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REPORT BY THE U.S.

General Accounting Office

Performance Appraisal Information From Selected Federal Agencies

This report presents information on 1983 performance appraisals for employees in three Department of Commerce agencies and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The information, which covers General Schedule employees in grades 1 through 15 and merit pay employees in grades 13 through 15, is categorized by race/national origin and gender.

GAO did not determine whether the performance appraisals given to individuals were justified, nor did it obtain information on such factors as the educational levels, time-in-grade, or the work experiences of the employees involved. Because of the limited nature of GAO's work, care should be taken when using the data presented.



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**UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548**

**GENERAL GOVERNMENT
DIVISION**

B-217980

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
House of Representatives

The Honorable Michael D. Barnes
House of Representatives

The Honorable Barney Frank
House of Representatives

This report responds to your April 2, 1984, request for information on federal employees' performance appraisals. In discussions with Congressman Hoyer's office, designated as our contact on this request, it was agreed that our work would be limited to agencies that had computerized performance appraisal data. The Department of Commerce (Commerce) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) were selected for the initial data gathering approach.

We performed our work at the Washington, D.C., headquarters of Commerce and NASA. At these organizations, we obtained performance appraisal data for General Schedule and merit pay employees and categorized it by race/national origin and gender. The General Schedule employees were in grades 1 through 15 and the merit pay employees were in grades 13 through 15. Although we observed differences in the appraisals for various employee categories, we had agreed not to attempt to identify reasons for these differences. The assignment's objectives, scope, and methodology are described in detail in appendix I.

After we briefed Congressman Hoyer's office in November 1984 on status of the assignment, it was agreed that we would conclude our work and provide you with the Commerce and NASA appraisal information we had developed. This information appears in appendixes II and III. We discussed the results of our work with Commerce and NASA officials and their comments were considered in preparing this report.

As agreed with Congressman Hoyer's office, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days from the date of the report unless you publicly announce its contents earlier. At that time, we will send copies to Commerce and NASA and make copies available to others upon request.

W. J. Anderson

William J. Anderson
Director

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL INFORMATION
FROM SELECTED FEDERAL AGENCIES

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of this assignment was to obtain information on performance appraisals by race/national origin (RNO) and gender for specific federal employees. As agreed with Congressman Hoyer's office, we identified several agencies with computerized performance appraisal information and selected two--the Department of Commerce (Commerce) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)--as the sample agencies for our preliminary data gathering effort. It was agreed with Congressman Hoyer's office that our work would be limited to gathering performance appraisal information. We did not attempt to determine whether the performance appraisals given to individuals were justified, nor did we obtain information on such factors as the educational levels, time-in-grade, or work experiences of the employees involved. Because of the limited nature of our work, care should be taken when using the data being presented.

We performed our work between June and November 1984 at the Washington, D.C., headquarters of Commerce and NASA. At Commerce, we obtained computer tapes containing personnel and appraisal information on all Commerce employees as of August 1984. We extracted various data on Commerce's General Schedule (GS) and merit pay¹ (GM) employees, including each person's grade level, pay plan (i.e., GS or GM), RNO, gender, and 1983 summary performance rating. At NASA, we obtained a copy of an internal report which summarized appraisal results.

¹The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-454, October 13, 1978) established a merit pay system and cash award program which provided that federal managers and supervisors in General Schedule grades 13 through 15 would receive pay adjustments based on their performance. According to OPM, as of October 1983, approximately 115,000 employees were covered by the merit pay system. Title II of the Civil Service Retirement Spouse Equity Act of 1984 (Public Law 98-615, November 8, 1984) subsequently replaced merit pay with a new performance management and recognition system. The new system is designed to make pay increases for managers and supervisors contingent upon specific levels of performance.

information for all agency employees as of January 1984. We extracted information from this report on GS and GM employees similar to the information obtained from Commerce. It should be noted that we did not determine the adequacy of the computer systems at Commerce and NASA which generated the data we received.

Using a statistical computer program, we prepared a series of data tables and bar graphs which depict the distribution of GS and GM employees' performance ratings in these two organizations by RNO and gender (see apps. II and III). We had to make certain adjustments to the information to allow for a consistent presentation of the data. These adjustments included the following.

- Employees who did not have ratings for the 1983 appraisal period recorded in the agency's personnel data system or who did not work at the agency during the rating period are not included in the tables and graphs.
- The two rating levels below successful/satisfactory were combined in the bar graphs because the number of employees rated at these levels was negligible compared to the other rating levels.
- RNO and gender groups of less than 25 employees were excluded from the bar graphs because we considered them to be subject to excessive variations.
- Percentage figures in appendixes II and III may not add to 100 due to rounding.

We also verified the accuracy of the Commerce data provided to us but did not do so for the NASA data. A description of our work at each agency follows.

Commerce

Commerce has four personnel management information systems from which the computer tapes were produced. Three of these systems cover one agency each--the Census Bureau, the National Bureau of Standards (NBS), and the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO). The fourth system covers the remainder of Commerce, which consists of about 15 agencies and offices. We compared a randomly selected sample of 25 to 30 employee records from each of the four systems to the supporting hard copy documents in the employees' personnel folders. The specific information we verified included:

- the actual rating received; and
- the employee's gender, grade level, entered on duty date, and pay plan (GS or GM).

We did not verify the accuracy of employees' RNO designations. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidance does not permit agencies that include RNO data in their automated systems to maintain the same information in hard copy format. To verify the accuracy of employees' RNO designations would have required us to contact agency personnel officials and/or the employees sampled to confirm that their RNOs were the same as the notations on the computer tapes. Agency officials considered--and we agreed--that such a procedure would be very sensitive as well as time-consuming.

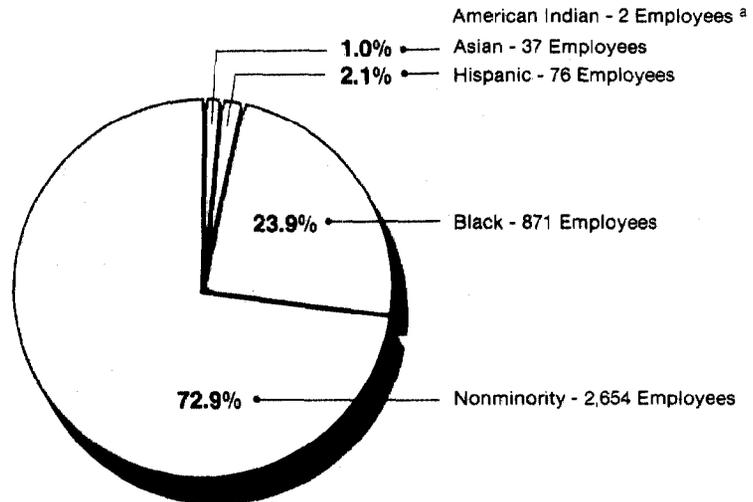
Our samples of employee records obtained from the four Commerce personnel management information systems showed that the records from the systems covering three Commerce agencies--the Census Bureau, NBS, and PTO--contained reasonably accurate information (i.e., approximately a 1 percent average error rate for the total of all data elements checked). The errors concerned ratings recorded on the computer tapes for which no hard copy ratings could be located for verification. The charts, tables, and graphs in appendix II present data for those three agencies.

NASA

As discussed with Congressman Hoyer's office, we did not verify the accuracy of the NASA data. Unlike at Commerce, we obtained NASA information from a hard copy report which presented summary employee appraisal data. A much more extensive verification effort than the one performed at Commerce would have been required at NASA. However, as agreed with Congressman Hoyer's office, our work was concluded without verification of the NASA data.

1983 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL INFORMATION FROM THREE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AGENCIES

Figure II.1: Race/National Origin Distribution of Census Bureau GS 1-15 and GM Employees (As of August 1984)



^a This group of employees was too small to be represented in the pie chart.

Figure II.2: Male/Female Distribution of Census Bureau GS 1-15 and GM Employees (As of August 1984)

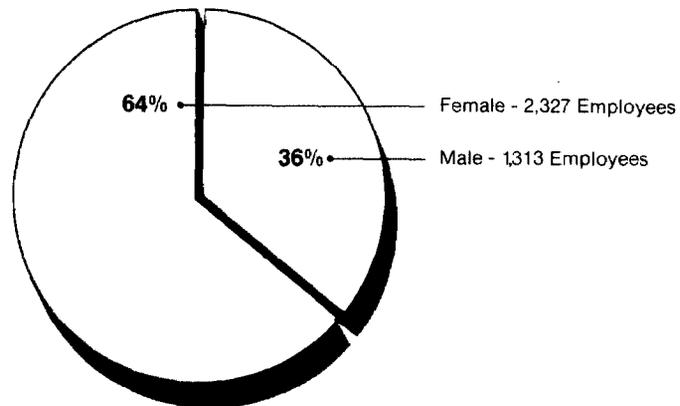
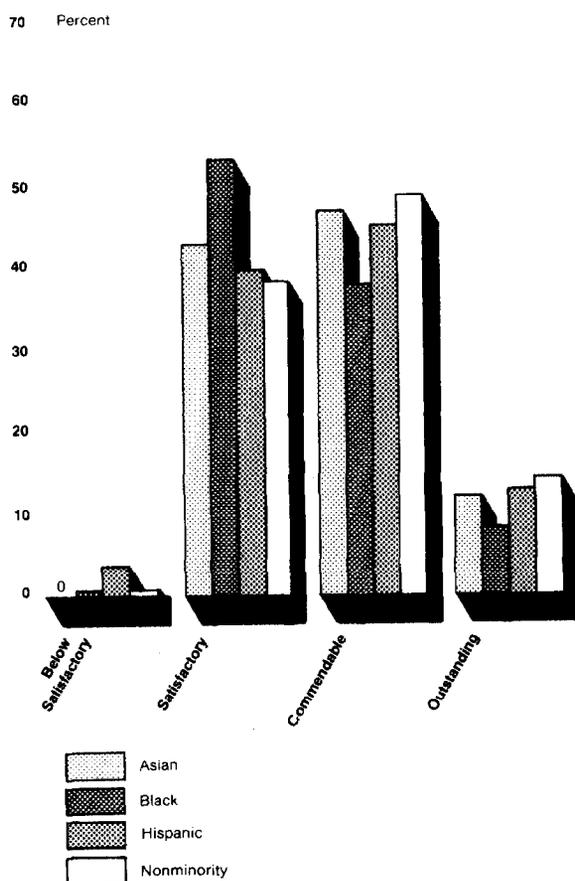


Figure II.3: Census Bureau Rating Distribution by Race/National Origin for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle) ^a



^a Groups of less than 25 employees are not shown in the bar graph.

Table II.1: Census Bureau Rating Distribution by Race/National Origin for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

RACE/NATIONAL ORIGIN	RATING										TOTAL #
	UNSATIS		MARGIN		SATISFCT		COMMEND		OUTSTAND		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AMERICAN INDIAN	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	2
ASIAN	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	43.2	17	45.9	4	10.8	37
BLACK	2	0.2	4	0.5	464	53.3	331	38.0	70	8.0	871
HISPANIC	1	1.3	2	2.6	30	39.5	34	44.7	9	11.8	76
NONMINORITY	0	0.0	15	0.6	1007	37.9	1267	47.7	365	13.8	2654
TOTAL	3	0.1	21	0.6	1518	41.7	1650	45.3	448	12.3	3640

Figure II.4: Census Bureau Rating Distribution by Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

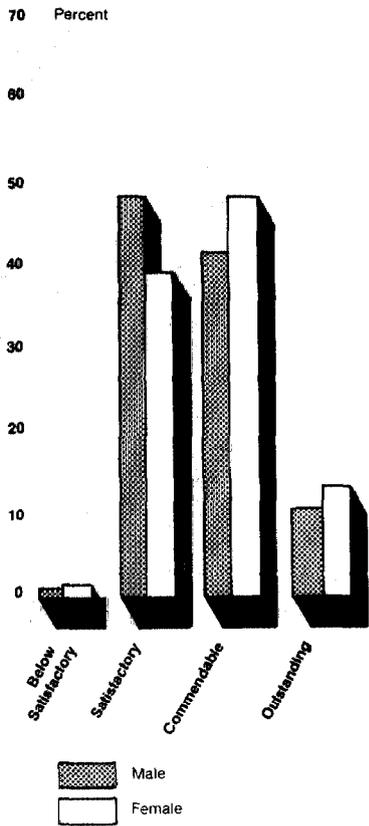
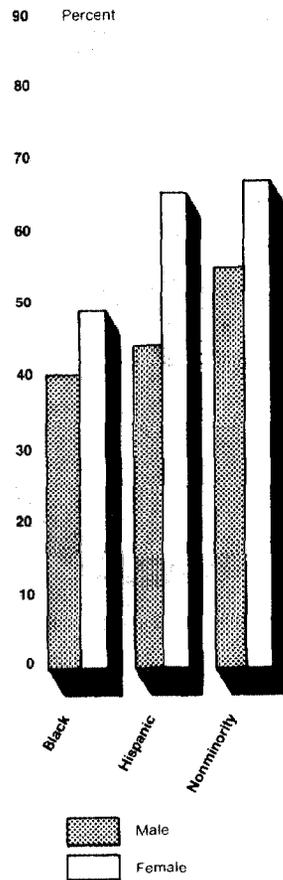


Table II.2: Census Bureau Rating Distribution by Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

	RATING										TOTAL #
	UNSATIS		MARGIN		SATISFCT		COMMEND		OUTSTAND		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
GENDER											
MALE	1	0.1	5	0.4	619	47.1	544	41.4	144	11.0	1313
FEMALE	2	0.1	16	0.7	899	38.6	1106	47.5	304	13.1	2327
TOTAL	3	0.1	21	0.6	1518	41.7	1650	45.3	448	12.3	3640

Figure II.5: Census Bureau Rating Distribution Above Satisfactory by Race/National Origin and Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle) ^a

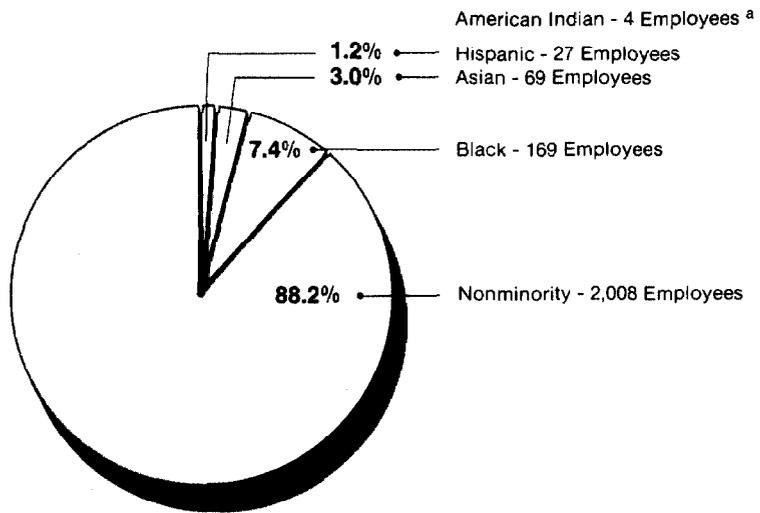


^aGroups of less than 25 employees are not shown in the bar graph.

Table II.3: Census Bureau Rating Distribution Above Satisfactory by Race/National Origin and Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

RACE/NATIONAL ORIGIN		GENDER		RATING										TOTAL #
				UNSATIS		MARGIN		SATISFCT		COMMEND		OUTSTAND		
				#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AMERICAN INDIAN	MALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1
	FEMALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1
ASIAN	MALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	54.5	8	36.4	2	9.1	22		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	26.7	9	60.0	2	13.3	15		
BLACK	MALE	0	0.0	1	0.4	135	59.5	75	33.0	16	7.0	227		
	FEMALE	2	0.3	3	0.5	329	51.1	256	39.8	54	8.4	644		
HISPANIC	MALE	1	3.4	0	0.0	15	51.7	10	34.5	3	10.3	29		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	2	4.3	15	31.9	24	51.1	6	12.8	47		
NONMINORITY	MALE	0	0.0	4	0.4	457	44.2	450	43.5	123	11.9	1034		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	11	0.7	550	34.0	817	50.4	242	14.9	1620		
TOTAL		3	0.1	21	0.6	1518	41.7	1650	45.3	448	12.3	3640		

Figure II.6: Race/National Origin Distribution of National Bureau of Standards GS 1-15 and GM Employees (As of August 1984)



^a This group of employees was too small to be represented in the pie chart.

Figure II.7: Male/Female Distribution of National Bureau of Standards GS 1-15 and GM Employees (As of August 1984)

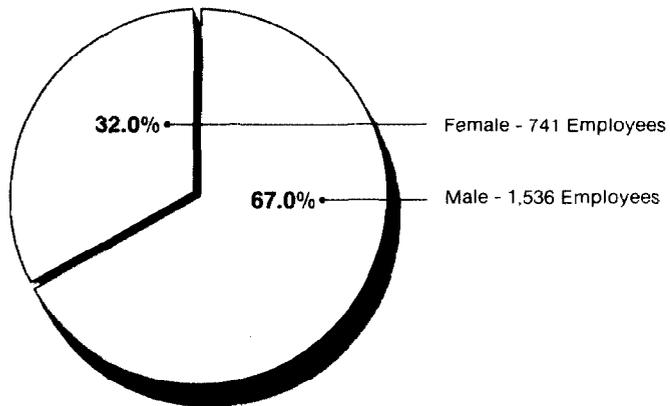
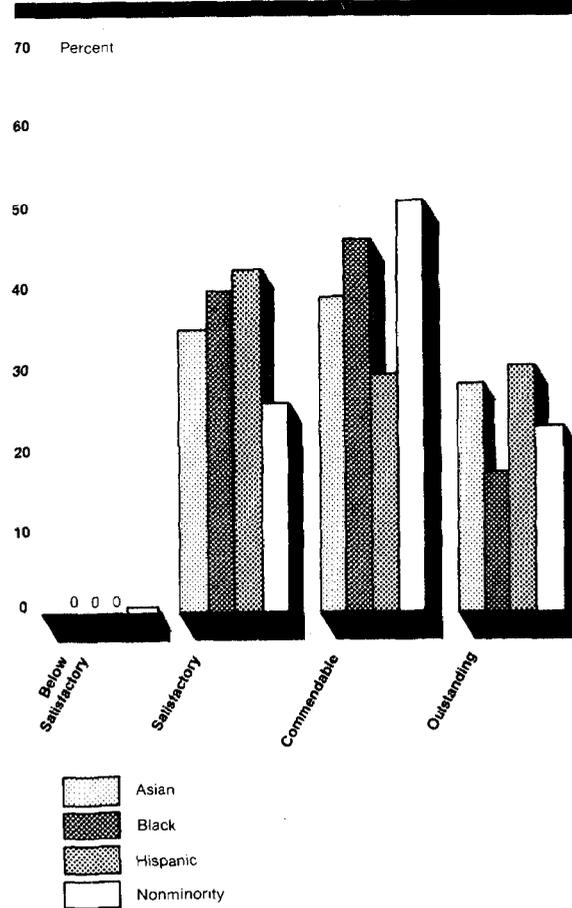


Figure II.8: National Bureau of Standards Rating Distribution by Race/National Origin for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle) ^a



^a Groups of less than 25 employees are not shown in the bar graph.

Table II.4: National Bureau of Standards Rating Distribution by Race/National Origin for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

RACE/NATIONAL ORIGIN	RATING								TOTAL #
	MARGIN		SATISFCT		COMMEND		OUTSTAND		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AMERICAN INDIAN	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	4
ASIAN	0	0.0	23	33.3	27	39.1	19	27.5	69
BLACK	0	0.0	64	37.9	78	46.2	27	16.0	169
HISPANIC	0	0.0	11	40.7	8	29.6	8	29.6	27
NONMINORITY	2	0.1	503	25.0	1005	50.0	498	24.8	2008
TOTAL	2	0.1	602	26.4	1119	49.1	554	24.3	2277

Figure II.9: National Bureau of Standards Rating Distribution by Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

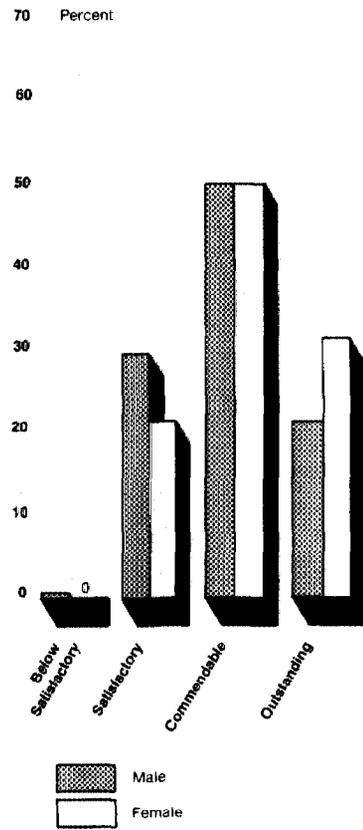
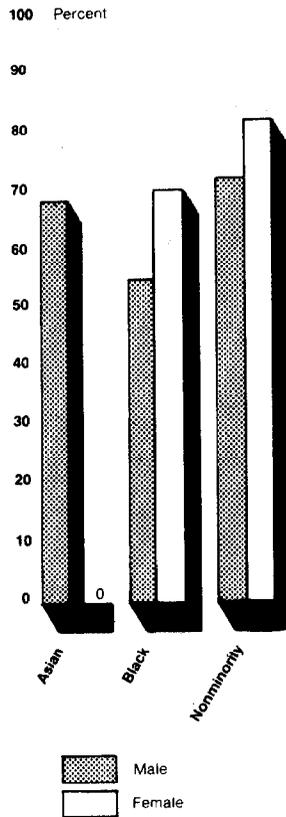


Table II.5: National Bureau of Standards Rating Distribution by Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

	RATING								TOTAL #
	MARGIN		SATISFCT		COMMEND		OUTSTAND		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
GENDER									
MALE	2	0.1	450	29.3	756	49.2	328	21.4	1536
FEMALE	0	0.0	152	20.5	363	49.0	226	30.5	741
TOTAL	2	0.1	602	26.4	1119	49.1	554	24.3	2277

Figure II.10: National Bureau of Standards Rating Distribution Above Satisfactory by Race/National Origin and Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle) ^a

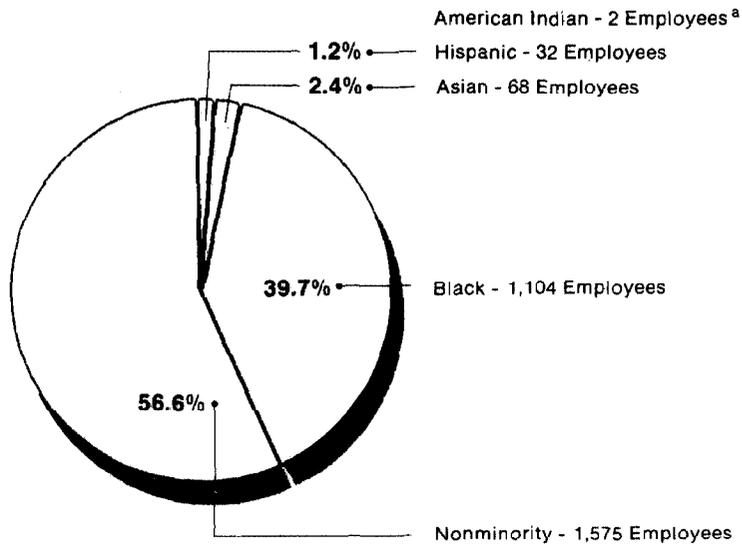


^a Groups of less than 25 employees are not shown in the bar graph.

Table II.6: National Bureau of Standards Rating Distribution Above Satisfactory by Race/National Origin and Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

RACE/NATIONAL ORIGIN		GENDER		RATING								TOTAL #
				MARGIN		SATISFCT		COMMEND		OUTSTAND		
				#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AMERICAN INDIAN	MALE	0	0.0	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	3		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	1		
ASIAN	MALE	0	0.0	20	32.3	23	37.1	19	30.6	62		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	3	42.9	4	57.1	0	0.0	7		
BLACK	MALE	0	0.0	38	44.7	37	43.5	10	11.8	85		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	26	31.0	41	48.8	17	20.2	84		
HISPANIC	MALE	0	0.0	7	38.9	6	33.3	5	27.8	18		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	4	44.4	2	22.2	3	33.3	9		
NONMINORITY	MALE	2	0.1	384	28.1	689	50.4	293	21.4	1368		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	119	18.6	316	49.4	205	32.0	640		
TOTAL		2	0.1	602	26.4	1119	49.1	554	24.3	2277		

**Figure II.11: Race/National Origin
Distribution of Patent and Trademark
Office GS 1-15 and GM Employees
(As of August 1984)**



^aThis group of employees was too small to be represented in the pie chart.

**Figure II.12: Male/Female Distribution
of Patent and Trademark Office
GS 1-15 and GM Employees
(As of August 1984)**

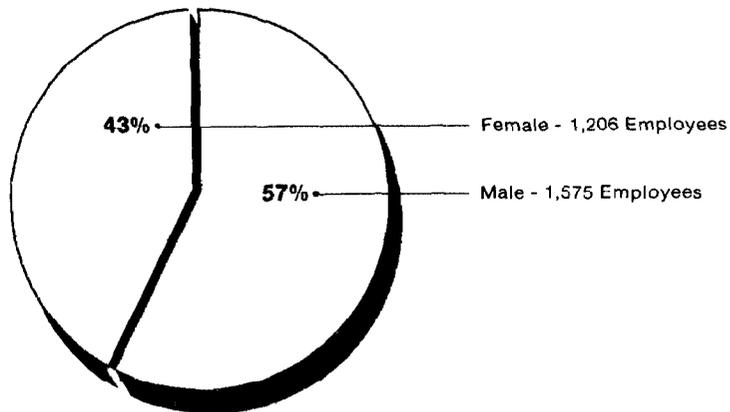
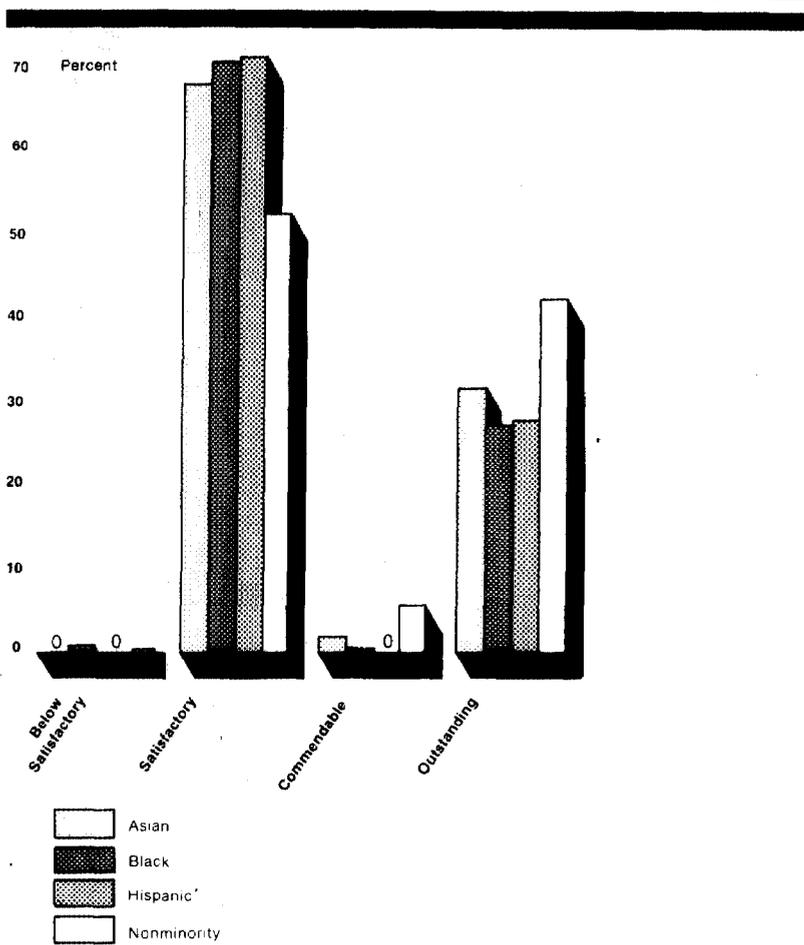


Figure II.13: Patent and Trademark Office Rating Distribution by Race/National Origin for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle) ^a



^a Groups of less than 25 employees are not shown in the bar graph

Table II.7 Patent and Trademark Office Rating Distribution by Race/National Origin for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

RACE/NATIONAL ORIGIN	RATING										TOTAL #
	UNSATIS		MARGIN		SATISFCT		COMMEND		OUTSTAND		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AMERICAN INDIAN	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2
ASIAN	0	0.0	0	0.0	46	67.6	1	1.5	21	30.9	68
BLACK	1	0.1	9	0.8	787	71.3	7	0.6	300	27.2	1104
HISPANIC	0	0.0	0	0.0	23	71.9	0	0.0	9	28.1	32
NONMINORITY	0	0.0	1	0.1	829	52.6	81	5.1	664	42.2	1575
TOTAL	1	0.0	10	0.4	1686	60.6	89	3.2	995	35.8	2781

Figure II.14: Patent and Trademark Office Rating Distribution by Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

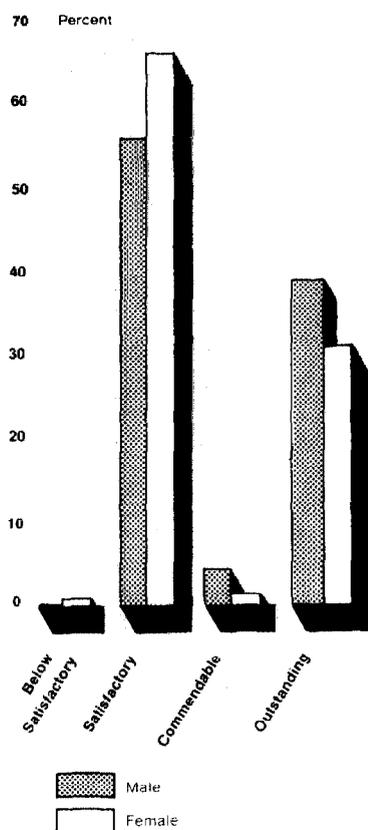
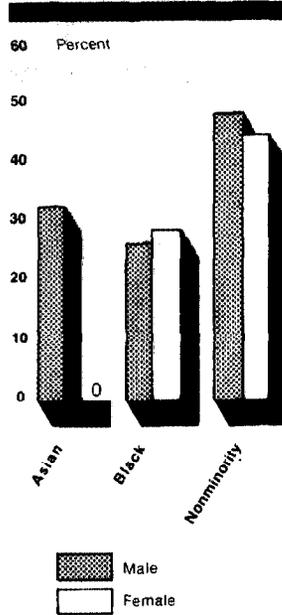


Table II.8: Patent and Trademark Office Rating Distribution by Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

GENDER	RATING										TOTAL #
	UNSATIS		MARGIN		SATISFCT		COMMEND		OUTSTAND		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
MALE	0	0.0	2	0.1	887	56.3	71	4.5	615	39.0	1575
FEMALE	1	0.1	8	0.7	799	66.3	18	1.5	380	31.5	1206
TOTAL	1	0.0	10	0.4	1686	60.6	89	3.2	995	35.8	2781

Figure II.15: Patent and Trademark Office Rating Distribution Above Satisfactory by Race/National Origin and Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle) ^a



^a Groups of less than 25 employees are not shown in the bar graph.

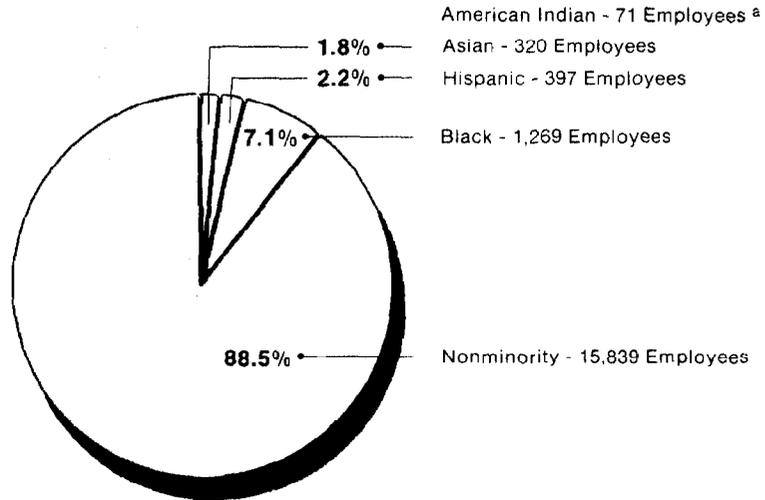
Table II.9

Patent and Trademark Office Rating Distribution Above Satisfactory by Race/National Origin and Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (1983 Rating Cycle)

		RATING										TOTAL #
		UNSATIS		MARGIN		SATISFCT		COMMEND		OUTSTAND		
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
RACE/NATIONAL ORIGIN	GENDER											
AMERICAN INDIAN	MALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
	FEMALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2
ASIAN	MALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	38	67.9	0	0.0	18	32.1	56
	FEMALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	66.7	1	8.3	3	25.0	12
BLACK	MALE	0	0.0	1	0.4	194	74.0	4	1.5	63	24.0	262
	FEMALE	1	0.1	8	1.0	593	70.4	3	0.4	237	28.1	842
HISPANIC	MALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	75.0	0	0.0	4	25.0	16
	FEMALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	68.8	0	0.0	5	31.3	16
NONMINORITY	MALE	0	0.0	1	0.1	643	51.8	67	5.4	530	42.7	1241
	FEMALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	186	55.7	14	4.2	134	40.1	334
TOTAL		1	0.0	10	0.4	1686	60.6	89	3.2	995	35.8	2781

1983 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL INFORMATION FROM THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA)

Figure III.1: Race/National Origin Distribution of NASA GS 1-15 and GM Employees (As of January 1984)



^aThis group of employees was too small to be represented in the pie chart.

Figure III.2: Male/Female Distribution of NASA GS 1-15 and GM Employees (As of January 1984)

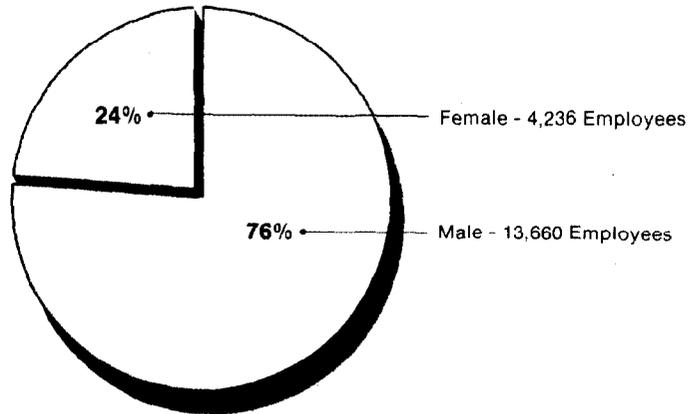


Figure III.3: NASA Rating Distribution by Race/National Origin for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (FY 1983 Rating Cycle)

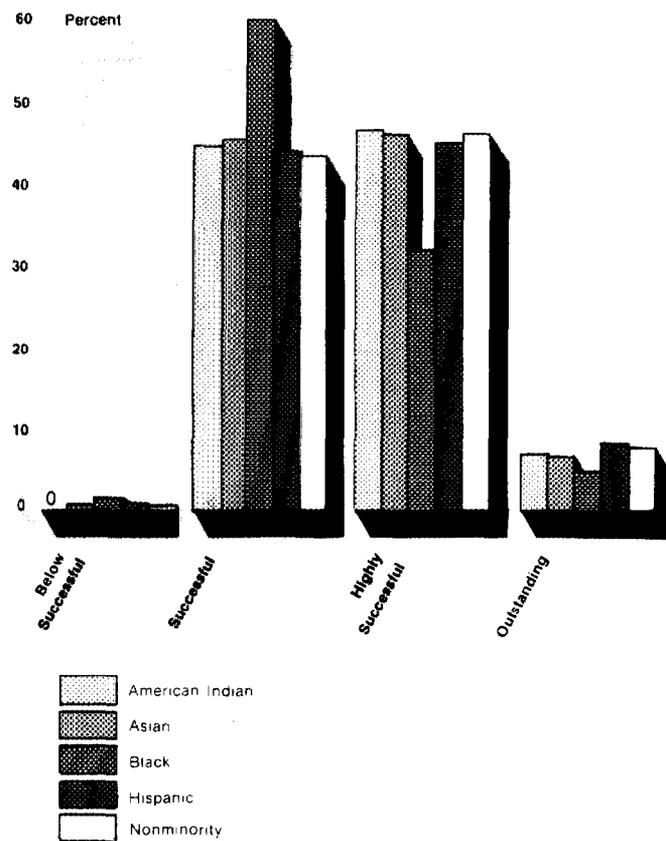


Table III.1: NASA Rating Distribution by Race/National Origin for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (FY 1983 Rating Cycle)

RACE/NATIONAL ORIGIN	RATING										TOTAL #
	UNSATIS		MIN SATIS		SUCCESS		HIGH SUCCESS		OUTSTAND		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AMERICAN INDIAN	0	0.0	0	0.0	32	45.1	34	47.9	5	7.0	71
ASIAN	1	0.3	1	0.3	146	45.6	150	46.9	22	6.9	320
BLACK	4	0.3	17	1.3	765	60.3	421	33.2	62	4.9	1269
HISPANIC	1	0.3	2	0.5	177	44.6	182	45.8	35	8.8	397
NONMINORITY	6	0.0	61	0.4	6901	43.6	7493	47.3	1378	8.7	15839
TOTAL	12	0.1	81	0.5	8021	44.8	8280	46.3	1502	8.4	17896

Figure III.4: NASA Rating Distribution by Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (FY 1983 Rating Cycle)

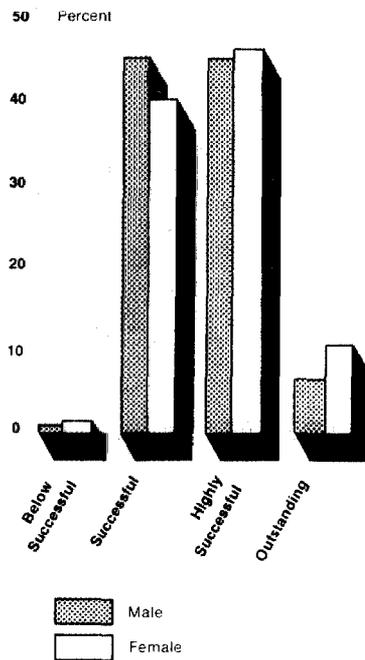


Table III.2: NASA Rating Distribution by Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (FY 1983 Rating Cycle)

	RATING										TOTAL #
	UNSATIS		MIN SATIS		SUCCESS		HIGH SUCCESS		OUTSTAND		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
GENDER											
MALE	8	0.1	59	0.4	6292	46.1	6286	46.0	1015	7.4	13660
FEMALE	4	0.1	22	0.5	1729	40.8	1994	47.1	487	11.5	4236
TOTAL	12	0.1	81	0.5	8021	44.8	8280	46.3	1502	8.4	17896

Figure III.5: NASA Rating Distribution Above Successful by Race/National Origin and Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees
(FY 1983 Rating Cycle)

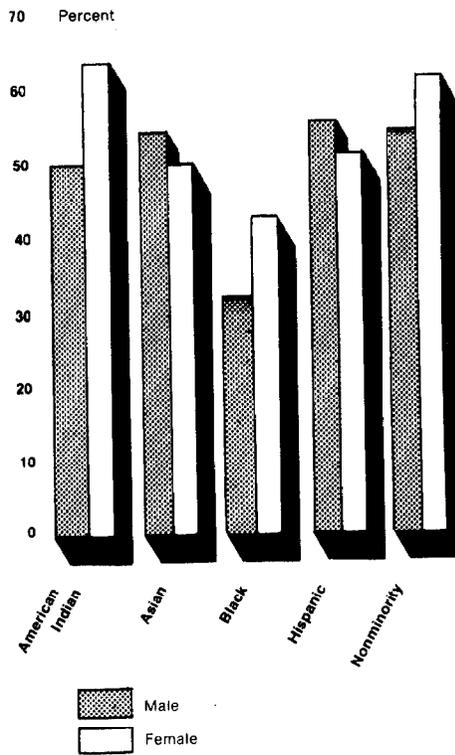


Table III.3: NASA Rating Distribution Above Successful by Race/National Origin and Gender for GS 1-15 and GM Employees (FY 1983 Rating Cycle)

RACE/NATIONAL ORIGIN		GENDER		RATING										TOTAL #
				UNSATIS		MIN SATIS		SUCCESS		HIGH SUCCESS		OUTSTAND		
				#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AMERICAN INDIAN	MALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	23	50.0	20	43.5	3	6.5	46		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	36.0	14	56.0	2	8.0	25		
ASIAN	MALE	1	0.4	1	0.4	108	44.3	114	46.7	20	8.2	244		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	0	0.0	38	50.0	36	47.4	2	2.6	76		
BLACK	MALE	1	0.2	8	1.4	391	66.2	174	29.4	17	2.9	591		
	FEMALE	3	0.4	9	1.3	374	55.2	247	36.4	45	6.6	678		
HISPANIC	MALE	1	0.4	0	0.0	119	43.6	133	48.7	20	7.3	273		
	FEMALE	0	0.0	2	1.6	58	46.8	49	39.5	15	12.1	124		
NONMINORITY	MALE	5	0.0	50	0.4	5651	45.2	5845	46.7	955	7.6	12506		
	FEMALE	1	0.0	11	0.3	1250	37.5	1648	49.4	423	12.7	3333		
TOTAL		12	0.1	81	0.5	8021	44.8	8280	46.3	1502	8.4	17896		

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