

CONDITONS OF SERVICE FOR WOMEN TEACHERS

In the Natal Education Department, most women teachers are paid lower salaries than their male counterparts. There is however, parity for about 20% of women teachers who hold posts of Head of Department or higher in schools graded at least P11. In principle, it has been agreed to phase in equal pay for both sexes, moving from the most senior posts downwards in the years ahead.

(In practice, promotion to one of these senior posts often means a decrease in pocketable pay for married women since:

- i) these are permanent posts which carry higher pension contributions.
- ii) a higher salary grading often nudges combined husband/wife salaries into a higher tax category.)

The heaviest discrimination is against married women teachers.

On marriage, a woman teacher must resign from the permanent staff and may rejoin the service as a temporary teacher. This means she may be given (or give) 24 hours notice. In addition, she is basically employed for one calendar year, afters which her post may or may not be renewed.

A certain number of posts in each school are permanent, the others are temporary and are re-advertised annually. A temporary married teacher may apply for a permanent post when it is advertised: selection is based on a points system in which a temporary teacher has less chance in certain categories. Permanent posts are not advertised except on resignation by a previous holder.

Most temporary married women are thus on tenderhooks each yearend since they may possibly not be re-employed in their previous position and may not be re-employed at all. This is particularly galling for the well qualified teacher who may be replaced by a first year teacher repaying a government loan. She may find herself unemployed with financial commitments outstanding.

As civil servants, the civic and political rights of a teacher are strictly circumscribed. In particular, she shall not publicly comment in the press or at any public meeting on a matter which may embarrass the Department or prejudice the interests of any political party. She needs permission to become a member of a town council, board or health committee. Women's Bureau of S.A.?

"Occasions may arise ... to make speeches or address public bodies. Every care must be exercised that no statements are made which might embarrass the State, the Administration, or be construed as criticism of its declared policy."