ramsay, E. (1993) 'Linguistic omissions marginalising women managers', in D. Baker and M. Fogarty (eds), *A Gendered Culture: Educational Management in the '90s*, VUT, Published Papers.

Sinclair, A. (1994) *Trials at the Top*, University of Melbourne Australia Centre.

Spender, D. (1983), *Women of Ideas (and what men have done to them)*, Ark Paperbacks.

Tannen, D. (1991), *You Just Don't Understand: Men and Women in Conversation*, Virago.

Tannen, D. (1994), *Talking from 9–5: how women's and men's conversational style affect who gets heard, who gets credit, and what gets done at work*, Virago.

Thorne, B., Kramarae, C. and Henley N. (eds) (1983) *Language, Gender and Society*, Cambridge, Newbury House Publishers.

Appendix 1: Victoria University of Technology EEO/AA management plan objectives

1. To maximise the understanding of the Equal Employment Opportunity Programme and commitment to its implementation at all levels of management within the university.
2. To ensure that all members of the university staff know the standards of behaviour required of them in order for equal employment to be achieved within the university.
3. To ensure that merit is the basis of selection and promotion within all parts of the university and that opportunities for career progress are open to all employees on the basis of their skills and expertise.
4. To ensure that the structures policies and procedures of the university contribute as far as possible to the establishment of equal employment opportunity for all its employees.
5. To ensure that equal employment opportunity considerations are an integral part of human resource management policies, procedures and practices within the university, including industrial relations, award provisions and enterprise bargaining.
6. To provide the opportunity to all employees to maximise their workforce skills and to broaden their areas of expertise.
7. To ensure that the university has a sufficient understanding of the composition of its workforce through the staff profile data, so as to give employees the opportunity to utilise their skills and experience fully.
8. To take whatever special measures may be necessary beyond the general implementation of equal opportunity to utilise as fully as possible within the university the potential contribution of identified disadvantaged groups.
9. To ensure that all employees have access to information about the EEO/AA programme to assist staff in realising their potential contribution to the university.
10. To provide employees with access to a means of redress to any injustices or impediment to equal employment opportunity that they may experience in the university.
11. To monitor the effectiveness of both the objectives and strategies of the EEO programme in achieving its mission within the university.
12. To ensure that equity is the basis for conferring all forms of employment benefit within the University.
13. To encourage an increase in the proportion of women employed in areas where they are currently under-represented.
14. To aim to achieve an improved gender balance on the university's major decision making committees by 1995.

Appendix 2: Victoria University of Technology Act 1990

Academic Board	COUNCIL	Board of TAFE
Committees	Committees	Committees
Sub-committees	Sub-committees	Sub-committees

Background

By way of background, the University of Victoria Act (1990) establishes the governance of the university whereby 'the Council is the governing authority of the university and has the management and superintendence of the university'. The Act provides, inter alia, the membership, terms of office, procedures for election, filling of casual vacancies, the chair, meeting procedures, and powers of Council. As the governing body of the university, Council oversees all areas of the university's operations. This is achieved by the establishment of a number of permanent and ad hoc committees which report to Council on a range of issues from the capital works programme to student loans.

The Academic Board is similarly established under the Act 'for the purposes of academic oversight, including the provision of advice to the Council on the conduct and content of prescribed academic programmes and courses of study of higher education of the university'. Like Council, a number of permanent and ad hoc committees or working groups have been established which report to Academic Board on matters ranging from post-graduate studies programmes to affirmative action.

Victoria University is a dual sector institution, therefore the Act also establishes the Board of Technical and Further Education which reports to Council on matters relating to the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector of the university. Like Council and Academic Board, it has established a number of permanent and ad hoc committees which report to it on a range of issues.

The sub-committees and working groups of Council, Academic Board and Board of TAFE are smaller groups which are established by the parent committee either as a permanent standing committee which would report to each meeting, or as an ad hoc working group which is established to consider a particular issue and would report until its task had been completed and then be dissolved. The membership of both standing committees and working groups is drawn from members of the committee together with others from the university community who have an interest or expertise in the area.

Appendix 3: Behaviour observation

AGENDA ITEM No:

	Male	Female	Comments
Intro. topic			
Discussion			
Procedural outcome			
Chair			
Supportive behaviours			
Negative behaviours			

Appendix 4b: Effective participation in decision making

15. Did you feel intimidated addressing the meeting today? Yes / No

16. Did you say what you really wanted to today? Yes / No

17. Did you feel satisfied with your contribution to the meeting today? Yes / No

18. If not, why not:

19. To what extent, in a range from 1 to 4, do you think the following assist effective participation in meetings?

(Please circle one number for each)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
1	2	3	4	Open ended questions
1	2	3	4	Laughter
1	2	3	4	Nod of appreciation
1	2	3	4	Personal invitation to speak
1	2	3	4	Knowledge of topic
1	2	3	4	Knowledge of meeting procedure

20. To what extent, in a range from 1–4, do you think the following inhibit effective participation?

(Please circle one number for each)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
1	2	3	4	Side conversations
1	2	3	4	Request to repeat or clarify your comments
1	2	3	4	No response to comments
1	2	3	4	Blank faces
1	2	3	4	Laughter
1	2	3	4	No knowledge of topic
1	2	3	4	No knowledge of meeting procedure

21. Would you like to make any other comments about today's meeting?

Appendix 5: Interview questions

Questions explored the following issues:

1. What does effective participation in meetings mean to you?
2. How do you judge or measure your level of satisfaction with
 - (a) meeting process
 - (b) meeting outcomes
3. How do you prepare for meetings?
4. What weight do you put on a feeling that decisions are made outside the meetings?
How does action tend to be developed out of the questions and issues raised at meetings? What might contribute to this?
5. Only women reported noting anything personal or aggressive at meetings. How did you answer/interpret this question? How might you interpret this outcome?
6. Did you attend any of the workshops run by the Equity and Social Justice Branch:
 - Effective participation in meetings
 - Team building and leadership
 - Charing meetings: inclusive practice
7. Were they helpful? How?
8. There was a strong endorsement of the things listed in Questions 19 and 20 of the questionnaire that attempted to identify behaviours that might inhibit or encourage participation. Do these findings resonate with you? Anything to add?
9. Overall, women reported themselves to be least satisfied with their contribution to debate and participation generally, yet paradoxically the most satisfied with committee decisions and teamwork. What do you think might contribute to this?
10. Do you, on reflection over the research period (i.e. Semester Two, 1994), feel satisfied with your membership and participation on the committee.
11. How long have you been involved with this committee? Have the meetings, and your satisfaction/participation, changed over your whole time of involvement?
What has affected that?
12. Would you nominate for another term? Another Committee? If not, why not?



Research Paper 2

Feminism and research

By Gaby Weiner, PhD

This paper is reproduced with permission from: G. Weiner (1994),
Feminism in Education, Buckingham, Open University Press.

About this research paper

This chapter, reprinted with permission from *Feminism in Education: an introduction*, considers questions about how feminist praxis in its many versions relates to research. In this context, the author's and others' efforts to develop and implement a feminist research praxis, while undertaking a funded research project, are discussed. The chapter would be of special interest to those using the modules 'Women and Research' and 'Academic Leadership'.

I Feminism and research

Feminism has been viewed as a paradigm of modernity and, as such, many feminists have been content to work within modernist research conventions at the same time as attempting to place the social construction of gender at the centre of their enquiry (Hekman, 1990; Griffiths, 1992; Weiner, 1992). Yet feminism has played a vanguard role in challenging science's epistemological foundations which are rooted in modernity, by anticipating (and engaging with) many of the recent debates arising from post-structuralism and post-modernism. Thus challenges have been made to universal, patriarchal, research paradigms, i.e. the study of 'man' (e.g. Stanley and Wise, 1983); positivism's claim to neutrality and objectivity (e.g. Harding, 1987); the distortion and invisibility of the female experience (Smith, 1978); the notion of the autonomous and rational individual as the main goal of education (Walkerdine, 1990); the extent to which educational research itself can challenge inequality (Weiner, 1990); and arguments put forward about the shifting category of 'woman' as outlined in the post-structural writing of Weedon (1987) and Riley (1988) and so on.

More specifically, feminist researchers have concentrated as much on the 'how', the practice of research, as on findings and knowledge-claims. For example, Oakley (1981) and the authors in the influential 'Theories of Women's Studies' collection (Bowles and Duelli Klein, 1983) reject positivist 'cold' approaches of the 'scientific' method in favour of more interactive, contextualised methods both to improve the experience for women of being researched and 'in search of pattern and meaning rather than for prediction and control' (Lather, 1991, p. 72). This, in turn, has led to questions, for example, about power relations within the research process (Riddell, 1989), the necessary reflexivity of the researcher (Lather, 1991) and the need for feminist emphasis on the importance of subjectivity and personal involvement in the research process (Stanley and Wise, 1990).

It is also clear, however, that there is no one inclusive feminist research method and in fact, feminism itself is a site of struggle over meaning (for a discussion of the disagreements and contradictions within feminism, see Hirsch and Fox Keller, 1990). Nevertheless, as has already been pointed out, embedded in feminist research as a form of praxis is a concern about the practices and processes of research (and this is where it differs from the work of Stenhouse and Schon) which also engages with social justice/injustice, from a vantage point which may be viewed as more (or differently) illuminating than other vantage points (see Harding, 1990, and also Hill Collins, 1990, for discussion of a black, feminist vantage point). Further, Smith argues that standpoint theory has crucial cultural as well as empirical consequences for women by: 'taking up the standpoint of women as an experience of being, of society, of social and personal process which

must be given form and expression within the culture' (Smith, 1978, p. 294). Although currently popular, the standpoint theory nevertheless has drawn criticism since it is quite obvious that certain feminist standpoints, for example those of white, academic, middle-class feminists, have clear predominance over others such as the 'silenced feminist standpoints' of black and lesbian feminist epistemology (Stanley and Wise, 1990).

2 Identifying feminist praxis

What might a feminist praxis look like, then, which draws on the debates arising out of feminism, pedagogy and research; that includes the full range of women (feminists?) involved in education, whether as teachers, researchers, academics, parents, administrators, etc., and that is applicable to the various contexts of education, from the primary classroom to the university lecture theatre? What might a feminist praxis look like that, in drawing on the work of Freire, Schon, Stenhouse, Carr and Kemmis, Lather and Stanley, also embodies the moral/political stance of feminism suggested by Griffiths?

Patti Lather uses praxis as an organising principle of feminist pedagogy and research. For Lather, 'praxis is the self-creative activity through which we make the world ... it is the central concept of a philosophy that did not want to remain a philosophy, philosophy becoming practical' (1991, p. 11). Drawing on Gramsci's appeal for adherence to a praxis of the present, Lather argues that it should illuminate the lived experiences of progressive or oppressed groups and itself should be illuminated by their struggles. She also suggests that praxis requires both 'reciprocity' as a means of consciously empowering those involved to change their situation and 'reflexivity' as a means of progressing critical enquiry. Thus, it seems that feminist praxis constitutes a fusion of values, theoretical perspectives and practice, with a specific grounding in feminist epistemology.

The fusion is visible in Stanley's (1990) broader use of the term more to connect three themes within feminist research. First, praxis constitutes an indication of a continuing feminist commitment to changing the world rather than merely researching it; the term should not, however, be used as a signifier for one particular feminist position (Stanley criticises Lather for applying praxis exclusively to action research). Second, praxis rejects the 'theory/research' divide, uniting 'manual and intellectual activities which are symbiotically related' (Stanley 1990, p. 15). Third, it dissolves the methodological/epistemological split in which 'method' is the relatively insignificant 'how' subordinated to the significant 'what' – the knowledge that is being sought. Here, then, the vision of feminist praxis is further extended to encompass not only theory, action and values but also has the epistemological aim of challenging and dissolving conventional, regulative dualisms such as male/female, mental/manual, black/white, theory/practice, and so on.

In fact, from the earliest days of modern feminism, demands for change involved praxis issues: for instance, calling for the 'personal as political', namely expecting people to live out their overtly egalitarian political values in private as well as in public life or for the development of 'woman-friendly' non-hierarchical and non-conflictual settings and practices. How to act on inequalities in power relationships has also been viewed as an important element of feminist practice, as is usefully illustrated in the recent debate in the United States about how differences

within feminism can be questioned without resorting to the conflictual male academic model of attack, defence, counter-attack, etc. In particular, concerns were expressed about how different feminists may be positioned within such a discourse:

Feminists have a lot of trouble with our own authority (that of senior academic women) because women are still not generally in power. If we hold to a general (feminist) perspective we are still powerless victims oppressed as women. But if we talk about the world in which we operate, the small academic world of literary criticism, feminists do have power.

(Gallop et al., 1990, p. 354)

Quite clearly, then, the demands of a feminist, critical praxis are likely to be numerous, complex and highly contested, though this should not detract from any attempts to develop one. Moreover, it will certainly contain some, if not all, of the following features:

- deriving from experience and rooted in practice;
- continually subject to revision as a result of experience;
- reflexive and self-reflexive;
- widely accessible and open to change;
- grounded in the analysis of women's (and men's) multiple and different material realities;
- illuminative of women's (and men's) multiple and different experiences and material realities;
- explicitly political and value-led;
- within the classroom, imbued with feminist organisational practices grounded in equality, non-hierarchy and democracy;
- within educational research, additionally rejecting conventional dualisms such as theory/practice, mental/manual, epistemology/methodology.

3 Developing a feminist research praxis

I have attempted, thus far, to discuss how the notion of feminist praxis has been treated within the classroom, within research and within feminism generally. In this section I want to show how the concern to develop a feminist ethic or praxis shaped the method, organisation and analysis of a particular project with which I was involved whose main aim was to explore the 'practice' of equal opportunities policy in colleges and universities. In particular, I focus on the concerns of members of the project team about their own research practice in the context of ideas about feminist praxis as outlined above.¹ The project was not without its problems – illness of team members, lack of resources, difficulties of liaison with case-study institutions, occasional differences of perspective between project team members and so on – but it is my view that the careful reflections on the research process at the onset of the project gave us a framework for dealing with each problem as it arose.

¹ The research team for the Equity and Staffing Project (funded by the FSRC, No. R000 23 3301) comprised Janet Powney and Joanna McPake from the Scottish Council for Research in Education, and Maureen Farish and Gaby Weiner from South Bank University.

Briefly, the project which started in November 1991 and was completed in March 1994, had the determinedly social justice brief of promoting greater equity for staff in colleges and universities. It involved detailed and longitudinal (two-year) case-studies of three educational institutions, one each from the further education (vocational college), new university (ex-polytechnic) and traditional university sectors. A variety of research methods were used including formal and group interviews; informal conversations and dialogues; questionnaires; documentary analyses; observation of events, people, meetings and buildings; staff audits; and, in two cases, tracking the senior manager. The project's chosen methodology – the policy case-study – seemed to rest easily within the feminist research paradigm in that it was multi-method and anti-positivist, aiming to be interactive and reciprocal, attentive to subjectivities, potentially flexible and richly descriptive.

In an early project paper, Maureen Farish and I argued for the adoption of a multi-theory, multi-method approach to the project (drawing on 'grounded theory', 'case-study', 'organisational theory' and 'feminist epistemology') (Farish and Weiner, 1992). However, feminist epistemology appeared to be the most crucial of the methodological approaches to the investigation and implementation of equal opportunities, in allowing possibilities for both the promotion of greater equality and recognition of differences. The concern of the researchers about the principles of ethical practice led us to focus on a number of different issues: in particular, composition of the project team, project organisation, reflexivity and reciprocity of the research process, analysis and presentation of findings. We also realised that praxis demanded greater explicitness about the research process rather than the relatively greater emphasis, conventionally, on findings and resultant contribution to knowledge.

3.1 The project team

The research team comprised four white women from various ethnic backgrounds, at different levels in academia and of different ages and stages in their lives and careers. Two of us worked at South Bank University in London and two at the Scottish Council for Research in Education in Edinburgh, Scotland. None of us was full time as the project was relatively low-funded (approximately £40,000 over 30 months) but the fact that the project work was spread across the four of us meant that we felt able to share perspectives, interests, decisions and responsibilities, and also to provide 'cover' for other project members where necessary.

The principles of feminist research were seen by us as applicable to forms of humanist research relating to groups other than women. Thus, by adopting a 'feminist standpoint' for the project which recognises differences between women, it also provided the framework for the recognition of differences within and between other social groupings. As Cockburn (1980, p. 10) notes:

Men tell us 'women cannot claim to be equal if they are different from men. You have to choose'. We now have a reply. If we say, as women, we can be both the same as you and different from you, at various times and in various ways. We can also be the same and different from each other. What we are seeking is not in fact equality but equivalence, not sameness for individual women and men but parity for women as a sex, or for groups of women in the specificity.

We are conscious, however, that as white women, the researchers represented one main segment of under-representation (due to the unintended exclusion of black researchers from the project team because of the structural racism of the contract research process). We aimed to

redress this imbalance by having a more representative project advisory group and also by being particularly alert to issues of 'race' and ethnicity and other forms of inequality in our research practice. However, we were also conscious of the significance of the absence of a black feminist standpoint from our research.

3.2 Project organisation

The structure of the project was designed to be relatively flat and non-hierarchical, though, inevitably, status differences between project members could not entirely be eradicated. As the project director, I took main responsibility for general administration including organising project meetings, writing and distributing minutes and taking any necessary follow-up action. I was also responsible for the overall smooth running of the project, filling any pressing gaps in the fieldwork. Each of the other researchers (Maureen Farish, Joanna McPake and Janet Powney) had the main responsibility for one of the case-studies and also played a 'minor' role in a second case-study, taking a share of the fieldwork and having some familiarity with the specific institutional context.

In the course of the project, as might be expected, several of the researchers had a period of time away from the project. The collaborative nature of the project organisation worked well at these times in that it allowed for researchers to cover for each other but also to 'slow down' the pace of the research to accommodate any relatively short-term absences or problems. Maintaining a reasonable level of communication between members of the research team was also a significant factor in the project organisation since the case-study institutions and our own institutional bases are relatively geographically dispersed, the researchers sometimes worked from home and all had other professional and personal responsibilities and commitments. Also travel funds were severely limited, therefore communication between the researchers necessarily needed to be flexible and continuous. However, by exploiting relatively recent developments in communication technologies, we managed to maintain regular contacts through the telephone (for individual calls and regular 'formal' telephone conferences), the fax and termly face-to-face meetings in London or Edinburgh.

3.3 Research process

Initially, access to the case-study institutions was negotiated with the senior management, though the research team were conscious of the pitfalls (and advantages) of such a top-down research entry. Some degree of 'protection' for both researchers and staff from the case-study institutions was gained, however, through agreement to 'ethical guidelines' involving access to information, opportunities to respond and amend research accounts and guaranteed anonymity, where possible. Thus, all research accounts were returned to appropriate staff members to check for meaning and accuracy.

Nevertheless, it became apparent fairly early on that in some instances, the project was being used by institutions as part of their agenda-setting and public relations objectives. Also, some interviewees and respondents revealed their anxiety and feelings of vulnerability concerning their own institutional positioning by the manner in which they scrutinised the research accounts, eradicating any perceived contentious statements. Certainly, in one case, statements about the difficulties for gay members

of staff were eliminated from an interview account, generating much discussion in the research team about who had ultimate control over the research data. We questioned, for instance, whether it is ethical in all instances for an interviewee to retain control over the research account!

Different research approaches were replicated across institutions: for example, those of tracking a senior manager, following through the staff recruitment process and distributing a questionnaire eliciting the response of the main body of staff to equal opportunity policy making. The intention was not to compare policies and practices within institutions which have very different histories and cultures, but rather to seek understanding through the prism of difference.

3.4 Analysis

A common problem with collecting data drawn from a wide range of sources and by a variety of methods is how to develop a coherent and plausible analysis: that is, what to do with the data that sits there 'sprawling, diffuse, undefined and diverse' (Loflund, quoted in Lather, 1991, p. 124). Although the main form of analysis was to organise and present the data as case-studies, we drew on other research studies of equal opportunities policy making (Cockburn 1989, 1991; Jenkins and Solomos, 1989; Faludi, 1991) to build a more analytic framework around certain key points. These include:

- *disappointment* – in the failure of previous policies relating to equal opportunities;
- *difference/specificity* – of groups, institutions, individuals, contexts, agendas, cultures;
- *resistance* – or 'backlash', of groups, individuals, to equal opportunities policies;
- *contradiction* – in interpretation of equal opportunities and between institutional imperatives and staff cultures;
- *universalising tendencies* – of policies which see subordinate groups as homogeneous, for example, being devised to suit all women or only black staff (or in research terms, claiming that feminist understanding is sufficient to understand the position of other oppressed groups);
- *power relations* – in policy making, between management and main-grade staff, and in the research process, e.g. between white researchers and black respondents, or between low-status (female) researchers and high-status (male) respondents.

One way of taking the above elements into account in the analysis was to focus on the specifics of a 'moment' in the research, adapting Lewis's powerful notion of a 'pedagogical moment' and drawing also on case-study methodology as a means of using multiple sources of evidence to focus on an instance (Hakim, 1987). The attempt was made to bring together feminist values, theory and practice within feminist praxis in order to create new analytical practices and critical meanings which could, nevertheless, be applied more generally:

as a way of analysing how they [discursive practices] are structured, what power relations they produce and reproduce, where there are resistances and where we might look for weak points more open to challenge and transformation.

(Weedon, 1987, p. 137)

3.5 Utilising the moment!

One such 'moment', which will now be discussed in some detail, involved four individual interviews on staff perceptions of equal opportunities policy, taking place on the same wet and windy day in May in the same higher education institution. The interviews were arranged by the main case-study researcher who gained access to staff via the Dean of Faculty. Another member of the research team did the interviewing using a semi-structured interview schedule covering knowledge of, and involvement and sympathy with, the institution's equal opportunities policy. The interviewees were sent a copy of the questions prior to their interview.

The variety of possible classifications of the interviewees serves to reveal the potentiality for 'fragmentation' of the research subject. For example, all the interviewees were white; two were relatively high status: male dean (H); female professor (J) and two relatively low status: male, semi-retired part-time lecturer (K); young, female research assistant (L); two were male (H and K) and two were female (J and L); two were long-established staff members (H and K) and two were relatively new (J and L); one (L) was much younger than the other three, etc.

The interviews took place in the interviewees' rooms or rooms of their own choosing. All seemed willing to be interviewed, were polite and, though having cleared time to be interviewed, were clearly busy. What is evident from the field-notes is that each interviewee, rather than reveal any hidden 'truth' or new perspective, appeared swiftly to take up a position, to 'claim an identity' (Maclure, 1993) in relation to equal opportunities and in relation to the university.

Thus, K (male, part-time lecturer) identified himself both as a long-time staff member and is having views typical of the institution as a whole – though he felt perhaps that he was rather more advanced in his thinking compared with some of his colleagues in the all-male department in which he works. According to the field-notes:²

K would think that his view on equal opportunities is shared by the university, and [he] is fairly comfortable with the current EO policy ... in the main, most staff have been fairly indifferent ... While changes have occurred, there are lecturers who are less open to influence than K. But then, K is probably less responsive than he would like to be.

In contrast, L (female, research assistant) portrayed herself as quite angry, in particular, about the day-to-day behaviour of colleagues and would like more done about the 'jocular' sexist remarks of male colleagues whereby 'points are still scored and the "correct" message sent' and understood! She felt herself to be already 'way ahead of the language guidelines provided' and expressed disappointment in her lack of involvement in equal opportunities policy making. She identified most with being female, young and on a temporary contract; so overall, though 'L regards herself as receptive and interested in any development' her conclusions about the university equal opportunities policy was that it is 'disappointing'.

H presented himself as a well-respected, hard-working and long-standing member of the university with a good research record. He was very aware of the 'still very powerful senior management and lay individuals who are

² All the field-notes and accounts of interviews quoted here were checked and validated by the main project participants and interviewees.

instinctively rather than intellectually opposed to EO. Most can deal with women on court only if they can flirt ... [they] cannot cope with those who "talk back". Yet H managed to help ease or 'nod through' official policy and support the activities of various feminists in his faculty. He was the only one of those interviewed to provide an overview of how equal opportunities had developed over the years – as a result of the variable efforts of the three university principals. For instance, he remembered that the 'gender specific language booklet created real "rage" among some lay members of court'. H reasoned that, though considerable progress has been made by the university, there were still major problems and 'it is still not taken as seriously as it should be'.

Finally, J (recently-appointed female professor) appeared to have the most sophisticated and knowledgeable perception of the strengths and limitations of the institution's equal opportunities policy. She reported that though there seemed to be little overt discrimination against women, there were only three female professors, no female heads of department or deans and no women in the senior management group. There was also no thorough-going support of equal opportunities, no proper monitoring, and no attempt made to ensure female representation on the important university committees: 'thus women have no purchase over resource allocation'. Moreover, the university culture was strongly male, middle-aged, and middle-class.

Despite this catalogue of poor practice and 'want of a system', J did not appear as angry as L – perhaps because she had moved, at least to some degree, through the 'glass ceiling' and was less vulnerable to the day-to-day sexism of male colleagues. As to her view on the university's equal opportunities policy, she intimated that there was a degree of smugness at higher levels: 'It's a bit of a "curate's egg"'. There are some good things happening but the university still has a long way to go.'

3.6 Analysing the specifics of the moment

This 'moment' focuses on the receivers and interpreters of equal opportunities policy in one higher education institution. What is noticeable in the interviews of K (part-time lecturer) and L (research assistant) is how 'in the dark' about policy they were compared with H (male dean) and J (female professor). Thus, the interviewees' knowledge of policy, their support and resistance, their identification with and criticism of policy, all seemed closely related to their immediate professional and personal contexts – and to their multiple realities. The two female interviewees would, no doubt, have identified themselves as feminists, if asked. Yet their perception of the policy and its actual (or potential) impact on their immediate circumstances, their bargaining power in the market-place, their differential positioning in the power-knowledge practices within the policy discourse of their institution, all served to highlight their differences rather than their shared interests. However, their shared experience of sexist practices enabled them to offer a sharper perspective on the 'problem' of inequality than their male colleagues.

The two male interviewees, in contrast, portrayed themselves as more detached, more 'rational', more distanced from equal opportunities concerns. They both suggested that it was vociferous feminists in their faculty and outside the university who had raised the stakes and/or created the fuss. They, themselves, seemed somehow frozen on the

sidelines, able to act only in offering or withdrawing their support. Further, whilst H appeared to have a genuine commitment to enhancing equality within the university, it seemed to be related more to altruism than to any deeply-felt passion for challenging existing practices or material conditions that might affect him.

In fact, what most united the two male interviewees was their concern to dismiss 'positive action' – it was not mentioned by either of the female interviewees. In K's case, though he acknowledged that discrimination goes on (and, indeed, provided examples), he asserted his absolute opposition to any positive action strategies in favour of women. In H's case, while he articulated a sympathy for positive action, his insistence that there would be insufficient support for it to have any chance of being adopted as university policy has similar implications. 'Positive action', possibly the most 'radical' of the policies available, thus, was used ritually by the men as a signifier for marking the boundaries of equal opportunity policy making.

This 'moment', it is hoped, serves to show how the adoption of a post-structural feminist standpoint for the analysis enabled the identification of the specifics that underlie policy and practice in a patriarchal society while at the same time allowing for differences, other than gender, also to have significance.

3.7 Presentation of findings

There were a number of stages through which the findings of the project passed in order to enter the public domain: accounts were written up, sent back to those involved to check for accuracy and meaning, incorporated into regular report-backs to the case-study institutions and to various advisory groups, and incorporated into academic papers and the final report. Overall, the main aims of the project were to get to some sort of 'truth' about the policy-making process and to enhance the effectiveness of those attempting to promote greater equality. So, clearly, the manner in which we framed the report-backs was important, and indeed was carefully discussed beforehand. For example, were we going to be challenging or congratulatory, critical or sympathetic? Were we going to play the naive researcher or the seasoned academic? Most of all, what we sought from the institutions involved in the study was to win them over to a more highly-prioritised commitment to equality and, through the research data provided on their institution, to help them explore how they could best move forward.

In fact, though there were illuminating and cheering exceptions, the patterns that we found and reported were depressingly familiar: for example, a predominance of staffing structures with exclusively (white) male chief executives, senior management including some women but few black staff, women more likely to have main responsibilities and posts for equal opportunities rather than being in the key 'power' positions of senior management, etc. Moreover, those women (black or white) who had achieved senior positions suffered from feelings of visibility and isolation, hostility from (male) subordinates and sometimes from colleagues, patronising behaviour from their bosses, overload and overwork, and continually being viewed as the abnormal 'other' – or just simply not 'one of the boys'. At the same time, there seemed to be a continual need to revise and update policy initiatives, intimations of a backlash waiting to be unleashed and problems (and possibilities) arising from the multiple positioning of staff members in relation to equality issues – often simultaneously supportive and resistant.

An added difficulty was that the two-year period in which we conducted the research was one of immense and continual change across all the sectors represented by the case-study institutions. Instigated by the British government policy orientated towards the market, the case-study institutions experienced amalgamations, important changes in status, institutional name-changes, internal restructuring and re-organisation, resultant relocation of work and office space and so on. Thus, while the project, in the main, was welcomed by those working in the institutions involved, equality as a policy issue was viewed as going down rather than up the policy agenda.

4 Is this feminist praxis?

In attempting to articulate a feminist research praxis, I have considered the emergence of the notion of praxis within education, and attempted to envisage a feminist praxis, drawing on recent discussions within feminist research and feminist pedagogy. In accordance with the explicit requirement within praxis of 'openness' and 'reflexivity', I have also provided some detail on the structure and organisation of a particular research study with which I have been involved, in order to expose its praxis orientation.

Did our practice as researchers meet the requirements of a feminist research praxis? Was it characterised by the following: greater explicitness about the research process, for instance, concerning organisational arrangements, how decisions are made, the theoretical and methodological frameworks used etc.; evidence of reflexivity and self-reflexivity of researchers and a willingness to be open to criticism; flexibility of research methodology based on some form of reflection on practice; existence of a feminist consciousness, and in particular, of a clear understanding of the implicit and explicit power relations within the research team, between the researcher and the researched, and within institutional research contexts?

Was indeed feminist praxis achieved? Perhaps this is an impossible question to answer since, to quote Hooks, feminist thought is always on the move as a 'theory in the making' (Hooks, 1984, p. 10). Perhaps in this case intention is more important, or at least as important, as outcome. Moreover, other 'critical' researchers might claim sympathy with most of the tenets of feminist praxis and research. The point to make here is that whatever the outcome, feminist thought and consciousness helped us to shape our practice. Thus, the aims of the researchers were to be reflexive in our concerns about black non-representation on the research team, in the way we worked together, and in our relations with the case-study institutions. We also tried to respond to themes emerging from the data in shaping how we collected the data and the form of analysis we chose. Thus, we attempted to reveal the hierarchies at play and to make 'resistant discourses' more widely heard and available – for the explicit purpose, as Lather (1991) puts it, of interrupting power imbalances. We tried to portray the complex interplay of power relations – in the knowledge that a rather more simplistic analysis would have been more welcome from the policy makers in our study.

Clearly, there were also micro-politics about how we, as researchers, presented our case. Thus, how project accounts were written explicitly and

implicitly foregrounded certain values and biases (see for example, Farish and Weiner, 1992; McPake, 1992; Powney, 1992) and of course, for all the project team, this research was part of our paid work and a 'shop-window' for future employment and career progress.

However, whether we have become better researchers or more conscious of social justice issues (though these are of course important) may be of less interest ultimately than whether the project helped to change things at the macro- and micro-political levels of the case-study institutions, and more widely – a much more difficult (if not impossible) evaluation task.

As to the more grandiose goal of contributing to the development of a 'praxis of the Left', and this perhaps can stand as the concluding remark for the book, I can do no more than (perhaps, presumptuously) suggest a way forward based on the previous discussion of educational praxis which, nevertheless, arises out of a specific progressive politics – that of feminism. In my view, drawing from the debates within feminism (as well as within other critical movements) a new values-position and praxis could well benefit from greater emphasis on and exploration of the following four elements:

- social justice/equality concerns at *micro-* as well as macro-political levels;
- the importance of changing *practice* as well as structures;
- the *complexities* of human experience which render relations of dominance/subordination as more problematic than in the past;
- the necessity of greater openness and the need to be *responsive* to changing circumstances and demands.

References

- Bowles, G. and Duelli Klein, R. (eds) (1983) *Theories of Women's Studies*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986) *Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research*, London: Falmer Press.
- Cockburn, C. (1989) 'Equal opportunities: The long and short agenda', *Industrial Relations Journal*, Autumn.
- Cockburn, C. (1991) *In the Way of Women: Men's resistance to sex equality in organisations*, London: Macmillan.
- Faludi, S. (1991) *Backlash: The undeclared war against women*, London: Chatto & Windus.
- Farish, M. and Weiner, G. (1992) Staffing Policies in Further and Higher Education: Setting the Scene. Paper given at the Equal Opportunities and Management Symposium, CEDAR annual conference, University of Warwick, April.
- Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, London: Penguin.
- Gallop, J., Hirsch, M. and Miller, N. K. (1990) 'Criticizing feminist criticism', in Hirsch, M. and Fox Keller, E. (eds) *Conflicts in Feminism*, New York: Routledge.
- Gramsci, A. (1971) *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, edited/translated by Hoare, Q. and Nowell-Smith, G., London: Lawrence & Wishart.

- Griffiths, M. (1992) Making the Difference: Feminisms, Postmodernism and the Methodology of Educational Research, Paper presented to the ESRC seminar, Methodology and Epistemology in Educational Research, Liverpool University, June.
- Hakim, C. (1987) *Research Design: Strategies and Choices in the Design of Social Research*, London: Unwin Hyman.
- Harding, S. (ed.) (1987) *Feminism and Methodology*, Milton Keynes: Open University press
- Harding, S. (1990) 'Feminism, science and the anti-enlightenment critiques', in Nicholson, L.J. (ed.) *Feminism/Postmodernism*, New York: Routledge.
- Hekman, S. J. (1990) *Gender and Knowledge: Elements of Postmodern Feminism*, Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Hill Collins, P. (1990) *Black Feminist Thought*, New York: Routledge.
- Hirsch, M. and Fox Keller, E. (eds) (1990) *Conflicts in Feminism*, New York: Routledge.
- hooks, b (1984) *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, Boston: South End Press.
- Jenkins, R. and Solomos, J. (1989) Racism and Equal Opportunities Policies in the 1980s, 2nd edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lather, P. (1991) *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/in the Postmodern*, New York: Routledge.
- Maclure, M. (1993) 'Arguing for your self: Identity as an organising principle in teachers' jobs and lives', *British Educational Research Journal* 19 (4): 311–22
- McPake, J. (1992) Equal Opportunities Policy Documents in Further and Higher Education: Some Reflections, Paper presented at the annual conference of the British Educational Research Association, Stirling, August.
- Oakley, A (1981) 'Interviewing women: A contradiction in terms', in Roberts, H. (ed.) *Doing Feminist Research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Powney, J. (1992) Every Which Way: Comments on Researching Institutional Policy, Paper presented at the annual conference of the British Educational Research Association, Stirling, August.
- Riddell, S. (1989) 'Exploiting the exploited: The ethics of feminist research', in Burgess, R.G. (ed.) *The Ethics of Educational Research*, London: Falmer Press.
- Schön, D. (1987) *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Smith, D. (1978) 'A peculiar eclipsing: Women's exclusion from man's culture', *Women's Studies International Quarterly*, 1:281–95
- Stanley, L. and Wise, S. (1983) *Breaking Out: Feminist Consciousness and Feminist Research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Stanley, L. and Wise, S. (1990) 'Method, methodology and epistemology in feminist research processes', in Stanley, L. (ed.) *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology*, London: Routledge.
- Stanley, L. (ed.) (1990) *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology*, London: Routledge.

Stenhouse, L. (1975) *Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development*, London: Heinemann Education.

Walkerdine, V. (1990) *School Girl Fictions*, London: Verso.

Weedon, C. (1987) *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Weiner, G. (1990) 'Ethical practice in an unjust world: Educational evaluation and social justice', *Gender and Education*, 2 (2): 231–8.

Weiner, G. (1992) What do I do with the data? Some thoughts on institutional policy research and feminist methodology, Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association, annual conference, Stirling, Scotland, August.

Ancillary Material B

Case-studies

Contents

Successful women leaders in the South Asia context	55
By Iftikhar Hassan	
Women and management in higher education in Sri Lanka	63
By Chitra Karunaratne	
Women in academic leadership positions in higher education in Malaysia	71
By Asmah Haji Omar	
Women and management in higher education: a South Asian perspective	85
by Swarna Jayaweera	
The Pacific Women's Charter	89
By Konai Helu Thaman	