

Earnings inequality in South Africa 1995–2003

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Preface

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) has established an occasional paper series. The occasional papers are designed to be quick, convenient vehicles for making timely contributions to debates or for disseminating interim research findings, or they may be finished, publication-ready works. Authors invite comments and suggestions from readers.

About the authors

At the time this study was undertaken, Dr Ingrid Woolard was Research Fellow in the School of Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Dr Chris Woolard is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

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Executive summary

In this paper we use October Household Survey (OHS) and Labour Force Survey (LFS) data to establish whether the real earnings gap between highly skilled and low-skilled workers active in the formal sector of the South African economy in the period 1995 to 2003 narrowed or widened. We also assess changes in the earnings gap in that period between whites and other race groups, and between men and women.

We find that the earnings of unskilled men and women declined, more so for men than for women. The earnings levels of workers in other skills categories did not change markedly. Consequently, the earnings gap widened between low-skilled (i.e. unskilled and semi-skilled) workers on the one hand and more highly skilled workers as well as managers on the other.

The gap between the earnings of African and white managers (with and without tertiary qualifications) narrowed, as did the gap between male and female managers. From 1999 onwards the earnings of historically disadvantaged female managers without tertiary qualifications improved significantly.

The real earnings of highly skilled workers of all races remained constant. This means that the earnings gap between highly skilled Africans and whites did not narrow. Similarly, there were no indications of a narrowing of the gender earnings gap in this skills category. However, the racial and gender earnings gaps in this category were smaller than in any other.

Similarly, the racial earnings gap among workers in skilled occupations did not close. The earnings gap between skilled Africans and whites was larger than that in the highly skilled category. Interestingly, the racial earnings gap among skilled women was much smaller than among their male counterparts. It is clear, therefore, that during the period under review white men were still preferred for positions of responsibility, with consequently better pay.

The earnings of both male and female semi-skilled Africans declined slightly, and the earnings of semi-skilled men of all races declined. The earnings of semi-skilled women of all races did not change significantly.

The earnings gap between workers in low-skilled and highly skilled occupations was significantly smaller in the public sector than in the private sector. This resulted from higher earnings at the bottom of the public sector pay scale and lower earnings at the top. The earnings levels of semi-skilled workers were higher in the public sector than in large and small private firms. By contrast, highly skilled workers in the public sector earned significantly less than those in large firms in particular.

Earnings inequality in South Africa 1995–2003

Introduction

The South African labour market is characterised by high unemployment and low levels of job creation. Unemployment rates vary significantly by educational attainment and skills level. Lewis (2001) found that unemployment rates varied from ‘near zero’ among highly skilled workers to more than 50% among unskilled and semi-skilled workers, yet for three decades the earnings of lower-skilled workers had grown far more quickly than those of skilled workers. Using data from the Quantec database, he found that in 1999 real remuneration per highly skilled person was at 90% of the 1970 level, while real remuneration of unskilled and semi-skilled workers was at 250% of the 1970 level. This led him to the ‘unavoidable’ neoclassical conclusion that unskilled and semi-skilled workers had gradually been priced out of the jobs market.

While the data on which Lewis based this argument were imperfect, few would argue that the gap between the earnings of unskilled and semi-skilled workers on the one hand and skilled and highly skilled workers on the other narrowed during the 1970s and 1980s.

This paper investigates whether the gap between the real earnings of highly skilled and low-skilled workers in the formal sector of the South African economy continued to narrow after this country’s transition to democracy. We find that the converse is true: over the period in question, the earnings of more highly skilled workers remained roughly constant in real terms while the earnings of unskilled workers declined.

Historical context

Table 1 shows the evolution of earnings during the 50 years prior to 1994. In this period, the South African economy experienced both growth and stagnation at different times and in different sectors. Notable economic phases included rapid growth in the 1960s (on the back of increased industrialisation and increased commodity prices); the world oil crisis in the early 1970s; and the effects of economic isolation, disinvestment, and sanctions in the 1980s. Consequently, one would expect trends in earnings to reflect not only apartheid legislation but also variations in economic conditions.

The table shows marked differences in real earnings in different time periods and among different sectors. Among whites the pattern is clear: real earnings growth

declined steadily over the two decades preceding the transition to democratic rule, consistent with the slowdown in the economy after the late 1960s (although in some sectors the slowdown only made itself felt in the 1980s). However, growth in African earnings only began to slow down much later. Earnings in the construction sector were the first to reflect the deepening recession after 1985.

Table 1: Rate of growth of real earnings of whites and Africans by economic sector, 1945–1990 (average percentage per annum)

Sector	Race	1945–1960	1960–1972	1972–1975	1975–1980	1980–1985	1985–1990
Manufacturing	Whites	3.05	3.35	0.92	1.16	0.08	-0.80
	Africans	0.44	2.57	7.57	3.62	1.59	1.21
Construction	Whites	1.89	4.18	-1.63	1.42	-0.56	-2.68
	Africans	0.07	3.38	6.07	-0.38	2.16	-2.67
Mining*	Whites	2.35	2.48	4.44	-1.59	0.36	
	Africans	0.31	1.32	29.59	5.44	3.12	
Formal sector	Whites			0.83	-0.79	1.79	
	Africans			10.47	3.29	2.88	
Non-primary sectors	Whites				-0.74	1.22	-0.28
	Africans				2.85	2.28	3.12

Source: Hofmeyr (1999)

* In respect of mining, the period 1980–85 is replaced by 1980–84, as the Chamber of Mines did not collect racially disaggregated data after 1984.

It is apparent from the data that up to 1972 the earnings gap between Africans and whites actually widened. While much of this may have been caused by direct wage and employment legislation, it was also caused by the secondary effects of apartheid education. This impeded the development of Africans, thus limiting their ability to benefit from the economic boom of the 1960s.

Table 2 shows that racial earnings disparities declined substantially after 1970. While this partly reflects a change in occupational categories as well as better education, other factors were also at work (Fallon 1992; Hofmeyr 1999; Van der Berg & Bhorat 1999). These included reduced discrimination as a result of the scrapping of job reservation, the abolition of influx control, and the pressures of growing trade unionism. The last-named factor is especially apparent in the large increase in African mining wages in the 1970s. Nevertheless, significant racial earnings disparities still existed in 1990.

Table 2: Earnings of Africans as percentages of the earnings of whites by economic sector, 1960–1990

Sector year	Mining*	Manufacturing	Construction
1960	6%	19%	18%
1970	5%	17%	15%
1980	17%	23%	19%
1985	19%	25%	21%
1990	n.a.	29%	22%

Source: Adapted from Fallon (1992)

* The Chamber of Mines did not collect racially disaggregated data after 1984.

Despite the improvements in relative earnings, Table 3 shows that earnings discrimination on the basis of race was still evident in the late 1980s. After standardising for other relevant earnings-related characteristics, McGrath (1990) found significant earnings

differentials attributable to race. This is consistent with other studies (see, for example, Hofmeyr 1990; Moll 1998).

Table 3: Earnings by race expressed as percentages of earnings of whites, 1976–1989

Year	White	Coloured	Indian	African
1976	100%	62,2%	67,0%	57,1%
1985	100%	78,8%	87,3%	78,2%
1989	100%	79,9%	89,4%	84,7%

Source: McGrath (1990)

Method

We used national household survey data collected by Statistics South Africa to analyse earnings patterns in the period 1995 to 2003. The data for 1995 to 1999 were drawn from the annual OHS, and the data for 2000 to 2003 from the biannual LFS. The data for 2000, 2001, and 2002 were drawn from the September rounds of the survey, while the data for 2003 were drawn from the March round (this was the latest dataset available when the analysis was made). About 65 000 workers of working age were interviewed in the course of each survey, except for the 1996 OHS when only 44 000 individuals of working age were interviewed. (A reduced sample was used in 1996, as a Population Census was conducted in that year.)

We considered only those people who were working in the formal sector of the economy, in order to maintain greater consistency over time. The household surveys have become better at capturing informal work and subsistence agriculture, so including all working people might have biased the results.

All interviewees were asked to specify their earnings. Respondents had the option of stating their exact incomes, or indicating that it fell within a certain range. About three fifths of respondents stated their exact incomes in rands.¹ In cases where individuals specified that their income fell within a certain range, we assigned them a random amount within that range.

The four skills categories employed in this study are based on the *International Standard Classification of Occupations* (ISCO-88), published in 1990 by the International Labour Office (ILO 1990) in Geneva. ISCO-88 organises occupations into a hierarchical framework in terms of two main concepts: *the kind of work performed*, defined as a set of tasks or duties designed to be executed by one person; and *skill*, defined as the skills level (the degree of complexity of constituent tasks), and *skills specialisation* (the field of knowledge required to perform the constituent tasks in a competent manner).

ISCO-88 assigns four skills levels to the 10 major occupational groups (Table 4). These skills levels are derived from the educational levels defined in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 76). Using ISCED categories to define skills levels does not imply that the skills needed to perform a given job can be acquired only through formal education. They may be, and often are, acquired through informal training and experience.

The **first ISCO skills level** is derived from ISCED 76 category 1, comprising primary education which generally begins at the age of five, six, or seven, and lasts about five years. In keeping with most other research in South Africa, we refer to this category as ‘unskilled’.²

The **second ISCO skills level** is derived from ISCED 76 categories 2 and 3, comprising the first and second stages of secondary education. The first stage begins at the age of 11 or 12 and lasts about three years, while the second stage begins at the age of 14 or 15 and also lasts about three years. A period of on-the-job training and experience may be necessary, sometimes formalised in apprenticeships. This period may supplement the formal training or replace it partly or, in some cases, wholly. We refer to this category as ‘semi-skilled’.³

The **third ISCO skills level** is derived from ISCED 76 category 5, comprising education which begins at the age of 17 or 18, lasts about three years, and leads to an award not equivalent to a first university degree. We refer to this category as ‘skilled’.

The **fourth ISCO skills level** is derived from ISCED 76 categories 6 and 7, comprising education which also begins at the age of 17 or 18, lasts about three, four, or more years, and leads to a university or post-graduate university degree or the equivalent. We refer to this category as ‘highly skilled’.

Occupational group 0 (the armed forces) and occupational group 1 (legislators, senior officials, and managers) are not linked to a skills level. For the purposes of this paper, the armed forces are dropped from the sample, while occupational group 1 is treated separately. We refer to occupational group 1 with the shorthand term ‘managers’.

Table 4: Major ISCO-88 occupational groups linked to ISCED skills levels and our chosen terms

Major occupational groups		Skills level	Description
1	Legislators, senior officials, and managers	–	
2	Professionals	4	Highly skilled
3	Technicians and associate professionals	3	Skilled
4	Clerks	2	} Semi-skilled
5	Service workers and shop sales workers	2	
6	Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	2	
7	Craft and related trades workers	2	
8	Plant and machine operators and assemblers	2	
9	Elementary occupations	1	Unskilled
0	Armed forces	–	

Earnings inequality by gender and skills level

As noted in the previous section, the category ‘legislators, senior officials, and managers’ is not linked to a skills level and is therefore dealt with separately. It includes a very wide range of occupations – from prime minister to film producer, travel agent, ship’s purser, and shopkeeper, among many others. In an attempt to reduce variations within this category, managers are divided into those with and without post-secondary (tertiary) qualifications.

Figure 1 and Table 5 show that the real earnings of men active in all skills categories in the formal sector remained fairly constant. Here, and in other figures, the error bars are for a 95% level of certainty. The only significant trend is that the real earnings of unskilled workers declined after 2001, while remaining relatively constant beforehand. By contrast, the real earnings of managers without tertiary qualifications increased after 1999. Nevertheless, over the period as a whole all real earnings, with the important exception of workers in unskilled occupations, remained fairly static. Given concerns about the data, whether there was a real decline in earnings in 1997 is a matter for debate.

Figure 1: Average hourly earnings of men active in the formal sector of the economy by skills category, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

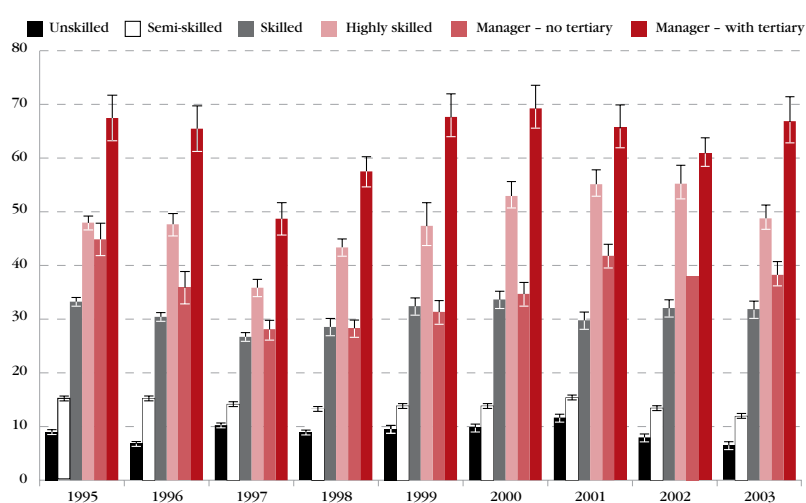


Table 5: Average hourly earnings of men active in the formal sector of the economy by skills category, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

Skill category	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Unskilled	9.0 ± 0.2	7.9 ± 0.4	10.6 ± 0.3	8.8 ± 0.4	9.7 ± 0.5	10.0 ± 0.4	10.4 ± 0.9	8.2 ± 0.3	5.9 ± 0.2
Semi-skilled	15.8 ± 0.2	15.2 ± 0.4	14.2 ± 0.3	12.8 ± 0.3	13.7 ± 0.4	15.3 ± 0.3	15.2 ± 0.4	13.3 ± 0.3	13.0 ± 0.3
Skilled	33.8 ± 1.3	31.3 ± 1.1	26.5 ± 1.1	28.9 ± 1.3	31.8 ± 1.5	34.0 ± 1.6	29.9 ± 1.1	30.8 ± 1.3	30.9 ± 1.4
Highly skilled	47.5 ± 1.9	46.9 ± 3.1	35.7 ± 1.3	44.0 ± 2.8	48.7 ± 2.7	53.4 ± 2.3	55.1 ± 2.9	55.2 ± 2.7	49.3 ± 2.1
Manager (no tertiary)	43.6 ± 3.9	35.9 ± 2.8	28.4 ± 1.4	28.5 ± 2.2	31.6 ± 2.2	34.9 ± 1.7	41.2 ± 2.1	38.1 ± 1.8	38.8 ± 1.9
Manager (with tertiary)	67.7 ± 5.4	65.9 ± 4.5	49.5 ± 4.2	56.9 ± 5.1	67.9 ± 4.9	69.2 ± 3.7	66.0 ± 3.7	60.5 ± 3.0	67.1 ± 3.7

Note: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval.

Figure 2 and Table 6 show that the real earnings of female managers (without tertiary qualifications) rose. This seems to reflect more equitable employment practices. As in the case of their male counterparts, the real earnings of unskilled women declined after 2000, although the decline was not as large. The earnings of semi-skilled, skilled, and highly skilled women remained constant (within statistical error).

Figure 2: Average hourly earnings of women active in the formal sector of the economy by skills category, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

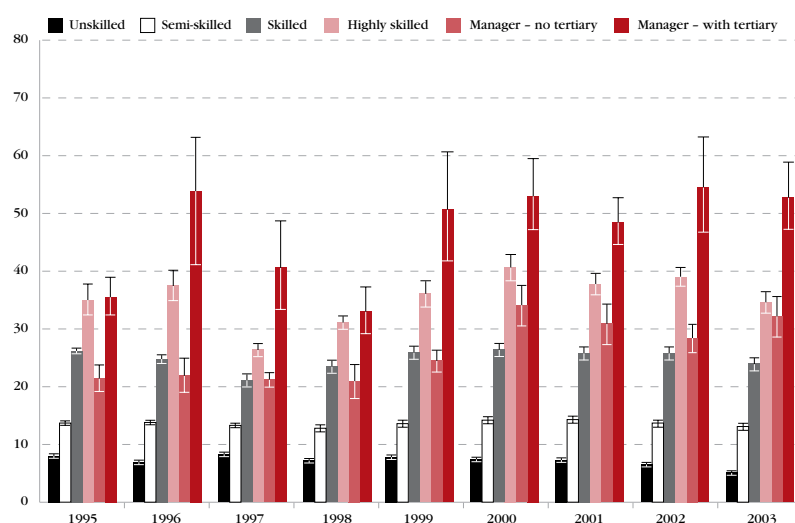


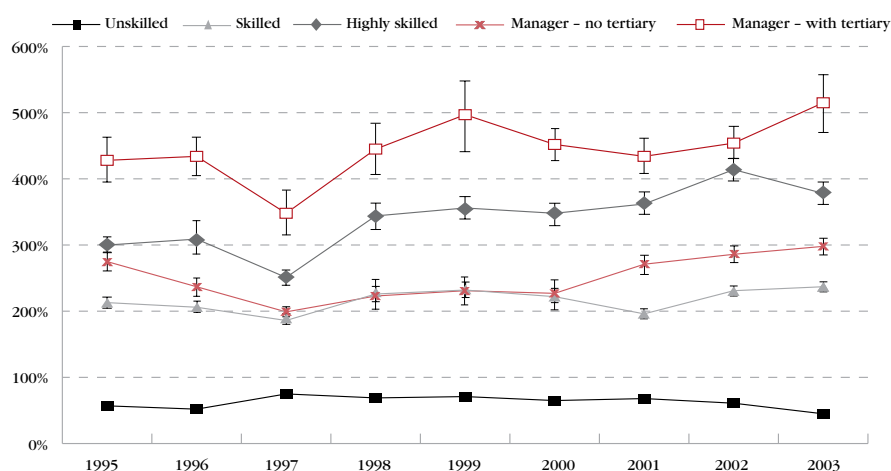
Table 6: Average hourly earnings of women active in the formal sector of the economy by skills category, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

Skill category	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Unskilled	8.0 ± 0.3	6.9 ± 0.3	8.3 ± 0.4	7.2 ± 0.3	7.8 ± 0.4	7.4 ± 0.3	7.3 ± 0.2	6.5 ± 0.2	5.1 ± 0.2
Semi-skilled	13.7 ± 0.3	13.8 ± 0.5	13.3 ± 0.3	12.8 ± 0.6	13.6 ± 0.4	14.2 ± 0.5	14.3 ± 0.5	13.7 ± 0.4	13.1 ± 0.4
Skilled	26.2 ± 0.8	24.8 ± 0.9	21.1 ± 0.8	23.5 ± 0.9	25.9 ± 1.4	26.4 ± 0.8	25.8 ± 0.8	25.8 ± 0.7	24.0 ± 0.6
Highly skilled	35.0 ± 2.3	37.5 ± 2.7	26.4 ± 0.8	31.1 ± 1.4	36.1 ± 1.8	40.7 ± 1.8	37.8 ± 1.7	38.6 ± 1.7	34.6 ± 1.4
Manager – no tertiary	21.4 ± 1.6	21.9 ± 3.0	21.2 ± 1.4	21.0 ± 3.3	24.5 ± 2.3	34.1 ± 3.5	30.9 ± 2.7	28.4 ± 1.9	32.2 ± 3.2
Manager – with tertiary	35.5 ± 3.5	54.6 ± 8.0	40.6 ± 7.9	33.0 ± 4.3	50.7 ± 10.1	53.0 ± 6.1	48.4 ± 4.4	54.5 ± 8.5	52.7 ± 5.9

Note: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval.

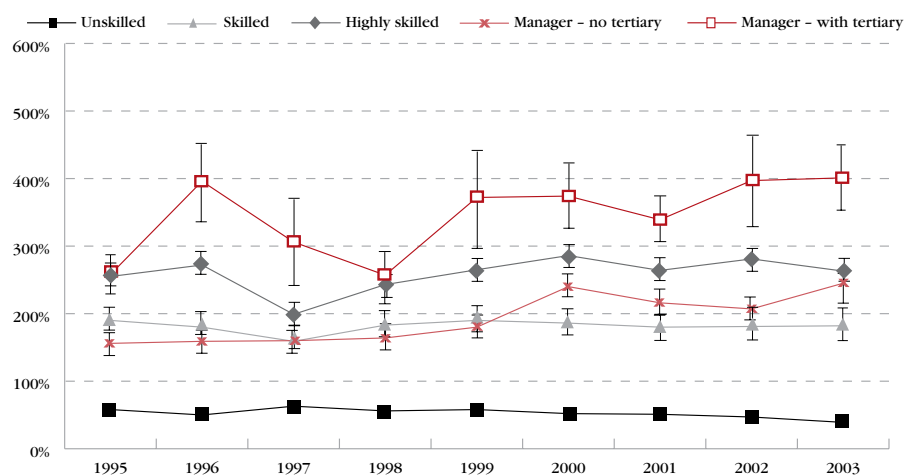
Figure 3 shows that over the period under review the earnings gap widened between semi-skilled men on the one hand, and highly skilled men and male managers with tertiary qualifications on the other. Also, after 1998 the earnings gap widened between semi-skilled men and male managers without tertiary qualifications. There was no significant widening of the earnings gap between semi-skilled and skilled men, although after 2001 there was a slight widening of the earnings gap between unskilled and semi-skilled men.

Figure 3: Hourly earnings of males active in the formal sector by skills category, 1995–2003 (relative to the earnings of semi-skilled males)



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Unskilled	0.57	0.52	0.75	0.69	0.71	0.65	0.68	0.61	0.45
Skilled	2.13	2.06	1.86	2.26	2.32	2.22	1.96	2.31	2.37
Highly skilled	3.00	3.09	2.51	3.44	3.56	3.48	3.62	4.14	3.78
Manager – no tertiary	2.75	2.37	1.99	2.23	2.31	2.27	2.71	2.86	2.98
Manager – with tertiary	4.28	4.34	3.48	4.45	4.97	4.52	4.34	4.54	5.15

Figure 4: Hourly earnings of women by skills category, 1995–2003 (relative to the earnings of women in semi-skilled occupations)



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Unskilled	0.58	0.50	0.63	0.56	0.58	0.52	0.51	0.47	0.39
Skilled	1.90	1.80	1.59	1.83	1.90	1.86	1.80	1.81	1.82
Highly skilled	2.55	2.72	1.99	2.43	2.65	2.86	2.64	2.81	2.63
Manager – no tertiary	1.56	1.59	1.60	1.64	1.80	2.40	2.16	2.07	2.45
Manager – with tertiary	2.58	3.96	3.06	2.57	3.72	3.74	3.39	3.97	4.01

Because the samples are smaller, the degree of certainty in comparing the relative earnings of women is smaller than for men. Although the gap between semi-skilled women and female managers (both with and without tertiary qualifications) widened slightly, the trend is not statistically significant. The only significant trend was a slight widening of the gap between unskilled and semi-skilled women, and consequently between unskilled women and those at all other skills levels.

Figure 5: Hourly earnings of women by skills category relative to the earnings of their male counterparts, 1995–2003

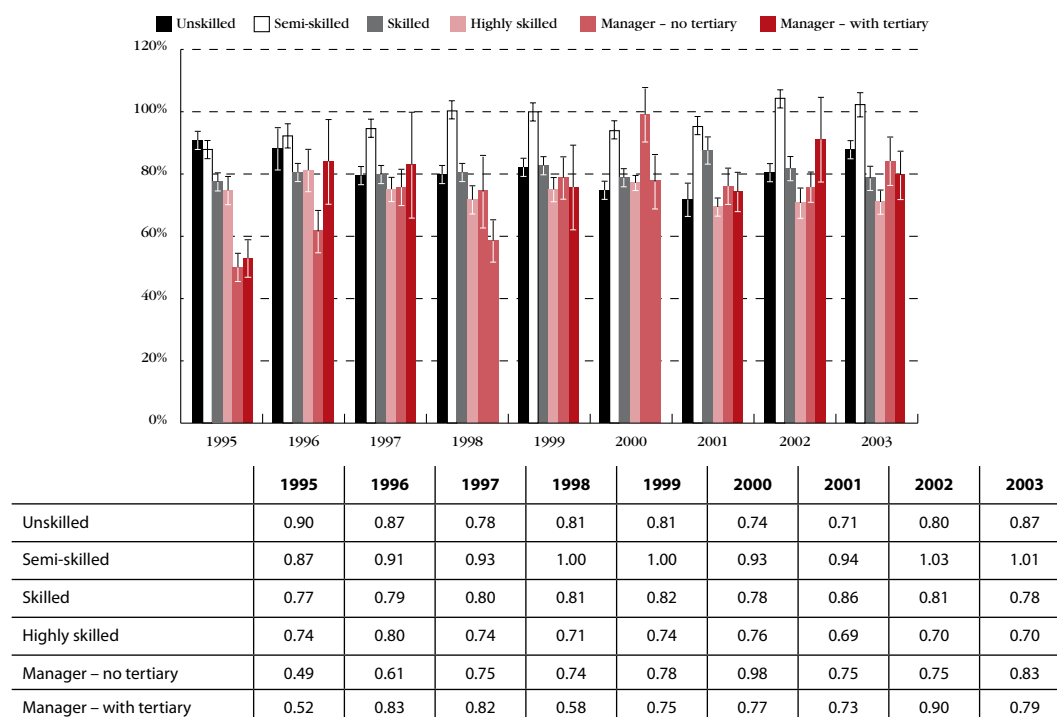


Figure 5 shows that the relative disparity between the earnings of men and women remained roughly constant in the unskilled, skilled, and highly skilled categories. Whether the earnings gap between female and male managers with tertiary education is shown to have decreased depends on the reliability of the 1995 data; after 1996 this earnings gap did not change significantly. Similar concerns apply to the data for managers without tertiary qualifications. The earnings gap between semi-skilled males and females did seem to narrow slightly but significantly. Interestingly, the smallest gender earnings gap occurred in semi-skilled occupations (reflected by the high relative wage ratio). While this may seem to indicate a higher level of gender equality, the real explanation is more subtle. The proportion of white men in semi-skilled occupations was lower than in the higher skills categories; therefore, the earnings of better-paid white women in semi-skilled occupations were counterbalanced by those of African men in the same skills category.

We now turn to each of the six skills categories under review as defined earlier in this paper.

Managers with tertiary qualifications

Because of the small sample, the data for managers with tertiary qualifications are uncertain. Figure 6 and Table 7 show how real earnings changed in this category. The only statistically significant result is that, after 1996, the real earnings of male African managers increased. The data show a step jump possibly caused by employment equity policies and legislation. A similar step jump is visible in the earnings of managers without tertiary qualifications, but not in the other skills categories. Figure 7 shows a slight diminution in racial disparities. Because of the small samples, and despite using medians, the results for coloured managers are uncertain. Unlike other race groups in which the median lies below the mean (because of high income outliers), the median for coloureds is usually above the mean (indicating low income outliers). If means are used, a very different picture of coloured/white disparity in this skills category emerges.

Figure 6: Average hourly earnings of male managers with tertiary qualifications by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

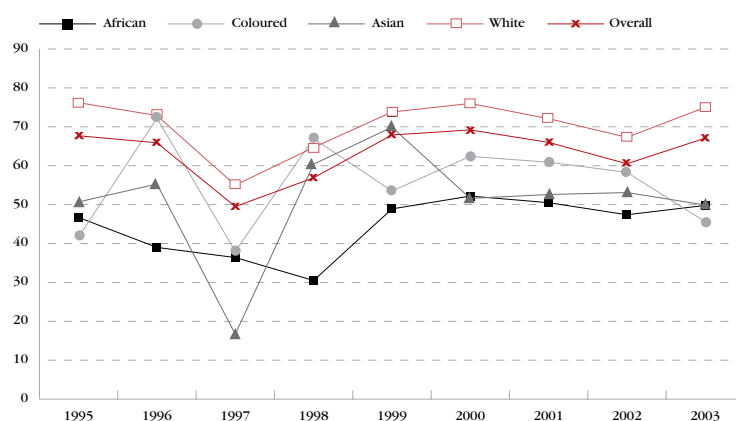
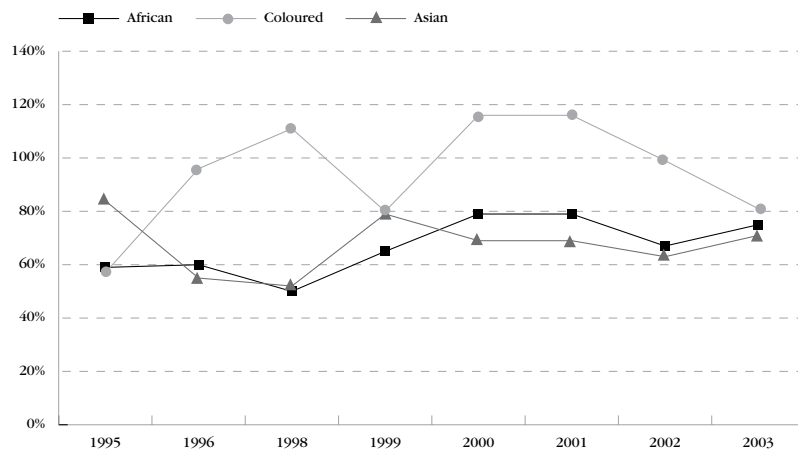


Table 7: Average hourly earnings of male managers with tertiary qualifications by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	46.7 ± 7.1 (33.8)	39.0 ± 3.7 (38.7)	36.4 ± 4.7 (37.7)	30.5 ± 5.0 (25.2)	48.9 ± 5.5 (36.6)	52.2 ± 4.2 (44.5)	50.5 ± 4.1 (42.6)	47.4 ± 5.3 (35.9)	49.8 ± 5.4 (43.3)
Coloured	41.7 ± 8.8 (32.5)	72.2 ± 9.6 (62.2)	38.0 ± 3.6 (37.7)	67.0 ± 13.8 (56.3)	53.5 ± 13.8 (44.8)	62.4 ± 6.7 (65.3)	60.9 ± 6.9 (62.6)	58.3 ± 8.2 (52.7)	45.6 ± 5.8 (46.9)
Asian	50.7 ± 5.8 (48.0)	55.3 ± 12.6 (35.4)	16.7 ± 6.1 (37.7)	60.4 ± 25.4 (26.3)	69.9 ± 22.1 (44.2)	51.6 ± 7.2 (39.0)	52.6 ± 8.0 (37.4)	53.1 ± 11.6 (33.7)	49.9 ± 7.9 (41.0)
White	76.2 ± 6.8 (57.3)	72.9 ± 5.5 (64.7)	55.0 ± 5.4 (37.7)	64.7 ± 6.5 (50.7)	73.8 ± 6.5 (56.1)	76.0 ± 5.4 (56.4)	72.1 ± 4.9 (54.0)	67.3 ± 3.9 (53.3)	75.0 ± 4.5 (57.6)
Overall	67.7 ± 5.4	65.9 ± 4.5	49.5 ± 4.2	56.9 ± 5.1	67.9 ± 4.9	69.2 ± 3.7	66.0 ± 3.7	60.5 ± 3.0	67.1 ± 3.7

Notes: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval. Values in brackets are median values.

Figure 7: Median hourly earnings of African, coloured, and Asian male managers with tertiary qualifications relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.59	0.60	0.50	0.65	0.79	0.79	0.67	0.75
Coloured	0.57	0.96	1.11	0.80	1.16	1.16	0.99	0.81
Asian	0.84	0.55	0.52	0.79	0.69	0.69	0.63	0.71

Figure 8 and Table 8 show that the real earnings of African female managers increased. However, this trend is only statistically significant post 1998 because the small number of African female managers prior to this makes the point estimates unreliable. The number of African female managers increased steadily.

The earnings of white female managers with tertiary qualifications did not grow significantly, while the data for Asian and coloured women are uncertain because of very small samples. Relative earnings by race are not presented because of major uncertainties in the data.

Figure 9 shows that the earnings of white female managers remained largely constant relative to the earnings of their male counterparts.

Figure 8: Average hourly earnings of female managers with tertiary qualifications by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

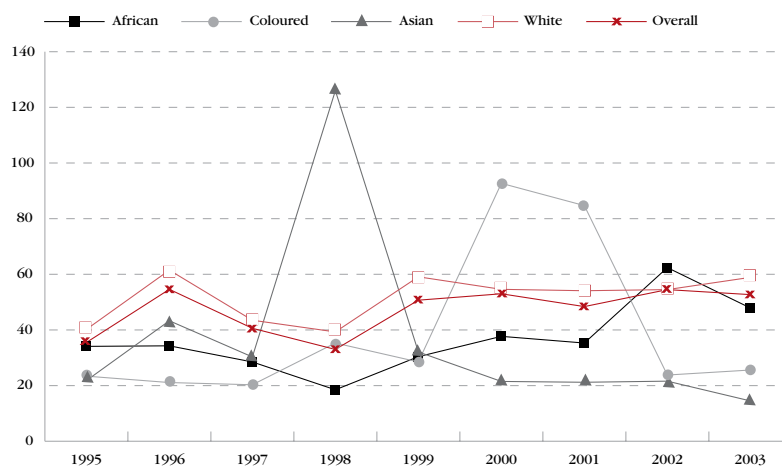
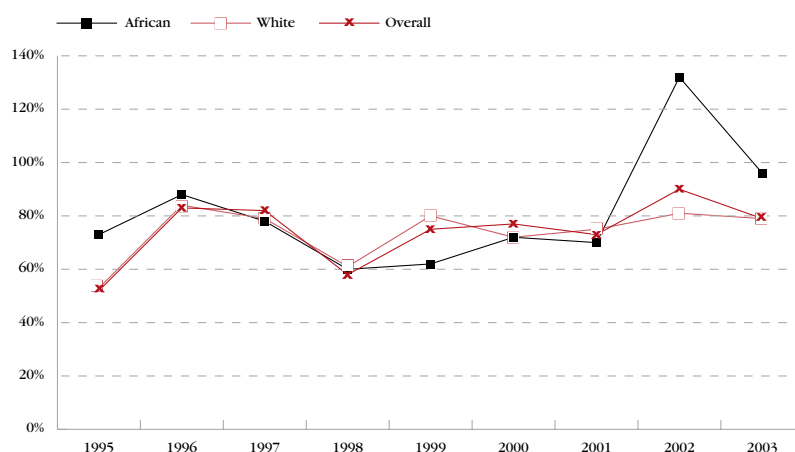


Table 8: Average hourly earnings of female managers with tertiary qualifications by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	34.1 ± 4.5 (28.6)	34.3 ± 7.1 (28.9)	28.5 ± 4.6 (26.3)	18.5 ± 4.5 (11.5)	30.4 ± 4.3 (26.9)	37.7 ± 4.5 (30.4)	35.3 ± 4.2 (29.1)	62.4 ± 19.8 (33.6)	47.9 ± 10.4 (26.1)
Coloured	23.4 ± 6.3 (17.2)	21.1 ± 1.6 (18.7)	20.3 ± 0.0 (26.3)	35.3 ± 0.0 (28.3)	28.5 ± 9.9 (17.8)	92.7 ± 28.8 (91.5)	84.7 ± 25.3 (87.6)	23.8 ± 5.7 (29.9)	25.6 ± 4.9 (25.4)
Asian	21.8 ± 2.9 (20.9)	43.3 ± 12.0 (54.8)	30.3 ± 11.6 (26.3)	126.4 ± 0.0 (134.0)	32.1 ± 0.0 (32.1)	21.5 ± 5.9 (24.7)	21.2 ± 5.9 (23.6)	21.6 ± 3.4 (26.3)	14.5 ± 6.9 (17.4)
White	40.2 ± 5.8 (26.5)	61.5 ± 10.1 (40.5)	43.5 ± 9.8 (26.3)	39.3 ± 5.2 (31.7)	59.1 ± 14.6 (38.3)	54.6 ± 5.7 (42.6)	54.1 ± 5.7 (40.8)	54.5 ± 7.2 (44.7)	58.9 ± 7.4 (38.8)
Overall	35.5 ± 3.5	54.6 ± 8.0	40.6 ± 7.9	33.0 ± 4.3	50.7 ± 10.1	53.0 ± 6.1	48.4 ± 4.4	54.5 ± 8.5	52.7 ± 5.9

Note: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval.
Values in brackets are medians.

Figure 9: Hourly earnings of African and white female managers with tertiary qualifications relative to the earnings of their male counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.73	0.88	0.78	0.60	0.62	0.72	0.70	1.32	0.96
White	0.53	0.84	0.79	0.61	0.80	0.72	0.75	0.81	0.79
Overall	0.52	0.83	0.82	0.58	0.75	0.77	0.73	0.90	0.79

Managers without tertiary qualifications

Figure 10 and Table 9 show that the overall earnings of managers without tertiary qualifications increased markedly after 1997. In fact, in 1999 and 2000 the real earnings of Asian and African managers in this category increased significantly, and then levelled off. The earnings of coloured managers jumped in a similar way slightly earlier, probably as a result of the affirmative action policies introduced in the late 1990s. Such earnings jumps do not occur in the other skills categories. Despite these increases, the earnings gap between white managers and those of other race groups did not close entirely. It did narrow, but was still bigger than in the skilled and highly skilled categories.

Figure 10: Average hourly earnings of male managers without tertiary qualifications by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

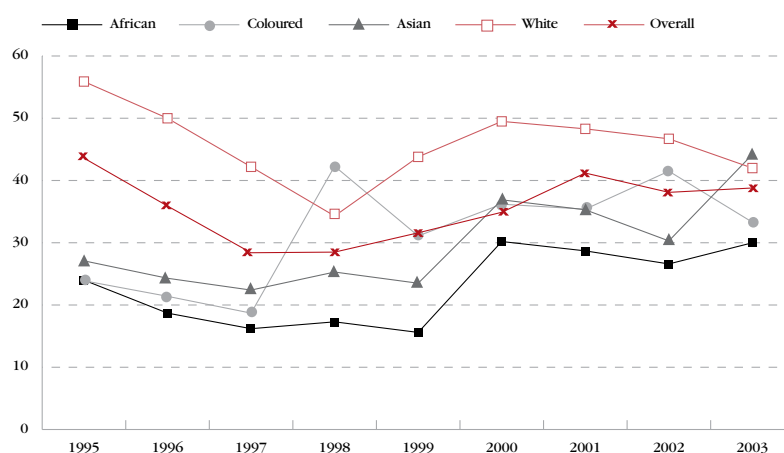


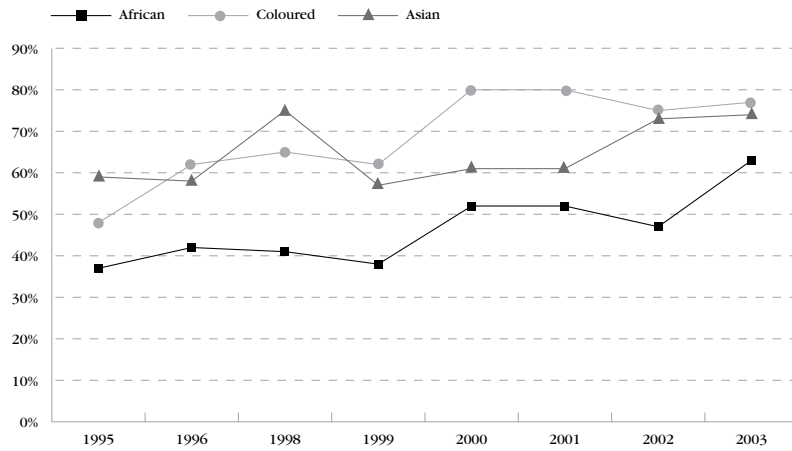
Table 9: Average hourly earnings of male managers without tertiary qualifications by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	24.0 ± 3.1 (15.1)	18.7 ± 2.2 (14.9)	16.2 ± 1.4 (19.1)	17.3 ± 1.8 (11.7)	15.6 ± 1.4 (12.2)	30.2 ± 3.7 (19.7)	28.7 ± 3.6 (18.8)	26.6 ± 2.8 (17.5)	30.0 ± 3.1 (20.5)
Coloured	23.9 ± 3.7 (19.8)	21.4 ± 5.7 (22.2)	18.7 ± 1.2 (19.1)	42.3 ± 16.9 (18.6)	31.1 ± 6.0 (19.8)	36.2 ± 4.1 (30.5)	35.4 ± 4.0 (29.2)	41.5 ± 6.4 (27.9)	33.3 ± 4.9 (25.0)
Asian	27.1 ± 2.4 (24.3)	24.3 ± 4.4 (20.9)	22.4 ± 1.7 (19.1)	25.3 ± 3.2 (21.5)	23.5 ± 4.1 (18.1)	36.9 ± 5.1 (23.4)	35.3 ± 4.9 (22.4)	30.3 ± 3.2 (26.9)	44.2 ± 6.4 (23.8)
White	55.9 ± 6.0 (40.9)	50.0 ± 3.7 (35.9)	42.2 ± 2.5 (19.1)	34.3 ± 2.5 (28.7)	43.8 ± 3.5 (31.7)	49.5 ± 3.2 (38.1)	48.3 ± 3.2 (36.5)	46.7 ± 2.6 (36.9)	42.0 ± 2.3 (32.3)
Overall	43.6 ± 3.9	35.9 ± 2.8	28.4 ± 1.4	28.5 ± 2.2	31.6 ± 2.2	34.9 ± 1.7	41.2 ± 2.1	38.1 ± 1.8	38.8 ± 1.9

Note: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval. Values in brackets are medians.

Figure 12 reveals that the earnings of female managers without tertiary qualifications rose significantly. As in the case of male managers, there was a particularly significant step jump in the earnings of female African managers in 1999 and 2000, largely because they came from a lower base. The data for Asian women should be treated with caution, as the sample was very small. Interestingly, the earnings of white women in this skills category increased gradually (the trend is statistically significant), but, unlike coloured men, no statistically significant increase could be observed for coloured women; the very small increase in 2000 is not statistically significant. Figure 13 shows that the gap in the earnings of African, coloured, and Asian female managers and their white counterparts narrowed significantly. For example, whereas in 1995 African female managers were earning less than half the earnings of their white counterparts, by 2003 they were almost on par. Therefore, much greater progress was made in closing the racial wage gap among female managers than among male managers. Figure 14 shows a general closing of the gender earnings gap in this skills category. In fact, it seems as if African female managers earned more than their male counterparts, although statistical

Figure 11: Median hourly earnings of African, coloured, and Asian male managers without tertiary qualifications relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.37	0.42	0.41	0.38	0.52	0.52	0.47	0.63
Coloured	0.48	0.62	0.65	0.62	0.80	0.80	0.75	0.77
Asian	0.59	0.58	0.75	0.57	0.61	0.61	0.73	0.74

testing shows that the ratio is not significantly different from 1. Some African women managers earned very well, and skewed the results; however, the narrowing of the gender earnings gap among Africans is still real. The gender gap among whites also narrowed, but not among coloureds or Asians. As in the case of skilled and highly skilled workers (see below), it appears that white men were still being selected for better paying jobs.

Figure 12: Average hourly earnings of female managers without tertiary qualifications by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

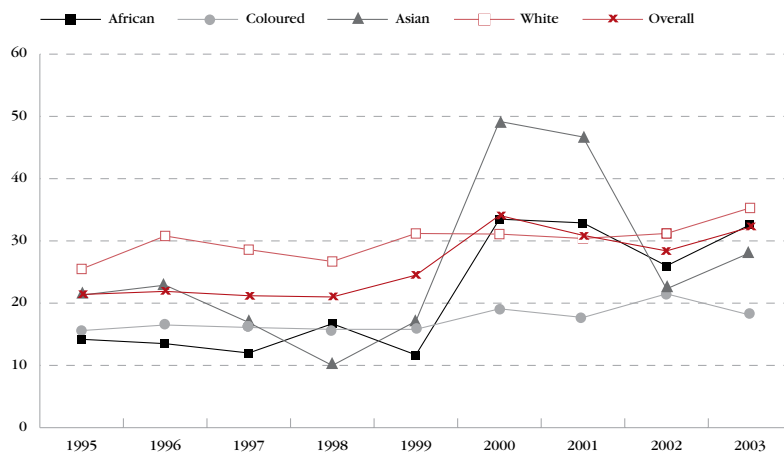
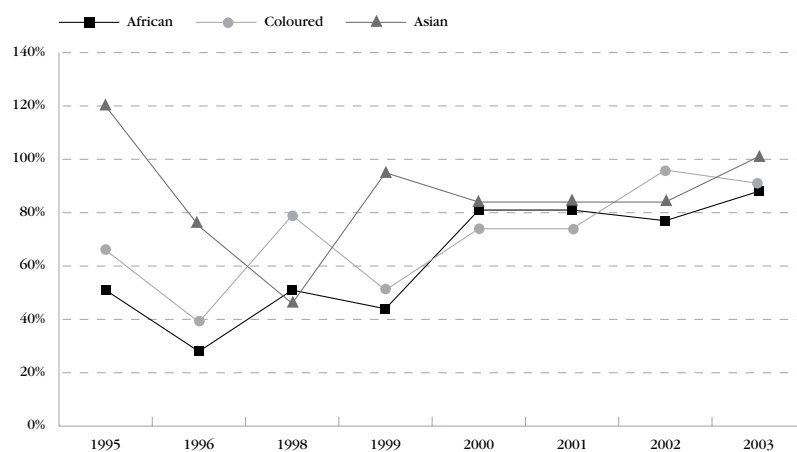


Table 10: Average hourly earnings of female managers without tertiary qualifications by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	14.2 ± 2.0 (10.8)	13.5 ± 4.6 (7.9)	12.0 ± 1.2 (13.2)	16.7 ± 5.8 (9.9)	11.7 ± 2.0 (10.1)	33.5 ± 6.1 (19.7)	32.9 ± 6.0 (18.8)	26.0 ± 3.1 (17.2)	32.6 ± 7.0 (19.0)
Coloured	15.6 ± 1.8 (13.9)	16.5 ± 5.4 (11.1)	16.1 ± 2.4 (13.2)	15.8 ± 2.6 (15.2)	15.8 ± 2.3 (11.7)	19.1 ± 2.7 (17.8)	17.7 ± 2.4 (17.0)	21.5 ± 4.9 (21.4)	18.1 ± 1.8 (19.7)
Asian	21.3 ± 4.8 (25.2)	22.9 ± 5.4 (21.1)	16.9 ± 2.7 (13.2)	10.0 ± 1.5 (8.8)	17.1 ± 4.3 (21.7)	49.2 ± 20.2 (20.4)	46.7 ± 19.0 (19.5)	22.3 ± 3.8 (18.8)	28.1 ± 6.9 (21.9)
White	25.5 ± 2.5 (21.0)	30.8 ± 3.4 (28.1)	28.6 ± 2.4 (13.2)	26.7 ± 5.7 (19.4)	31.2 ± 3.3 (22.9)	31.1 ± 2.8 (24.1)	30.4 ± 2.9 (23.1)	31.2 ± 2.6 (22.3)	35.3 ± 4.7 (21.6)
Overall	21.4 ± 1.6	21.9 ± 3.0	21.2 ± 1.4	21.0 ± 3.3	24.5 ± 2.3	34.1 ± 3.5	30.9 ± 2.7	28.4 ± 1.9	32.2 ± 3.2

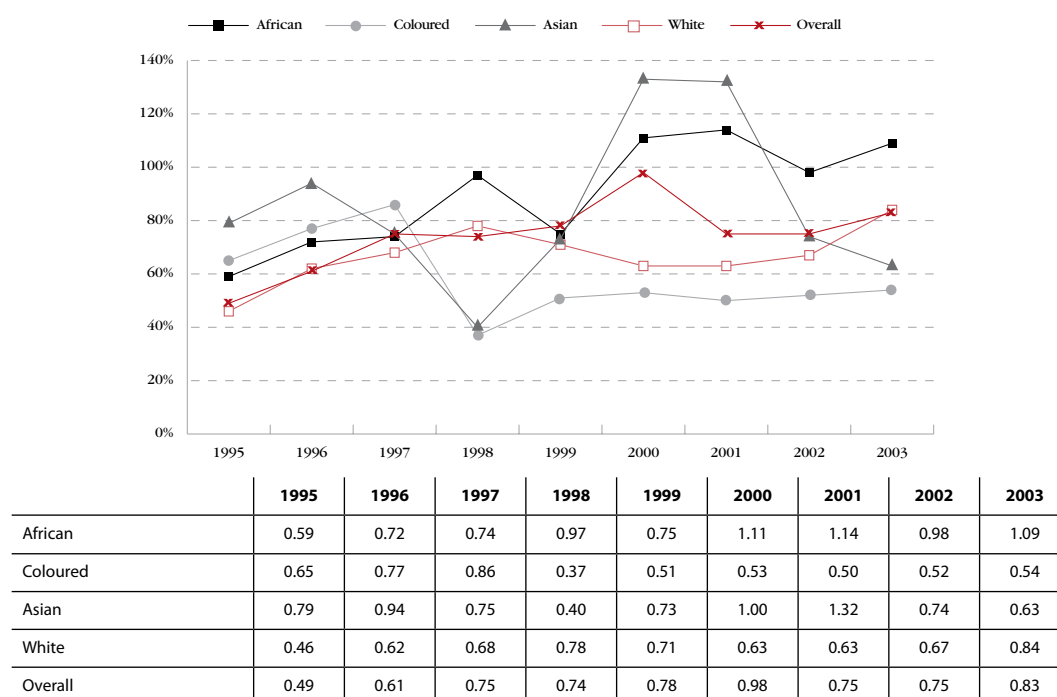
Note: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval.
Values in brackets are median values.

Figure 13: Median hourly earnings of African, coloured, and Asian female managers without tertiary qualifications relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.51	0.28	0.51	0.44	0.81	0.81	0.77	0.88
Coloured	0.66	0.39	0.79	0.51	0.74	0.74	0.96	0.91
Asian	1.20	0.75	0.46	0.95	0.84	0.84	0.84	1.01

Figure 14: Hourly earnings of female managers of various race groups without tertiary qualifications expressed as a percentage of the earnings of their male counterparts, 1995–2003



Highly skilled workers

Figures 15 and 16 show that the earnings of men in highly skilled occupations rose slightly for all race groups, but the results do not appear to be statistically significant. Figure 17 shows that the earnings gaps among women of various race groups in this category did not close. If there is any significant trend, it is the relative decline in the earnings of coloured workers. This figure uses median values because the smaller samples of members of some race groups (eg Asians) make the mean more susceptible to outliers.

Figure 15: Average hourly earnings of men in highly skilled occupations by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

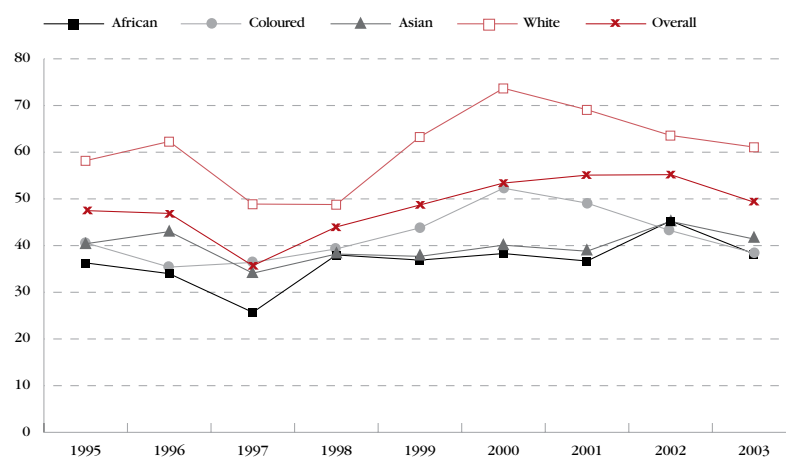
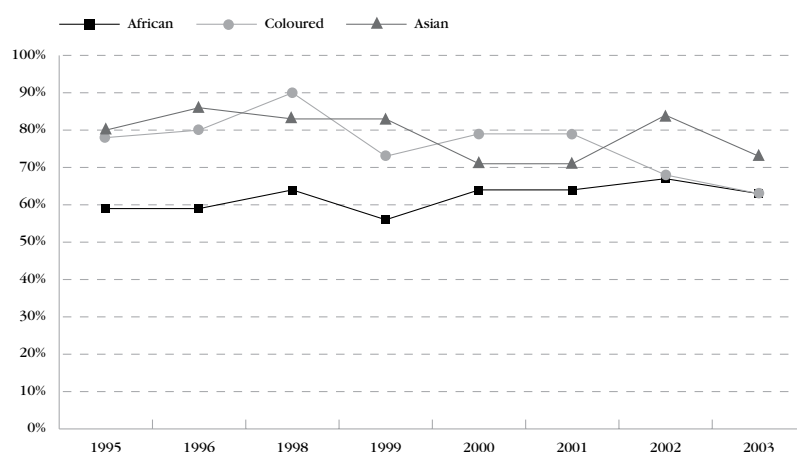


Table 11: Average hourly earnings of men in highly skilled occupations by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	36.3 ± 2.4 (28.0)	34.0 ± 2.5 (27.3)	25.7 ± 1.1 (27.0)	38.0 ± 5.7 (26.6)	36.9 ± 3.6 (27.7)	38.3 ± 2.6 (32.8)	36.7 ± 2.6 (31.4)	45.3 ± 5.0 (34.1)	38.2 ± 2.4 (33.2)
Coloured	40.6 ± 3.8 (37.0)	35.4 ± 6.9 (36.9)	36.4 ± 2.7 (27.0)	39.3 ± 6.8 (37.2)	43.8 ± 9.9 (35.6)	52.3 ± 7.9 (40.0)	49.1 ± 7.3 (38.3)	43.2 ± 7.1 (34.3)	38.4 ± 5.6 (33.0)
Asian	40.4 ± 2.0 (38.3)	43.0 ± 4.2 (39.7)	34.1 ± 3.6 (27.0)	38.2 ± 4.9 (34.3)	37.7 ± 7.1 (40.9)	40.1 ± 4.5 (36.0)	38.8 ± 4.2 (34.5)	45.2 ± 6.8 (42.8)	41.4 ± 4.8 (38.4)
White	58.2 ± 2.9 (47.6)	62.3 ± 6.0 (46.0)	48.9 ± 2.8 (27.0)	48.8 ± 3.4 (41.4)	63.3 ± 4.6 (49.1)	73.7 ± 5.1 (50.8)	69.1 ± 4.8 (48.7)	63.6 ± 3.7 (50.7)	61.1 ± 3.5 (52.6)
Overall	47.5 ± 1.9	46.9 ± 3.1	35.7 ± 1.3	44.0 ± 2.8	48.7 ± 2.7	53.4 ± 2.3	55.1 ± 2.9	55.2 ± 2.7	49.3 ± 2.1

Note: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval. Values in brackets are median values.

Figure 16: Median hourly earnings of highly skilled African, coloured and Asian men relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.59	0.59	0.68	0.56	0.64	0.64	0.67	0.63
Coloured	0.78	0.80	0.90	0.73	0.79	0.79	0.68	0.63
Asian	0.80	0.86	0.83	0.83	0.71	0.71	0.84	0.73

Note: Using median values.

As Figure 17 and Table 12 show, the earnings of women in this skills category did not change significantly. The rapid growth in earnings after 2001 is due to the very small number of Asian women. The earnings gap between white women and women of other race groups seemed to close slightly, especially in the case of African women. Interestingly, as Table 18 shows, the ratios between the earnings of African, coloured and Asian women and those of white women are far closer to 1 than in the case of their male counterparts. This may well indicate greater racial equality in the workplace among women than among men. It is likely that white men are still being preferred for responsible positions, at higher levels of pay. Of course, white women are less likely to be members of better paying professions, such as

engineering, than white men. This is clearly illustrated in Figure 19, which shows that the gender earnings gap in this skills category is the biggest for whites, despite the fact that white women are better paid than their counterparts of other racial groups.

Skilled workers

Skilled workers include technicians and associate professionals such as teachers and nurses with diplomas rather than university degrees, pilots and air traffic controllers, laboratory technicians, and dental assistants. Figure 20 and Table 13 show that the real earnings of skilled males remained relatively constant. No statistically significant trend is apparent. As with highly skilled men, the earnings gap between skilled workers of various race groups does not seem to be narrowing. What is significant is that the earnings gap by race is consistently larger for skilled than for highly skilled workers.

Figure 17: Average hourly earnings of highly skilled women by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

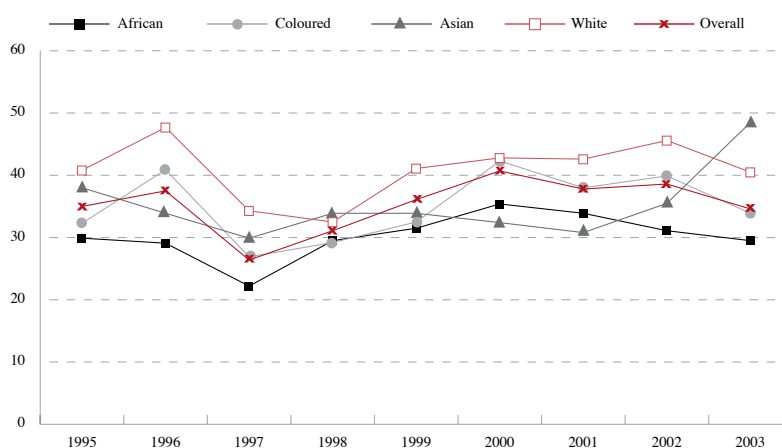
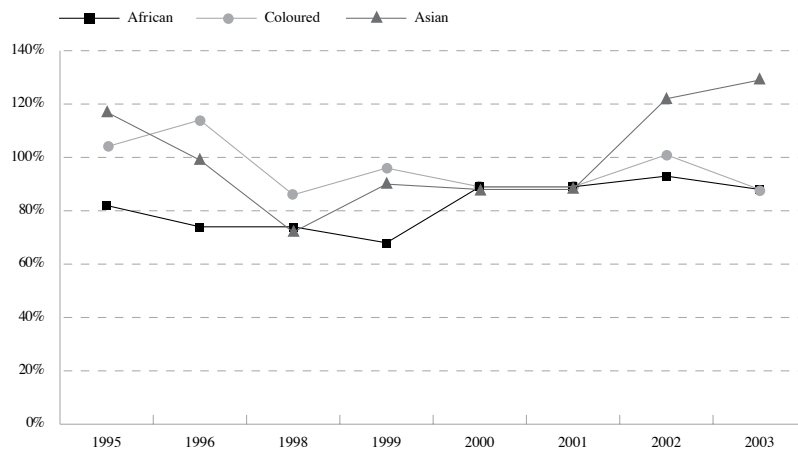


Table 12: Average hourly earnings of highly skilled women by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	29.9 ± 1.7 (25.8)	29.1 ± 1.9 (25.5)	22.2 ± 0.7 (21.6)	29.5 ± 2.3 (22.9)	31.5 ± 2.3 (23.6)	35.4 ± 2.2 (30.4)	33.9 ± 2.1 (29.1)	31.1 ± 1.6 (30.1)	29.5 ± 1.1 (28.2)
Coloured	32.3 ± 3.7 (32.9)	40.9 ± 7.8 (39.5)	26.9 ± 1.5 (21.6)	29.2 ± 2.4 (26.6)	32.5 ± 3.3 (33.3)	42.3 ± 6.7 (30.5)	38.0 ± 4.7 (29.2)	39.9 ± 6.6 (32.5)	33.9 ± 4.8 (28.2)
Asian	38.0 ± 2.3 (37.0)	33.9 ± 4.6 (34.2)	29.9 ± 2.9 (21.6)	33.9 ± 5.0 (22.3)	33.9 ± 5.4 (31.4)	32.4 ± 2.8 (30.0)	30.8 ± 2.2 (28.7)	35.5 ± 2.5 (39.4)	48.5 ± 7.1 (41.5)
White	40.8 ± 5.2 (31.5)	47.7 ± 6.0 (34.7)	34.3 ± 2.1 (21.6)	32.5 ± 2.1 (31.0)	41.1 ± 2.9 (34.9)	42.8 ± 2.9 (34.3)	42.6 ± 3.0 (32.8)	45.6 ± 3.2 (32.3)	40.5 ± 3.2 (32.2)
Overall	35.0 ± 2.3	37.5 ± 2.7	26.4 ± 0.8	31.1 ± 1.4	36.1 ± 1.8	40.7 ± 1.8	37.8 ± 1.7	38.6 ± 1.7	34.6 ± 1.4

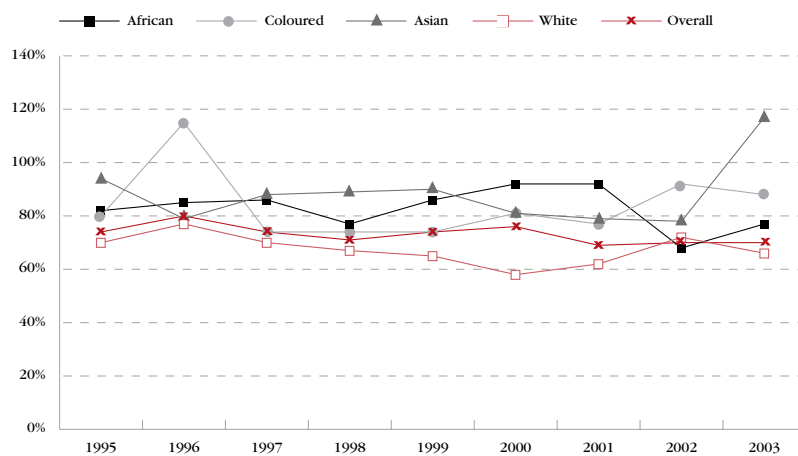
Note: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval.
Values in brackets are median values.

Figure 18: Median hourly earnings of highly skilled African, coloured, and Asian women relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.82	0.74	0.74	0.68	0.89	0.89	0.93	0.88
Coloured	1.04	1.14	0.86	0.96	0.89	0.89	1.01	0.88
Asian	1.17	0.99	0.72	0.90	0.88	0.88	0.22	1.29

Figure 19: Hourly earnings of highly skilled women by race expressed as percentages of the earnings of their male counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.82	0.85	0.86	0.77	0.86	0.92	0.92	0.68	0.77
Coloured	0.80	1.15	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.81	0.77	0.92	0.88
Asian	0.94	0.79	0.88	0.89	0.90	0.81	0.79	0.78	1.17
White	0.70	0.77	0.70	0.67	0.65	0.58	0.62	0.72	0.66
Overall	0.74	0.80	0.74	0.71	0.74	0.76	0.69	0.70	0.70

Figure 20: Average hourly earnings of men in skilled occupations by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

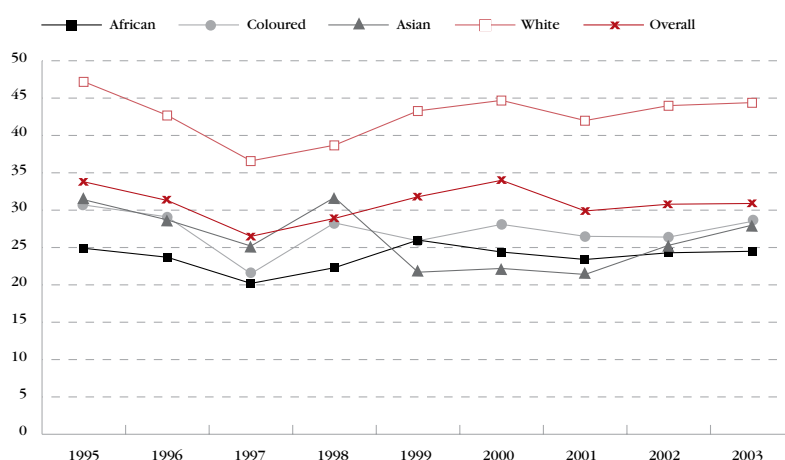
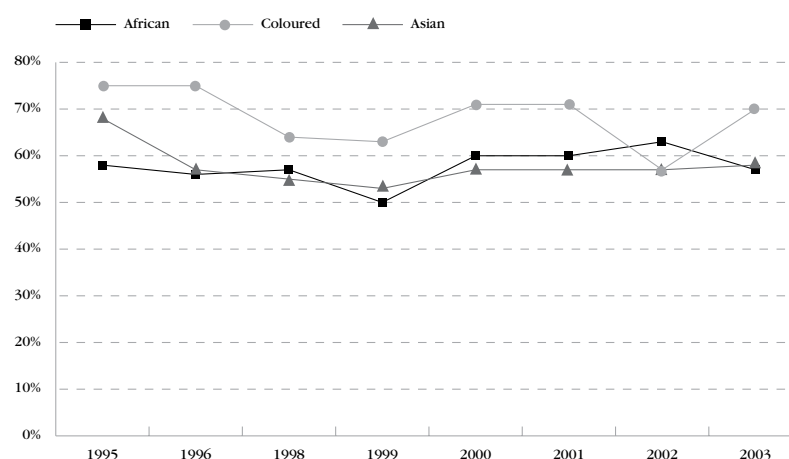


Table 13: Average hourly earnings of skilled men by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	24.9 ± 0.7 (22.8)	23.7 ± 1.0 (19.6)	20.2 ± 1.2 (19.3)	22.3 ± 1.1 (18.7)	26.0 ± 2.1 (17.0)	24.4 ± 1.0 (21.5)	23.4 ± 1.0 (20.6)	24.3 ± 1.2 (21.9)	24.5 ± 1.5 (20.5)
Coloured	30.7 ± 3.1 (29.6)	29.1 ± 2.2 (26.5)	21.5 ± 1.4 (19.3)	28.3 ± 1.8 (21.0)	25.9 ± 1.4 (21.7)	28.1 ± 3.7 (25.4)	26.5 ± 3.6 (24.3)	26.4 ± 2.1 (19.7)	28.5 ± 3.1 (25.3)
Asian	31.4 ± 2.4 (26.7)	28.7 ± 2.6 (20.1)	25.2 ± 2.8 (19.3)	31.7 ± 7.6 (18.0)	21.7 ± 2.9 (18.0)	22.2 ± 1.7 (20.4)	21.4 ± 1.6 (19.5)	25.3 ± 4.0 (19.7)	28.0 ± 3.4 (21.1)
White	47.2 ± 3.1 (39.2)	42.7 ± 1.9 (35.1)	36.6 ± 2.3 (19.3)	38.7 ± 2.7 (33.1)	43.3 ± 2.4 (34.2)	44.7 ± 2.6 (35.6)	42.0 ± 2.5 (34.1)	44.0 ± 2.5 (34.8)	44.4 ± 2.5 (36.0)
Overall	33.8 ± 1.3	31.3 ± 1.1	26.5 ± 1.1	28.9 ± 1.3	31.8 ± 1.5	34.0 ± 1.6	29.9 ± 1.1	30.8 ± 1.3	30.9 ± 1.4

Note: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval.
Values in brackets are median values.

Figure 21: Median hourly earnings of skilled African, coloured, and Asian men relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.58	0.56	0.57	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.63	0.57
Coloured	0.75	0.75	0.64	0.63	0.71	0.71	0.57	0.70
Asian	0.68	0.57	0.55	0.53	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.58

As with their male counterparts, no statistically significant trend could be discerned in respect of skilled women (see Figure 22 and Table 14). As in the case of highly skilled workers, the ratio of the earnings of skilled African, coloured and Asian women to their white counterparts is higher than the corresponding ratio for men. This indicates that there is greater racial equality among women in this skills category than among men. Interestingly, the median earnings of skilled Asian women were lower than those of skilled African women, although this is a small base effect with large uncertainties. Also, when mean earnings rather than medians are used, the effect is smaller. A similar effect is also seen in respect of Asian men, although the earnings gap between Asian and African men is smaller. Again, a small base effect is suspected. Figure 24 shows that there is almost no disparity between the earnings of skilled African men and women. The disparity is largest between white men and women.

Figure 22: Average hourly earnings of skilled women by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

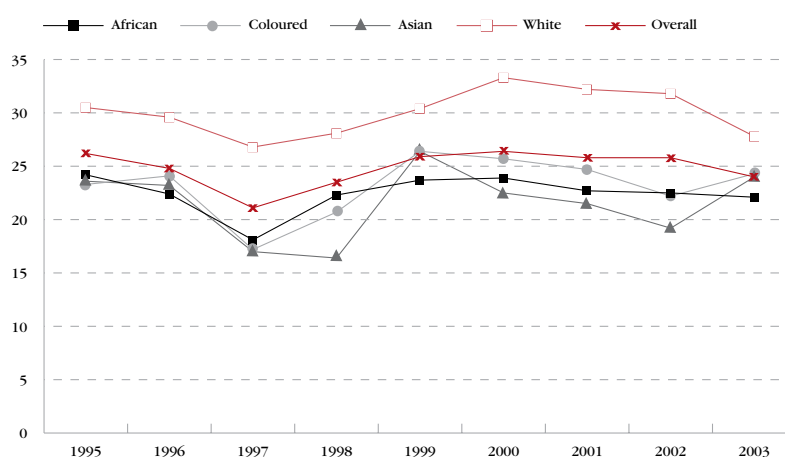
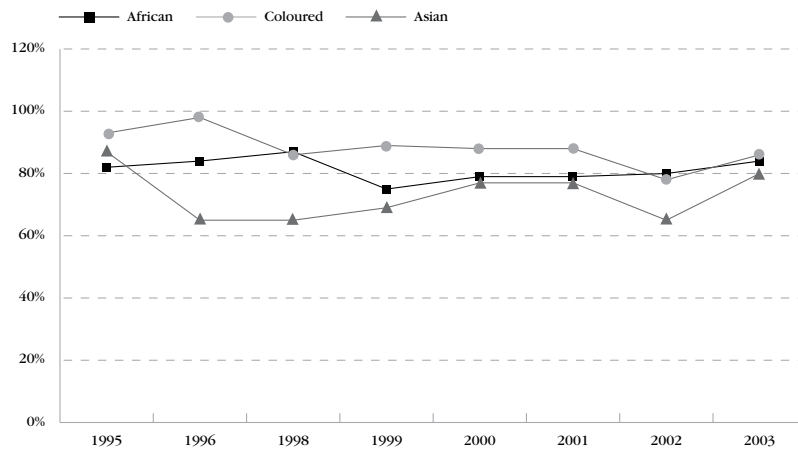


Table 14: Average hourly earnings of skilled women by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	24.2 ± 0.9 (20.8)	22.4 ± 0.7 (19.7)	18.1 ± 1.1 (15.2)	22.3 ± 1.1 (19.9)	23.7 ± 1.2 (18.3)	23.9 ± 0.9 (20.7)	22.7 ± 0.9 (19.9)	22.5 ± 0.8 (21.4)	22.1 ± 0.6 (20.6)
Coloured	23.3 ± 1.0 (23.5)	24.1 ± 1.5 (23.0)	17.2 ± 1.1 (15.2)	20.7 ± 1.7 (19.6)	26.4 ± 2.9 (21.8)	25.7 ± 2.1 (22.9)	24.7 ± 2.0 (21.9)	22.2 ± 1.6 (20.9)	24.3 ± 1.4 (21.1)
Asian	23.6 ± 1.6 (22.1)	23.2 ± 2.9 (15.4)	17.0 ± 1.6 (15.3)	16.4 ± 2.0 (14.9)	26.4 ± 4.6 (16.9)	22.5 ± 2.2 (20.0)	21.5 ± 2.0 (19.2)	19.2 ± 2.2 (17.4)	24.0 ± 2.6 (19.5)
White	30.5 ± 1.2 (25.4)	29.6 ± 2.5 (23.5)	26.8 ± 1.7 (15.2)	28.1 ± 2.0 (22.8)	30.4 ± 3.9 (24.4)	33.3 ± 1.7 (26.1)	32.2 ± 1.7 (25.0)	31.8 ± 1.6 (26.7)	27.8 ± 1.4 (24.6)
Overall	26.2 ± 0.8	24.8 ± 0.9	21.1 ± 0.8	23.5 ± 0.9	25.9 ± 1.4	26.4 ± 0.8	25.8 ± 0.8	25.8 ± 0.7	24.0 ± 0.6

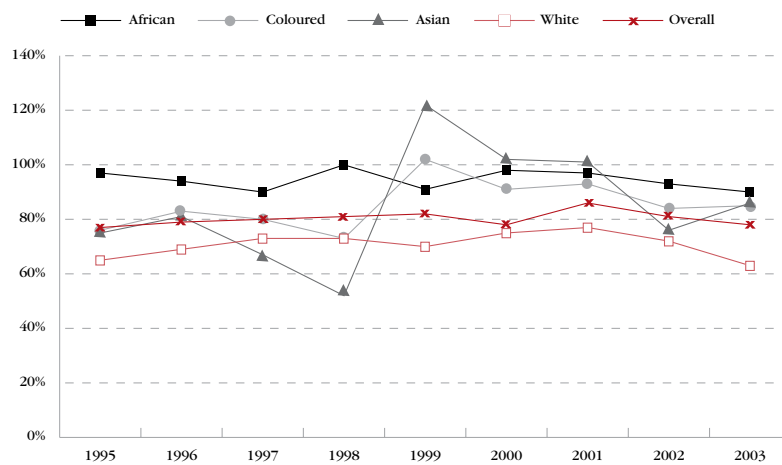
Notes: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval.
Values in brackets are medians.

Figure 23: Median hourly earnings of skilled African, coloured, and Asian women relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.82	0.84	0.87	0.75	0.79	0.79	0.80	0.84
Coloured	0.93	0.98	0.86	0.89	0.88	0.88	0.78	0.86
Asian	0.87	0.65	0.65	0.69	0.77	0.77	0.65	0.80

Figure 24: Median hourly earnings of skilled African, coloured, and Asian women relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.97	0.94	0.90	1.00	0.91	0.98	0.97	0.93	0.90
Coloured	0.76	0.83	0.80	0.73	1.02	0.91	0.93	0.84	0.85
Asian	0.75	0.81	0.67	0.52	1.22	1.02	1.01	0.76	0.86
White	0.65	0.69	0.73	0.73	0.70	0.75	0.77	0.72	0.63
Overall	0.77	0.79	0.80	0.81	0.82	0.78	0.86	0.81	0.78

Semi-skilled workers

Semi-skilled workers include clerks, service workers, skilled agricultural workers, craft-workers and plant operators. More than half of South Africa's formal labour force falls in this category, so earnings within it vary widely. For example, divers, models, and race horse trainers earn far more than security guards or fishermen.

Figure 25 and Table 15 show that the earnings of semi-skilled African, coloured and Asian men were more stable than those of their white counterparts. This is because the sample for whites was relatively small, and therefore more variable. The only significant trend in this category is a decline, though slight, in the earnings of African men. As in the case of skilled and highly skilled workers, there is a gap between the earnings of semi-skilled white men and those of other races; with the largest gap found between the earnings of Africans and whites. There is also a significant discrepancy between the earnings of African men on the one hand and coloured and Asian men on the other, which was not significant in the case of skilled men. Furthermore, while the earnings gap between African men and white men in the skilled category was greater than in the highly skilled category, the gap is greater still in the semi-skilled category.

Figure 25: Average hourly earnings of semi-skilled men by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

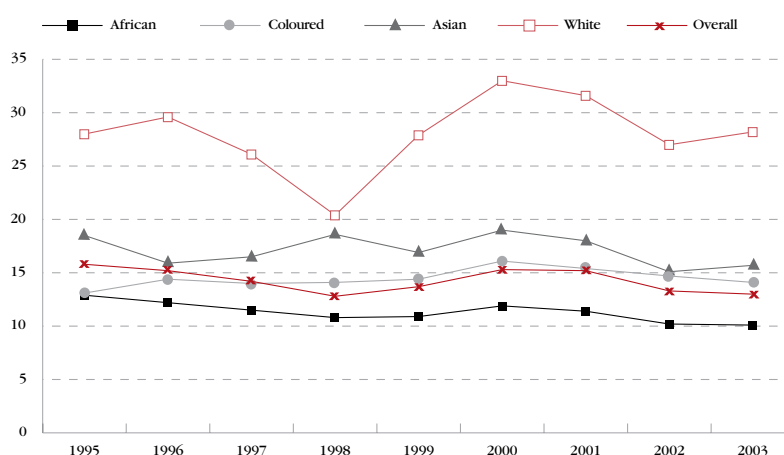
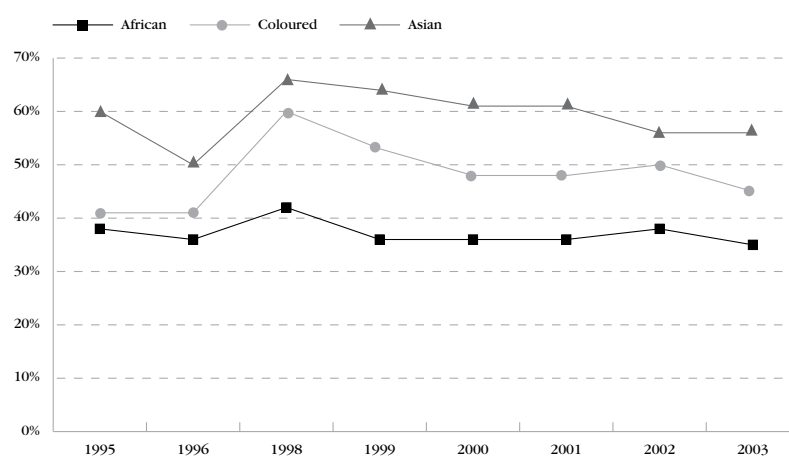


Table 15: Average hourly earnings of semi-skilled men by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	12.9 ± 0.2 (10.0)	12.2 ± 0.4 (9.1)	11.5 ± 0.2 (9.5)	10.8 ± 0.3 (7.8)	10.9 ± 0.3 (7.6)	11.9 ± 0.2 (9.1)	11.4 ± 0.2 (8.8)	10.2 ± 0.2 (8.3)	10.1 ± 0.2 (8.0)
Coloured	13.1 ± 0.4 (10.7)	14.4 ± 0.9 (10.5)	14.0 ± 0.5 (9.5)	14.1 ± 0.6 (11.2)	14.4 ± 0.6 (11.0)	16.1 ± 0.8 (12.3)	15.4 ± 0.8 (11.8)	14.7 ± 0.9 (10.9)	14.1 ± 0.6 (10.2)
Asian	18.5 ± 0.8 (15.9)	15.9 ± 0.9 (12.5)	16.5 ± 0.9 (9.5)	18.6 ± 3.7 (12.2)	16.9 ± 1.6 (13.5)	19.0 ± 1.4 (15.4)	18.0 ± 1.3 (14.7)	15.1 ± 0.8 (12.3)	15.7 ± 0.8 (12.6)
White	28.0 ± 0.5 (26.4)	29.6 ± 1.5 (25.3)	26.1 ± 1.1 (9.5)	20.4 ± 0.8 (18.6)	27.9 ± 2.3 (20.9)	33.0 ± 1.9 (25.4)	31.6 ± 1.8 (24.3)	27.0 ± 1.1 (21.9)	28.2 ± 1.0 (22.6)
Overall	15.8 ± 0.2	15.2 ± 0.4	14.2 ± 0.3	12.8 ± 0.3	13.7 ± 0.4	15.3 ± 0.3	15.2 ± 0.4	13.3 ± 0.3	13.0 ± 0.3

Notes: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval. Values in brackets are medians.

Figure 26: Median hourly earnings of semi-skilled African, coloured, and Asian men relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.38	0.36	0.42	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.38	0.35
Coloured	0.41	0.41	0.60	0.53	0.48	0.48	0.50	0.45
Asian	0.60	0.50	0.66	0.64	0.61	0.61	0.56	0.56

Figure 27 and Table 16 reveal a statistically significant increase in the earnings of semi-skilled coloured, Asian, and white women, but a marked decline in the earnings of semi-skilled white women from 2000 onwards. The earnings of all semi-skilled women did not increase because the data are dominated by African women, whose real earnings did not increase. Figure 28 shows that the earnings of African women declined relative to those of white women. This did not happen in respect of coloured and Asian women. Furthermore, the earnings gaps for women in this skills category are much larger than in the highly skilled and skilled categories (a black woman earns more than 50% less than her white counterpart). Interestingly, as Figure 29 reveals, the earnings gap between men and women in this skills category closed entirely. However, this is something of a simplification as closer investigation reveals that a gender discrepancy still existed in all constituent race groups (ratio < 1). The overall gap closed because there were relatively few white semi-skilled workers, and the earnings of white women increased. Furthermore, while the earnings of semi-skilled African women remained relatively constant, those of African men declined, thus narrowing the earnings gap among semi-skilled Africans. Because on average semi-skilled white women earn 1.5–1.75 times as much as African men, the effect is a very small overall gender earnings gap for semi-skilled workers.

Figure 27: Average hourly earnings of semi-skilled women by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

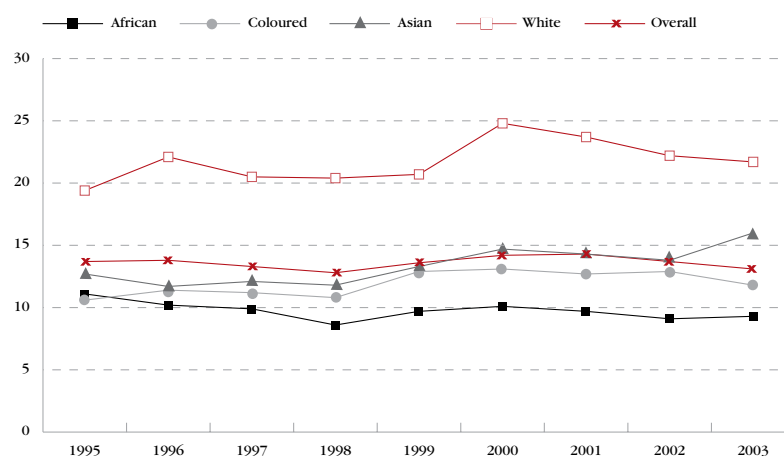


Table 16: Average hourly wages of semi-skilled women by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

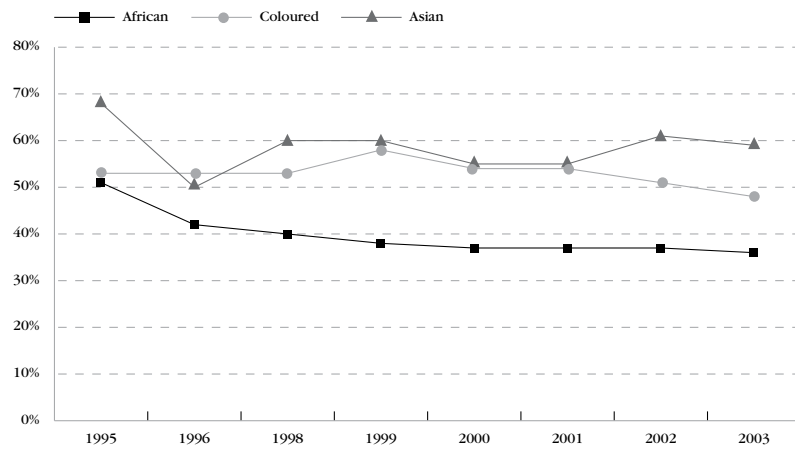
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	11.1 ± 0.3 (8.5)	10.2 ± 0.4 (7.4)	9.9 ± 0.4 (8.9)	8.6 ± 0.4 (6.5)	9.7 ± 0.4 (6.2)	10.1 ± 0.3 (6.8)	9.7 ± 0.3 (6.5)	9.1 ± 0.3 (6.6)	9.3 ± 0.4 (6.3)
Coloured	10.6 ± 0.4 (8.9)	11.4 ± 0.7 (9.3)	11.2 ± 0.6 (8.9)	10.8 ± 0.4 (8.7)	12.9 ± 0.9 (9.4)	13.1 ± 0.6 (10.1)	12.7 ± 0.6 (9.6)	12.9 ± 0.8 (9.1)	11.8 ± 0.6 (8.4)
Asian	12.7 ± 0.6 (11.3)	11.7 ± 0.8 (8.7)	12.1 ± 0.8 (8.9)	11.8 ± 1.0 (9.8)	13.3 ± 1.0 (9.8)	14.7 ± 1.2 (10.3)	14.3 ± 1.2 (9.9)	13.8 ± 0.7 (10.9)	16.0 ± 2.4 (10.5)
White	19.4 ± 0.5 (16.7)	22.1 ± 1.2 (17.4)	20.5 ± 0.6 (8.9)	20.4 ± 1.3 (16.3)	20.7 ± 0.9 (16.3)	24.8 ± 1.4 (18.6)	23.7 ± 1.4 (17.8)	22.2 ± 0.9 (18.0)	21.7 ± 0.8 (17.7)
Overall	13.7 ± 0.3	13.8 ± 0.5	13.3 ± 0.3	12.8 ± 0.6	13.6 ± 0.4	14.2 ± 0.5	14.3 ± 0.5	13.7 ± 0.4	13.1 ± 0.4

Notes: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval. Values in brackets are medians.

Unskilled workers

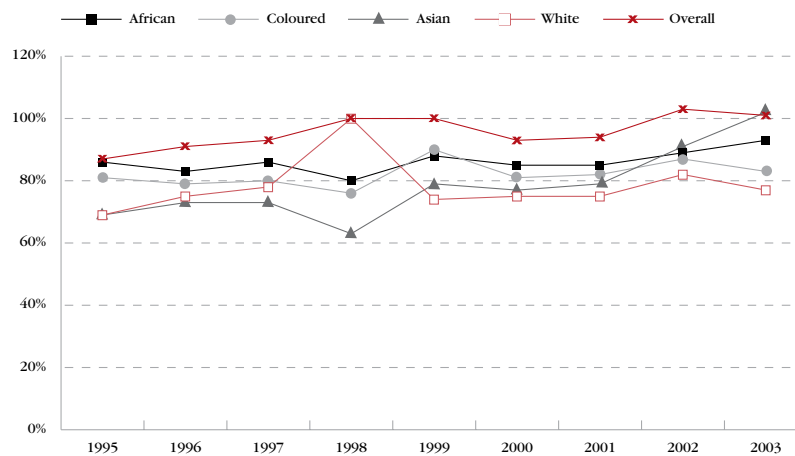
This category includes workers active in elementary occupations, such as floor sweepers, farm labourers, construction workers, messengers, and cleaners. Figure 30 and Table 17 show that the earnings of unskilled men fell after 2001. Because of small samples, the increases in the earnings of unskilled white and Asian men between 1997 and 2000 should be treated with caution. Nevertheless, these values (which are likely outliers) do skew the overall earnings trends upwards (especially in 2000–2002). The values during others years are very close to those for African men. The earnings of unskilled African men in fact fell after 1999. This effect is statistically significant. Because of the very small number of unskilled white men, the uncertainties about earnings relative to those of white men are very large, and so relative wages are not shown.

Figure 28: Median hourly earnings of semi-skilled African, coloured and Asian women relative to those of their white counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.51	0.42	0.40	0.38	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.36
Coloured	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.58	0.54	0.54	0.51	0.48
Asian	0.68	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.55	0.55	0.61	0.59

Figure 29: Hourly earnings of semi-skilled women by race, expressed as percentages of the earnings of their male counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.86	0.83	0.86	0.80	0.88	0.85	0.85	0.89	0.93
Coloured	0.81	0.79	0.80	0.76	0.90	0.81	0.82	0.87	0.83
Asian	0.69	0.73	0.73	0.63	0.79	0.77	0.79	0.91	1.02
White	0.69	0.75	0.78	1.00	0.74	0.75	0.75	0.82	0.77
Overall	0.87	0.91	0.93	1.00	1.00	0.93	0.94	1.03	1.01

Figure 30: Average hourly earnings of unskilled men by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

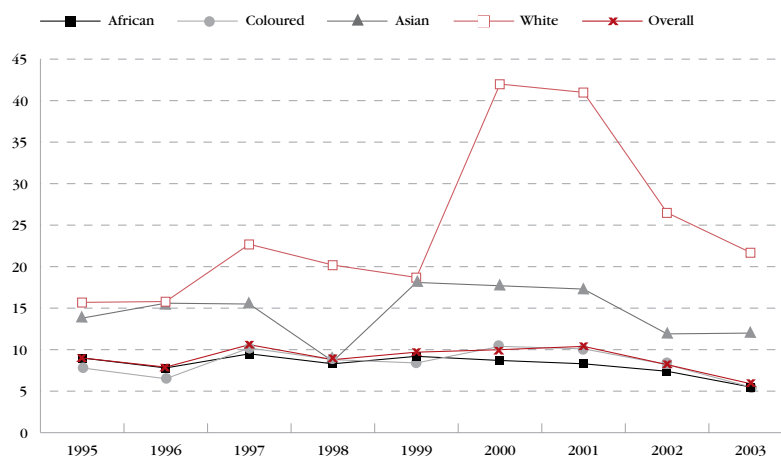


Table 17: Average hourly earnings of unskilled men by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	9.0 ± 0.3 (7.1)	7.8 ± 0.4 (5.7)	9.5 ± 0.3 (7.6)	8.3 ± 0.3 (6.7)	9.2 ± 0.5 (6.6)	8.7 ± 0.4 (6.6)	8.3 ± 0.3 (6.3)	7.4 ± 0.2 (6.4)	5.5 ± 0.2 (3.9)
Coloured	7.8 ± 0.3 (6.3)	6.5 ± 0.6 (5.4)	10.2 ± 0.5 (7.6)	8.8 ± 0.6 (6.9)	8.4 ± 0.5 (6.5)	10.4 ± 0.6 (8.1)	10.1 ± 0.6 (7.7)	8.2 ± 0.5 (7.0)	5.5 ± 0.3 (3.6)
Asian	13.8 ± 1.9 (11.1)	15.6 ± 4.6 (9.6)	15.5 ± 2.2 (7.6)	8.6 ± 2.0 (7.8)	18.1 ± 7.3 (9.9)	17.7 ± 2.4 (15.2)	17.3 ± 2.4 (14.6)	11.9 ± 3.2 (6.7)	12.0 ± 1.7 (10.9)
White	15.7 ± 1.7 (12.7)	15.8 ± 2.2 (12.6)	22.7 ± 1.8 (7.6)	20.2 ± 4.0 (13.8)	18.7 ± 2.4 (15.7)	42.0 ± 13.3 (25.4)	41.0 ± 12.7 (24.3)	26.5 ± 5.0 (19.4)	21.7 ± 3.5 (15.8)
Overall	9.0 ± 0.2	7.9 ± 0.4	10.6 ± 0.3	8.8 ± 0.4	9.7 ± 0.5	10.0 ± 0.4	10.4 ± 0.9	8.2 ± 0.3	5.9 ± 0.2

Notes: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval. Values in brackets are medians.

Figure 31 shows, as in the case of African men, a statistically significant decline in the earnings of unskilled African women (in this case after 1997). As in the case of white men, the data for unskilled white women should be discounted because of small samples. The increase in the earnings of Asian women is not statistically significant. Figure 32 shows that the gender earnings gap remained relatively constant in respect of unskilled coloured and African women. The samples of whites and Asians were too small to be significant.

Figure 31: Average hourly earnings of unskilled women by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

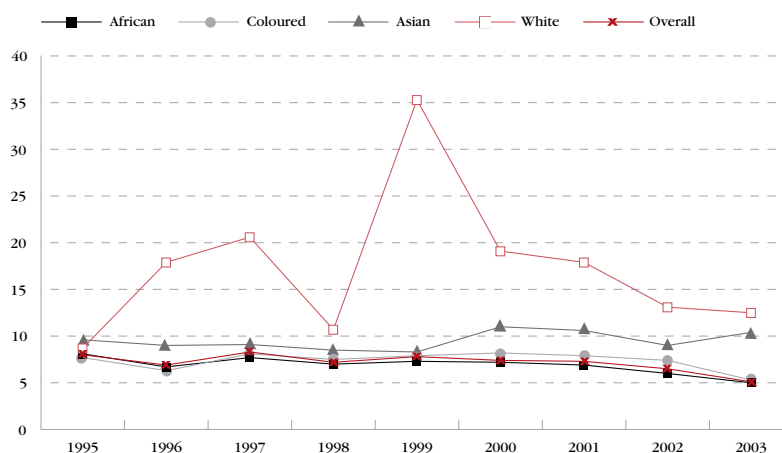


Table 18: Average hourly earnings of unskilled women by race, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	8.1 ± 0.3 (6.0)	6.7 ± 0.4 (4.8)	7.7 ± 0.4 (6.0)	7.0 ± 0.3 (5.3)	7.3 ± 0.3 (5.2)	7.2 ± 0.3 (5.6)	6.9 ± 0.2 (5.4)	6.0 ± 0.2 (4.9)	5.0 ± 0.2 (3.3)
Coloured	7.7 ± 0.5 (6.4)	6.3 ± 0.6 (5.0)	8.1 ± 0.5 (6.0)	7.5 ± 0.6 (6.2)	7.9 ± 0.6 (6.8)	8.2 ± 0.5 (7.1)	7.9 ± 0.5 (6.8)	7.4 ± 0.6 (5.8)	5.3 ± 0.3 (3.6)
Asian	9.6 ± 1.0 (9.5)	9.0 ± 1.0 (8.9)	9.1 ± 1.6 (6.0)	8.5 ± 2.3 (6.1)	8.3 ± 0.9 (8.2)	11.0 ± 1.6 (9.4)	10.6 ± 1.5 (9.0)	9.0 ± 1.4 (6.6)	10.4 ± 4.6 (5.9)
White	8.7 ± 1.3 (7.4)	17.9 ± 4.5 (9.8)	20.6 ± 3.2 (6.0)	10.7 ± 2.5 (13.0)	35.3 ± 8.8 (33.6)	19.1 ± 3.5 (15.3)	17.9 ± 3.1 (14.6)	13.1 ± 2.7 (10.9)	12.5 ± 1.8 (14.2)
Overall	8.0 ± 0.3	6.9 ± 0.3	8.3 ± 0.4	7.2 ± 0.3	7.8 ± 0.4	7.4 ± 0.3	7.3 ± 0.2	6.5 ± 0.2	5.1 ± 0.2

Notes: Errors indicated are for the limits of the 95% confidence interval.
Values in brackets are median values.

Earnings differentials in large versus small enterprises

In Table 19 we distinguish between workers active in small firms (those employing fewer than 50 workers), large firms, and the public sector. This analysis could only be done by using LFS data, as the OHS does not contain questions relating to firm size except in respect of self-employed workers. Large enterprises pay between 10% and 40% more than small firms, depending on the skills category. The only case in which large firms pay less than small firms is for highly skilled men, although the difference is not significant.

Figure 32: Hourly earnings of unskilled women by race, expressed as percentages of the earnings of their male counterparts, 1995–2003



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
African	0.90	0.86	0.81	0.85	0.79	0.83	0.83	0.82	0.91
Coloured	0.99	0.96	0.80	0.85	0.94	0.79	0.79	0.90	0.96
Asian	0.70	0.58	0.59	0.99	0.46	0.62	0.61	0.76	0.87
White	0.56	1.13	0.91	0.53	1.89	0.45	0.44	0.49	0.58
Overall	0.90	0.87	0.78	0.81	0.81	0.74	0.71	0.80	0.87

The table indicates that the public sector is the highest remunerator of lower-skilled (unskilled and semi-skilled) workers, both men and women. In contrast, the public sector pays highly skilled workers and both classes of managers less than large firms do. However, because of the large variation in managers' earnings, many of the employer type pairs are not significantly different. Also of interest is the fact that both large and small firms pay highly skilled workers significantly more than managers without tertiary qualifications. In contrast, the premium for highly skilled workers in the public sector is not significant. This may reflect the nature of public sector work and differences among highly skilled workers required by the public sector and those required by the private sector. This is also illustrated by Table 20; it is immediately apparent that the gap between the lowest paid (unskilled) and highest paid (managers) categories is lowest in the public sector.

The general decrease in the earnings of unskilled workers is even more significant in respect of small firms. This is because no decrease in the earnings of unskilled workers in the public sector is evident. This may reflect the increasing casualisation of unskilled work by small firms.

The gender earnings gap was also the smallest in the public sector, and the largest in small firms. In 2000–2003 women in the public sector earned 88% of their male counterparts, with the figures for small and large firms 80% and 83% respectively. However, only the difference between the public sector and small firms is significant. In general, the ratio of African, coloured and Asian workers' earnings to those of their white counterparts is closest to unity in the public sector. In small and large firms the ratios lie in the range 0.5–0.7 and in the public sector in the range 0.7–0.9.

Table 19: Average hourly earnings of workers active in the formal sector by size of firm, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	2000			2001			2002			2003		
	Small	Large	Public	Small	Large	Public	Small	Large	Public	Small	Large	Public
Male, unskilled	9.6 ± 1.4	9.9 ± 1.1	10.9 ± 1.0	8.4 ± 1.9	10.5 ± 1.3	12.0 ± 1.3	6.8 ± 0.7	9.6 ± 0.9	9.7 ± 0.7	4.8 ± 0.4	6.4 ± 0.5	9.8 ± 0.8
Male, semi-skilled	13.0 ± 0.7	16.3 ± 1.2	19.5 ± 1.3	13.4 ± 1.2	15.7 ± 1.1	19.5 ± 1.5	11.1 ± 0.7	15.3 ± 0.8	18.8 ± 1.2	10.8 ± 0.6	12.8 ± 0.7	21.0 ± 1.6
Male, skilled	34.9 ± 6.2	38.5 ± 7.3	31.1 ± 3.0	31.0 ± 4.6	37.4 ± 7.0	28.7 ± 2.0	31.4 ± 5.5	33.9 ± 4.6	28.4 ± 2.0	33.4 ± 6.4	32.4 ± 4.7	28.4 ± 2.0
Male, highly-skilled	50.1 ± 6.5	66.6 ± 11.2	47.8 ± 5.3	61.3 ± 12.4	66.1 ± 9.5	43.6 ± 6.0	56.8 ± 9.8	60.8 ± 8.0	46.6 ± 7.2	54.1 ± 9.3	61.4 ± 8.8	38.7 ± 3.6
Male, manager without tertiary	33.9 ± 3.8	38.8 ± 8.2	34.9 ± 6.2	36.4 ± 4.4	52.5 ± 9.1	35.3 ± 5.2	35.9 ± 4.0	44.4 ± 6.6	29.0 ± 7.7	37.0 ± 4.3	45.3 ± 7.3	33.4 ± 6.8
Male, manager – tertiary	64.9 ± 11.0	81.8 ± 12.4	51.3 ± 8.5	61.0 ± 10.1	70.2 ± 11.2	62.3 ± 10.8	57.0 ± 8.7	63.4 ± 8.4	60.8 ± 10.0	57.6 ± 10.1	84.9 ± 11.7	56.4 ± 12.4
Female, unskilled	6.5 ± 0.7	7.3 ± 1.0	9.1 ± 0.9	6.4 ± 0.6	8.1 ± 1.1	9.0 ± 0.7	5.4 ± 0.5	7.6 ± 0.7	8.3 ± 0.8	4.3 ± 0.4	4.5 ± 0.5	8.7 ± 1.3
Female, semi-skilled	12.7 ± 1.1	13.9 ± 1.6	18.6 ± 2.2	12.6 ± 1.4	13.9 ± 1.1	18.5 ± 1.8	11.7 ± 0.9	15.0 ± 1.1	19.0 ± 1.6	11.1 ± 0.9	13.3 ± 1.6	18.5 ± 1.2
Female, skilled	20.6 ± 2.9	32.7 ± 5.6	27.5 ± 1.6	25.4 ± 4.2	28.7 ± 4.6	25.5 ± 1.4	23.6 ± 3.5	25.1 ± 3.0	25.3 ± 1.3	23.9 ± 3.5	23.9 ± 2.7	23.9 ± 1.0
Female, highly-skilled	40.6 ± 6.4	57.0 ± 9.8	35.7 ± 10.3	36.3 ± 7.1	66.4 ± 16.6	34.3 ± 3.0	50.6 ± 13.7	44.9 ± 7.8	32.3 ± 2.5	34.6 ± 7.5	44.0 ± 13.1	32.9 ± 2.7
Female, manager without tertiary	31.9 ± 9.5	41.6 ± 11.7	38.2 ± 3.4	27.4 ± 5.4	41.6 ± 11.0	30.6 ± 12.5	25.5 ± 3.7	35.0 ± 7.2	29.0 ± 5.8	30.7 ± 7.7	37.5 ± 14.5	29.8 ± 7.4
Female, manager – tertiary	57.9 ± 24.0	39.9 ± 10.6	51.4 ± 10.5	44.3 ± 16.5	61.3 ± 21.4	40.2 ± 9.7	41.2 ± 9.8	70.4 ± 28.1	53.6 ± 33.2	39.1 ± 10.0	71.4 ± 20.5	63.5 ± 28.2

■ Significantly different from other two groups

■ Significantly different from small

■ Significantly different from large

■ Significantly different from public

Table 20: Average hourly earnings of workers in various skills categories by size of firm relative to the earnings of semi-skilled workers, 1995–2003 (constant 2000 prices)

	2000			2001			2002			2003		
	Small	Large	Public	Small	Large	Public	Small	Large	Public	Small	Large	Public
Male, unskilled	0.74	0.61	0.56	0.63	0.67	0.62	0.61	0.63	0.52	0.45	0.50	0.47
Male, semi-skilled	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Male, skilled	2.69	2.36	1.60	2.31	2.39	1.47	2.84	2.21	1.51	3.10	2.54	1.35
Male, highly skilled	3.85	4.09	2.46	4.57	4.22	2.23	5.14	3.97	2.47	5.01	4.82	1.85
Male, manager without tertiary	2.61	2.38	1.80	2.72	3.35	1.81	3.25	2.90	1.54	3.43	3.55	1.59
Male, manager with tertiary	4.99	5.02	2.64	4.55	4.48	3.19	5.16	4.14	3.23	5.34	6.66	2.69
Female, unskilled	0.51	0.52	0.49	0.50	0.58	0.48	0.47	0.51	0.43	0.39	0.33	0.47
Female, semi-skilled	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Female, skilled	1.63	2.35	1.48	2.02	2.07	1.37	2.02	1.68	1.33	2.15	1.79	1.29
Female, highly skilled	3.21	4.09	1.92	2.88	4.78	1.85	4.33	3.00	1.70	3.12	3.30	1.77
Female, manager without tertiary	2.52	2.99	2.05	2.18	2.99	1.65	2.18	2.34	1.52	2.77	2.81	1.61
Female, manager with tertiary	4.58	2.87	2.76	3.52	4.41	2.17	3.53	4.70	2.82	3.53	5.35	3.42

Conclusions

This analysis suggests the following:

- Over the period under review the real wages of unskilled workers declined, more so for men than for women. The real earnings levels in other skills categories showed little change, resulting in an increased divergence between low-skill and skilled/highly skilled occupational classes.
- The earnings gap between African and white managers (both with and without tertiary qualifications) declined, as did the earnings gap between female and male managers.
- The earnings of highly skilled workers remained flat for all race groups; among other things, this means that the earnings gap between Africans and whites did not narrow. The gender earnings gap in this skills category also did not narrow.
- The racial earnings gap among skilled workers also did not close. The earnings gap between skilled Africans and whites was larger than among their highly skilled counterparts. Interestingly, the racial gap among skilled workers of different race groups was much smaller among women than among men.
- In the semi-skilled category, only Africans (male and female) experienced a small decline in earnings. The earnings of semi-skilled men of all races declined, but the position of women did not change significantly.
- The earnings of unskilled workers of both sexes declined.
- The earnings gap between low-skilled and highly skilled workers was significantly smaller in the public sector than in the private sector – both as a result of higher earnings at the bottom and of lower earnings at the top.

Endnotes

¹ For example, in OHS 97, 10 276 of the 17 481 persons in the formal sector gave a specific amount in rands. In LFS 7, 11 699 of the 17 914 persons in the formal sector gave a specific amount in rands.

² Borat, Lundall and Rospabe (2002) refer to this category as 'elementary', which is possibly a better description.

³ Borat et al. (2002) refer to this category as 'unskilled', which is somewhat confusing.

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