

Women graduates 'earn less than men'

CLAIRWYN NEILLY, Staff Reporter

WOMEN graduates of all races are at the bottom of the heap when it comes to earning power, according to a Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) study.

The survey, released in Pretoria yesterday, shows that

black, coloured and Indian male graduates last year generally earned more — up to R34 000 a year in some cases — than their female counterparts of all races.

White men were excluded from the survey, as a 1990 HSRC survey focused exclusively on the income of gradu-

ates in this group.

However, white male graduates earned more in 1990 than did male graduates of other population groups in 1991.

The latest HSRC survey shows that the biggest gap in earnings of men and women graduates last year was in the

self-employed group.

Here, the average salary of male graduates was R84 800, while that of self-employed women was R50 000.

Male medical specialists with their own practices earned R140 000 and women specialists earned R120 000.

In the private sector, male graduates earned an average of R49 800, and women earned R42 000.

The average salary for men in the public sector was R49 300 a year, and women earned an average of R39 400.

However, the survey points out that the gap in salaries could be partly due to differences in age, experience and working hours.

An example is that self-employed men tended to be 41 years old, have 13 years' experience, and worked a 49-hour week.

By contrast, self-employed women worked an average of 43 hours a week, had 12 years' experience, and were 36 years old.

Some of the few professions where women earned more than men were in clerical and administrative posts in the public sector. Here, women with seven years' experience earned R26 300, compared with R25 200 for men with 10 years' experience.

However, the position changed when fringe benefits were included. Men then earned a total income of R34 800 and women R30 700.

A total of 29 109 graduates, of whom 22 698 were white women, took part in the survey.

*Cabner
Discrimination*