

Evaluating Equal Employment Opportunity and its impact on the increased participation of men and women in the Transport Industry

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to identify the approaches undertaken in implementing equal employment opportunity in the transport industry in Australia and the links between these approaches and indicators of increased participation of women. This male dominated industry employs limited numbers of women with fewer numbers of women in management. The study analyses data from a unique set of equal opportunity progress reports from all organisations in the transport industry that are required to provide public reports under Australian legislation. The findings indicate a correlation between some approaches to equal opportunity and increased numbers of women in some areas. The study is equally remarkable for what it does not find. Despite widespread equal opportunity implementation across a broad number of employment measures there are limited measures that predict increases in the numbers of women in management or in non-traditional roles. This study differs from others in that it identifies issues specific to one industry and links organisational approach to equal opportunity with the employment status of both women and men.

Keywords: *Equal Employment Opportunity; Women in Management; Non-traditional work; Transport Industry; Managing Diversity.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Equity within employment practice for competitive advantage has been argued to be an important component of business success. Arguments vary but suggest the utilisation of staff and the broad development of skills form an important component of business success, particularly with organisations that take the 'high road' approach to competitiveness (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). The business world has been slow to recognise the talent women offer in business other than in support roles (Singh, 2005). One of the ways an organisation can limit its utilisation of the labour force is to reduce the potential pool of employees by ignoring a particular group of employees or potential employees, or relegating them to a limited number of roles. The 'cut' is often made along the lines of sex and occurs around the globe and across many industry sectors with women suffering employment discrimination (Wirth, 2001). These issues are particularly evident in an industry that has historically employed few women in most countries; namely transport. The limited integration of diverse talent is now recognised as limiting real growth (Thomas, 2004) reducing responsiveness to diverse customers and markets (Holton, 2005) and leading to reduced skills on executive boards (Singh, 2005). Research on the transport industry has paid attention to the social, economic and spatial needs of communities, including issues such as the impact of technological change on work and life (for example, Kwan, Dijst and Schwanen 2007; de Graaff and Rietveld 2007). A neglected area of

research is that relating to the strategies and employment policies of firms in the industry itself. In particular, little is known about organisational policies that address labour force issues, including recruitment and retention, career development and training, equity and diversity.

Women continue to be underrepresented in non-traditional industries and occupations and this occupational segregation has consequences for women and it has been identified as the principal cause of the wages gap between men and women in Western economies (see Ackah, 2001). In Australia the transport industry has historically been male-dominated; that is, employing more than 60 per cent men (AAA, 1997). In 2007 there were 501,000 workers in the transport and storage industry, comprising 379,700 men (76 per cent) and 120,500 women (24 per cent). This percentage breakdown has not altered since 2003, despite a ten per cent increase in employment in the industry (ABS, 2004 & 2008). The standard description of the industry as defined in the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) is road, rail, water, air and space, and other transport; services to transport; and storage (ABS 1993).

The under-representation of women in senior positions in the transport industry across the globe is marked. Examination of the ten organisations in the transport industry included in the top 200 organisations on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX200) in 2006 shows that only four of the ten organisations had women on boards and half had no women in executive management (EOWA, 2006c). These organisations had 6.9% (n=5) women board directors and 10.5% (n=9) women executives. In the USA the Catalyst census of women board directors and corporate officers in the Fortune 500 with SIC Industry classification of 'transportation and utilities' (101 organisations) indicated the percentage of women directors ranging from 2.2% to 19% and the percentage of women corporate officers ranged from 3% to 23% (Catalyst, 2006a, 2006b). In Canada women hold 11.2% of director positions and 14% of corporate officer positions in the FP500 (Catalyst, 2003) with the transport industry identified as one of the "middle" ground industries with less than 18% of women executives. Europe provides a similar picture. The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions' (2004) report on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Services of General Interest identified that the sector of 'transport, storage and communications' in

2000/1 had 31% women employees in Central and Eastern European countries and 25% women employees in the former EU15.

In the past three decades most countries have introduced laws that outlaw discrimination on the ground of sex. Many countries have gone further than this and promoted pro-active strategies within organisations (Wirth, 2001: 141-143) that recognise systemic discrimination suffered historically by women and provide policies and practices that not only are non-discriminatory but assist women to compete in the workplace on an equitable basis with men. Most of these initiatives have been voluntary, particularly in the private sector (Wirth, 2001: 141). Many of these initiatives have been promoted and ultimately adopted by organisations as good for business. Increasingly the research evidence is demonstrating the link(s) between equity for women in organisations and the competitive advantage of the organisation. Hite and McDonald (1995) note that companies choosing not to develop and groom women for management positions are losing valuable resources. While Baldiga (2005) found that organisations seek to recruit talented women, they must also provide opportunities for advancement and balance in order to retain them. Work life balance continues as a major variable in the argument for developing productive diversity that encourages competitive advantage. Perry-Smith and Blum (2000) found that those organisations who offer HR policies that give employees the flexibility, information and convenience to manage their non-work lives are providing a strategic means for ensuring increased organisation performance.

This paper examines the types of policies in equal employment opportunity (EEO) programs and the status of women within the transport industry in Australia in order to identify interventions that predict increased number of women within that industry. Results indicate that a number of EEO measures are not predictive of increasing the numbers of women employed. However on two EEO measures, namely, addressing sexual harassment and ensuring equal access to training and development opportunities, links were identified with increased numbers of women employed and women in management.

2 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Equal opportunity legislation has been argued to have improved the employment status of women around the globe (Thornton, 1990; Cockburn, 1991; Still, 1993; Konrad and Linnehan, 1995; Sheridan, 1995; French, 2001; French and Maconachie, 2004). While there has been a lack of evaluation by independent researchers (Konrad and Linnehan, 1995) and limited assessment of equal opportunity legislation, its implementation remains complex, with the general consensus being that women have made occupational gains since the introduction of the legislation (Still, 1993; Strachan and Burgess, 2001). However, the extent to which legislation has influenced the change is still being debated. Konrad and Linnehan (1995) confirmed the importance of regulation for the imposition and inducement of unpopular organisational change but identified that institutional pressure is also an important element of equal opportunity as it determines administrative structures used in addressing disparity. They suggest both the majority and protected groups have difficulty accepting administrative structures designed to address disparity through affirmative action. Yet, it is proactive affirmative action which correlates with increased participation of women.

As well as legislation, Kanter (1976) supports the use of specific policies to encourage equal opportunity. Social structural policies or those that challenge biased organisational structures and decision-making are identified as influencing outcomes for increased participation of women. Despite their considerable use in Australian organisations, Sheridan (1998) recommended more proactive policies that include work and family balance issues to recognise the limitations that family roles have placed on women in the past. French and Maconachie (2004) note that equity management policies that recognize role-related differences and gender specific EEO structures of support including mentoring and networks for women, particularly in isolated male dominated areas of work, are predictors of increased numbers of women in management, whereas, the use of social structural policies are not predictive of increased numbers of women in management.

The use of a combination of both various EEO structures and policies are increasingly reported. Liff (1999) notes that those organisations currently awarded in Britain for their equal opportunity policies are those that are implementing side by side policies that show positive action with those that present a more radical challenge for organisational culture and practice. In fact multiple implementations of

different equity management strategies are increasingly recommended (Sheridan, 1998; Liff, 1999; Dickens, 2000, French, 2005). Liff (1999) also identifies the need for social regulation in addition to legal regulation through consultation with employees and their unions as an important further requirement in equity management to ensure employee needs are included on the equity agenda.

While the disparity between men and women in decision making positions within the industry remains clear, identifying the career barriers for women continues to be ambiguous. In a study of more than 80 women transport and logistics managers in the UK, career barriers identified included the men's club (37.5 per cent), prejudice of colleagues (26.6 per cent), lack of career guidance (25 per cent) and sex discrimination (15.6 per cent). Senior women were more likely than junior women to complain of these attitudinal barriers (Simpson and Holley, 2001). Johnson et al. (1999, 2000) identified that both men and women in the logistics and transportation industry perceive a glass ceiling for women. In their study of 1000 logistics and transportation professionals, 500 of whom were women, more than 75 per cent of the women and 33 per cent of the men believed that women were limited in growth opportunities through exclusions at both a professional and social level. However, women entering the industry are apparently not so concerned. A study of women undergraduates majoring in logistics found that these women believed that gender bias was not a serious issue facing women in logistics (Knemeyer et al., 1999). In USA, Baker (2000) reports an increasing level of female participation across all levels of the industry resulting in a decline in wage disparity. However, little is said about how this change is occurring. The commitment of women workers in the industry appears high as results from two separate studies identified that both men and women are highly committed to their companies and to the profession (Rae, 1995; Johnson et al., 1999, 2000).

The difficulty faced by women working in non-traditional industries and occupations is recognised as different from women working in traditional areas or from men working in female dominated workplaces. Previous arguments that men and women gravitate toward different types of jobs based on the innate differences in the sexes (McIntyre, 1994) have largely been replaced by discussion of

the deeply embedded gendered cultures of work and the problems of reconciling promotion and family responsibilities (Bagilhole, 2002).

2.1 Equal Employment Opportunity in Australia

In comparison to most countries, Australia has legislated for a reasonably comprehensive regime of EEO. As well as a range of anti-discrimination legislation preventing discrimination on the ground of sex (among a large range of other grounds), legislation specific to equal employment opportunity for women has been in place since 1986. This legislation covers all organisations in the private sector with more than 100 employees. The *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999* promotes the elimination of discrimination and provision of equal opportunity for women and ‘the principle that employment for women should be dealt with on the basis of merit’ (section 2A). Quotas for the employment of women in organisations have never been a part of the Australian equity legislation. The legislation mandates that organisations produce an annual equal opportunity progress report¹, which includes the organisation’s employment profile and details of activities addressing the disparity between women and men. This equates to more than 2,500 organisations employing over one and a quarter million women in Australia (approximately one quarter of all employed women) (EOWA, 2006a). The extent of the coverage and the length of time of the operation warrant analysis of outcomes and the findings are potentially of interest internationally because this coverage is wider and more comprehensive than most other countries where purely voluntary programs exist.

The programs are initiated and implemented by management and have been increasingly set within the context of efficiency and productivity (Strachan and Burgess, 2001). While the legislation in Australia has been driven by social justice goals and the business case, it is the latter which is given prominence. The government agency responsible for administering the legislation (Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workforce Agency [EOWA]) promotes ‘what many leading Australian employers already know – that Equal Opportunity in the Workplace boosts a company’s profitability and makes incredibly savvy business sense’ (EOWA, 2007b). EOWA states that specific benefits of an EEO program include that it helps attract and retain the best talent; assists company productivity

¹ From 2008 this reporting will be on a biennial basis (EOWA 2007a).

and innovation; helps to attract more female customers; enhances a company's management style; and reduces a company's risk (EOWA, 2007b). Equity management is decentralised and administered within each organisation through diverse management and human resource management systems, and offers a wide range of outcomes for women in the workplace (French, 2001). The fairness and relativity of these outcomes in addressing disparity at work remain contentious as do the elements of what is effective equal opportunity implementation.

3. RESEARCH AIM

Despite an extensive literature on the barriers women face in the workplace and in management positions, there is limited research examining specific equity strategies and even less literature that can link strategies to outcomes such as a change in the numbers of women in senior positions (Konrad and Linnehan, 1995; French, 2001; Naff and Kellough, 2003). There is a dearth of research that classifies the conditions under which such change occurs (Glastra et al., 2000). Further, there is limited information on equal employment opportunity programs and their results specific to different industries (Konrad and Linnehan, 1995; French, 2001). This study differs from others in several important respects. First, it seeks to identify the differences between the types of equal opportunity approaches implemented. Second, the study seeks to determine any relationship between an approach used to implement equal employment opportunity and the increased participation of women, particularly in management and non-traditional roles. Until now, research has focused on the causes of disparity in the workplace and argued for various strategies to address that inequality. Few studies have linked equity strategy and outcomes in the participation numbers of women. Third, the study utilises a unique data set comprising organisational reports that include policy information and employment statistics from an entire population of transport organisations in one country.

4. METHOD

Data Gathering

The research was undertaken using secondary data gathered from information provided by 91 transport organisations reporting in one year to the Australian Government (specifically the Equal

Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency) on their equity management practices. The *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999* requires all private sector organisations with 100 or more employees to submit an equal opportunity progress report. The progress report, which becomes a public document, must detail the workplace profile of men and women and their job roles, the equal opportunity issues specific across seven (7) employment matters and strategies for addressing these issues as well as priorities of actions taken and future plans.² In 2003, 114 transport and storage organisations submitted EEO reports to the Agency. These reports were downloaded from the Agency's Online Searchable Database of Reports between January 2005 and April 2005 (EOWA, 2005). Twenty three reports were unable to be used due to errors (n=8), duplication of reporting for subsidiary organisations (n=9) or non disclosure due to waiver (n=4). In order to be waived from annual reporting, an organisation's application must clearly demonstrate that it has analysed its workplace to identify the equal opportunity issues for women; taken all reasonably practicable measures to address each issue; and been compliant with the legislation for at least three consecutive years (EOWA, 2006b).

In this project, content analysis of each progress report was undertaken of the organisational profile; the EEO issues identified by the organisation across the seven (7) employment matters and actions prioritised, and future plans. Content analysis measures the semantic content of the message and is "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of a communication" (Emory and Cooper, 1991:457). The classification of the content analysis is addressed in the following section. Information was recorded in an SPSS data base.

Measures

1. Employment Profile. Employment details of men and women in specific job roles were aggregated to four main categories: management (including senior executives, management; supervisory staff, and professional staff), sales and service; operations (including maintenance, technicians, trades and miscellaneous personnel); and clerical staff.

² A copy of this document is available on the EOWA website at http://www.eeo.gov.au/Research_And_Resources.asp

2. EEO Approaches. The seven employment matters reported on are: recruitment and selection; promotion and transfer; training and development; work organisation; conditions of employment; addressing sexual harassment; pregnancy and breastfeeding policies. Information on each of the seven employment matters was classified according to the equal opportunity approach taken by the organisation. The classifications utilised were those identified by French (2001) in a typology of equity management approaches based on distributive structure, that is equal/equitable treatment through gender specific and non-gender specific procedures, and implementation strategies, that is activities compliant with legislation or following non-legislative recommendations. The classifications are as follows:

No reporting: This classification was used when no comments were made, or issues identified or no strategies outlined at all on any one or all of the seven employment matters.

Traditional: The traditional classification was used to identify an approach that refutes discrimination plays any role in workplace disparity between different employee groups and supports the different treatment of individuals in the workplace based on the choices made by individuals. This approach advocates against the specific implementation of equity measures, instead calling on women and minority groups to make different educational and lifestyle choices in order to create change (French, 2001). In this study comments such as, *'recruitment and selection is always based on the best match between the prospective candidate to the skills and competencies set out in the job description'*; *'women are mainly employed in clerical positions'*; *'when vacancies arise they are advertised externally and internally to ascertain the best person for the position'*;

Anti-discrimination: The anti-discrimination classification was used to identify an approach that acknowledges the importance of the removal of discriminatory practices and processes in order to offer equal treatment based on human rights principles. This approach fulfils the requirements of anti-discrimination legislation such as the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*. Equal employment opportunity activity limited to equal treatment and/or equal outcomes for men and women was classified as 'anti-discrimination' (French, 2001; Konrad and Linnehan, 1995). In this study comments such as *'no [job] advertisement is gender biased'*; *'all staff have attended seminars on*

harassment and are aware of the responsibilities and their rights under the policy'; *'7 of the 9 women on maternity leave have returned to work either in their previous position or a part time position for an agreed period of time'*. Also comments such as *'Our policy is to treat men and women equally'* were included into this category.

Affirmative action: The affirmative action classification was used to identify an approach that acknowledges the importance of the removal of discriminatory practices as well as the adoption of special measures designed to assist members of disadvantaged groups, particularly women. This follows the usage of the term 'affirmative action' in the original Australian legislation (*Affirmative Action (Equal Opportunity for Women) Act 1986*): 'Affirmative Action is based on recognition and acceptance of the fact that it is not sufficient to make specific acts of discrimination unlawful. Further steps are needed to relieve the effects of past discrimination, to eliminate present discrimination and to ensure that future discrimination does not occur' (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 1984: 8). In this study reports on specific strategies such as apprentice or graduate programs for the recruitment of women were classified as affirmative action in nature. Examples include *'we attempt to ensure that there is a female employee on the interviewing panel to ensure that all applicants are given a fair go'*; *'a mentoring process has been established, including coaching with study and career guidance and advice for a number of female employees'*; *'we continue to provide remote access to the company's computer systems so that staff with family responsibilities can work from home'*.

Gender diversity: The gender diversity classification was used to identify an approach that acknowledges the potential for bias and discrimination against women within organisational structures and supports the neutral treatment of all individuals based on organisational requirements as a means of addressing any discrimination. While there is debate about exactly what constitutes policies and programs variously labelled 'diversity' and 'managing diversity' (Bacchi, 2000; Kirton and Greene, 2005), we have used the term 'gender diversity' to incorporate elements of organisational change. In order to classify policies as gender diversity, organisations needed to include elements of culture change within the organisation. In our policy classification, the category of gender diversity can extend on affirmative action, seeking cultural and systems changes that address root causes of

prejudice and develop the potential of every individual. Proactive equal employment opportunity activity that included specific treatment to address the potential for disadvantage for all workers or different needs of all workers not limited to gender and often including external measures such as enterprise bargaining and union advocacy were included in this categorisation. In this study reports that included leave opportunities that were the same for both genders and included maternity, paternity and adoption leaves were classified as diverse in nature. Examples included: *‘the processes established for consideration of individual needs in relation to work organisation and rostering have operated effectively this year with management, and unions combining efforts to ensure that problems and grievances were effectively resolved’*; *‘workplace flexibility is considered by balancing employee needs particularly those related to family with the organisation needs’*; *‘every effort is made to provide employees with a means to balance work and family responsibilities including providing job sharing, flexible working hours, carer’s leave and recognizing the need to minimise overtime’*. .

3. Priorities for EEO Actions. The priorities of actions undertaken were assessed and recorded using the same five point schema discussed above. For example, *‘Increase training to address sex-based harassment in the workplace’* was determined as anti-discrimination; *‘Implement strategies to encourage a greater rate of return from maternity leave’* was determined as an affirmative action because it addresses the needs specific to women; and *‘Developing systems for permanent part-time work or work from home opportunities for all staff’* was classified as gender diversity because it addresses the needs of all workers, regardless of gender.

4. Planned Future EEO Actions. The future actions encapsulating planned or intended actions for the following years that are designed to achieve and improve equal opportunity for women within the organisation were assessed according to the previous model with one extra addition. Some organisations identified a mix of strategies that moved across the range of assessable categories. An extra category called ‘mixed approach to equal opportunity’ was utilised to show this range.

5. Organisational Size. Organisation size has been considered to be a significant predictor of the employment status of women (Konrad and Linnehan, 1995; French, 2001). We measured size as the

number of employees, using four categories ranging from 100-500; 500-1000; 1000 to 3000, and 3000 or more.

Table 1 indicates the numbers of organisations according to size.

Table 1: Transport Organisations by Size

Less than 500 employees	55
More than 500 less than 1000	16
More than 1000 less than 3000	12
More than 3000	9

Analyses

In order to determine any relationship between the dependent variable (DV) and the independent variables (IV) ordinary-least-square (OLS) regression analysis was used. Independent variables consisted of equal opportunity approach; action taken; priority and future actions. Dependent variables consisted of the specific job roles of women and of men.

Data Reliability and Validity

Social desirability bias (Fowler, 1988) is a recognised threat to accuracy of information when there is pressure to present a socially desirable image of organisations. Public availability of the reports and the potential to be named in Parliament for a non compliant report may be seen as a pressure to present a socially desirable image. The legislation (EOWW Act) attempts to ensure accuracy of information by the mandatory requirement of the signatures of both the report writer (usually the HR manager) and the CEO on all reports submitted to the Agency (this information remains confidential). Further, each report is checked at the Agency, evaluated and the organisation contacted to verify information, to make recommendations and give feedback. Trained assessors review the contents of reports to first ensure compliance status under the Act, then evaluate the organisation's analysis of equal opportunity issues and identify demonstrated links with the organisation's current actions and future plans. Information is provided for those organisations that are not compliant under the Act, to assist them meet compliance standards (EOWA, 2006c).

The quantitative analysis of qualitative data can potentially prove a threat to accuracy and reliability as there is the possibility that the researcher may "force" cases into categories that reflect the biased

views of the researcher rather than the substantive actions of the respondents (Crompton and Harris, 1999). To address this issue we used a pre-determined model of equity management approaches to determine the categories into which the responses were to be divided and generated an appropriate coding scheme on this basis (Harris, 2001). To address reliability, the coding process was separated from the process of data entry to allow for cross checking. In addition the researchers worked together on the coding process with one researcher checking a sample of the coding from the other (Krippendorff, 1980). To address sampling validity we selected the data from an entire industry responsible for reporting their equal opportunity plans and where data were unavailable we cross checked available data with data from a different source (addressed further in the findings section following) (Krippendorff 1980; Harris 2001).

5. FINDINGS

Findings for this study are reported in two sections. First the results of the content analysis of approaches taken by organisations in addressing equal employment opportunity, across seven (7) measures; second the results of the correlation analyses of the equal employment opportunity approach taken and the numbers of men and women in management, sales and service, operations, and in clerical positions.

1. Approach to EEO

There was evidence of a range of different equal opportunity approaches taken to address the seven employment matters (see table 1). In 'recruitment and selection', 'promotion and transfer' and 'training and development', 16.1 per cent, 21.5 per cent and 17.2 per cent of organisations respectively reported no activities of any type to address any inequity of women in their organisations. Combined with the percentage of organisations that reported no specific equal employment opportunity activities in these areas (traditional approach) the result indicates more than half of all transport organisations report a less than compliant level of equal employment opportunity in the areas of recruitment, selection and training. Over one third of the organisations (32.3 per cent, 40.9 per cent and 37.6 per cent respectively) took an anti-discrimination approach to these employment matters. This involved the use of strategies that encouraged equal treatment of men and women in

recruitment, promotion and development. Less than 7 per cent of organisations took a proactive approach of any kind, either affirmative action or gender diversity, in designing and delivering equal employment opportunity strategies specific to the disadvantage of women in gaining access, promotion or opportunities for training and development.

Table 1: Organisations' Approaches to EEO in Employment Matters by Percentage

Approach Type	R&S	Promote/ Transfer	Train/Dev	Work Org	Condition/ Service	Harassment	Pregnancy & Breastfeeding
Nil	16.1	21.5	17.2	20.4	23.7	9.7	23.7
Traditional	32.3	40.9	37.6	29.0	35.5	7.5	17.2
Anti-discrimination	45.4	36.6	41.9	14.0	19.4	75.3	34.4
Affirmative Action	6.5	1.1	3.2	14.0	2.2	0	7.5
Gender Diversity	0	0	0	22.6	19.4	7.5	17.2

In the areas of 'work organisation' and 'conditions of service' a number of organisations offered no specific strategies for addressing inequity. In those organisations that did seek to proactively address inequity through affirmative action or gender diversity strategies, approximately 36% per cent took a proactive approach to developing equitable work patterns and 21.6% to developing equity in conditions of service. For many of these organisations part-time work, flexible work hours and 'work from home' opportunities were identified as opportunities for both women and/or men to balance their work/life issues.

In the area of addressing harassment, the majority of organisations took a compliance based approach in ensuring equal treatment through training of all staff, regardless of gender or organisational role. While some were not compliant, these were in the minority. This is not surprising given the strength of provisions in the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*. The Act defines and prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex and outlines extensive provisions for obtaining justice. Further, the tribunals and courts emphasise the importance of appropriate policies and practices and are supporting zero tolerance through judgments awarding increased amounts in damages (Jackson, 1998; Jenero and Galligano, 2003). A small number of organisations have taken compliance to new levels and identified an extension of their harassment policies to include protections for other groups, and have identified issues of vilification and bullying throughout their policies and procedures.

Compliance was also an important consideration in addressing the issues of pregnancy and breastfeeding. Many organisations had policies specific to meeting the requirements of the legislation but a small number had extended these to include further issues including adoption and invitro-fertilisation requirements, while others ensured the policies in these areas were also available for the father.

2. Correlation of EEO Approach and Numbers of Men and Women

The data was examined using multiple regression analyses in order to ascertain any relationship between the EEO approach and the numbers of men and women in management. A multiple regression controlling for size was performed with numbers of women in management as the DV and the EEO approach undertaken by the organisations across the seven employment matters as the IVs. A second multiple regression analysis, controlling for size, was performed with numbers of men in management as the DV and the EEO undertaken by the organisations across the seven employment matters as the IVs.

Table 3: Multiple Regression results for EEO Approach and Numbers of Women and Men in Management

	R ² adjusted	R ²	F	Df	B	β
Women in Management	.244	.327	3.941**	10,81		
Recruitment and Selection					-89.270	-.228
Promotion and Transfer					-79.978	-.191
Training and Development					99.201*	.243
Work Organisation					43.599	.198
Conditions of Service					-34.641	-.149
Addressing Sexual Harassment					132.264**	.356
Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Policies					-53.775	-.223
Priority in Actions Taken					14.288	.047
Future EEO Actions Planned					1.872	.010
Men in Management	.263	.344	4.250**	10,81		
Recruitment and Selection					-141.068	-.189
Promotion and Transfer					-177.757	-.223
Training and Development					208.426*	.269
Work Organisation					82.710	.197
Conditions of Service					-54.805	-.124
Addressing Sexual Harassment					230.592**	.326
Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Policies					-113.972*	-.248
Priority in Actions Taken					78.182	.135
Future EEO Actions Planned					9.710	.026

** p < .01; * p < .05

The model shows a significant relationship between the approach taken in implementing EEO and the number women in management. Two variables were identified as significantly positively correlated with increased numbers of women in management, namely Training and Development and Addressing Sexual Harassment. Two variables were identified as significantly positively correlated with increased numbers of men in management, namely Training and Development and Addressing Sexual Harassment. This indicates that organisations encouraging equity in training and development through the equal treatment of men and women and those taking action to address sexual harassment in compliance with legislation are linked with increased numbers of both women and men in management. Altogether the EEO approach taken accounted for 24 per cent of the variability in numbers of women in management and 26 per cent of the variability in numbers of men in management.

Further multiple regression analyses were run, also controlling for size, with number of women and the number of men in sales and service; operations and clerical positions as the DVs and the EEO undertaken by the organisations across the seven employment matters as the IVs. Results were similar with two variables consistently identified as significantly positively correlated with increased numbers of men and women, specifically Training and Development and Addressing Sexual Harassment.

Table 4: Multiple Regression results for EEO Approach and Numbers of Women and Men in Sales and Service

	R ² adjusted	R ²	F	Df	B	β
Women in Sales and Service	.242	.325	3.903**	10,81		
Recruitment and Selection					-175.781	-.213
Promotion and Transfer					-177.556	-.201
Training and Development					215.102*	.250
Work Organisation					91.962	.198
Conditions of Service					-86.686	-.177
Addressing Sexual Harassment					261.163**	.334
Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Policies					-102.749	-.202
Priority in Actions Taken					83.045	.130
Future EEO Actions Planned					39.101	.096
Men in Sales and Service	.120	.217	2.239*	10,81		
Recruitment and Selection					-4.915	-.006
Promotion and Transfer					-210.038	-.222
Training and Development					231.116*	.252
Work Organisation					136.019*	.274
Conditions of Service					-46.273	-.089
Addressing Sexual Harassment					38.511	.046
Pregnancy and Breastfeeding					-116.547	-.215

Policies						
Priority in Actions Taken					-15.802	-.207
Future EEO Actions Planned					65.298	1.244

** p < .01; * p < .05

Table 5: Multiple Regression results for EEO Approach and numbers of Women and Men in Operations

	R ² adjusted	R ²	F	Df	B	β
Women in Operations	.181	.271	3.007*	10,81		
Recruitment and Selection					-28.028	-.092
Promotion and Transfer					-89.767	-.275
Training and Development					86.890*	.274
Work Organisation					24.0269	.140
Conditions of Service					-3.348	-.019
Addressing Sexual Harassment					81.115*	.281
Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Policies					-44.496	-.237
Priority in Actions Taken					22.653	.096
Future EEO Actions Planned					-6.475	-0.43
Men in Operations	.344	.416	5.764**	10,81		
Recruitment and Selection					-38.859	-.026
Promotion and Transfer					-495.924*	-.310
Training and Development					425.318**	.274
Work Organisation					131.748	.157
Conditions of Service					-3.157	.004
Addressing Sexual Harassment					231.467	.164
Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Policies					-255.067*	-.277
Priority in Actions Taken					126.838	.109
Future EEO Actions Planned					-63.709	-.086

** p < .01; * p < .05

Table 6: Multiple Regression results for EEO Approach and Numbers of Women and Men in Clerical positions

	R ² adjusted	R ²	F	Df	B	β
Women in Clerical Positions	.252	.334	4.069**	10,81		
Recruitment and Selection					-81.095	-.179
Promotion and Transfer					-90.197	-.186
Training and Development					121.238*	.257
Work Organisation					48.448	.190
Conditions of Service					-27.305	-.102
Addressing Sexual Harassment					129.069*	.300
Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Policies					-73.151**	-.262
Priority in Actions Taken					37.630	.107
Future EEO Actions Planned					10.611	.047
Men in Clerical Positions	.248	.330	3.996**	10,81		
Recruitment and Selection					-74.430	-.192
Promotion and Transfer					-80.321	-.194
Training and Development					79.883	.198
Work Organisation					43.174	.198
Conditions of Service					-21.482	-.094
Addressing Sexual Harassment					139.038**	.379
Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Policies					-57.589*	-.242
Priority in Actions Taken					-17.134	-.057
Future EEO Actions Planned					11.262	.059

** p < .01; * p < .05

Results also indicated that ‘pregnancy and breastfeeding policies’ had a significant negative relationship with increased numbers of women and men in the clerical positions and men in operations.

In 2003, ten (10) organisations in the transportation sector were identified in the top 200 organisations on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX200) (EOWA, 2003). Four (4) of these organisations were waived organisations under the Agency’s criteria and were excused from annual reporting of their EEO progress reports for a fixed period up to 2 years. Six of the ten organisations had no women on their boards and no women executives. Two of these six exclusively male governed organisations were organisations waived from reporting to EOWA because of the quality of their EEO reports. Four organisations had women on their boards and in executive management positions. In each case except one, the number was less than 20%. That one organisation had 40% women in executive positions. Two of these four organisations were also waived from reporting to EOWA and each of these two had less than 20% women on their boards or in executive management positions. The evidence would suggest that organisations waived from reporting to the agency based on the quality of their reports are doing no better and some may argue they are even worse than those still reporting each year when considering the numbers of women in decision making positions.

6. DISCUSSION

Results indicate a range of equal employment opportunity implementation approaches utilised. Further, the results indicate that these approaches appear to differ in outcomes. Relatively few organisations implement proactive strategies in the areas of recruiting, promoting, and developing of women to address any identified inequities between women and men particularly the number of women in management and in other non-traditional roles. Kanter (1976), Sheridan (1998), and French and Maconachie (2004) referred to these areas as ‘social structural’ strategies related to the organisations’ structure used to address any systemic bias or discrimination against women. Only one of these social structural measures, ‘training and development’ implemented as it was, from an equal treatment approach, was positively associated with the increased numbers of women across the

various job areas. However, this measure was also positively associated with the increased number of men across various job areas including management, operations, and sales and service (but not increases of men in clerical positions). We interpret these findings as indicating that equal treatment of men and women in access and opportunity to training and development is conducive to encouraging equal increases in the numbers of both men and women in management and in other job roles, but is not however conducive to addressing any disparity between men and women in management or non-traditional roles. Such a result further supports the importance of continuing the pressure for strategic proactivity in implementing EEO. Numerous organisations identified 'equal treatment' as the primary reason for their lack of any proactive strategies in recruitment, promotion and training for women. Yet without specific programs that acknowledge women's historic systemic disadvantage in this industry, change is unlikely to occur. It would seem the old battle of 'what is equity' is still being waged at an operational level in the transport industry. Equal treatment has been widely recognised as insufficient to achieve equity of opportunity or equity of outcomes for women (Bacchi, 1990; Poiner and Wills, 1991, French and Maconachie, 2004). Research has shown that equal treatment based on strategies that are blind to identity differences including race and sex are not conducive to change in many of the measures of advancement for women to address the disparity between men and women (see Konrad and Linnehan, 1995; French, 2001).

Results indicate a significant proactivity in the implementation of some of the measures of equal opportunity, specifically 'organisation of work' and the 'conditions of service' and 'pregnancy and breastfeeding policies'. Where 'organisation of work' relates to the implementation of work and family policies and 'conditions of service' relates to the implementation of fairness in the terms of work and rewards for work. Kanter (1976), Sheridan (1998), and French and Maconachie (2004) recognise these areas as 'role related' strategies used to address the fair division of labour between men and women and to ensure women are not disadvantaged by their different and traditional role requirements in society. None of these role related measures were positively linked with increased numbers of women in the non-traditional areas of management and operations, nor in the sales, service or clerical area. However, proactive strategies of equal opportunity in addressing work

organisation were predictive of increased numbers of men in sales and service. We interpret these findings to suggest that limiting the approach to equal employment opportunity implementation to merely work and family balance policies appears to maintain the current participation numbers of men and women. Such policies may allow women to move in and out of work as their family needs dictate, but without proactive strategies in the structural and support practices, further access to management or non-traditional areas of work appears limited.

Our findings of a negative association between the implementation of pregnancy and breastfeeding policies and the numbers of women employed in clerical roles, and the numbers of men in clerical and operations positions challenges popular belief and is difficult to interpret. More than 60% of organisations were at least compliant with pregnancy and breastfeeding policies in the workplace with many offering extra support in terms of special rooms and parental support policies for both mother and father. However, most organisations identified that very few employees required or accessed such support. A further result of note is the positive relationship between the implementation of measures to address sexual harassment. A positive relationship was evident not just for all the areas of work for women, but also for men. We take this to mean that addressing the basic human rights of employees through the identification of appropriate behaviours applicable in the workplace between and among the two genders has positive outcomes for a climate change beneficial for everyone in the workplace.

The equal treatment for equal outcome approach to equal opportunity displayed by transport organisations appears to offer the means of ensuring equality of participation encouraging greater flexibility of working conditions and fair pay structures but this does not appear to extend to equality of access or the equality of opportunity for movement into management or leadership roles or into non-traditional roles such as operations. We contend that in today's competitive market place this tactic ensures a cheap flexible labour force for roles denied access to career paths. With increased family friendly policies and flexible hours, people with family responsibilities, still predominantly women, continue to provide a ready source of labour for support roles and service jobs often outside any career structure. In a study of male and female perspectives on equality measures in another non-

traditional area for women, the construction industry, men identified policies that maintained the current workplace environment as the most valuable, while women's priorities were in developing a flexible workplace with fairer and more transparent procedures (Dainty et al., 2001). Career enhancing aspects were important and the opportunity to combine work and family lives maintained a high ranking. It is debatable whether merely providing the opportunity to combine work and family is proactive enough to support and encourage substantive change that equates to increased numbers of women in decision making positions. Without proactive implementation of equal opportunity measures across a range of areas, including the structural procedures of recruitment and selection and promotion, and support structures including mentoring schemes and networks for women, substantive change appears uncertain. EEO, it would seem, has been diverted from delivering equitable opportunities for recruitment, promotion and development to address disparity between men and women at work. It has instead become a 'pacifier' for workers through the delivery of day-to-day equality of opportunity for participation, incorporating a return to work after life altering events and a 'satisficer' for industry in meeting staffing requirements under changing workplace situations.

7. LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While the cross sectional nature of this study diminishes our ability to make causal inferences this does not limit the value of the study as a preliminary work in EEO specific to the transport industry. This research presents a first step in gaining an understanding of the issues of women's employment and whether current policies can enhance the involvement of women in the industry. Future investigation warrants in-depth research through interviews or survey that would address the application of an organisation's reported implementation of EEO requirements as opposed to the perception of those requirements and whether such activities have any real impact. A prospective study should also examine the process of developing EEO reports at the organisational level to identify the strategic choices for policy and implementation. Little work has been done to identify the process of developing these organisational reports and the cultural or political challenges experienced by those involved in the process.

8. CONCLUSION

The findings presented suggest that equal employment opportunity in the transport industry in Australia is implemented through an approach that encourages the equal treatment of men and women through the social structural measures including recruitment, promotion and training. Further, equal opportunity is also predominately implemented through equitable treatment of men and women in the role related measures namely work organisation and terms and conditions of employment, through proactive work and family balance strategies. However these current approaches offer no change in the status quo in the representation of women in management or in non-traditional areas. Overall, the results suggest that for substantive change to occur, implementation of equal employment opportunity measures needs to be more strategic and more proactive. This requires positive and equitable treatment in the structure of recruitment, selection and promotion processes, as well as proactive measures designed to support women in non-traditional areas. Work and family balance measures may be important in providing equal access; however without a wider platform of equal employment opportunity these strategies alone do not address the disparity or inequity of participation between men and women at work.

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