Dancing to their own tune: Career Success and Australian Women Leaders

Shirley Anne Koch

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Sydney School of Education and Social Work

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

University of Sydney

2020

Acknowledgement of authenticity

This is to certify, that to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis is my own work. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or other purposes.

I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources has been acknowledged.

Shirley Koch

September 2019

Acknowledgement of assistance

Acknowledgements and dedications

This project was made possible by the interest and involvement of the project participants, support and guidance from my professional colleagues, love and support from my friends and family and the sustaining curiosity and interest of many bystanders along the journey.

I am indebted to the participants in this project, who generously gave their time and effort in the belief that their shared experiences might make a contribution to a greater understanding of women's career success and thus, be a support for other aspiring women leaders. I am grateful for their willingness to share their insights and for trusting me with their stories.

My project was born under the supportive auspices of Dr Lesley Scanlon, to whom I owe thanks for her supervisory guidance until her retirement in 2016. My thanks also go to Dr Di Bloomfield, my associate supervisor in the early stages of the project. I am also grateful to for help and support from Dr Kevin Laws, who took on the role of associate supervisor upon Dr Bloomfield's retirement and continued beyond his own retirement.

I am particularly indebted to the members of my final supervisory team, who thankfully have not retired during my candidature. The team includes Professor Ken Cruickshank and Dr Jonnell Uptin, whom I sincerely thank for their patient support and guidance. Professor Cruickshank's sensible advice, good humour and thought-provoking discussions have been most appreciated. My thanks go to Dr Uptin for her insight and honest feedback and for rescuing me when I was without a supervisor.

I acknowledge the support of my University of Sydney colleagues, especially Dr Kathy Rushton, Dr Vilma Galstaun and Nola McMullan who offered practical advice and provided important personal support. Also, thanks go to my friend, retired editor, Margaret Puglisi, who reluctantly came out of retirement to help me. I thank her for her honest, precise and sage

of the project, I was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness leading to extensive surgery, lengthy hospitalisation, difficult recuperation and a future of uncertainty. During the following months, I was grateful for the loving support from those around me who not only encouraged me to work on recovering my health but to also hold fast to the completion of the work that has governed my life for the best part of the last decade. I was encouraged by the importance with which others viewed my project and appreciate their gentle yet insistent persuasion to return to the keyboard and complete this labour of love.

This study is dedicated to daughters - to my daughters, Louise and Anna and the daughters of others - in the hope that they can be inspired by the experiences and advice of other women and encouraged to achieve their own career ambitions, whatever they might be. I hope their career journeys will be characterised by clear vision in realising opportunities, in an environment of equality and unlimited possibility for all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

Although there is a considerable body of research into the reasons for disparity in gender representation at leadership level, less is known about the enabling factors for the relatively few women who have managed to get 'to the top'. This study explores how such women perceive and define career success highlighting enabling factors and identifying antecedents.

The study focuses on the experiences, understandings and insights of seventeen Australian women leaders across a range of industries. These women entered the workforce around the years between 1970 and 1990; a time of great social change in the career landscape as women began to engage with tertiary education and professional work in unprecedented numbers. They are part of a group of pioneering women aspiring to professional careers and leadership. This study preserves the experiences and understandings of these pioneers making a historically significant contribution to the discourse about career success for women in Australia. Participants shared a determination to find their way 'to the top' despite different career routes and life journeys; standing out from other women. They were able to chart their own career courses in the established patriarchal hierarchy of the time with little guidance and few established pathways, requiring the creation of new and unique ways to advance their careers.

This qualitative study is conceptually framed by Bourdieu's cultural capital theory as a way of understanding how value is attributed to antecedent personal, societal and contextual factors, and how the ability to accumulate career capital is influenced by childhood and adulthood forces. Career success hinges on the development of capital-rich personal characteristics, shaped by the socio-cultural milieu of early life and the legacy of attitudes and practices passed down through family, yet also influenced by broader societal and contextual forces.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

'ALL MY LIFE I WANTED TO BE SOMEBODY and HERE I AM!'

SUZI QUATRO, THE WILD ONE

1.0. Introduction

Women make up 47% of the workforce in Australia (Australian Government, 2018a) and yet remain underrepresented at executive leadership levels in most Australian industries and sectors (Sealy, Doldor & Vinnicombe, 2009; Still, 2006; Australian Government, 2012, 2019). Women represent only 30% of management personnel and less than 17% of Chief Executive Officers. As many as 70% of companies (ASX–listed) still do not have any women in key management roles (Australian Government, 2018a). It is argued that the economic costs associated with gender disparity, in terms of productivity and profitability as well as the social ramifications necessitates a rethink about how women get 'to the top' and how change can be accelerated (Sanders, Hellicar & Fagg, 2014).

The Australian Human Rights Commission has found that having significant numbers of women in leadership roles "encourages and sustains" (2013, p. 2) others, thereby increasing gender diversity and helping to redress inequity. Encouragingly, there are signs of gradual redress, with a slow but steady decrease in gender imbalance noted since the introduction of gender reporting requirements (Australian Government, 2018a; Chief Executive Women, 2013; Piterman, 2008). The Workplace Gender Equality Agency, for example, reports that women comprised 50% of new appointments to ASX-listed boards in 2018 taking the ratio of directorships on boards held by women from 25% in 2017 to 28% in 2018 (Australian Government, 2018a).

The strong tradition of international and Australian research about women and career success has focused on the obstacles and the unique challenges for career-oriented women aspiring to get to the top (e.g. Eagly & Carli, 2007; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; 1977b; 1977c; Still, 2006), associated with the so-called 'glass ceiling' (Haslam & Ryan, 2008; Martell, 2004). This focus on career roadblocks and gender inequity is discouraging for aspiring women (Chief Executive Women, 2013) and perpetuates the outdated "think manager think male" (Lemoine, Aggarwal & Sheed, 2016, p. 483) notion.

These issues have been taken up in the media with demands for greater scrutiny. This includes increased investigation about how women make it 'to the top'; how they overcome career obstacles and stereotypic attitudes. To develop a new discourse, women need to contribute to the conversation about how career success is viewed and how the perceptions of their own success influences what this looks like. It is important to hear the accounts of women who have 'made the transition successfully from follower to leader' (Doogue, 2014, p. 2) in order for other women to envisage themselves as leaders.

In particular, this study addresses the research gap particularly regarding pioneering women leaders who began their journey 'to the top' between 1970 and 1990; a time of great social and cultural change for working women in Australia. These women represent the first wave of aspirational women in numbers who disrupted the formerly 'male-only' bastion of leadership. Research into the experiences and circumstances of women from this cohort adds to our knowledge about the experience and the influence of the Australian context.

This study focuses on a distinctive group of women situated in a unique time and age, who offer important insight about the specific socio-cultural and historical influences that shaped their development as leaders and framed their career success. This study contributes to the research conversation by focusing on women's points of view and addressing what they identify as career-enabling factors.

The findings contribute to the understanding of career-enabling factors. The themes emerging from the experiences of these women can inform the conversation about career success for women providing guidance for future generations of women with leadership aspirations. There may also be benefits for organisations in retaining the next generation of talent with implications for individuals, schools, organisations, institutions and policy makers.

1.1. Research purpose

The aim of this qualitative study is to explore perceptions about the career success of women leaders in Australia who have sidestepped the glass ceiling and made it 'to the top'. This study explores the lives of these women and examines the complex ways in which they have navigated successful careers at a time when leadership was considered to be a 'man's world'. Furthermore, the study examines how these women describe and define career success and explain the impact of their background, work experience and relationship factors on their capacity to accrue career capital and how these factors underpin their success.

The study focuses on the career stories of seventeen women in senior leadership roles in large organisations across a range of sectors and industries, all publicly lauded as successful women leaders.

1.2. Significance of the study

Conceptually, this study reframes the way in which women and their career success are considered by particularly focusing on women's perspectives through retrospective reflections on their own experiences and careers and their insights on the factors of most significance for other women. This places constraining constructs such as the 'glass ceiling' in a broader and more contextual career picture. Much existing research about women and career success focuses on obstacles and barriers, with a great deal known about how women are prevented from getting ahead (Eagly & Carli, 2007) and yet not enough is known

about factors that enable success. Thus, this single-sex study shifts the focus from gender differences between men and women to exploring the enabling factors for women (Holton & Dent, 2012; Mitchell, 1984, 1991).

Furthermore, it focuses on the exploration of enabling factors impacting women who are representative of an important pioneering group of Australian women leaders (Metz & Tharenou, 2001; Tharenou, 1997, 1999). There is little known about how historical change impacts women's career success. This study the period 1970 to 1990 – an area of research silence in terms of women and career success. The study offers insights about women who worked their way into leadership roles in a male-dominated career environment and at a time when women had largely only been leaders of women (Macintyre, 2009).

Methodologically, the study draws upon the personal narratives and reflections of the seventeen carefully selected women, contextualising these within historical and socio-cultural change. Personal perspectives allow new concepts about career success to emerge that are not dependent on predetermined notions.

The substantive significance of this study is it challenges simplistic notions of demographic correlation and intergenerational change with a more complex understanding of women and career success. This study shows the importance of what women bring with them in terms of career capital and how they perceive this to be developed through the influence of their early life habitus as well as experiences and relationships throughout a lifetime.

The findings have pedagogical implications for the way in which training and career support for women are constructed and organised, particularly in terms of school careers counselling, career management of women and career planning and development. Advice provided to others can contribute to the enablement of other aspiring women leaders; by showing there is more than one way to achieve success.

1.3. Catalyst for the present study

The ideas informing this study began to percolate while I was undertaking a Master of Business Management degree. I was interested in the leadership aspects covered, particularly the different ways of leadership and the paths to leadership. This connected with my long career in school education where I had the opportunity to witness the career trajectories of women, piquing my interest about who makes it to the top. I felt that while there are commonalities between the experiences and career outcomes of some women, the complexity of what constitutes career success varies greatly.

I came to think there was much to learn from those who have 'made it to the top' instead of just considering the problems. As part of another project I was keeping a reflective journal. The following entry is taken from this. The account shows the potential of women to view career success in their own terms, raises questions on the importance of support from others and provides thought-provoking ideas about what enables some women to be 'successful career women'.

Reflective journal entry - March 4, 2011

Friday night drinks at Karen's place

What an interesting evening it turned out to be! Karen, the epitome of a successful career woman at the peak of her corporate career, has resigned. Twenty-six years with the same multinational company has allowed Karen to build her career, establishing a formidable professional reputation. Her senior leadership role required international travel and enormous responsibility for people, products and finance – the traditional hallmarks of 'success'. For us she is a 'shining light', a 'superstar' and a 'success story'. She has made it 'to the top' and now she is throwing it all away!

Perhaps what looks like success to Karen is different from how others see it. Success for

Karen must be more than status symbols of titles and high salaries as she is prepared to trade those for a largely unplanned future. Wouldn't she choose 'success' over uncertainty? Perhaps what is viewed as success changes with circumstances or when one 'gets there', or perhaps there can be a variety of successes in the one lifetime. What does career success look like to different women?

Karen wants us to help her make decisions about redirecting her career. Her high-flying, well-paid, prestigious job is apparently no longer sufficiently sustaining or motivating. Karen asked us, her friends who knew her best, to help her readdress her career by writing ideas on blank business cards collected in a glass jar – a 'vase of options' and affirmations.

The women in that room shared with Karen many attributes and characteristics. We were born around the same time, educated in the late 1960s and 1970s, entering the workforce around the early 1980s. We have grown up better educated than our mothers, with unprecedented access to opportunities, including our free undergraduate university experience, thanks to Gough Whitlam. Choice has been a feature of our generation, in terms of education, employment, fertility and lifestyle. We are part of the first generation of educated Australian women to enter the workforce expecting to have a career and a family and to work beyond marriage. We exemplify the 'having it all' generation, with multiple roles as workers, mothers, wives, friends, daughters etc. Despite our similarities, the variations on how this looks are evident among the women assembled. Why is it that Karen is held in such high esteem? Is it her personality, her professional standing, the ease with which she combines the components of her life, or is she really a superstar among women?

There was great enthusiasm in affirming Karen's abilities and achievements, with us suggesting ideas suited to her passions and talents. Here is Karen asking us to mentor her, regardless of our occupations (e.g. nurses, educators, doctors, receptionists, Pilates instructors, physiotherapists, practice managers) or level of seniority. She wants to hear our

voices, as friends, as women, as fellow career travellers.

Mentoring by 'business card' is new to me. A flood of questions comes to mind about the role of mentoring for Karen's success in particular and for women's success in general. Does friendship act as a support mechanism? What other factors might be instrumental in career success? Is career success based on more than personal ability, hard work and luck?

The room was bursting with ideas and suggestions for Karen's future, but perhaps these have value beyond these walls as career advice for our dozen or so daughters, all in their early career years.

Note: Karen was not a participant in this study. Her name is a pseudonym.

1.4. Introduction to conceptual framework and terminology

In asking why have these women have succeeded, I found that there was not one clear factor. There was not even a set of clearly defined factors. Looking further afield into sociological frameworks enabled me to analyse the stories within the context of the social milieu in which participants existed. The work of Bourdieu (1977; 1986; 1998) conceptualises a theoretical framework that moves away from finding determining factors and allows for an examination of the social world as systems of human reactions and their relationship to historical and structural powers in societies. By drawing from this theoretical framework, discussions broadened from investigating the individual traits of the individuals in the study to examining the individuals in the context of history and Australian society. Taking up Bourdieu's theory of capital provides insight into the ways the women were resourced throughout their lives and also the ways in which the corporate field determines what are valuable qualities in leadership. Similarly, Bourdieu's theory of habitus provides a framework to understand how certain dispositions and societal expectations influence thoughts and actions, particularly in terms of gendered

expectations, and how participants perceived this as a success-enabling factor.

In this study, 'capital' represents the personal 'material, cultural, social, [and] symbolic' (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a, p. 355) goods or resources, which enable individuals to maintain or advance their social position in a specific area or domain. All forms of capital (economic, social, cultural and symbolic) are perceived to be types of career capital, understood to be enabling factors in career success. The general use throughout this report of the terms 'capital' and 'cultural capital' denotes types of capital important for career success or 'career capital'. Where necessary specific types of capital are explained.

The term 'habitus' describes the underlying system of forces connecting social structures and the place of the individual in their environment. This is influenced by wider societal forces and shaped by aspects such as gender and social class, as well as dispositions of individuals and the society of communities (Bourdieu, 1977; Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016b). This pertains to how these women engaged with the 'socio-cultural milieu' (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a, p. 355) of family and work environment. In this study, 'habitus' is used to describe the social forces governing the ways in which the participants think, feel, behave and present themselves to the world (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016b) encapsulating dispositions, attitudes and ingrained habits. It recognises that for many of the women, 'the game' (Bourdieu, 1977) that these participants entered was skewed toward a male dominated culture and that they were the first to inhabit this domain. A Bourdieusian lens, therefore assists in describing and understanding the agency the women used to enter the field and how they managed their capital to rise to leadership positions in their various fields.

Additionally, the study draws upon the Bourdieusian notion of 'field'. 'Field' is used to mean the 'structure of the social setting in which an individual operates' (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016, p. 355) with particular fields having their own set of rules, expectations and hierarchies. 'Field' includes the structure, context, place, people and relationships in a

specific domain and how people are positioned in regard to one another. Individuals who possess social and cultural capital, which aligns with what is valued, are able to achieve dominance and therefore will have power to influence the 'field' and other people (Bourdieu, 1986). Fields are viewed to overlap with individuals able to leverage advantage in multiple situations. In this study, domains such as school, work, leadership and specific occupations are viewed as 'fields'.

The interrelationship between these key Bourdieusian concepts is where the analysis of this thesis takes life. The thesis draws upon these three interrelated concepts to show that the traditional field of leadership was a male domain and how these women successfully inhabited these domains using their cultural and social capital; creating strategies to enter and succeed there. A Bourdieusian lens enables reflection upon the unique perceptions these women bring to understanding ascension to leadership. See Section 2.3 for Theoretical framework

1.4.1. Other Terminology

This section outlines and explains specific terminology used in this study.

Gendered terms

Where possible, the gendered terms 'women' and 'men' are deliberately used in this study, rather than 'female' and 'male' which are terms specifically used in reference to a person's sex, as shown in Moran (2014). This reflects the view that career conversations are inherently gendered (McGuire & Reger, 2003) and require a 'gender lens' (de Vries, Webb & Eveline 2006, p. 577). The terms 'women and men' are used in this order to disrupt the traditional convention of men preceding women in text e.g. "Men and women of the corporation" (Kanter, 1977).

However, it is sometimes necessary to use the scientific terms of 'female' and 'male' or to

mix these terms (e.g. 'women bosses' and 'male counterparts') to clarify meaning and avoid repetitive or awkward phrasing. A particular example used throughout this study is the term 'male-dominated' fields, which refers to occupations described as "sex-skewed work environments" (Shroedel, 1990, in Grossman & Chester, p. 249) or areas where men outnumber women,(Martin & Barnard, 2013).

Leadership terms

'Getting to the top' is used throughout this study to describe the process that women undertake to reach leadership roles in organisations. It denotes an aspiration to gain a positional title and a role of leadership in senior management and administrative ranks, synonymous with decision-making power and influence over people and budgets. Similarly, women who have 'made it to the top' are seen as having successfully achieved this aspiration, gaining sufficient leadership capital in the process. In this study, 'leader' is assumed to be a goal as well as a symbol of career success for participants and, as such, is used synonymously with the term 'success'.

Career success

In this study, 'career success' is used as a broad term to describe positive career outcomes (Dyke & Murphy, 2006) synonymous with personal satisfaction of career goals and often termed 'a successful woman'. A recurring theme in much of the literature is the integral association between career success and leadership. Success for career-oriented women is likely to be perceived when women are viewed as leaders. In this context, a 'successful woman' is one who considers herself or is considered by others as a leader.

Marriage

In this study, the term 'husband' is used to describe personal partners and spouses because this is the term universally used by participants. The same applies to the use of the term 'marriage', used deliberately to describe spousal relationships, regardless of the

religious or legal nature of the relationships. The term 'spouse', a more modern convention, is reflective of the usage of other authors.

1.5. Outline of thesis

The thesis is organised into the following six chapters.

Chapter 1 – Introduction to the Study: Chapter 1 introduces the rationale, contextualisation and explanation of the study. In addition it includes a foreword to the Bourdieusian lens used to conceptualise the study and explains the terminology used throughout the study.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review: This chapter presents a review of literature relevant to the thesis, starting with two main discourses about career success: the social construct of 'career' in relation to women and measurement of career success (Section 2.1); and the identification and exploration of enabling factors and influencing forces (Section 2.2). The epistemological framework for the present study, highlighting a narrative methodological design influenced by the psycho-sociological understanding of Bourdieusian cultural capital theory (Bourdieu, Chamboredom & Passeron, 1991; Fitzsimmons, 2011), is presented in Section 2.3. The final section (Section 2.4) identifies and outlines the research gap in the current literature and presents the research questions for this study.

Chapter 3 – Methodology: This chapter outlines and justifies the methodology and research design used in the study.

Chapter 4 – Findings: The findings of this study are presented in three main sections: introduction of participants (Section 4.1); analysis of personal viewpoints about the definition of career success (Section 4.2); and findings about the antecedents of success factors (Section 4.3).

Chapter 5 – Discussion: A discourse on the complexities and paradoxes of the various

factors and experiences that contribute towards career success for women.

Chapter 6 – Conclusions: Presentation of conclusions in relation to the research questions (Section 6.1), contribution of the study and recommendations for further research (Section 6.2) and update on the study participants (Section 6.3 and 6.4).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increase in research interest in women leaders and leadership as a career goal. Both quantitative and qualitative research has examined what career success as a leader looks like and how it is achieved. This body of research across many fields has predominantly focused on impediments to women's career progression. This study, however, shifts the focus to success-enabling factors and research relevant to career success rather than obstacles. Research questions are presented at the conclusion of this chapter.

This chapter reviews the tradition of research into antecedents and correlations of women's career success, particularly sociological factors such as family background, income, composition and birth order and individual personalities and education (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; 1990; Holton & Dent, 2012; Keown & Keown 1982; Moran, 2014; Szirom, 1991), cultural capital factors (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006) and organisational influences (Ng, Eby, Sorenson & Feldman, 2005; Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001). This requires a cross-disciplinary approach across fields of leadership, business, management, organisational and psychological research into women's success factors (e.g. Eagly & Carli, 2007; Holton & Dent, 2012; O'Neil, Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008; Parker & Liao, 2016; Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi & Goldberg, 2007; Still, 2006; Sutin, Costa, Miech & Eaton, 2009; Tharenou, 2005).

The current study takes into particular account the seminal work of Fitzsimmons (2011) and colleagues (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a; 2016b; Fitzsimmons, Callan & Paulsen, 2014), drawing upon the Bourdieusian framework used in their research for framing the theoretical

understanding for this study (see Theoretical Framework). These authors applied a Bourdieusian framework to the Australian context, in terms of cultural capital required in the field of corporate leadership, particularly focusing on how women and men CEOs differ in accumulated capital. Despite the current study being non-comparative, their research provides relevant findings regarding women and career success.

The current literature is critiqued in two main research areas: understanding how career success is defined, understood and gauged (Section 2.1): and (Section 2.2) evaluating the literature that explores factors that enable and influence career success, analysing the research about the role of personality and 'standing out' as factors of career success. This section also includes the investigation of literature about the role of childhood background and educational experiences in accruing career-valued capital, necessary for success. Research on work-related experiential factors, the role of luck and adult relationships is then explored. Finally, the influence of historical and socio-cultural forces in the 20th century context on aspiring women leaders is also investigated.

This leads to the theoretical framework (Section 2.3), identification of the research gap and the research questions to be addressed (Section 2.4).

2.1. How is career success defined and understood?

This section addresses the research about what constitutes a career and the multiple ways in which career success is defined and measured.

2.1.1. What is a career?

The social construct of what a career is and what success looks like has changed; career constructs have been influenced by changes in post-modern social science and late 20th century organisational practice (Bullock-Yowell, Andrews & Buzzetta, 2011; Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008; O'Neil, Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008; Pouyard, Vignoli, Dosnan

& Lallemand, 2012). These studies show that organisational changes brought about by globalisation and restructuring of organisations through mergers and flattened hierarchies, have influenced the social construct of career.

Early studies with a linear career construct, describe predictably upwards steps in hierarchical status, with the expectation of long-term continuous commitment in the same organisation or industry (Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008; Schein, 1996; Super, 1990, in Brown & Brookes; Wilensky, 1961). These constructs of career were criticised as reflecting male bias in the theoretical understanding of career development, where career is depicted as a long-term uninterrupted experience of work with hierarchical steps through increasingly prestigious promotions (e.g. Schein, 1996; Super, 1990, in Brown & Brookes) with no anticipation of variations (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003).

The shift away from this model came about because of changing social work conditions and the growth of research into the career paths of women. Firstly, changes to the career landscape was the notion of long-term employment in Australia in the same organisation, become a historical memory (Macintyre, 2009). Secondly, the growth in numbers of working women and women leaders since the 1970s in Australia has also contributed to this shifting career paradigm (Macintyre, 2009). Such changes opened up the opportunity for a new dialogue aligned with changing routes and limitless possibilities (Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008). This aligns with the work of Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel (2008), who call for a new model of career development that takes into account the increasing variations of career paths, especially where these change direction and are typified by interruptions, as often characterised in the careers of women.

Research into the careers of women opened up exploration of a whole range of new factors both leading to and stemming from this paradigm shift. Studies found that the particularities of women's career paths rarely follow a set trajectory (Schellenberg, Kruass, Hättich &

Häfeli, 2016). Women do not easily fit the traditional career metaphors of hierarchical 'ladders' or 'spirals' central in career planning; metaphors often better reflecting the experience of men (O'Neil, Bilimoria & Saatcioglu, 2004; Eagly & Carli, 2007). Women also put more importance on context and support than on promotion to the top. Eagly & Carli (2007) argue that the career metaphor of a 'labyrinth' better suits the experiences of women as the term more realistically incorporates characteristic career interruptions, changes in directions and negotiating dead ends. Others describe a career model metaphor for women as 'cross currents in a river of time' weaving through a lifetime, showing emphasis and changing criteria for gauging success at different times (Powell & Mainiero, 1992, p. 216).

One new direction in this research was a focus on work and non-work aspects of life in understanding career, a particular aspect highlighted by research into women's careers (Asplund, 1988; Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Nicholson & West, 1988; Marshall, 1984; Russo, Kelly & Deacon 1991). Career choices made by women are determined by personal, organisational and societal factors, with women showing two overriding concerns: career progression and family and friends (Ng and Feldman, 2014). Women need to set their own definitions and take control of such as goals, quality of life and work-life balance (Hennig, 1973; Finegold & Mohrman, 2001).

These newer models of careers are more protean and flexible in nature (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009) and more multidimensional and imaginative than traditional types (Schein, 1978). These lead to more nuanced notions of career as a series of related roles undertaken throughout a lifetime (Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008; Savickas, 1995).

The second direction has been the greater emphasis on the value of individual experiences (Savickas, 1995). As individuals move to more multifaceted careers (e.g. multiple directions, flexible working conditions, more than one job at a time), certainty and predictability of employment decrease and customisation increases (Ng & Feldman, 2014). This individual

focus reframes how careers are viewed. Ng and Feldman (2014) found in their large-scale meta-analysis that careers are increasingly characterised as a personalised sequence of work experience over time and across multiple roles, organisations and occupations. This reflects a unique and multifaceted construct, the result of the complex interplay between individual, historical and socio-cultural forces.

The gender contrasts in studies have led to calls for men and women's' careers to be studied separately (Astin, 1984; Gersick & Kram, 2002; O'Neil, Bilimoria & Saatcioglu, 2004). However, Piterman (2008) argues that the increasingly protean model of what constitutes a career means the distinctions between how women and men view careers are becoming increasingly blurred, which suggests that future research needs to go beyond gender dichotomy.

2.1.2. Gauging career success

Career success is largely measured on career outcomes in terms of salary, status and career satisfaction (Abele & Spurk, 2009). However historically, women and men are shown to define and describe career success differently with women consistently placing a greater emphasis on aspects of satisfaction and fulfilment (Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008). While a successful career is shown to be one that compares to an accepted social norm (Dries, 2011) career success is viewed as a dynamic social construct determined by participant age and career stage (Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008).

Traditionally, measurement of career success is gauged by quantifiable criteria of upward progression through largely hierarchical organisational structures such as promotions and gains in status, responsibility and salary level (Briscoe, Hall & De Muth, 2006; Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008; Hennig, 1973). However, this position can be seen as valuing and promoting a masculine view of success as it reflects the linear career model historically characteristic of men. However, research has consistently shown that women

gauge career success in different ways to men, with greater value given to subjective criteria and less emphasis on outward success symbols (Buse, Bilimoria & Perilli, 2013; Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Dyke & Murphy, 2006; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Martin & Barnard, 2013; Moran, 2014). Women typically measure and define career success by more than hierarchical and financial gain (Martin & Barnard, 2013) and are less motivated by position and status (Hennig, 1973). Subjective measures such as fulfilment and purpose are consistently characterised as ways in which women view career success (Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Buse, Bilimoria & Perilli, 2013; Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Moran, 2014; Trahey, 1977).

A greater female perspective evident in research, confirms a preference for intuitive, subjective and intangible success criteria such as personal fulfilment and job satisfaction. Women define success in terms of "influence" (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003, p. 267), seeking power through achievement and personal recognition and respect rather than by simply aiming for promotion to prestigious titles. Their ability to "grow" people and organisations and "make a difference" (Baxter, 2013, in Breekveldt, p. 52) is important criteria. Success is also gauged on aspects such as the ability to drive change, develop positive reciprocal relationships and take control of one's own destiny (Bagihole, 2006; Buse, Bilimoria & Perilli, 2013; O'Neil, Bilimoria & Saatcioglu, 2004; Hennig & Jardim, 1990; Moran, 2014; Ruderman & Ohlott 2002).

Furthermore, women define success in terms of being good at what they do, but only if the work is highly valued as important in broader terms for society and the wider world (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003). Tangible status of a title is perceived to be important in that it gives women the opportunity to "exert influence", to "make a mark on the place" and to "improve things" (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003, p. 267).

These feminine differences in defining career success challenges the idea that the only legitimate definition of career success or the model of career success to be compared to is within the hierarchical corporate framework (O'Neil, Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008) commonly shown to favour traditional patriarchal outcomes such as income and positional title (e.g. Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). However, it can be argued that while women define career success using different benchmarks to men, quantifiable criteria such as outward symbols of promotions, prestigious job titles and increasing salary levels are often viewed as signs of progression and evidence of career success. These are valued as they confer power and status, which influences critical agency to achieve other important defining goals (Dyke & Murphy, 2006; Martin & Barnard, 2013; Moran, 2014; O'Neil, Bilimoria & Saatcioglu, 2004; Sheridan, 2002; Tannen, 1994; Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003).

In other words, women need to be recognised by others through outward symbols to be legitimised as leaders and therefore able to exercise power and influence. Women see themselves as successful through their agency to makes things happen but need the support of objective signposts of success as a signal to others. Furthermore, women do not necessarily have to be promoted to the highest levels in order to consider themselves to be successful if they are able to exert influence (Baxter, 2013, in Breekveldt).

Historically, success is shown to be viewed as a difficult concept for Australian women to accept and to explain as it can conflict with the stereotypic idea that women should be self-effacing and modest in order to fulfil social expectations (Szirom, 1991). This idea, creates a conflict impacting how success is viewed as "Success is fundamentally at odds with the notions of femininity" (Horner, 1969, in Szirom, 1991, p. 8). Likewise, Mitchell (1984) found that women tend to prefer to be the "object" (p. 2) rather than the attention seeking "subject" (p. 2) in the discussion about their career success, preferring to present a socially acceptable viewpoint about career success, which does not centre upon money and prestige (Finegold & Mohrman, 2001).

Additionally, women are shown as likely to be self-deprecating about their own success linking the "tangible and positive effects of their own work" (Vinnicombe & Bank 2003, p. 267) to their organisation, but not necessarily to themselves. Women are likely to credit their success more to cooperative team effort or luck than to their own ability, feeling uncomfortable with the label of 'success' (Szirom,1991). Authors suggest that this is because success is a gendered term, much like the generic male term 'he' traditionally used in literature (Szirom, 1991; Twenge, Campbell & Gentile, 2012), which perpetuates the idea that success is linked to males (Szirom, 1991). This is further compounded by language used about women, which is less "instrumental" (e.g. independent, confident) and more "affective" (e.g. cooperative, friendly) (Szirom, 1991, p. 9).

Other factors are shown to impact the definition of success (Parker & Cusmir, 1992). Types of occupation as well as levels of managerial responsibility influence determinants of success, with greater value placed on personal fulfilment and job security as women progress to leadership levels (Parker & Cusmir, 1992). Conversely, men are viewed to value wealth and status as success criteria at all stages of their careers. However, in some studies, no gender differences in subjective success markers are found (Judge, Cable, Boudreau & Bretz, 1995; Nabi, 2003; Peluchette, 1993) suggesting that both women and men value personal fulfilment and other intangible criteria. Some studies have found fewer gender differences in how women and men view career success, but continuing differences in the metrics used to gauge success (Dyke & Murphy, 2006). These changes in understanding and practices and an increased focus on the feminine experience have led to a growth in the variety of criteria used for gauging career success (Dries, Pepermans & Carlier, 2008).

Definitions of career success evolve over time, vary between individuals and are influenced by factors such as gender issues, differing criteria of success and personal differences in perceptions and aspirations (Festinger, 1954; Nicholson & de Waal-Andrews, 2005; Wieck

& Berlinger, 1989, in Hall & Lawrence). Furthermore, other factors – such as age, career stage, interest, industry, family circumstances and commitments and other socio-historical aspects – are found to impact the way in which career success is defined and demonstrated (Ng & Feldman, 2014).

In summary, research about the social construct of a career and the phenomenon of career success has been influenced by changes in the career landscape through the evolution of how people work and subsequent broadening of career models. Studies show that the construct of career success is changing from a masculine view of success, which has traditionally been linked to outward symbols of success such as job titles and the accumulation of wealth and other status symbols. The advent of increased numbers of women entering the workforce has widened the dialogue about what careers can look like, with women's careers typically characterised by non-linear journeys that differentiate them from the traditional male model.

While studies show that the differences between how women and men view career success may be diminishing, women still largely view career success in terms of subjective criteria such as job satisfaction, rather than relying on tangible symbols of success such as hierarchical promotional titles and increasing salaries. However, traditional objective criteria are valued by women as signals to others of their power and influence. The persistent notion that women view career success differently to men supports the idea in the present study that career success for women needs to be studied separately. Additionally, the idea that women prefer to be modest and self-effacing about personal achievement is also explored.

The idea that how women perceive career success changes over time as their circumstances alter through age, personal situation, career stage and experiences is explored in the present study. How participants perceive success at various career stages

and what factors determine the differences is explored.

The following section (Section 2.2) analyses the literature on career-enabling factors for women and traces the antecedent influences of these factors on career success.

2.2. What factors enable career success?

This section investigates the second major area of research in this thesis exploring factors that enable women's career success. This includes the review of research about the different types of cultural capital viewed as important for career success identifying specific aspects of both human and social capital in terms of personal characteristics and standing out from others. This includes the role of childhood influences on individual development and the accumulation of career promoting capital. Research is also reviewed into the role of educational experiences, work-related experiential factors, especially in early career stages and how aspects of luck act as antecedent catalysts for career success. Literature about the value of supportive relationships at work or social capital (e.g. friendship, mentoring and networking) and at home (e.g. marriage, parenthood and friendship) is also explored. Literature about the way in which historical and socio-cultural forces of the 20th century have influenced the Australian career environment for women is also included.

2.2.1. Personality matters

A wealth of research studies from across a range of disciplines focuses on the role of personality as a success-enabling factor. While this study is sociological in nature it draws from literature from other disciplines but in this section particularly highlights research from psychology. How sociology explores the social world overlaps with psychological cognitive structures, which connect social and mental processes (Bourdieu, 1996). This section evaluates pertinent research about the important role that personality or personal characteristics play in women's career success.

Women consistently identify a range of important personality characteristics, as essential for career success (Breekveldt, 2013; Coleman, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1990; Holton & Dent, 2012; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Trahey, 1977; Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003). A commonality in these studies is the emergence of a set of complementary characteristics such as intelligence and determination and the identification of a suite of other helpful characteristics such as self-confidence, a strong work ethic, an optimistic and resilient outlook, passion for work, personal courage and integrity and self-awareness. Studies show aspects of personality are linked to each other and are related to positive career outcomes, highlighted below.

Intelligence is identified as an essential personal characteristic, considered to be critical for career success in studies such as Strenze's large-scale meta-analysis (2007) confirmed in the more recent Australian study by Rosa, Hon, Xia and Lamari (2017). Intelligence is shown to be a powerful indicator of career success when measured by adult levels of education, occupation and income. As intelligence is shown to be a relatively stable genetic personal characteristic, it is therefore considered as a reliable predictor of success (Strenze, 2007).

Early identification of above-average intelligence in childhood and in early career is shown to have positive impacts on occupational status over a career span (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen & Barrick, 1999; Schellenberg, Krauss, Hättich & Häfeli, 2016) and is valued as an important antecedent determinant of career success (Dreher & Bretz, 1991; Judge et al., 1999; Siegel & Ghiselli, 1971). This can be partially explained because highly intelligent people are likely to commit to further education, which expands career capital and they are likely to look for and take leadership roles (Schellenberg et al., 2016; Strenze, 2007). However, simply being clever is not enough to ensure career success, as other contributory characteristics, skills and support mechanisms need to be taken into account (Dawkins, 1989).

Hard work is viewed as an essential characteristic with women leaders identifying a strong work ethic and a willingness to work hard as important in being successful (e.g. Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Holton & Dent 2012; Williams, 2000). A strong work ethic is highly valued in the field of the corporate world (Williams, 2000) and enables the acquisition of further career capital through access to career opportunities (Fitzsimmons, 2011).

Historically, characteristic qualities of successful women have consistently included a sense of determination as an essential feature (e.g. Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a, Trahey 1977) confirmed in later studies (e.g. Holton & Dent, 2012: Tharenou, 2005). Determination is described in terms of single-mindedness, doggedness and being proactive in career development, elements viewed as essential for career success (Coleman, 2011). Determination in combination with hard work and enthusiasm are viewed as valued personal features and important career capital (Coleman, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Holton & Dent, 2012; Tharenou, 2005; Trahey, 1977) linked also to self-confidence and belief in the possibility of success (Coleman, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Holton & Dent, 2012). A combination of determination, confidence and self-belief is viewed to contribute to occupational performance or the ability to do a good job, a further benchmark of career success (Abele, Hagmaier & Spurk, 2016).

Women who are viewed as strong and determined consistently feature in studies about career success. Hennig and Jardim (1977a) show that women leaders, view determination is a key characteristic, an essential ingredient identified for succeeding at "anything" (p. 33), a characteristic which includes "drive to achieve, an orientation to task, the desire to be respected for one's abilities, the enjoyment of competition, [and] a capacity to take risk" (p. 33). Similiarly, Rosa et al. (2017) show that women identify determination, as well as dedication and independence as factors of their success. These features are viewed as important career qualities, in combination with characteristics such as intelligence and a

strong work ethos, although these latter characteristics are not seen as enough on their own to explain women's success.

Early success experiences are shown to lead to the development of career-supporting self-confidence, instilled in childhood and identified as a key characteristic for women leaders (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003). Other studies find that confidence can be further developed over time through life experiences (Coleman, 2011; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a), especially helpful in combating self-doubt and the feeling of isolation that often accompanies women leaders (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003). These studies show that a high level of confidence can support courage to seek career-enhancing promotion and encourages resilience needed to overcome challenges. Similiarly, women leaders perceive related features of self-efficacy or self-belief as career enhancing, in relation to salary, status and career satisfaction (Abele, Hagmaier & Spurk, 2016). Importantly, confident women are likely to program themselves to overlook potential career barriers and obstacles, focusing primarily on career enabling aspects (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003). Studies such as Vinnicombe and Bank (2003) provide support for the focus of the present study on the isolation of enabling characteristics for women, an under-researched area.

Optimistic women have an "expectation that more good things … will happen in the future" (Carr, 2011 p. 89) as an important career supporting mindset. People with optimism (Seligman, Reivich, Laycox & Gilham, 1995), a positive mindset (Coleman, 2011) or an upbeat outlook are shown to have brighter futures and greater chances of success than those without (Carr, 2011; Seligman et al., 1995). These positive personal characteristics support career enhancement through the continued pursuit of goals, assist with self-regulation and provide coping mechanisms for dealing with adverse circumstances (Carr, 2011). Likewise, high-achieving women are shown to possess valuable psychological strength, with this strength emanating from the four tenets of psychological capital: "hope, optimism, resilience and self-efficacy" (Morgan, 2014, p. 83). An associated state of hopefulness helps

individuals to envisage a positive career pathway and to have the agency or motivation to use that pathway (Carr, 2011).

Associated "positive emotions, motivations and commitments to work goals" (Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007, p. 460) are linked to the likelihood of promotion to senior roles and leadership, central to career success and to emotional and physical well being (Luthans et al., 2007). Women who are confident of success demonstrate a positive work attitude, are optimistic and enthusiastic about work and have a strong commitment to career goals (Coleman, 2011; Holton & Dent, 2012; Tharenou, 2005). Optimism and resilience are shown to be essential characteristics in encouraging long-term commitment to and persistence in relation to career goals, both of which are important for sustaining high energy and motivation despite setbacks (Holton & Dent, 2012).

Important additional personal qualities for career success identified by women include courage and boldness (e.g. Judge, Higgins, Thareson & Barrick, 1999; Schellenberg, Krauss, Hättich & Häfeli, 2016). Trahey (1977) describes the type of courage or audacity needed for career success as "chutzpah" (p. 20). This can also be described similarly as having a fearlessness to take calculated risks and to be "afraid of nothing" (Coleman, 2011, p. 48) or, as an *"esprit de corps"* (Sinclair, 1994, p. 22). A recent parallel construct of "grit" (Duckworth, Peterson, Mathews & Kelly, 2007, p. 1087; Duckworth & Gross, 2014) has comparable meaning and is found to support persistence and passion for long-term career goals and to be important to the ability to enact personal and leadership vision (Baum & Locke, 2004; Duckworth & Gross, 2014; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Locke & Latham, 2013; Vallerand, Houlfort & Forest, 2014, in Gagne, 2014; Wrzesniewski, 2011, in Cameron & Spreitzer, 2011,). Similarly, school students with 'grit' are likely to stick to their educational goals in tough school situations providing the opportunity for the development of career valued capital such as determination and resilience (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Eskreis-Winkler, Duckworth, Shulman & Beale, 2014). This raises questions about the antecedents

of 'grit', pointing to the potential value of early life experiences, especially for women experiencing adversity in childhood.

Women identify passion and enjoyment for their work as key criteria of career success, shown to have a belief that work that has a greater purpose in making the world better is important (Holton & Dent, 2012). Other contributory personality characteristics are shown to include integrity and self-awareness (e.g. Carr, 2011; Parry & Proctor-Thompson, 2002). Integrity is thus shown to be an internal moral compass that ensures women are holding true to their beliefs and principles. Possessing the ability to recognise one's own ethical stand and values is important as a success indicator and an essential personal characteristic of career success (Mavin, Williams, Bryans & Patterson, 2015).

Additionally, self-awareness of strengths and capabilities enhances career progression, particularly in early career. Establishing capabilities and having these affirmed can positively impact self-efficacy and lead to increased confidence to tackle challenges and cope with setbacks (Holton & Dent, 2012). A high level of self-awareness is helpful for women so that they can effectively surround themselves with people with complementary skills, access effective networking opportunities (Holton & Dent, 2012) and enact leadership direction and purpose (Coleman, 2011; Hakim, 2004; Ruderman, Ohlott, Panzer & King, 2002).

Studies in psychology, (Blignaut, Ungerer & Muller, 2014, Penney, David & Witt, 2011), show that personal traits – the chief psychological constructs used to describe distinguishing characteristics of personality – influence individuals to behave in certain ways. These traits have a role in shaping careers and predicting important life outcomes (Penney, David & Witt, 2011; Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001; Sutin, Costa, Miech & Eaton, 2009). Many psychology-based studies linking personality and career success are informed by trait theory, which uses tools such as the Big Five dimensional model (e.g. Carr, 2011; Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006). This model measures five personality dimensions:

conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion and openness to experience (Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006).

The Big Five model is found to be useful in explaining and predicting some career determining aspects of mental health, job satisfaction, job performance (Blignaut, Ungerer & Muller, 2014) and income and occupational prestige (Sutin, Costa, Miech & Eaton, 2009). Additionally, studies using the Big Five model align personality types with job titles (e.g. symbols of progression), employability, job satisfaction (Boudreau, Boswell & Judge, 2001) and status attainment (Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006; Sutin et al., 2009; Wihler, Meurs, Wiesman, Troll & Blickle, 2017). However, such inventories are criticised as being too broad (Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006) and problematic because of the subjective nature of traits as well as the de-personalising aspect of grouping people into types (Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006)

Studies drawing on trait theory such as the Big Five model assume that traits remain the same over time, especially in terms of personality, which is thought to be relatively stable throughout an individual's lifetime (Soldz & Vaillant, 1999). This idea has been challenged in research showing change in traits to match industry or organisation requirements, with different values depending on the context (Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006; Kohn & Schooler, 1982; Mitchell, 1977). Personality types or dimensions do not necessarily predict associated behaviours in a work situation nor is the possibility of how personality can change over time fully considered (Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006).

Additionally, trait theory studies show only moderate correlative links between personal traits and career success (Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006), while more qualitative interdisciplinary studies show stronger links between personal characteristics and individual's career success (e.g. Coleman, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Holton & Dent, 2012, Moran, 2014; Tharenou, 2005; Seligman, Reivich, Laycox & Gilham, 1995; Ammerman

& Williams, 2012). There is an argument that greater attention needs to be paid to the contextual situation rather than personality type. The present study takes into account research using trait theory, however, acknowledges the shortcomings by focusing on both the personality perspectives and contextual factors.

Other studies point to career outcomes being influenced by personal disposition gained through inherited genetic factors, or nature (e.g. McCrae, Jang, Angleiter, Riemann & Livesley, 2001; Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006) and socialisation (Bourdieu, 1990). While traits are seen largely as inherited, they are further developed from early childhood through the process of nurture (Bandura, 1977). While the relative importance of the relationship between genes and environment is somewhat contested (Polderman, Benyamin, de Leeuw, Sullivan, van Bochoven, Visscher & Posthuma, 2015), a large-scale twin study by Johnson, Vernon and Feilor (2008) finds that personal traits are the result of a balance of both inherited genetics and learned behaviour through socialisation.

In summary, the research about personality as a factor in enabling career success shows that women identify as important, a range of personal traits, characteristics and dispositions, which play a role in providing career-enabling capital. Characteristics such as a strong work ethos, intelligence, determination, confidence, an optimistic outlook, a sense of resilience, independence, passion for work and a sense of integrity are shown to be personal qualities that support career success. These qualities are both viewed as the product of inherited biology and the result of processes of socialisation, with early life experiences and family background shown to be important factors. The consensus of the literature is that these characteristics are not enough in isolation but are shown to work together to provide access to further accumulation of cultural and social capital, especially in the form of education and career opportunities.

While trait theory helps to explain individual characteristics and dispositions, the links to career success are weak. Additionally, the focus of socio-psychological vocational literature pays insufficient attention to important sociological perspectives of the nuanced interplay of personality and the environment (Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006). This study takes a sociological approach foregrounding the role of context in the development of personal characteristics and considering the dynamic nature of occupational careers (Boudreau, Boswell & Judge, 2001; Gelissen & de Graaf, 2006). The interconnections between these aspects provide background for understanding the role of personality in the present study. This study draws on a range of disciplinary foci in order to establish how personality impacts career success as recommended in Fitzsimmons (2011) but takes a sociological approach embedding the role of context.

2.2.2. Standing out from the crowd

Successful women are notable and visible. However, standing out as different from others is considered to be of potential career value but has not always been shown to be a career-enhancing factor (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Groysberg, 2008; Kanter, 1977; Powell, 2012). The psychology–based research literature identifying personal characteristics and traits (section 2.2.1) goes some way to explaining how and why successful women stand out. However, a broader range of literature acknowledges the historical changes in how successful women have been viewed as different. This section reviews further research about this position of gender-based rarity, taking into account socio-cultural change.

Early studies found successful women leaders to be so rare that they are described as *'rara avis'* or a "rare bird" (Trahey, 1977, p. 15), worthy of research value, but often described in derogatory terms and viewed with suspicion. Studies in the 1960s and 1970s showed that successful women were rare, viewed as "different" (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a, p. 74; Kanter, 1977) and perceived as "biologically unfit" (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a, p. 74) or

psychologically ill suited for leadership. Women leaders were often described as 'aggressive', 'masculine', 'hard' and 'cold ' (Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a), or as an "iron maiden" (Kanter, 1977, p. 383). These characteristics were shown to be at odds with socially accepted norms for women of the time, which typically encompassed desirable traits of warmth and friendliness; social stereotypes shown to be supported by both men and women (Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). These women stood out from their male colleagues because of their gender and stood out from other women through their aspirations and roles in the workplace; their rarity (Kanter, 1977).

Kanter's (1977) pivotal work, *Men and Women of the Corporation,* an extensive qualitative study of high-achieving female and male leaders, introduces the idea of standing out as a "token" (p. 209). It finds that tokenism reduces career opportunities and narrows the range of perceivable roles that women can fill. Kanter shows that, when there are few women in an organisation, women can not only become tokenised, with their differences highlighted, but also put under pressure to maintain the cultural status quo by conforming to socially accepted roles seen as appropriate for the culture of the organisation. Other later studies confirm problems of tokenism (e.g. Bagihole, 2006; Buse, Bilimoria & Perilli, 2013; Sheridan, 2002; Powell, 2012). Increased visibility through disproportionate attention can be problematic and that being defined by gender, predetermines what women can do and can think they can do, often limiting their opportunities and leaving them unable to leverage their important leadership qualities (Kanter, 1977).

Additionally, Kanter and others show that women can feel socially and professionally isolated if they are the only women in an organisation (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Kanter, 1977; Marshall, 1995). Perhaps in response to this sense of isolation, some women report being more comfortable in the company of men than with other women, further distancing themselves from their female peers and increasing their difference (Hennig & Jardim,

1977a), but increasing career capital through attention and potential championing (Fitzsimmons, 2011).

Alternatively, high-achieving women can be idealised and stand out as "superwomen" (e.g. Piterman, 2013, in Breekveldt, p. 23). Trahey (1977) Piterman (2013) and Richie and Piterman (2011) show that this type of standing out leads to the perception that success is possible only for 'the extraordinary woman'. Piterman shows that women aspiring to leadership roles may be demotivated by the unrealistic images of women 'at the top', as they may not envisage themselves as 'superstars', thus, limiting the transition of women from middle management to executive levels. The historical "think manager; think male" paradigm (Lemoine, Aggarwal & Steed, 2016, p. 483) contributes to the perception that women have less legitimacy to leadership unless they are extraordinary (Lemoine, Aggarwal & Steed, 2016). However, recent studies show the 'think manager; think male' paradigm to be weakening, with increasing expectation that women will be and can be leaders and women leaders referred to in less deprecatory terms (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Holton & Dent, 2012).

Perhaps, because of their continued rarity, there is a high level of interest shown in the experiences of such women (Doogue, 2014; Mitchell, 1991). Successful women are consistently shown to be rare (Groysberg, 2008; Szirom, 1991, Doogue, 2014), but standing out because of their rarity is shown to be beneficial for career outcomes.

Standing out is shown to be a career enabling factor with Fitzsimmons' (2011) comprehensive qualitative study of female and male CEOs, showing women to be seen less as tokens, with their rarity viewed as an asset as it attracts crucial support. Even being portrayed as a superwoman or "star" (Groysberg, 2008, p. 1) is shown to benefit career outcomes for women as they can leverage career-enhancing mobility because their skill set is transferable. Unlike their male counterparts, Groysberg (2008) finds that 'star' women who

switch firms can maintain their stardom, bringing positive outcomes for the organisation and themselves. Furthermore, standing out through 'star' status allows women to leverage career-important alliances in teams and become crucial allies in power sharing (Powell, 2012). Kanter's early work (1977) also finds that increased visibility can support professional reputation and enhance career opportunities, confirmed in later studies (e.g. Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Kleinherz (2018) describes how famous Australian writer and academic, Germaine Greer, felt from a young age she was destined to stand out because she was very tall and did not fit into what a woman of the time was meant to look like or be like. She considered this sense of oddity gave her license to develop tactics to deal with her misfit status. Standing out as different increased her noticeability, gave her the opportunity and impetus to share her ideas and ensured others paid attention to her. Thus, standing out enhanced her career opportunities and outcomes.

The notion of standing out is particularly notable for Australian career-oriented women in the 20th century, who were inevitably the only women in the senior ranks of their organisations (Byrski, 1999; Cox, 1996; Doogue, 2014; Mitchell; 1984; 1991; Szirom, 1991; Piterman, 2013). Historically, studies described women as either accepting the stereotypic role of wife and mother or standing out as a woman in a 'man's world' (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a, Kanter, 1977; Trahey, 1977; Keown & Keown, 1982). This study draws upon how this binary choice manifests in more recent times.

The present study draws on the recent studies taking a non-judgmental approach to 'standing out'. It attempts to address the gap in the area of research, particularly in the Australian context. Despite research findings that standing out can be both beneficial and disadvantageous there is little study of how women leaders perceive this and how they view any positive influences of their gender on their career outcomes. In the next section

research is evaluated concerning factors of family background and how these factors not only influence the development of women from childhood but also contribute to them standing out from others.

2.2.3. Family background

The identification of career-important personal traits and characteristics alone does not fully explain career success (Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi & Goldberg, 2007) as individuals are born with certain innate qualities but these do not always lead to the same life and career outcomes. Qualities and characteristics re influenced by the socio-historical context in which individuals are raised and through the socialisation effects of the family and community by whom they are nurtured (Nicholson & de Waal-Andrews, 2005; Whiston & Keller, 2004). This section reviews the research about the influence of family background on personal development and how this shapes the accumulation of social and cultural capital needed for career success.

As philosopher, Aristotle claimed, the formative years of childhood have a crucial influence on human development (Cook, 2009) supporting the idea that individuals develop because of a highly interactive process between them and their environment and their relationships with other people and objects (Ceci, 2006; Houston, 2017). While innate constitution (biology and dispositions) is shown to play a central role in the composition of an individual's characteristics, immediate family and peer group are shown to influence how an individual establishes their identity in childhood and affect the development of their personal characteristics (Houston, 2017).

Houston (2017) argues that development is largely through socialisation, which enables understanding and use of societal rules, processes and values shared by a group or class. Individuals are further shaped by the influences of their local community and by groups and institutions on a broader societal level, just as wider historical, economic and political force

have influence (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Houston, 2017). Contextual factors are overlapping forces, which influence development, with "events in time changing the dynamics" (Houston, 2017, p. 5) within systems. Social systems and individuals are affected by the "density, thickness and vibrancy" (Houston, 2017, p. 5) of the influencing forces.

Families are viewed as unique social systems comprising a combination of "biological, geographical, historical, affectional and legal ties" (Carr, 2011, p. 279) with 'family of origin' defined as birth or adopted family (Nichols, 2003) or the family in which formative years are spent (Whiston & Keller, 2004). Family of origin is viewed as the primary influencing force, shaping the development of a child (Dumais, 2002) although families are shown to be heavily influenced by time, place and relationships and do not operate independently from their surroundings (Ceci, 2006; Houston, 2017). Contextual variables need to be taken into account, such as family status, social class and the era in which one is born (Dumais, 2002; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Whiston & Keller, 2004).

As antecedents to career success, family of origin plays a significant role in developing how individuals invest in education and their career commitment, although family of origin does not necessarily determine how career trajectories and patterns will play out for women (Schellenberg, Krauss, Hättich & Häfeli, 2016). Parents act as domestic and occupational role models for their children in terms of type of occupation, attitudes to education and expectations (Cook, 2009) with parental levels of education, especially those of fathers and parental occupations shown to align with career success. The influence of parental expectations is shown to be more powerful than role modelling, especially in terms of educational aspirations. For example, if parents articulate expectations that a child will go to university, then the child is more likely to attend (Cook, 2009). Thus, successful women are likely to have fulfilled their parent's expectations and to have followed their examples.

Families are shown to be covert and overt socialisation forces occurring in early life, with

members influenced by parental attitudes, sex role stereotypes and gendered roles portrayed within families and access to school and post-school opportunities (Ticklin, Croxford, Ducklin & Frame, 2001). Parental attitudes and behaviours (Sadker & Sadker, 1994), as well as media messages, are shown to have more impact than any "genetic hardwiring" (Wojtalik, Breckenridge, Gibson Hancox & Sobehart, 2007, p. 44) in influencing subsequent adult attitudes and behaviour (Wojtalik et al., 2007). These aspects of socialisation ultimately affect career decisions and, in particular, influence career aspirations of women (Bandura, 1986; Eccles, 1987), attitudes towards role expectations and feelings of self-efficacy (Wojtalik et al., 2007). Furthermore, there is a strong correlation between family socio-economic status and level of career success for daughters (Macintyre, 2009; McMunn, Kelly, Cable & Bartley, 2012). Childhood messages also come from "socialisers" (Wojtalik et al., 2007, p. 46); from parents but also from others such as teachers, which impact the development of children's beliefs and attitudes concerning their own aptitudes and those of others.

Primary socialisation in childhood is a powerful force; more formative than subsequent experiences (Bourdieu, 1990) and fundamental to later career outcomes (Cook, 2009). Socialisation in childhood is shown to be a strong determinant in the development of individuals' ideas about themselves, their motivations towards life and work and, ultimately, the degree of career success that they experience (Ashby & Schoon, 2010; Bourdieu, 1990; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Keown & Keown, 1982). Powerful messages in the form of beliefs and behaviours are transmitted to children during early life, shaping self-perception and experiences with achievement (Wojtalik, Breckenridge, Gibson Hancox & Sobehart, 2007). Wojtalik et al. (2007) argue that individuals are formed by their surroundings and relationships, which evolve and change over a lifetime.

Gender role stereotypes are shown to be a major influence in how children are socialised (Wojtalik et al., 2007), resulting in biased perceptions of capabilities of individuals and

influencing how attitudes develop differently about women and men regarding goals, values and expectations of success (Eccles, 1994). Huston (1983) showed that by five years of age, children have already developed gender role stereotypes concerning appropriate behaviours and characteristics. Attitudes are perpetuated or dispelled in various degrees by socialisation factors, with children gauging their behaviours and aspirations against held stereotypes and adjusting them to conform to the norms of their own familial environment (Huston, 1983; Wojtalik et al., 2007). In addition, children are influenced by their parents' attitudes and values (Evans & Diekman, 2009), particularly in regard to the division of domestic labour (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Owen Blakemore & Hill, 2008; Fulcher, Sutfin & Patterson, 2008). Gender role stereotypes have significant force in how children perceive their adult futures and the development of gender role expectations, potentially interfering with career aspirations for women (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Fitzsimmons, 2011).

Gender role socialisation in childhood can lead to the endorsement of stereotypical gender roles and interests in occupations that align with these roles (Evans & Diekman, 2009). This can lead women to choose a career that conforms to stereotypical role expectations and appears socially acceptable, which, historically, included occupations such as teaching and nursing (Evans & Diekman, 2009). These studies give rise to questions about how some girls are able to allay these strong stereotypic socialisation forces to be different from their sisters.

In summary, extant research shows that tangible and intangible features of family background have a strong influence on the development of children through family socio-economic status and parental attitudes and expectations, which are linked to career success. The research highlights the important role of family background in the socialisation of children although this is viewed in combination with the effects of socialisation from the surrounding environment and other people. Gender stereotype socialisation is shown to be a result of society attitudes and beliefs and from within the family influencing women's

career choices. However, there is a gap in the literature about how women are able to break away from the effects of childhood socialisation. This questions how women balance the acceptance and rejections of social stereotypes to both fit in and stand out. Likewise, studies do not effectively explain the variance between siblings with the same environmental influences and similar genetic makeup. These issues are therefore explored in the present study.

Family composition and birth order

Family composition is historically shown as an antecedent factor in career success for women, with certain aspects of birth order and number and sex of siblings emerging as key factors for women leaders. In early studies women leaders are found to be either an 'only child', or the first born in a small family (Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). First-born children can experience the "special child syndrome" (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a, p. 78) where they are given time and individual attention from parents not available to subsequent children, giving rise to the development of career-enhancing personal qualities such as confidence, self-efficacy and sense of independence. Additionally, they are more likely to achieve eminence, have high motivation for future achievement and attain higher education than their siblings (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). These factors point to the accumulation in childhood of appropriate career-valued cultural capital due to luck in being born first.

Similarly, successful women leaders are traditionally shown to come from small families (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Keown & Keown, 1982). However, in research that is more recent the correlation between a small family of origin and career success is questioned with Evans and Kelley (2002) arguing that the degree of disadvantage for women growing up in a large family has become less significant over time. They show that a higher family socio-economic status and the dynamics of the family are of greater significance to eventual success, than

family size. Hennig and Jardim (1977a) suggest that, regardless of the size of the family, the composition of the family makes a difference to how girls develop.

Growing up in a girls-only family is shown to be an enabling factor as daughters develop career-enhancing skills by not having to compete with brothers for attention and support. Historically, boys are shown to be treated differently, in terms of receiving greater support for education and higher parental expectations than their sisters (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). This is shown to be especially significant for the eldest daughter who may also experience the advantages of the first-born. Hennig and Jardim (1977a) suggest that lack of brothers points to girls sharing important relationships with their fathers – relationships traditionally linked to boys – including outdoor activities and technical tasks which are viewed as activities which provide access to valued cultural capital. Hennig and Jardim (1977a) contend that growing up as a proxy son can build self-reliance and confidence. This type of father–daughter relationship is thought to provide girls with the experiences needed to later compete with men in the work environment (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). Alternatively, if fathers reject the notion of gender role stereotypes, girls can grow up with the belief they will not be limited by societal gender role expectations. This can contribute to the development of important attitudes and strengths (Evans & Diekman, 2009; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a).

However, the benefits of the absence of brothers is somewhat contested. Fitzsimmons' (2011) later comparative study finds that women CEOs who have brothers did not see themselves as disadvantaged, despite lower paternal expectations about career aspirations and reduced support to engage with tertiary education. Fitzsimmons (2011) establishes that the presence of brothers may even enable their sisters to develop self-efficacy through childhood play, with the girls benefiting from a competitive environment commonly associated with boys, which encourages girls to develop risk-taking skills and "successfully test their abilities" (Fitzsimmons, 2011, p. 224).

Interest in whether aspects of demography, such as family composition and size, still has currency, has directed the present study. Additionally, the changes in research results about the impact of family composition and birth order on career success, suggests that sociological forces change over time thereby altering their relevant importance.

Family relationships and childhood experiences

This section analyses research about the correlative links between family relationships and career success. The key finding is that it is the quality of relationships, especially with a parent; in childhood and adolescence, that influences the development of career-enhancing personal characteristics, attitudes, values and skills (e.g. Evans & Kelley, 2002; Fitzsimmons, 2011, Hennig & Jardim, 1977).

Some studies show that successful women are likely to have close relationships with fathers (e.g. Evans & Kelley, 2002; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a); other studies place less emphasis on the father–daughter relationship and greater focus on the value of mother–daughter relationships and other relationships (Burke & Attridge, 2011; Evans & Kelley, 2002; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Strenze, 2007). Rather than specific parent-daughter relationships, parenting style is linked to future vocational behaviour (Schellenberg, Krauss, Hättich & Häfeli, 2016; Whiston & Keller, 2004).

However, the influence of mothers is found to be important (e.g. Schellenberg et al., 2016; Trahey, 1977) particularly as role models and supporters (Riggio & Desrochers, 2006; Allen, French & Poteet, 2016). Mothers who work outside the home are shown to significantly impact the development of their daughters, with less influence when the mother's principal role is home making (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Trahey, 1977). Role modeling of a working mother can be influential because it creates an increased climate of gender egalitarianism in the home, directly resulting in increased levels of educational aspiration, development of assertiveness and increased self-efficacy in daughters (Goldberg, Prause, Lucas,

Thompson & Himsel, 2008; Riggio & Desrochers, 2006). Emotional and social support provided in childhood is shown to be valuable. Thus, growing up in a family environment where daughters receive support and interest from adults including other female relatives such as grandmothers and aunts (Trahey, 1977) as it encourages them to access opportunities and helps them to develop supportive characteristics; adding to their cultural capital (Houston, 2017). These findings are tempered by Wackerle's (2010) study that finds children with the same background are not necessarily influenced by their upbringing in the same manner, suggesting that familial background is only part of a combination of forces that influence development.

As part of the influence of childhood environment, early life experiences are shown to influence children's motivations, opportunities and learning experiences providing career-enhancing capital (Wigfield, Battle, Keller & Eccles, 2002; Fitzsimmons, 2011). These findings are supported by research into the positive effect of childhood experiences even when these are considered to be adverse in nature.

Positive childhood experiences are generally seen to impact positively on development of personal qualities and the adoption of values and attitudes (Eagly & Heilman, 2016; Evans & Diekman, 2009; Fitzsimmons, 2011, Seligman, Reivich, Laycox & Gilham, 1995). These influence opportunities and learning experiences, protecting against pessimism and depression and build problem solving skills and autonomy (Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007; Seligman, Reivich, Laycox & Gilham, 1995; Wigfield, Battle, Keller & Eccles, 2002; Fitzsimmons, 2011).

These findings are supported by research into childhood experiences of work and travel. Working while still at school is a commitment that is shown to help young people to accrue skills and attributes, which are later valued in the field of work (Fitzsimmons, 2011). Studies from different eras such as Trahey (1977) and Fitzsimmons (2011) show that holiday and

weekend work as a teenager, working in a family business, or holding down a part-time job while in high school creates important career foundations. Taking on adult responsibility, such as dealing with money and interacting with adults, helps young people develop important characteristics of independence and self-efficacy (Seligman, 2011) and prepares them for the adult workplace (Trahey, 1977). Furthermore, in addition to working as a teenager, growing up in a family where hard work is highly regarded and modeled by parents, is shown to positively impact the development of a lifelong strong work ethic, highly valued in the adult work place (Fitzsimmons, 2011).

Travel in early life can also have a powerful influence on the development of children, providing them with opportunities to gain important attitudes. Travel gives rise to diverse experiences that add to cultural understanding and a greater worldview. When coupled with an ability and propensity to reflect on these early experiences, women who experience childhood travel are likely to benefit from this additional cultural capital (Assman, 1994; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Webster, 2003).

This is typified in Fitzsimmons' (2011) study showing that almost all the participant CEOs recall extensive childhood travel, holidaying and visiting relatives. This was viewed as the "typical Aussie thing" (p. 200). Travel is shown to be a mechanism for broadening understandings and increasing career choices and options, valued as social and cultural capital. However, this points to the importance of the attitudes and resources of parents who enabled these formative travel experiences. Fitzsimmons (2011) notes that travel experiences such as these were somewhat unusual for the time, limited to well-resourced middle-class families. This includes aspects such as financial resources, a home with a literary culture and access to educational and cultural resources (Evans & Kelley, 2002). The value of travel highlights the benefits of a family environment rich in cultural capital where a suite of career-enhancing factors interrelates (Fitzsimmons, 2011).

Close family relationships are shown to support the development of valued characteristics although these are not necessarily essential for providing the social and cultural capital needed for career success. Warm family relationships (Darling & Steinberg, 1993) with secure attachments during childhood (Cassidy & Shaver, 2008) are considered influential in forming important precursor career qualities such as self-confidence, a sense of trust in others and a sense of security in self, family and society (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). Safe and stable families where there are trusting relationships, where self-direction is encouraged, where mutual respect is shared and where parents are open and supportive are found to have a positive impact the development of career-enhancing characteristics (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Schellenberg, Krauss, Hättich & Häfeli, 2016).

However, poor career outcomes are not always the consequence of disharmonious or unsupportive families. Furthermore, adversity in childhood through events such the death of a parent, or parental divorce does not necessarily lead to poor career outcomes. This points to the possibility of the impact of adversity being mitigated by other factors (Fitzsimmons, 2011) and shown to be a possible catalyst for the development of important coping skills and attitudes (Burke & Attridge, 2011; Evans & Kelley, 2002; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Strenze, 2007). These include the development of characteristics such as resilience when coping with hardship (Masten, Hubbard, Gest, Tellegen, Garmezy & Ramirez, 1999) and the ability to effectively deal with stress (Feldt, Kokko, Kinnunen & Pulkkinen, 2005).

Some children who have experienced adversity due to parental divorce or separation, conflict, or have been exposed to stress can develop resilience and hopefulness in response (Carr, 2011). Carr argues that adversity in childhood can lead to the development of high motivation for self-advancement in some children, marked by features of persistence and tenacity. Likewise, Fitzsimmons (2011) and others suggest that developing characteristics such as self-efficacy, independence and self-reliance may be a by-product of dealing with adversity, contributing to the accumulation of valued career capital

required to overcome challenges (Burke & Attridge, 2011; Evans & Kelley, 2002; Strenze, 2007).

Positive outcomes such as academic achievement, prosocial conduct and social competency are shown if children have support from a surviving or present parent, or other significant adult, who can help children effectively process adverse experiences (Carr, 2011; Sahlstein & Allen, 2002). This also points to the benefits of a well-resourced background (Masten, Hubbard, Gest, Tellegen, Garmezy & Ramirez, 1999) and suggests there are benefits for children who possess high levels of cognitive and emotional intelligence to be able to make the best from their adverse circumstances (Masten et al., 1999; Sahlstein & Allen, 2002; Seligman, Reivich, Laycox & Gilham, 1995).

There is support for the idea that genetic makeup may help allay the impact of childhood adversity through an inherited genome linked to the development of resilience (Kaufman, Yang, Douglas-Palumberi, Houshyar, Lipschitz, Krystal & Gelernter, 2004). It is shown that some people are genetically more likely to bounce back from childhood adversity (Caspi, McClay, Moffit, Mill, Martin, Craig, Taylor & Poulton, 2002). However, genetic disposition is not enough to ensure resilience; support from a trusted adult is important (Kaufman et al., 2004). The importance of a supportive relationship with a significant adult is aligned with other research (e.g. Carr, 2011; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Sahlstein & Allen, 2002), helping to explain how some children are more resilient than others and therefore able to better recover from childhood adversity.

Seligman (2011) shows that individuals respond differently to adversity depending on the level of optimism and resilience they already possess, with some individuals recovering from trauma while others are unable to bounce back. Positive thinking and optimism enable resilience in the face of setbacks (Duckworth & Gross, 2014; Seligman, Reivich, Laycox & Gilham, 1995; Trahey, 1977), with women who have effective self-coping mechanisms more

likely to succeed than those who do not (Holton & Dent, 2012). These career-enhancing practices allow women to reframe or reappraise negative situations (Carr, 2011).

Experiencing autonomy or self-management and mastering adult skills in childhood, are shown to contribute to the development of coping mechanisms, optimism and surety of ability to cope with the challenges of life. Opportunities for development of these characteristics can include such activities as being responsible for food preparation and self-care (Seligman, Reivich, Laycox & Gilham, 1995). These conditions can be evident in adverse and non-adverse family circumstances.

Seligman et al. (1995) confirms that childhood experiences can influence the development of a valued optimistic mindset and that optimism can be learned: manifesting as a defence mechanism against pessimism (and depression) in later years. Similarly, optimistic individuals are shown to demonstrate career-enhancing problem solving ability in accepting and explaining problems in terms of specific causes and establishing practical solutions from a young age (Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007). These studies point to the value of developing career-enhancing qualities of resilience and optimism in childhood, directing the present study to investigate early life experiences, in particular the role of dealing with adversity as an antecedent factor of career success.

Interestingly, children with the same background are not necessarily influenced by their upbringing and experiences in the same manner (Wackerle, 2010), suggesting that familial background and childhood experiences are only part of a combination of forces that influence development. The idea that high-achieving women are typically optimistic and that they may be different to their siblings in motivation, abilities and aspirations, are points of interest in the present study.

Educational experiences

The following section examines how educational experiences are shown to shape development and provide opportunity for the accumulation of important social and cultural capital that privileges individuals' position at school and later sets them up to succeed in the workforce. In general terms, education is shown to be a significant career-enabling success factor (e.g. Fitzsimmons, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; 1977c; Holton & Dent, 2012; Keown & Keown, 1982) influenced by family attitudes, social forces and experiences with educational success.

Parental attitudes and educational experiences influence the experiences of children, shaping the type of schooling, the levels of education attained and attitudes towards education (Cook, 2009; Macintyre, 2009; McMunn, Kelly, Cable & Bartley, 2012). Education has long been perceived as a way to increase social mobility and insulate against the hardships of poverty (Teese & Polesel, 2003) and as a way to accumulate cultural capital essential for career success (Fitzsimmons, 2011). The level and quality of education makes a difference to the likelihood of career aspiration and success for women, with research since the early 1970s linking a high level of education (school and university) with positive career outcomes (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Holton & Dent, 2012; Kanter, 1977; Keown & Keown, 1982). Indicatively, Holton and Dent (2012) include the completion of secondary school, gaining university qualification and completing post-graduate studies and other training as important educational milestones linked to women and their career success.

The type of school attended makes a difference with an alignment shown between career success for women and schools with the following characteristics: a high ratio of teachers to students, small school populations and teachers who are predominately women (Fitzsimmons, 2011). According to Fitzsimmons, an important ingredient is receiving

individual attention from teachers, which is seen to be possible in small country schools, schools in wealthy urban suburbs, or in single-sex private schools. While women seem to do well in single-sex schools, characteristically it is their attitudes upon leaving school that impact their career success. Regardless of the type of school, Fitzsimmons (2011) finds that leaving school with a sense of self-belief is an important foundation for career aspiration and engagement. Fitzsimmons, Callan and Paulsen (2014) note that a school environment where women have opportunities to acquire specific career capital promotes the development of leadership acumen.

A feature of school experience for many Australian women born before 1970 was attendance at single-sex schools (Mulvey, Grindley & Gawith, 2007). For Catholic girls that often meant attendance at schools under the governance of a religious order (Massam, 2014). Scant research studies comparisons of different types of religious and non-denominational schooling in regard to women and professional career success, however the literature points to the benefits of a Catholic education. A Catholic school environment at a certain time in history, is seen to be conducive to the development of important cultural capital for girls, through the inculcation of faith-based attitudes and values.

Nuns were viewed to have a profound impact on the development of girls, with Ryan (1999) positing the idea that a mid-century Catholic education was the catalyst for a wave of Australian intellectuals and feminists who "became outspoken advocates for feminism and other radical causes" (p. 35). Ryan (1999) cites Catholic school graduates such as Dr Germaine Greer, Dr Anne Summers, Dr Carman Lawrence and Dr Denise Bradley as examples of such women. The culture in Catholic schools of that era supported girls to do their best and to aspire to a career (Massam, 2014) at a time when roles for women were constrained.

Historians, Mulvey, Grindley and Gawith (2007) and Macintrye (2009) establish that for

decades from the early to mid 20th century, religion was the great divide between the more dominant Protestant religions and minority Catholics, influencing social activities in Australian society including schooling. Mulvey, Grindley and Gawith (2007) and others (e.g. Ryan, 1999; Macintyre, 2009) show that growing up in a Catholic family influenced social development as school environment influenced all social relationships and shaped how characteristics and skills were acquired and developed.

This points to the significance of the role of religion in family background in terms of educational choices, particularly in the mid 20th century with Catholic girls likely to be schooled in single-sex schools with religious nuns (or sisters) as teachers (Mulvey, Grindley & Gawith, 2001). Catholic girls' schools in the 1950s and 1960s are seen as examples of effective female leadership, creating an environment which influenced girls to be independent, confident (Mulvey, Grindley & Gawith, 2007) and resilient (Rennie, 2015) within strong women-driven communities (Ryan, 1999). Bauch (1989) highlights that pedagogy in Catholic schools was action based rather than passive based confirming Ryan's (1999) anecdotal work. This included the necessity to master debating skills and perform in singing, music and drama, which built confidence and offered opportunities for intelligent, talented girls with potential to be recognised (Ryan, 1999). Intelligence gave clever girls access to attention and affirmation not available to others, privileging them with opportunity to access and leverage the benefit of school success. Clever girls could bring accolades and reflective glory to the school were affirmed and rewarded, supported by nuns who were constrained by their vows of humility (Ryan, 1999).

Inadequate teacher training and lack of access to mathematics and science curriculum was compensated in other ways (Ryan, 1999). O'Brien (2008) contends that a Catholic education builds core personal characteristics of loyalty and courage required to defend one's faith, providing lifelong career benefits. The impact of a Catholic school education is shown to have long lasting effects in terms of positive attitudes and values (Bauch, 1989),

confirmed by Fitzsimmons (2011), who linked character-building school experiences to the development of skills and attitudes important for positive career outcomes.

Despite the Catholic Church of the mid-20th century having an outwardly masculine public facade, behind the scenes, Catholic schools were female driven; staffed and managed by nuns (O'Brien, 2008). Arnold (1985) and Bauch (1989) argue that lack of distractions such as husbands and children allowed the nuns to focus solely on their students. The deep conviction of a meaningful vocation gave the nuns a single-mindedness, which benefited the development of their students (Summers, 1999). A lack of worldliness of the nuns helped to insulate and shield the girls from outside society where boys were viewed as superior and their education as more important (Arnold, 1985). However, inside single-sex schools, girls were free from competition with, or comparison to boys and thus less likely to be impacted by societal gender stereotyping.

However, evolution in Catholic traditions and a downturn in women seeking to join religious orders saw significant change to Catholic schools after the 1970s (Mulvey, Grindley & Gawith, 2007). Catholic schools became increasingly coeducational and staffed by Catholic laity, changing the nature of a Catholic education (O'Brien, 2008). Macintyre (2009) finds that interdenominational animosities decreased as fewer people aligned themselves with religious organisations in the last few decades of the 20th century.

This body of research largely features historical studies, although anecdotal studies favour the privileged view of Catholic insiders such as alumna. Nevertheless, the research highlights the unique position of Catholic schools in Australian history, as antecedent influences on potential women leaders. While a focus on Catholic girls' schools in this section aligns with the demography of 1950s and 1960s, non-Catholic girls were more likely to attend a government school (a single-sex or coeducational) (Macintyre, 2009).

The present study is guided by the research that faith-based single-sex schools are important background factors in future career success for women attending school in mid 20th century Australian schools. The socio-historical influences of a faith-based school education, is time and context relevant for women in the present study.

It may not be a Catholic education per se that created the right conditions, but the fact that these schools reflected an environment in which clever girls could do well. This points to the importance of a supportive school setting where attention was paid to girls and their potential acknowledged and affirmed. The influence of other educational and socio-historical factors, such as experiences of success at school and a tertiary education are outlined in the following sections.

Success at School

Regardless of the type of schooling, success at school is shown to be a key factor, often characterised by good grades, acknowledgments of achievement and undertaking of leadership roles. Success at school helps develop implicit confidence in ability as a learner and increases the likelihood that individuals will perceive the potential of schoolwork to advance their own ambition (Fitzsimmons, Callan & Paulsen, 2014; Teese & Polesel, 2003). Experiences of success are also likely to increase motivation to work hard (Fitzsimmons, Callan & Paulsen, 2014) and to build resilience to deal with setbacks (Teese & Polesel, 2003); all viewed as important career - enhancing capital.

Early leadership experience is also found to provide opportunities to gain important skills and to fuel expectations of future leadership. These skills and attitudes can be viewed as important cultural capital and transferrable into an adulthood work context. A common feature for successful women is their experience and success in student leadership as school leaders, spokespersons, prefects and social leaders (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Fitzsimmons, Callan & Paulsen, 2014). Women recall being "head of the class" (Hennig &

Jardim, 1977a, p. 31) and being a leader in community organisations such as girl scouts and church groups. Being elected team, class or school president is shown to be common in early studies such as Hennig and Jardim (1977a) and still current in Fitzsimmons' (2011) Australian study.

Furthermore, success in extracurricular activities is shown to be valuable, providing opportunities for achievement and recognition of talent. Success in activities such as sport, music and public speaking can contribute to the development of self-confidence and confirmation of competence, which Fitzsimmons (2011) links to future performance. Contrastingly, success in traditionally female activities (e.g. school singing) can contribute to an intensification of gendered behaviour, suggesting that this type of success may promote sex role stereotyping (Bandura, 1997; Harter, Waters, Whitesell & Kastelic, 1998).

Low family socio-economic status has a significant negative impact on educational and occupational attainment, however, this disadvantage can be offset by school success (Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi & Goldberg, 2007; Teese & Polesel, 2003), Success enables students to be empowered by their school experience rather than "imprisoned by it" (Teese & Polesel, 2003, p. 139). This points to the possibility of education as a key to social mobility and intergenerational change, a concept explored in the present study. School success is also shown to perpetuate the expectation of continuing success (Bandura, 1997; Fitzsimmons, Callan & Paulsen, 2014; Harter, Waters, Whitesell & Kastelic, 1998).

Academic success at school can lead to university entrance with a university education perceived to be an important career foundation (Holton & Dent, 2012; Tharenou, Latimer & Conroy, 1994). Tertiary education has become more desirable as university qualifications have increasingly become prerequisites for professional occupations (Teese & Polesel, 2003) with strong links shown between levels of education and later income and status (Howard, 1986). Higher levels of education are aligned with career progression and

promotion, with postgraduate qualifications such as a Master of Business Administration increasingly shown to be important to corporate career success. Higher education signals legitimacy for women leaders and is viewed as important career capital (Holton & Dent, 2012; Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003).

Positive experiences and success at school and the attainment of tertiary qualifications are antecedent factors of career success contributing to social and cultural capital, which Fitzsimmons (2011) shows to be important for career-oriented women as they enter the adult workforce. The following section evaluates research about experiences at work that also contribute to career success.

2.2.4. Work related experiential factors

Women's career trajectories are often characterised as disjointed and non-linear, developing in different ways to the careers of men largely due to "developmental differences" (O'Neil, Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008). However, there is a body of research on the impact of women's work and life experiences which show that particular early career experiences are critical for accumulation of the career capital required for career success and that certain roles and experiences throughout a career have significant value (e.g. Hewlett & Luce, 2005; Holton & Dent, 2012; Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003).

Experiences in the early years of a career have significant positive impact on career outcomes – with 'early career' determined as roughly from ages 22 to 33 years – (Levinson, 1996; White, Cox & Cooper, 1992). It is described as a time for rapid learning, expeditious development and establishment of professional reputation as a woman with high potential (Still, 1993). Important learning at this stage can include understanding and dealing with organisational culture, working with others and forming networking and strategic alliances (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). This is a time when women can develop personal characteristics to fit with a particular industry or job (Ng & Feldman, 2014), have opportunities to prove their

expertise and to establish their reputation as someone worth supporting and following (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003; White, Cox & Cooper 1992). Holton and Dent (2012) argue that experiences in early career have the potential to inspire and set the tone for all that follows, building on the career capital brought to the workplace from earlier experiences.

Support mechanisms in early career include sponsorship from within an organisation, which can help a woman feel like an "insider" rather than an "outsider" (Holton & Dent, 2012, p. 130), helping to build confidence and integrating the woman within the organisational culture. These support mechanisms can also help to establish career foundations in terms of career patterns, engagement, commitment and persistence to career aspirations (Hewlett & Luce, 2005).

Studies show that choices made in early career can generate valuable career capital, including such choices as where to work, which industry or employer to join, the size of organisation and the type of job. These impact how women are introduced to their career and can have long-lasting influence on their career success (e.g. Holton & Dent, 2012). Likewise, gaining access to key projects and membership to high-performing teams in early career helps women to build confidence and self-esteem and increases their visibility within the organisation (Holton & Dent, 2012). Gaining broad experience in early career is show to be beneficial in terms of understanding how an organisation operates and particularly about the core purposes, promotional structures and career pathways of an organisation (Holton & Dent, 2012; Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003).

Involvement in challenging work from early in a career journey supports motivation and enables skills development (Asplund, 1988; Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Nicholson & West, 1988; Marshall, 1984; Russo, Kelly & Deacon, 1991). Challenging work provides opportunity for "stretch and challenge" (Holton & Dent, 2012, p. 34) tasks where women can learn new skills in a supportive environment providing impetus

for increased self-awareness about talent and identification of capabilities by others. This early acknowledgement of technical expertise can provide affirmation of legitimacy for a role and signal an individual's worth to others (Holton & Dent, 2012).

Early identification of talent can lead to increased and accelerated opportunities for career progression (Tharenou, 2005, in Burke & Mattis). It can also lead to fast tracking or talent spotting, where individuals can be specifically selected, nurtured, given training and networking opportunities, be sponsored and championed and offered promotions beyond expectations (Tharenou, Conroy & Latimer 1994). This can lead to increased visibility as a "high flyer" or "superstar'" (Kanter, 1977, p. 134). Early identification can also lead to early access to project leadership and responsibility for major change initiatives, allowing the individual to learn and practice leadership (Holton & Dent, 2012).

Strategic work experience and realisation of opportunity in early career contributes to the accumulation of important capital (e.g. Fitzsimmons, 2011), but it is also important to have access to social networks and structures (Becker, 1993; Burke & Mattis, 2005; Burt, 1998; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Mavin, Williams, Bryans & Patterson, 2015; Metz & Tharenou, 2001; Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002) and to engage with mentoring relationships (Mavin et al., 2015; Metz & Tharenou, 2001). The skills and understandings gained through work experience and supportive relationships -such as mentoring- in early career can provide important career capital which privileges the possessor to a dominant role, advantaged over others in terms of recognition and progression (Fitzsimmons, 2011).

Accounts of women's career trajectories often show that women's careers are non-linear and characterised by interruptions (Eagly & Carli, 2007), which raises the problematic role of career planning, especially in early career. Taking responsibility for career planning and development is shown to align with career success for women (Coleman, 2011; Hewlett, 2002; Holton & Dent, 2012) as it can help to establish career anchors or clarify specific

career aspirations, viewed especially important in early career (Schein & Van Maanen, 2016). Women can benefit from developing strategies to fulfil a two to five-year plan based on a projected personal and professional image, which may include factoring in having children (Hewlett, 2002). Ideas about the need for early career commitment to clear career goals, to get started quickly and to develop a career planning strategy (Coleman, 2011; Hewlett, 2002; Holton & Dent, 2012) contrast with older research showing that career success is possible without these factors (Hennig & Jardim,1977a). Hennig and Jardim found that women were able to achieve career success even with a slow start and no clear career plan. They were able to attain career success as leaders even when commitment to career decisions was postponed until women were in their mid thirties. These contradictory findings prompted the investigation in the present study of whether successful careers could be slow to start and what the mitigating factors might be.

A wealth of multidisciplinary literature outlines experiential factors as impacting career success beyond the early career stage. Authors such as Richie and Piterman (2011) show that work and life experiences throughout a lifetime, have profound influence on career outcomes. Likewise, Hakim (1999; 2003; 2004) asserts that various workforce factors emerge as relevant in the careers of women, determined and activated by the preferences women make, especially those formed early on in adult life. Hakim asserts that women largely either focus on engagement with work or commitment to home and family, with these choices being "primary determinants for fertility and employment decisions" (2003, p. 1) which impact career trajectories and outcomes.

Studies show that career progression is most rapid and strategic through 'line' or 'operational' pathways within organisations, aligned with control of people and money (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Moran, 2014; Sanders, Zeng, Hellicar & Fagg, 2017; Trahey, 1977). These roles are considered important as they impact the financial viability of an organisation and are therefore viewed as conduits to the top. Those who have control to allocate jobs, set budgets and are

involved with the "big fee" (Trahey, 1977, p. 7) accounts for their organisations have greater career progression than others. Other studies confirm that promotion to CEO is more likely from certain 'line' roles (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Moran, 2014), emphasising the importance of strategic career choices (Cimirotic, Duller, Feldbauer-Durstműller, Gärtner & Hiebel, 2017; Rowe & Crafford, 2003) and the significance of gaining a breadth of understanding of business across an organisation (Holton & Dent, 2012).

Holton and Dent (2012) show that beyond early career, choice of career direction and choice of roles and organisations impact career advancement, with some roles supporting the accumulation of career important capital more so than others. They find that working on special projects and contributing to pro bono work remove individuals from core business and limit progression. Studies show that support roles, even when associated with senior titles, may have limited responsibility and power within the decision-making mechanisms of an organisation and are less likely to be conduits for promotion to senior levels (Cimirotic et al., 2017; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Moran, 2014; Rowe & Crafford, 2003; Powell & Butterfield, 1979). While Holton and Dent (2012) also find the non-core business areas to be problematic for promotion, they show that critical relationships with line managers can be effectively strategic and that alliances made through special projects or pro bono work can be advantageously leveraged.

Many studies show that mobility or the willingness to change roles, employers and locations is career enhancing (Herriot, Gibson, Pemberton & Pinder, 1993; Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005; Schellenberg, Krauss, Hättich & Häfeli, 2016; Tharenou, 2005, in Burke & Mattis) and linked to promotion (Holton & Dent, 2012). Strategic and regular change of roles can support career momentum even if the change is within the same organisation (Holton & Dent, 2012); with a change every three years suggested by Kotter (1982). Tharenou (2005, in Burke & Mattis) finds that mobility can increase the scope of work and the opportunity to acquire new skills and, importantly, increase visibility within an organisation and industry.

Mobility aligns with greater diversity and more job experiences contributing to the accumulation of career capital (Fitzsimmons, 2011).

In particular, studies show mobility in terms of international experience adds depth and breadth to work experience, contributing to highly valuable career capital (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Ibarra, Ely & Kolb, 2013; Tharenou, 2005, in Burke & Mattis) although historically more valuable for career advancement for men than women (Tharenou & Zambruno, 2001). The idea that women are less willing to relocate because of family responsibilities is contested, rather that women are less likely to be considered for relocation due to persistent stereotypes (Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002). Never-the-less international experiences are shown to provide valuable leadership experience (Kotter, 1982) particularly in a linear and planned career (Cook, Heppner & O'Brien, 2002), increasing the likelihood of promotion (Cook, Heppner & O'Brien, 2002; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Nelson & Bridges, 1999).

Self-promotion is valued as a strategic career tool, important for increasing visibility (Cross, 2010; Kumra & Vinnicombe, 2008). Women who are able to self-promote increase the breakdown of stereotypes and help to manage perceptions about women as leaders and about individuals themselves (Kumra & Vinnicombe, 2008). However, Richie and Piterman (2011) argues that women need to self-promote strategically differently than men to ensure it does not become an obstacle to success.

Self-promotion in the form of proactivity can include taking control of career development by being ambitious, aiming high and developing career plans (Hewlett, 2002). Furthermore, getting noticed for ability and competence and developing a professional reputation for expertise, reliability, influence and leadership can be career enhancing (Holton & Dent, 2012; Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003). Women are advised to speak up, "manage up" (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003, p. 245) and publicise ambitions and achievements. Holton and Dent (2012) show that career capital can be accrued through shaping a professional image

and being proactive in driving career progression.

Chance, luck and happenstance are identified as critical career success factors, although women are likely to attribute their success to luck before their own ability and achievements Research findings identify the importance of unexpected and unplanned for luck as the result of happenstance (Coleman, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Szirom, 1991).

In summary, the major research findings show that what happens in early career is important in establishing what is to follow. It is during the early years that women make important choices about where to work and which directions to follow. Factors such as the development of supportive mechanisms made early can help women to accumulate vital social and human capital which act as conduits to access to key projects and challenging work. Working in supportive high performance teams on a broad range of tasks provides opportunity for specific and valuable training thus further accumulation of capital. Likewise, early identification of talent and potential ensures access to training opportunities. Being 'singled out' as a having high potential can lead to attracting support through mentoring and championing relationships.

What happens later in a career is also shown to be important. A key finding in recent research is the importance of career planning throughout a career, with planning linked to career progression and development. Likewise, ensuring that women are engaged in 'line' management roles, where they have access to the core business of their organisations is also important, although non-core activities can lead to the formation of supportive relationships and crucial alliances. Occupational mobility and international work experience are also shown to promote career development. Furthermore, self-promotion and proactivity in seeking opportunities makes a positive difference to career development, while luck is shown to be a factor in career success for women.

2.2.5. Adult relationships

This section evaluates the literature on the role of supportive personal relationships at home (e.g. marriage and parenthood) and professional relationships at work (e.g. championing, mentoring and networking) as well as strong interpersonal relationships both at work and at home.

Marriage and parenthood

Historically, studies show that marriage and parenthood are career limiting for women and career enhancing for men (Melamed, 1995; Tharenou, 2005, in Burke & Mattis). However, in contrast, some studies show that marriage can be a support mechanism and that parenthood is less disadvantageous than previously shown (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Tharenou, 1997, 2005), highlighting a changing impact on the role of marriage and parenthood for career-oriented women.

Early studies show that remaining single and childless is congruent with career success (Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Hennig & Jardim, 1990; 1977a; Kanter 1977; Trahey, 1977). Hennig and Jardim (1977a) find that single women do not have access to home support mechanisms and no time to form and maintain relationships and families and, therefore, often remained unmarried. Additionally, they show that the masculine culture of the business world often excludes women from career-enhancing networking opportunities that often occur through 'old school ties' and male-only clubs and sports. Macintyre (2009) also shows that Australian women in the 20th Century had less opportunity for promotion if they were married, with Tharenou, Latimer and Conroy (1994) showing that women were less likely to pursue career goals if they married, pressured by societal expectations to engage with family responsibilities above career aspirations.

However, in later work (e.g. Hennig & Jardim, 1990), more women reported to be married than in early studies (e.g. Hennig, 1973). Married women represent 90% of Hennig's high-

achieving women respondents, although 45% of those women subsequently divorced. Hennig and Jardim (1990) find that divorce can be a positive career factor as it often prompts increased commitment to careers. Hennig and Jardim (1990) also find that divorced women often undertake further education, increased career goals and firmed up career directions and timeframes.

Hennig and Jardim (1990) signal a change in the research by finding that "commitment to career goals" (p. 451) is more important than marital status as a success factor. Likewise, Tharenou (1997, 2005) finds that the 1990s brought about a variation in research findings, showing marriage to be less disadvantageous for women than in the past, with single women not necessarily having better career outcomes than married women.

Historically, successful women leaders were typically childless (e.g. Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). However, later research shows change, with Keown and Keown (1982) finding that almost 25% of their female respondents have children, although family size is often restricted to one or two children. By the early 21st century studies show that parenthood is more common with about 50% of Hewlett's (2002) 'high' and 'ultra' female achievers having children.

Traditionally, research shows that career breaks for childbirth and the ongoing demands and responsibilities around childcare, can be career limiting (Kanter, 1977; Keown & Keown, 1982; Tharenou, Latimer & Conroy 1994; Trahey, 1977; Whitmarsh, Brown, Cooper, Hawkins-Rodgers & Wentworth, 2007). Difficulty in re-entering the workforce (Hewlett, Sherbin & Foster, 2010) and issues such as lack of childcare, inadequate domestic support and lack of emotional and personal support (Hewlett, 2002) are found to impact women's career success. Likewise, Tharenou (2005) finds that lack of time, exhaustion and the tension of juggling conflicting demands can impact well being and the ability to focus on career aspirations.

Despite studies showing that parenthood negatively impacts career outcomes, there is a growing body of literature showing that strategic management of parenthood is found to help mitigate the effects of parenthood. Fitzsimmons (2011) finds that postponing childbirth can have benefits, as having an established career often brings greater financial security and ability to pay for outside help, having control over money and tasks and providing support needed to have a family. In additional, he also shows that career breaks can have positive consequences, as they can provide time to reflect on career development decisions and directions and to gain different skills, providing additional career capital. Tharenou (2005) also finds that effective spousal support and employment of domestic help can mitigate negative effects of parenthood. While managing family and career roles can be stressful and create tensions (Reitman & Schneer, 2002), there are career advantages for women in learning to cope effectively in terms of organisational skills and resilience (Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002).

The length of career break taken can influence the level of impact on a woman's career with shorter breaks found to be consistent with lower levels of disadvantage. Additionally, remaining connected to her employer can also mitigate the disadvantage of a woman's career break (Fitzsimmons, 2011). Typically, women CEOs in Fitzsimmons' study took short maternity breaks, returning to work on average within six months, not reporting significant interruption to their career progression. Alternatively, Fitzsimmons (2011) finds that multiple career breaks over time allow women to accumulate a broader range of work experience (e.g. a larger number of jobs) as many women return to work in different roles and organisations.

A significant factor for women in being able to manage multiple roles (e.g. mother, wife, worker) is the support of others. Fitzsimmons (2011) shows that, regardless of marital status, women CEOs indicate a need for "third party" (p. 219) assistance with domestic life in order to be able to commit to their career aspirations. Likewise, Holton and Dent (2012)

find that quality support at home and work is a helpful mechanism for managing both career commitment and parenthood. Parenthood in itself is not necessarily a barrier to career success if mitigating factors are leveraged (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Whitmarsh, Brown, Cooper, Hawkins-Rodgers & Wentworth, 2007). Having a family, a personal life and a career are not necessarily obstacles for women (Mavin, Williams, Bryans & Patterson, 2015) and parenthood is not always an impediment to career success (Tharenou & Zambruno, 2001).

The changes in findings over time about the role of marriage and parenthood informed the current study, raising questions about how participants in the present study view the role of marriage and parenthood in their career success. The research also highlighted an opportunity to investigate spousal occupations and support as well as attitudes towards divorce.

Support at home

Many studies show that effective support at home can mitigate career-limiting aspects associated with family responsibilities (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Whitmarsh, Brown, Cooper, Hawkins-Rodgers & Wentworth, 2007; Holton & Dent, 2012). Emotional support, personal encouragement and practical support from a spouse and family are valued as success-enabling factors. Additionally, support strategies from employer organisations can also make a difference to how parenthood impacts engagement with career aspirations for women (Holton & Dent, 2012).

Fitzsimmons (2011) and others find that the burden of domestic responsibility (e.g. organisation of domestic affairs, childcare, household chores) remains the purview of women regardless of their earning power and that of their partners and has the potential to impact the ability of women to fully engage with their career aspirations (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Whitmarsh et al., 2007). Hewlett (2002) finds that, despite changes over

time resulting in greater equality of the division of labour, women still do more than their partners, with some study respondents complaining that their spouses create more household work than they do.

Holton and Dent (2012) find equality in division of domestic responsibility can mitigate the effect of juggling conflicting roles at home and work. Also, Fitzsimmons (2011) finds that having an employed spouse provides the benefits of dual incomes, enabling the funding of professional support services such as home help and childcare. This confirms Tharenou (2005) who shows that an employed spouse is a supportive factor for women in contrast to the career benefits of a stay-at-home wife for a man. Fitzsimmons (2011) suggests that spouses who are self-employed may have more flexibility in adjusting their work to suit their partner's career aspirations and provide greater domestic and practical support.

Some studies outline the importance of careful choice of spouse, recommended as one who can support and understand the partner's career aspirations (e.g. Hewlett, 2002; Keown & Keown, 1982). Partnering early (before 25 years of age) provides the opportunity to establish a career with spousal support, allowing time if desired for the creation of a family life (Hewlett, 2002; Keown & Keown, 1982). Alternatively, Hennig and Jardim (1990) find that partnering with an older spouse who already has children, or who has time, patience and experience, can be supportive. Divorce is favoured as a way to overcome lack of spousal support (Fitzsimmons, 2011, Hennig & Jardim 1990). The current study was guided by these studies highlighting the importance of support, but questioning whether the perceptions of women towards marriage, parenthood and spousal support have altered since the latter years of the 20th century.

While research shows that supportive relationships at home can help women achieve their career aspirations, relationships at work are also helpful factors. The following section analyses the research addressing the value of support of friends and the role of reciprocal

work relationships in career success.

Support networks

Research indicates that emotional support is important for women's well being with support networks of family and friends identified as career-enabling factors (Holton & Dent, 2012; Marshall, 1995; Szirom, 1999), often providing modelling, mentoring and coaching, as well as social and emotional support (Holton & Dent, 2012; Szirom, 1999). Tomas and Castro (2013) find that strong social connections and relationships provide positive reinforcement, increase self-esteem, support confidence and increase personal and professional self-belief.

The key factors identified in research about the role of work relationships include mentoring, networking and role modeling and support from other women, valued as catalysts for shaping careers and influencing positive career outcomes (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Kanter, 1977; Piterman, 2008; Fitzsimmons, 2011). Women view strong relationships at work and networking as important support mechanisms (Fitzsimmons, 2011). While role modeling is career enabling (Sims & Lorenzi, 1992), it is not necessarily female role models that are important, as many high-achieving women report having no such models (Fitzsimmons, 2011).

Studies evidence that work relationships have a significant impact on career success (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Piterman, 2008) even if there are "no tangible career objectives" (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a, p. 33). Studies (e.g. Berman, Bock & Aiken, 2016; Hennig & Jardim 1977a; Piterman, 2008) show that women value and benefit from strong work relationships and authentic friendships as these help sustain motivation for career goals and provide career advancement opportunities through mentoring, sponsorship and championing. As well as providing support, strong relationships at work are used as a gauge of success by women (Piterman, 2008). Hennig and Jardim (1977b) find that the higher up the organisational hierarchy the more relationships matter.

Mentoring is highlighted by studies, as an important type of work relationship, linked to emotional and professional support and access to information (Metz & Tharenou, 2001; Berman, Bock & Aiken, 2016; Tomas & Castro, 2013) viewed as particularly critical for career advancement of women (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Ragins & Scandura, 1994). Research shows that mentors help women (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989; Turban & Dougherty, 1994; Vinnicombe & Colwill, 1995) by "providing reflected power, feedback, resources and access to the power structure" (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003, p. 239). Mentoring is also linked to an increased chance of promotion, with the reflective championing of a respected mentor providing legitimacy to the protégé's claim for advancement (Tharenou & Zambruno, 2001). Furthermore, Tharenou and Zambruno (2001) find that professional reputation can be improved through mentoring or championing, providing women with a symbol of qualification and signposting their leadership potential. Many studies show mentoring to be linked to increased remuneration (e.g. Fitzsimmons, 2011; Hunt & Michael, 1983; O'Brien, Biga, Kessler & Allen, 2010; Scandura, 1992) critical in boosting self-confidence and providing encouragement for women considering career moves (Fitzsimmons, 2011).

The benefits of being a mentor are also shown to be especially career enhancing for women. Helping others can increase visibility and improve remuneration for both mentor and protégé. However, Dinolfo, Silva and Carter (2012), show that former protégés, regardless of gender, are more likely to help others, with a 66% chance that, anyone with experience of having a "door opener" (p. 3) champion them, will later create and promote opportunities for others. Dinolfo, Silva and Carter (2012) find that an inclination to support others is commonplace, although this inclination does not apply to all women or all men.

Research reveals that the value of mentoring as a success-enabling factor depends on many aspects: quality of the relationships, purposes and goals, ways of collaboration, organisational support, gender and type of mentoring (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Ragins & Kram, 2007; Zachary & Fischler, 2005). Studies of high-achieving women have found supportive,

positive mentoring relationships are key (Berman, Bock & Aiken, 2016; Dinolfo, Silva & Carter, 2012; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; 1977c; 1990; Kanter, 1977; Metz & Tharenou, 2001; Piterman, 2008; Tharenou & Zambruno, 2001).

Mentoring can open up opportunities for networking (Burke & Mattis, 2005), important in building alliances (Holton & Dent, 2012), connecting women to information and opportunities (Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002) and finding sponsorship opportunities (Mavin, Williams, Bryans & Patterson, 2015). Networking with other women is viewed as career enabling (Tomas & Castro, 2013); especially with advantage of having 'girlfriends in high places' (McCarthy, 2004, pp. 9-14). While the idea that 'old boys networks' persist as a potential career barrier for women excluding them from informal networking opportunities, there is increasing evidence that women's networks are a growing phenomenon (McCarthy, 2004, p. 9). Women's networking organisations tend to be flexible, participatory and self-organising, connecting women quickly and effectively across industries and creating a sense of ownership and involvement (McCarthy, 2004). Networks can be useful in terms of training, mentoring and to help women to gauge other women's opinions through access to a 'council of wise women' (McCarthy, 2004, p. 11). Likewise, networking through professional associations is shown to provide access to industry information and opportunity, advice, friendship and support, as well as increasing visibility, credibility and contributing to professional repute through membership and activity (Fitzsimmons, 2011). Fitzsimmons shows that networking can be linked to important milestones across a career such as early promotions and board appointments. Other studies find that membership of professional networks can remedy feelings of social and professional isolation for women who work in male-dominated industries and organisations (Metz & Tharenou, 2001; Still, 1988).

In addition to the role of mentoring and networking, role models from early life are shown to have a positive effect on career outcomes. Role modeling from women at the top sends a strong message to an industry and to those within organisations in that industry about the

possibilities and positive opportunities for women (Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003). Role models can include female leaders in all-girls' schools (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Sims & Lorenzi, 1992) and women in the wider family context and community (Fitzsimmons, 2011). Women also look beyond the role modeling of mothers with domestic duties (Fitzsimmons, 2011), looking more broadly for cues from other women (England, 2010).

However, Piterman, (2013, in Breekveldt) finds that, where there are small numbers of women in high positions, a climate of low expectation for similar success for other women may exist. Additionally, women may not want to emulate the characteristics of the few women at the top as they may make success look unattainable, unattractive or typified as only available to 'superwomen' (Adams, 2016; Hoyts & Murphy, 2016; Piterman, 2013, in Breekveldt).

Even when women are unable or unwilling to access female role models they are shown to cite support from other women as an important career support factor; critical for success (Piterman, 2008; Shroedel, 1990). This runs counter to the metaphorical idea of the 'Queen Bee syndrome' where high-achieving women are thought to be unmotivated or unwilling to help other women (Mavin, 2006; 2008). This term, identified by Staines, Travis and Jayerante (1973), describes a form of gender-based hostility where women undermine each other, scrutinising and subjecting women subordinates and colleagues to unreasonably critical standards.

A comprehensive meta-analysis of studies from the late 1980s through to the early 2000s by Mavin, Williams, Bryans and Patterson (2015) finds that the concept of 'Queen Bee Syndrome' behaviour is contested. They suggest that the concept is a last century response to the inequities of women in leadership. Mavin et al. (2015) note that Wajcman (1998) showed that women undermine each other through constructs of femininity such as flirtation, admiration and general support for forms of gender domination and subordination

and use these constructs as ways to try to balance their gender role and work competence. Contrastingly, the focus on 'Queen Bee' behaviour is shown to be "much ado about nothing" (Sheppard & Aquino, 2013, p. 60); an over-problematising of same-sex conflict in the workplace that overshadows any comparable studies of similar conflict between men and between women and men. Cox (1996) suggests that more studies are needed to explore the positive relationships between women and how they support each other, rather than focusing on the popular media version of "women mud wrestling" (p. 14) or "women behaving badly" (Sheppard & Aquino, 2013, p. 60).

Furthermore, this 'Queen Bee' type of behaviour is shown to have diminished in Australia with most women dismissing the stereotypic 'Queen Bee Syndrome' notion as outdated (Rindfleish, 2000). Additionally, these behaviours have been found to be less prevalent in Australia since the introduction in the 1970s of anti-discrimination regulations and protocols. These were successfully designed to protect both women and men from the inappropriate use of sexualised behaviour and to promote the advancement of women (Still, 1997).

Never the less, while women in male dominated occupations are shown to often feel little support from colleagues, supervisors and unions, they highly value the support of other women wherever available (Shroedel, 1990). Increasingly women have been shown to want to ensure that it is "better, simpler and easier for those who travel behind" (Holton & Dent 2012, p. 120) by supporting and guiding others. As an example, Dinolfo, Silva and Carter (2012) show that highly qualified women do, in fact, support their female colleagues. In their study of 700 Master of Business Administration school graduates (1996–2007), they find that women are more inclined to mentor and support others regardless of the sex of the protégé. Important "paying it forward" (Dinolfo, Silva & Carter, 2012, p. 3) support is found to range from giving advice, to putting in a good word for someone, or providing access to information or engagement in critical tasks. Women are likely to offer career advice, sponsorship and personal support (including social support and role modeling) thus helping

other women to "climb the corporate ladder" (Dinolfo, Silva & Carter 2012, p. 7).

Perceptions about a lack of support for other women are found to be more about unrealistic expectations for senior women than intent. Reasons for apparent lack of solidarity may include individual differences, insufficient time and unsupportive work environments (Mavin, 2006). Despite the evidence of studies such as Sandberg (2015) and Mavin (2006) debunking the idea that women do not support each other, the negative 'Queen Bee' stereotype persists in the discourse about women and leadership (Berenbaum, 2009; Mavin, 2006) and in the Australian business context (Rindfleish, 2000)

In summary, key findings shows supportive adult relationships to support career success for women both at work and at home. The literature shows that marriage has historically been career limiting for women but in more recent research is viewed as less limiting and more supportive. Commitment to career goals is shown to have a greater influence on career success than marital status. Likewise, parenthood can negatively impact career outcomes through the necessity for career breaks and the on-going demands of responsibility for children. Although, findings show that strategic management of parental roles can mitigate the negative influences of parenthood. In fact, parenthood can be viewed as an opportunity for learning new skills, taking on different experiences and managing multiple roles; viewed as ways to accrue a variety of career capital.

Quality support at home is shown to be valuable, especially in terms of emotional support, encouragement and practical support. Increasing equality in the division of domestic labour has helped to mitigate the negative impact of the demands of family life for career-aspiring women. A major career-enhancing factor is the willingness of a spouse to support their partner's career goals. The literature shows that having an employed spouse can be a helpful factor as dual incomes can provide paid domestic help. An older spouse with free time, or a self-employed spouse with flexibility is viewed as supportive.

Support networks at home and work are shown to be important factors in women's career success. Social networks of family and friends are shown to enhance women's career development by supporting well being, self-belief and motivation. Likewise, supportive relationships at work are also shown to have a positive influence on career success.

Mentoring, in particular, is shown to provide important capital for career advancement. This relationship has the potential to provide knowledge and information about an organisation and the promotional pathways available. It is also shown to provide legitimacy for leadership and offer social and professional support. Mentoring can lead to networking; viewed as a career-enhancing factor.

Furthermore, role modeling is viewed as a support factor for women's career success, although research highlights the problematic nature of a lack of professional female role models and the potential problems with upward comparison. Women are shown to look to their school experiences and families for career role modeling and to more distant career role models in multimedia. Consistently, the literature shows the importance of support from other women as a career-enhancing factor, debunking the reality of the 'Queen Bee' syndrome while accepting that the perception persists.

This research informs the present study providing an opportunity to explore the perceptions of the participants towards the role of support of other women in their success and whether the 'Queen Bee syndrome' is relevant to the career experiences of women in this study.

2.2.6. Historical and socio-cultural forces

The following section explores research into how broader historical and socio-cultural forces influence the career success of women leaders. The review identities a research gap in regard to women leaders entering the work force in the latter years of the 20th century. Despite the body of historical and socio-cultural Australian studies exploring the economy,

education, changes in family life and social change relating to employment and the changing role of women in work (Encel & Campbell, 1991; Dixson, 1984; Goodwin & Huppatz, 2010; Lowenstein, 1978; Macintyre, 2009; Roe, 1985) there is little research focus on women leaders of that era.

Important formative work by Australian researchers such as Sinclair (1994), Still (1988, 1996) and Tharenou (1990, 1997) highlights the emergence of women leaders in greater numbers in the last three decades of the 20th century and recommends an increased research focus on these women (Tharenou, 1990, 1997). Tharenou shows that the advent of this group of working women disrupted the status quo – a masculine leadership model – where women were historically kept out of leadership roles. These studies signal a change in research direction, focusing on the obstacles encountered by women leaders and how they disrupt masculine leadership models.

Many of these studies also foreground historical and socio-cultural factors that impact individuals, families and communities fashioning what happens around them, developing shared practices, attitudes and expected behaviours (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Rodham Clinton, 2006).

There is strong evidence for the exclusion of women from the workforce (Macintyre, 2009; Cass & Brennan, 2004; Probert, 2004; Swain, 2005). Male responsibility for family support or the notion of a male 'breadwinner' is embedded in the culture of many countries it but is a typically Australian value, instantiated from as long ago as 1907 in the form of the Higgins Harvester Judgment and later government initiatives (Macintyre, 2009). Mid-century child endowment and other later programs as perpetuated this notion, encouraging women to stay at home and take care of families, thereby discouraging career aspirations (Cass & Brennan, 2004). Financial disincentives of the tax and welfare systems and poor support services continued to hamper employment options for women throughout the 20th Century

(Probert, 2005; Swain, 2005, both in Grimshaw, Murphy & Probert). For much of the 20th century, exclusion of women from the workforce was supported by a widely held support for the notion of a male 'breadwinner' (Dixson, 1984; Macintyre, 2009; Probert, 2005, in Grimshaw, Murphy & Probert). Women were more socially acceptable in the work force if they were widows, deserted wives, or poor, a societal attitude held long after the First World War and the Great Depression and one that disadvantaged career-oriented women (Australian Government, 2015; Broomehill, 1978; Macintyre, 2013; Potts, 1994; Williamson, 2016).

Women at times challenged the notion of a male 'breadwinner', especially in times of national crisis. They were expected to fulfill the roles traditionally taken by men during war time yet forced to return to the roles of family care and household management when times improved (Lowenstein, 1978; Macintrye 2009). World War II in particular, was a catalyst for major social change for women, as they were required to take responsibility for families and communities as well as joining the workforce. Women in full-time work grew to around 30% during the war years (Encel, MacKenzie & Tebbutt, 1974). Women emerged from the World War II as a resilient force (e.g. Encel, MacKenzie & Tebbutt, 1974; Grimshaw & Strahan, 1982), although the return of the soldiers saw them relegated to traditional roles (Grimshaw & Strahan, 1982).

The impact of the Great Depression in the 1930s was the disruption of education for young people, forced to leave school early to join the workforce (Lowenstein, 1978; Macintrye, 2009). Teenage boys, needed to work to support their families, unable to resume their education and entered adulthood under-educated and with limited work choice (McCalman,1995). This premature acceptance of adult responsibilities and missed education had profound effects on how this generation raised their children and the value they placed on education, particularly influencing the upbringing of children in the 1950s and

1960s (Bell, 1987; McCalman,1995). Generations of Australians thus lived by the lessons learned from the Great Depression persisting for decades after times and conditions improved (Lowenstein, 1978) with children extending the impact of hardship by adopting behaviours and fears of their parents (Bell, 1987).

Studies such as Lowenstein (1978) show that social conditions experienced through the Great Depression and the World War II years influenced parents to have modest but clear goals for their children in terms of safety, food and shelter and that they continued to live prudently and self-reliantly in the post-war years. Prior deprivation of education influenced parental attitudes with education embraced as a way to ensure their children's economic security (McCalman, 1995) and autonomy, self-sufficiency and independence from authority (Bell, 1987).

Increased wealth enabled families to keep their children at school for longer (Lowenstein, 1978), although there were few links between school education and requisite job skills. Teese and Polesel (2003) show that most skilled jobs at that time did not require university qualifications, so few children aspired to tertiary education. They found that completion of schooling and desire to attend university increased as occupations required tertiary qualifications later in the 20th century.

Beyond the need for women in the workforce in the two world wars, there were limited opportunities for women until the second half of the 20th century when attitudes and practices became less exclusive (Encel & Campbell, 1991). Australian society experienced part of a worldwide "mood for change" (Nolan, 2005, in Grimshaw, Murphy & Probert, p. 154) in the 1950s, impacted as Macintyre (2009) shows by the relaxation of regulations regarding the employment of married women in some occupations. Additionally, a decline in family size (Fitzsimmons, Callan & Paulsen, 2014) and the integration of new time-saving household technologies such as refrigerators and electric washing machines (Bell, 1987)

saw greater numbers of married women entering and staying in the workforce, a variation from the past where women were expected to only work until marriage (Macintyre, 2009).

Religious affiliation impacted societal attitudes (Macintyre, 2009). From 1933 to 1971 around 90% of the Australian population acknowledged having a religious affiliation, the predominant religion being Christianity (largely distinguished as Protestant or Catholic), providing avenues for social interaction and binding communities together. Religious beliefs influenced behaviour and decision-making, motivating women, in particular, to participate in unpaid charity work, often supporting social welfare programs under the umbrella of women's auxiliary associations. While there was restricted power involved in these organisations, they provided an opportunity for women to lead, manage people and resources and to advocate for others, although this was mostly in a female environment with women leading other women (Macintyre, 2009).

McCalman (1995) contends that the era between the 1970s and the 1990s was an important 'age of wisdom' (p. 263) for middle class Australians. They were a generation shaped by the Great Depression and world wars. They had done well but did not have family money to fall back on so needed to work to support themselves and their families. Religious inequalities were largely overcome and women were increasingly aspiring to careers. Encel and Campbell (1991) show that women entering the workforce from the 1970s onwards were influenced and enabled by a range of contextual forces novel to their time. These included the relaxation of prohibitions on education for women, employment of women and promotions for married women in certain industries. These changes supported greater access to education, particularly through government-funded tertiary education fees. Rodgers-Healey (2012) shows that following the lifting of bans on women in tertiary education women outperformed men at university graduate level for the last three decades of the 20th Century. Encel and Campbell (1991) highlight that occupational prerequisites became more aligned with tertiary education, thus making university qualifications

necessary for certain occupations. Additionally, in 1973 an equal wage was established (National Museum of Australia, N.D). Change was supported by the introduction of equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation from the 1970s onwards (Macintyre, 2009). Women entering the workforce from 1970 onwards were part of an influx of educated, career- oriented women who broadened the career; (Ng & Feldman, 2014; O'Neil, Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008) and changed the status of women in Australia by aspiring to and achieving leadership (Dixson, 1984).

Hakim (1999) argues that the entry of women during the 1970s into the workforce in countries in the European Union was stimulated by two concurrent social revolutions. These include the "contraception revolution" (p. 33) beginning in the 1960s, which saw women gain control of their own fertility, and the "equal opportunities revolution" (p. 33), which gave women unprecedented genuine choices, through improved access to educational, occupational and lifestyle opportunities. These combined to provide women with the ability to make choices about how they worked, lived and parented, which Hakim sought to explain through her Preferential Theory approach (1999; 2003; 2004). Her work provides a basis for explaining women's behaviour, not centered on male priorities and patterns of employment. Hakim confirms homogeneity in the preferences expressed among women in British, American, and later Spanish studies (2003), which may be extrapolated to the Australian context. However, she asserts heterogeneity and even conflict between the groups of women she describes as having career-centered, adaptive, or home-centred preferences. There is some criticism of Hakim's approach (Crompton, 2006; Crompton & Lyonette, 2007; Proctor & Padfield, 2002) in part due to a 'one size fits all' ideology, questioning that similar phenomenon may be caused by differing factors in different countries and contexts, or "multiple conjecture causation" (Ragin, 1987). Nevertheless, Hakim's theory suggests there is alignment in women's preferences that goes beyond national differences and may be used to explain work force factors supporting the influx of women entering the Australian

workforce in the 1970s.

Researchers into the growth and impact of the Women's Movement in Australia have argued that it acted as a catalyst for attitudinal change and made a significant contribution to how women viewed themselves. Grimshaw and Strahan (1982) find that, by the early 1970s, the impact of the Women's Movement was noticeable in the big cities in Australia. While the majority of Australian women did not have direct contact with the Women's Movement, changes in thinking and practices filtered indirectly down from the highly visible, middle-class women who were at the forefront, to other women Dixson (1984). The rights and needs of women were politicised and highlighted by organisations such as the highly visible and influential Women's Electoral Lobby (Cox, 1996; Ryan, 1999) encouraging women to have greater career aspirations.

Grimshaw and Strahan (1982) showed that the activism of the 1970s and a worldwide appetite for social change saw women gain greater autonomy. Increased control of reproduction (e.g. through the availability of the contraceptive pill), changes to ownership of property and guardianship of children and changing laws and attitudes towards divorce further impacted women and work. Encel and Campbell (1991) argue that government support for equal opportunities and anti-discrimination legislation helped to change long-held patriarchal traditions and attitudes towards women's roles.

Significant social change was brought about by activism in the Women's Movement, highlighting the "socialisation processes" (Grimshaw & Strahan, 1982, p. 2) that had previously stifled choices for women in education and work. Grimshaw and Strahan show that femininity, which was previously equated with "passivity, dependence, submissiveness and altruism" (p. 2) was later replaced by an ideology that women could be "strong independent human beings" (p. 2). This evolution in Australian societal attitudes, influenced by the events of the 20th century, changed the roles of women and precipitated an influx of

well-educated women entering the workforce from the 1970s, with unprecedented expectations of longer and more purposeful careers than ever before.

Historical and socio-cultural forces affect how women are raised and how they view their roles, supplying contextual background for the present study. However, the lack of research into how this context has impacted women leaders beginning their careers in the last three decades of the 20th century provides a unique opportunity for the present study to address this research gap.

2.2.7. Summary of Literature Review

In summary, the concept of what is meant by a career has changed over time with a shift from a focus on traditional hierarchical and typically linear progression through a single job or a series of related roles. Newer models are more protean and flexible, with greater suitability to the careers of women. Women's careers characteristically feature interruptions and changes of direction, often brought about by family responsibilities. Recent literature shows that the careers of women can be better represented by the metaphorical idea of a 'labyrinth' with a complex maze of stops and starts, or a 'river of time' weaving through a woman's life subject to changing professional and personal factors. Women and men view careers differently.

It is established that women and men gauge career success using a variety of metrics. The literature shows that women place value on subjective measures of personal contentment and job satisfaction, although traditional criteria of outward symbols of success such as job titles, salaries and status are considered valuable as signs of success to others.

The research about factors that enable career success show that women identify a range of important personal characteristics, such as intelligence, determination, self-confidence, strong work ethic, optimism, passion for work and integrity. While the role of nature and

environmental factors is contested, there is general agreement that both are important in the development of attitudes, skills and attributes valuable for career success. Lack of research focus on contextual factors and the complex interplay between personality and the environment informs this study.

The research also shows that beyond developing certain personal characteristics successful women leaders stand out from others as notable and visible. Their rarity makes them seem special or extraordinary, viewed as advantageous in terms of attracting support but can come at a personal cost. Standing out as one of few senior women in an organisation or industry can encourage or discourage women following due to a superwoman stereotype threat.

Antecedent factors influencing the development of attributes reflecting career capital include family background. What happens in childhood is shown to positively influence women, important for later career success. This includes family dynamics; habits and attitudes valued by parents and community and childhood experiences such as travel, adversity and support from parents. Early research shows that coming from a small family and being born first or as an only child can be advantageous for women, typical for successful women leaders. More recently, this is also contested, along with the perceived advantages or disadvantages of having brothers. Close father-daughter relationships, once seen as pivotal for success, have been shown to be less important, with the value of close mother-daughter relationships highlighted. Regardless of family dynamics, parental interest, affection and "care and concern" (Naidoo, 2009, p. 264) are perceived to be important positive influences for children.

Literature shows that personal characteristics are a product of socialisation occurring in early life, influenced by parental attitudes, sex role stereotypes, gendered roles demonstrated in families and society and opportunities post-school. Educational

experiences at school and supportive school environments are shown to be valuable in providing opportunities for girls to acquire career-valued capital. School environments where self-belief is encouraged and leadership opportunities accessed are shown to be important as precursor leadership factors.

In the Australian context, an area under researched, single-sex education and education in a faith-based schools are shown to be historically valuable in preparing women for career success. The research shows that in the mid-20th Century girls were likely to attend single sex schools, benefiting from the attention and role modeling of unmarried women teachers, typically nuns, if the girls attended a catholic school. School success in terms of recognition of intelligence and talent, support from parents for school achievement and a close connection between school and home are shown to be valuable antecedent factors for successful women. Importantly, tertiary education is linked to income and status; shown to be a critical source of career capital.

Women begin their work lives with an accumulation of career capital acquired in childhood and at school but gain further capital as they proceed through their work life. Early career experiences are shown to be important, through the acquisition of skills, understandings and the establishment of strategic alliances and networks. Early identification of potential, mentoring and access to a broad range of tasks and training opportunities are helpful. Recent research shows that that early career planning can be valuable although older literature suggests that career success be achieved when career commitment comes later, without relying on specific planning.

The literature shows the impact of marriage and parenthood on career success has changed over time, both being viewed as less disadvantageous than previously shown. Research in the latter 20th Century showed, as more women became leaders, many married and had children. The 1990s was viewed as a transitional time, shown in the

research to herald a positive change in attitude towards marriage. Likewise, parenthood was shown to be able to be managed so it did not negatively impact career success as perceived in earlier studies. Support at home by a spouse and networks of supportive friends and family are shown to be valuable. Support for women by other women is shown to be an important factor although remains a contested area, with the 'Queen bee syndrome' viewed as an outdated but still persistent notion.

The literature supports the notion that career success of women leaders is influenced in multiple ways by myriad interacting forces, beginning with circumstances of birth. The literature shows that individuals are fundamentally influenced by their personal qualities, characteristics, dispositions and attitudes, which are both innately acquired and further developed through socialisation throughout a life and impacted by wider historical and socio-cultural contexts such as the Great Depression, World War II and the social revolution caused by the Women's Movement. In the Australian context the notion of a male breadwinner was shown to underpin societal attitudes to women and work, for the greater part of the 20th Century, influenced by social change in the 1960s and the advent of increasing numbers of women entering tertiary education and, subsequently, the workforce.

The Literature Review has covered broad areas of quantitative and qualitative studies, of mixed method, sociology and psychology-based studies, something that is necessary in a cross-disciplinary field such as this. It has drawn on areas such as business, management and organisational research and family and development studies. The reason for interweaving such a range of disparate studies and approaches is because of the complex nature of career and career success requiring a holistic approach (Fitzsimmons, 2011; O'Neil, Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008). A broad exploration shows variation in definition and how the construct of career success is viewed and defined over time, especially in the past quarter century. Despite the differences between research traditions, many gender-based commonalities are shown, thus supporting a gender-specific focus.

The following section explains how the literature epistemologically shapes this study. This study draws on a Bourdieusian theoretical framework to explain the understandings of the current study and is detailed in Section 2.3.

2.3. Theoretical framework

The consensus of the literature is that women value a range of qualities, characteristics, opportunities, experiences and relationships as important for both defining career success and for explaining what constitutes success. These can be viewed as resources or 'capital', used as building blocks for career progression. These capitals are influenced by family and societal factors and impacted by broader socio-cultural forces. This section explains how a Bourdieusian theoretical framework is drawn upon in this study to explain the relationships between these capitals and their antecedent influences.

Bourdieu's capital theory centres on the intertwined and overlapping constructs of habitus, capital and field. Each of these dynamic constructs is closely linked and dependent upon each other. A Bourdieusian framework is chosen as it provides an effective explanatory psycho-social lens with which to study the perceptions of women regarding relevant capital for career success and how this capital can be accrued through habitus from childhood. This paradigm aids the understanding of what contributes to the formation of 'habitus', through which capital can be generated and further accumulated. It also helps in understanding the notion of 'capital' or what is valued in the 'field' of career success and the other fields in which participants operate (e.g. home, school, work).

Bourdieu's notion of 'field' is described as a evolving conceptual construction related to the factors or rules that "shape behaviour in a given context" (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016b, p. 768), influenced by regulations, relationships and other forces. 'Field' is viewed as a social space, implying common ground where the positioning and interactions of participants influences what is considered to be contextually valuable. Individuals and groups operate and occupy different but relative positions in the space, based on the type and amount of capital they possess (Bourdieu, 1998).

'Field' can also be envisaged as a force, attracting only those who possess matching capital. People with appropriate capital have greater opportunity to engage in the specific field; with dominant individuals and groups able to control the context in which capital is generated and have power to influence what is considered worthy (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a). Outsiders or those with different capital can be excluded from certain fields. How well individuals 'fit in' to the field, determines how effectively they 'play the game' (Bourdieu, 1990), influencing accumulation of capital. Those who can transpose capital from other, often overlapping and sometimes-contradictory fields, to new fields are advantaged, if the capitals are complementary and transferrable. Thus, those who are able to access and accrue more highly valued capital will be destined to be dominant and be able to access and exercise power.

Individuals are engaged in multiple concurrent fields that overlap, with each 'field' having a set of distinct rules and principles and where different sets of cultural capital are valued (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a). Bourdieu (1990) equates 'field' with game playing with the type of 'field' influencing the structure and impact of the forces involved, creating a hierarchical system around the types of capital valued (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a). Thus, 'field' influences the acquisition of capital in composition and volume and the identification of what is most valued (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a).

The Bourdieusian concept of 'habitus' is a construct intertwined and embedded with 'field', combining the structures, systems, relations and actions of an individual's social environment and background. The concept can be described as the totality of how "we act, think and hold ourselves out to the world" (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a, p. 355), or the actions and dispositions favoured, but also as the "structure of the social setting in which an individual operates" (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a, p. 355). The influence of an individual's habitus impacts their location in the field they inhabit and determines how effective they are in accessing the required and valued capital for their field. In other words, an amalgam of

relationships and societal forces surrounding an individual influence how they develop, think, behave and understand their world. This amalgam of forces is continually and contextually evolving, impacting and being impacted by relevant fields. Thus, understanding of habitus enables a richer understanding of how broader social structures influence individual development (Reay, 2015).

Importantly, Bourdieu's psycho-sociological perspective on habitus provides a way to study the effect of historical, social and cultural forces on individuals and of the socio-cultural milieu of family background. This provides a "window on the psycho-social" (Reay, 2015, p. 9) aspects of development. Bourdieu emphasises the importance of habitus in early life as a source of capital through the influence of socio-historical forces on families (Bourdieu, 1986). Confirming the strong influence of early life on the development of individuals revealed in the literature, Bourdieu maintains that childhood is a significant time for the formation of habitus. This can be through relationships within families, observation of the world around them and through processes of socialisation where children internalise behaviours and work out ways of understanding their world (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a). Children and their families are viewed as interdependent "socially positioned actors operating within a politicised context" (Houston, 2017, p. 66), impacting and impacted by their uniquely formed habitus.

Particularly pertinent to this study is Bourdieu's concern with education, which led him to consider schools to be important habitus for the generation and accumulation of cultural capital. However, rather than schools being neutral places where children were equally able to access capital, he viewed them as places where social stratification is generated and reproduced (Bourdieu, 1974, in Eggleston). He dismissed as a myth, the notion that education leads to social mobility and increases students' ability to accrue valued capital, thus allowing children to be successful simply through their own hard work and intellectual gifts (Desan, 2013).

He presented the idea that success at school is not based on meritocracy, asserting that the resources that children access from their home environment make a significant difference beyond their own intellect and talent. Bourdieu's notion that social heritage impacts family habitus, viewed as a primary source for capital, suggests that children will be more successful at school if their family background is well resourced. He considered that education spreads the culture of the dominant class ensuring continued success of those from well-resourced middle class backgrounds who are able to accrue the right type of capital (Desan, 2013).

Families where there is investment in education, as a means to increase capital and where children are inculcated in the ways of schooling, enable them to be better equipped with school skills and the ability to assimilate to school culture (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). For instance, families where children are familiarised with school culture such as access to books and equipped with the language and attitudes consistent with schools are well placed to be ready for school and likely to have school success (Bourdieu, 1997, in Lauder et al.). Valued capital accumulated in early life impacts how further capital is accessed and acquired in adulthood.

The construct of habitus is perceived to be highly acculturative, influenced by family background and intergenerational forces. The capital possessed by parents directly influences the habitus of children. Likewise, the type and amount of cultural capital accumulated by previous generations influences current habitus (Moore, 2008). Bourdieu highlighted the importance of taking into account the collective history that precedes the present, as habits and behaviours are influenced by historical events and current habitus is the result of historical and socio-cultural forces (Bourdieu, 1997, in Lauder et al.; 1998). Habitus is further influenced by the relationships and experiences of the present; highly dependent on the current environment. Moreover, habitus is inculcated over time by the fluctuating process of accumulation of capital, interactions, relationships and the

circumstances surrounding an individual. It is viewed as a dynamic adaptive concept that changes over time, evolving during a person's lifetime (Hardy, 2008).

The Bourdieusian framework encompasses the notion that capital includes all types of resources and "goods" (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016b, p. 768), including "all forms of power" (Ibid; Raskfoff, 2018), interrelated with the notion of field and habitus. In order to conceptualise the idea of what is valuable capital, this study accepts that capital is a broad term encompassing "material, cultural, social, [and] symbolic" and economic (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a, p. 355) resources. The construct of capital provides a way to investigate what are perceived as valuable resources or career capital and how these are demonstrated, developed and acquired. Fitzsimmons and Callan describe capital as "embodied capabilities" (2016a, p. 355), such as hard work and technical and social competencies, which are relevant to this current study as capital valued in the business or corporate world.

Capital can include aspects of expertise, knowledge and skills (e.g. human capital), monetary resources (e.g. economic capital) and social networks and aptitudes (e.g. social and cultural capital) (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a; Raskfoff, 2018) that can be leveraged to confer social advantage. Capital is 'like money, in that it can be saved, invested and used to obtain other resources' (Kingston, 2001, p. 89). The amount and type of capital possessed determines social advantage, in turn impacting an individual's habitus and ability to influence the field. The literature shows that career capital, particularly relevant, to this study of career success, encompasses human capital. This includes institutionalised resources including formal qualifications and training and work experience. Social capital is viewed of similar importance, as a long-lasting system, "the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, conscious or unconscious, aimed as establishing or reproducing social relationships that can be directly useable in the short or long term" (Bourdieu, 1997, in Lauder et al., p. 52). However, the concept of capital goes further to include more symbolic,

cultural and anthropological relations and interactions (Bourdieu, 1990). Symbolic aspects of career capital are difficult to quantify, as they are subjective: based on cognition and recognition (Bourdieu, 1998). Career-relevant capital is found in all types of capital and is considered to be important for career success.

As the Bourdieusian framework is primarily relational, it is incumbent upon the researcher to seek out the insights of dominant individuals within a particular field who have power to influence the concept of what is valued within that context (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016b). This study provides an opportunity to access the insights of power holders or dominant players in the field of leadership, as these participants highly value their positions as leaders. They recognise and identify what is valued in that particular field and how this can be realised and acquired. Historically, women have been viewed as outsiders or 'dominated' in leadership as they have possessed insufficient capital or their accumulated capital was not highly valued (O'Neil, Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008). However, the women in this study have been selected because they 'stand out' as possessing the valued capital for leadership and consequently career success.

In summary, the use of a Bourdieusian framework supports the exploration of the relationship between the capital valued in a particular field and how this is influenced by the habitus in which the capital is generated (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016b). In other words, using Bourdieu's intertwined trilogy of field, habitus and capital provides a way to explain what women view as valued resources for career success. This also aides understanding of what factors and forces in their background and experience enable them to acquire these resources, taking into account their family and other socio-historical influences. The current study particularly draws on the role of childhood and adulthood habitus in generating career-important capital, using the interdependent and co-constructed nature of the factors.

2.4. Research gap

A major change in the Australian career landscape saw the influx of educated, career-oriented women entering the workforce and aspiring to leadership from the 1970s viewed as the first generation of post-traditional mothers (Metz & Tharenou, 2001; Tharenou, 1997, 1999). While much is known about the gendered career obstacles they and other women cohorts face, there is little research focus on this generation of women, especially in regard to success-enabling factors. How these women have achieved career success is an under-researched area of significant importance addressed by this study.

While a wealth of comparative research exists about career success for women and men, there is little recent literature that addresses what enables women's success within a separate framework. This study addresses a research gap outlined by O'Neil, Hopkins and Bilimoria (2008) which calls for a greater research focus on how women define career success. This study provides an opportunity to hear from women leaders themselves, as experts in the Bourdieusian concept of the 'field' of career success, about their own perceptions of success.

Lack of recent research focused on factors of family background (e.g. birth order, family size) suggests a need to review whether older studies still have currency. Additionally, there is limited research on women's self-perceptions of the background factors influencing their career success.

Additionally, there is a research gap concerning the role of the socio-historical influences on career success of Australian women leaders, particularly in reference to the type of school education they received and how that is influenced by the impact of the social and historical time. Additionally, there is a lack of research focus on the role of faith-based school education on women's career success, a concept explored in the present study.

There is limited literature on how women are able to break away from the effects of

childhood socialisation, questioning how women balance the acceptance and rejections of social stereotypes to both fit in and stand out. Likewise, there is insufficient research to explain the variance between siblings with the same environmental influences and similar genetic makeup. The current study addresses these research gaps by answering the following five research questions.

2.4.1. Research questions

In order to explore how women leaders perceive and define career success and what are identified as success-enabling factors the following research questions are addressed.

- How do participants perceive and define career success?

- How do personality, family background and educational experiences influence enabling factors?

- How do career experiences impact career success?

- How do relationships in adulthood at home and at work affect career success?

- How do wider socio-cultural and historical contexts influence the development of success-enabling factors?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

"STRUCTURE AND ORDER ARE IMPORTANT FOR THE RESEARCH TO BE SCIENTIFIC. THE SOCIAL WORLD, HOWEVER, IS NOT ORDERLY OR SYSTEMATIC, THEREFORE, IT IS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT THE RESEARCHER PROCEEDS IN A WELL-STRUCTURED AND SYSTEMATIC WAY" (HOLLOWAY & WHEELER, 2010, p 8.)

3.0. Introduction

In order to explore the social phenomenon of women's career success, an appropriate qualitative approach was selected. This narrative Inquiry approach enabled an open-ended exploration of the lived experience of women leaders, ensuring that personal and contextual factors are taken into account and allowing participant voice to be paramount. The approach provides a framework not constrained by preconceived ideas and allowing for the emergence of new ideas and ways of knowing. This chapter describes and explains the systematic way in which this research study was designed and conducted.

The chapter is organised in the following sections:

The study aims and research questions are presented in Section 3.1, outlining the study cohort and how the research questions guide this study and align with the data sets. Section 3.2 explains the methodological approach used in this study and justifies the use of narrative inquiry. The following section (3.3) presents the study design, explaining how and why interviews were used and the role of field notes. The ways in which data was collected is outlined in Section 3.4, explaining the study setting, the recruitment and selection process, the ethical considerations for the study and the interview process. Section 3.5 presents how the data was analysed. The chapter concludes with Section 3.6 where a description and discussion about methodological and field issues is presented.

3.1. Study aims and research questions

The aim of this study is to explore perceptions about the career success of women leaders in Australia, specifically women entering the workforce in the two decades from 1970 to 1990. This research seeks to contribute to an ever-growing field of understanding about successful women leaders by broadening awareness of how women perceive career success for themselves and other women. This study aims to highlight emergent themes through inquiring into the narratives of those women who have 'made it'.

The following guiding questions are presented and addressed to help better understand how Australian women leaders perceive career success, what are identified as success-enabling factors and what are the antecedent forces of these factors. See chapter 6 for conclusions. Table 1 shows how the research questions align with interview directions, data sets and analysis.

- How do participants perceive and define career success?

- How do personality, family background and educational experiences influence enabling factors?

- How do career experiences impact career success?

- How do relationships in adulthood at home and at work affect career success?

- How do wider socio-cultural and historical contexts influence the development of success-enabling factors?

Table 1 Alignment of research questions with interview directions, data sets and analysis

Research question addressed	Interview directions (general area / specific focus)	Data Set	Analysis
How do participants perceive and define career success?	**Success**. Definitions of career success and changes over time	Interview transcription Field notes	Team discussion Reiterative classification and coding
How do personality, family background and educational experiences influence these enabling factors?	**Demographic information.** Geographical information, type of schooling, parental, religious, cultural influences Career journey / who was there and what happened along the way	Interview transcription. Field notes	Team discussion Reiterative classification and coding
How do career experiences impact career success?	**Career journey.** Early career events and relationships, milestones, opportunities, luck, metaphors	Interview transcription. Field notes	Team discussion Reiterative classification and coding
How do relationships in adulthood at home and at work affect career success?	**Social support at the top**. Friends, family, types of support at work and home	Interview transcription. Field notes	Team discussion Reiterative classification and coding
How do wider socio-cultural and historical contexts influence the development of success-enabling factors?	**Career journey**. Influences of time & place. **Demographic information**. Schooling, family, community context	Interview transcription. Field notes	Team discussion Reiterative classification and coding

3.2. Methodological approach

A qualitative research approach was selected for this research study as a way to explore, explain and gain understanding about the social phenomenon of career success. The nature of the subject necessitated an approach that enables the open-ended exploration of subjective opinions, attitudes and perceptions of participants without the constraints of a quantitative framework yet framed by a trustworthy and justifiable design.

A qualitative approach allows for the personalisation of subjective information, considered well suited for studies involving human experience in natural settings (Creswell, 2003). This research concerns itself with how a career is played out within a life lived and what insights and knowledge the participant is willing to share so that we can gain insight into how these women became successful.

3.2.1. Why Narrative Inquiry suits this study

Narrative Inquiry is commonly used in health, social science and education research to explore the subjective world of human experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2008; Ellis, 2004) and was chosen for this study because it is well suited to exploration of the multifaceted, ambiguous and paradoxical nature of life experience (Riessman, 2008). It is an approach that provides a method of capturing and understanding personal qualities and gives voice to individuals while acknowledging the importance of interactions between events, relationships and people (Creswell, 2003; Emden, 1998; Riessman, 1993) and allows access to 'insights directly from the field' (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016b, p. 766).

The use of Narrative Inquiry captures the interaction between personal career events and broader socio-historical and the participants, an aspect important in "experience driven" (Riessman, 2008, p. 4) research. This approach is also useful in exploring the "general or imagined phenomena" (Andrews, Squire & Tamboukou, 2008, p. 5) such as career success, in a contextual relationship, thereby reinforcing the three main tenets of Narrative

Inquiry – temporality, sociality and place (Riessman, 1993). This enables the current study to be contextualised to and framed by individual situations, historical eras and personal circumstances.

There is an acceptance of incongruence between the story lived and the story told (Rosenberg, 2008) and an acknowledgment that stories are viewed as temporal and contextual, varying with telling and retelling, but providing insight and unique perspective (Riessman, 2008). The understanding that experience is temporal underpins this type of research paradigm (Riessman, 1993; 2008) establishing that the stories told are likely to change if told at a different time.

This study draws upon research showing that women are increasingly willing to tell their stories when asked, encouraged by the opportunity to contribute to a larger conversation (Breekveldt, 2013; Byrski, 1999; Doogue, 2014; Mitchell, 1984, 1991; Szirom, 1991). Stories offer a common point of entry into experiences through a familiar and universal form (Bruner, 1990; Creswell, 2008; Emden, 1998; Riessman, 2008), giving life and substance to personal experiences (Chase, 2005, in Denzin & Lincoln). In this study, the participants had the freedom to construct and reconstruct their own insights on their career experiences, enabling them to be in control of their own voices (Creswell, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Riessman, 2008) and to provide diverse responses (Creswell, 2013). The unique pathways the participants in this study chose, open up new perspectives, giving us a female view and unexpected topics arose from their narratives. Additionally, this approach enabled participants to potentially benefit from their participation because they are able to see themselves in and through their stories providing an opportunity to re-vision their own experiences and gain new realisations and understandings (Barone & Eisner, 2006 in Green, Camilli & Elmore; Bruner, 1990; Chase, 2005 in Denzin & Lincoln; Clandinin, 2007; Clandinin, Pushor & Murray Orr, 2007; Roof, 1993).

The use of Narrative Inquiry in this study conceptualises the notion that humans need to be understood in a practical, interactive relationship with their contextual environment where experiences grow from each other and impact other experiences with a sense of "continuity" (Clandinin & Connelly 2000, p. 2) of experience (Polkinghorne, 1995). In this study, individual experience is viewed as impacted by the experiences of others from their own past and present; that is, an individual's experience can only be understood as embodied and embedded in a contextual culture or 'narrative unity' (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, pp. 2–3). As Emden (1998) claims, "everything becomes related to everything else in the expression of life's meaning and to strip one's research procedures of their wider influences is a contradiction of intent" (p. 30).

Criticisms of the central self-reporting nature of Narrative Inquiry which questions what is "silenced, contested and accepted" (Andrews, Squire & Tamboukou, 2008, pp. 1–2) are acknowledged yet refuted. There is value in what participants chose to share which gives their experience and voice power. It was not simply a matter of a story told, but a story built together, with meaning constructed through the process of the "telling" (Josselson, 2013, p. 225). The reflection and the recounting of the story is co-constructed and verified within the research context by both researcher and participant. This minimises the risk that the narrative is simply "re-interpreted and re-presented by the researcher" (Hardy, Gregory & Ramjeet, 2009, p. 11), leading to a "reductionist understanding" (p. 11).

Additionally shortcomings of this research approach include potential problems with analysis (Riley & Hawes, 2004), addressed with the establishment of a thorough analysis procedure and transparent reporting. Additionally, the problematic nature of generalisation from one study to other circumstances (Clandinin & Connelly 2000; Clandinin, Pushor & Murray Orr, 2007) is outweighed by the benefits of conceptual and thematic inferences available (Riessman, 2008).

The experiences of women in this study belong to a particular time and context, growing up in the mid–late 20ᵗʰ century and influenced by the constraints of the socially accepted notion of men as leaders. Experiences are guided and influenced by historical, social and cultural context or 'place' with Riessman (1993; 2008) arguing that experiences cannot be separated from time, social context or place. This acknowledges the sociological premise that human behaviours, beliefs and identities are shaped by societal context of history and culture and these in turn shape society (Giddens, 2005). In this study, Narrative Inquiry is used to enable the stories of the participants to be understood within their own individual, communal and historical context and in particular, within the milieu of the Australian historical and socio-cultural context. Taking into account the influence of world events and social change.

3.3. Study Design

3.3.1. Using interviews to gather data

This Narrative Inquiry based qualitative research study used personal, in-depth, semi-structured interviews to collect data. This is a commonly used tool for gathering qualitative information and pertinent in studies about the human condition (Kvale, 2007).

In-depth interviews are a way of getting close to participants and their individual experience, each one a series of stories woven together and interrelated in multiple ways. Interviews provided an opportunity for participants to reflect, recount, reassemble and organise the story of their lives, allowing participants to "impose order" and "make sense of events and actions in their lives" (Riessman, 2008, p. 2) thus providing insight into the complexity of their lived career experiences.

Interviews give voice to individual stories and value to specific experiences. Key reasons for using interviews without set questions, are the suitability for providing opportunities for participants to tell their stories with freedom to explore areas not necessarily anticipated. The

lack of predetermined factors provided space for new ideas and themes to emerge. However, the use of a semi-structured interview process provided a framework for the dialogue, giving shape and order to the research setting and I interactions between the researcher and the participant.

The use of personal semi-structured interviews embraced the subjectivity and collaboration of the researcher and the story-sharer (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The design for the interview process in this study was developed with respect for the insider point of view or the 'emic' perspective (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010, p. 3) of the participants as successful women. While the interviews focused on the perspectives and interpretations of the participants, the role of the researcher was explicit in the co-construction of meaning through the readjustment and redirection of questioning to address key question areas (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010) as well as through member validation.

Flexibility in questioning was enabled by the use of conversation promoters (e.g. indicative questions) rather than structured questions, as suggested by Kvale (2007). Participants were encouraged by the open-endedness of the conversation promoters to describe and explain experiences, events and relationships of their choosing. This means that the analysis process began during interviews, with ideas clarified on the spot. Participants were able to change their ideas and interpretation of their experiences as the conversation proceeded in response to their thoughts and the interaction with and the researcher (Kvale, 2007). Interpretation moved beyond the description of what the participants say to include the context of the story (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010) and the research context helped to enable understanding (Silverman, 2013).

Participants were willing to share their experiences with me as I had a sincere interest in their stories (Kvale, 2007) and were perhaps motivated by the benefits of gaining a clearer perspective or realisation about their experiences. This increased self-awareness may have

brought meaning to their lives. Additionally, there may have been feelings of satisfaction and happiness in reliving experiences through the telling of the story and in sharing insights with others (Atkinson, in Clandinin 2007). Alternatively, insights and self-realisations obtained through the memory and the reconstruction of past events had the potential to lead to anxiety about what to tell and what to omit, or distress about the remembered event or situation (Kvale, 2007). To allay any possible distress, participants were free to change topics at will, supported by the open-ended nature of the semi-structured questioning and researcher reflexivity.

The design of this study borrows from the interview traditions used in other studies about women and career success – Kanter (1977), Hennig and Jardim (1977a), Keown and Keown (1982) and Fried (1998) – research in the Australian context (Still, 1997; Tharenou, 2001) and, more recently, Piterman (2008), Sinclair (2009) and Fitzsimmons (2011). Reinharz and Chase (2003, in Holstein & Gubrium), contend that interviews are an effective qualitative research tool suitable for gaining retrospective perceptions, such as looking back at career journeys. The impact of socio-cultural influences on experience can also be recognised in this approach (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, in Clandinin), suiting the retelling of a long personal history such as a life-long career (Chase, 2005, in Denzin & Lincoln).

3.3.2. Field notes

Notes were prepared before each interview in an effort to get to know the participants. Following the interview, these were expanded with detailed information about the context of the interview, as well as ideas and impressions that might contribute to analysis. These field notes include comparisons and contrasts with other interviews and aspects about implied information (Mulhall, 2003). This provided additional data which helped to make sense of the narrated stories and which were used to create the profiles in which participants are introduced in Chapter 4 (Section 4.1). Field notes were added immediately following

interviews, taking into account the first listening to audio recordings of interviews. Notes were added at any time if information became apparent. See Appendix A for an example of post-interview field notes.

3.4. Data Collection

3.4.1. Study setting

Interviews were conducted in locations convenient for participants, largely in the central business districts of the Australian state capital cities of Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. These were in participants' workplaces (e.g. offices or meeting rooms), hotel lobbies and city coffee shops. Venues and times were mutually agreed upon, with interviews lasting approximately 60 minutes.

3.4.2. Recruitment

Recruitment process

The participants were selected from a list of women drawn up from media sources including 20 Most Influential Female Voices (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 2012) and the 100 Women of Influence award winners (*Australian Financial Review*, 2012). The publication of lists of women of influence were relatively new at that time; an initiative by the print media to highlight the achievement of women. Additionally, names were added to my extensive recruitment list through recommendations from friends and colleagues and later from recommendations from the participants, a type of snowball recruitment process (Silverman & Masvasti, 2008). This recruitment list was shortened as the recruitment process continued and the selections were made. In order to maintain confidentiality, people who recommended others were not informed whether the women they recommended actually participated.

The initial recruitment list of 50 potential participants was further refined to around 20 women who:

- held a senior leadership role in a large organisation (e.g. more than 100 employees)

- held a role title from the list below;

- did not work in not-for-profit sector (beyond the scope of this study)

Role titles held by the potential participants included:

- The C suite - Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer

- Principal, Director, Managing Director

- Board of Management Director / Chair Person

- Partner

- Professor

- Member of Parliament

Using the Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency (Australian Government, 2013) categories required for gender representation annual reporting the recruitment list was further refined using the criterion of industry. The occupational categories used by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) were chosen for use in this study as these provided a consistent and reliable information source. Additionally, annual gender reporting for large organisations is supported by government legislation through the WGEA useful for comparison over time. The refined recruitment list covered the following range of industries:

- healthcare and social assistance

- education and training

- professional, scientific and technical services

- information, media and telecommunications

- public administration

- financial and insurance services.

Potential participants were assessed for accessibility (e.g. living and working in Australia) via an internet search and likelihood for de-identification (internet search). Some potential participants were ruled out because of perceived problems maintaining anonymity. Others worked in industries that were already represented by others on the recruitment list. In order to be selected, participants needed to satisfy recruitment criteria, have an interest in the study, be available for interview and be accessible (e.g. friend of a friend). See *A fine example* (journal excerpt) for an example of the leadership calibre of potential participants and reasons for inclusion or exclusion. The recruitment process resulted in the selection and acceptance of 17 participants over a period of many months (see Selection Process for further details).

A fine example

An excerpt from my reflective journal

October 6 2013

I acknowledge the role, that banker Gail Kelly, - the first woman to head up an Australian bank- has played in this study even though she was not approached to participate. She has, however, played an important role in the study as an example.

As the study progressed, I was constantly asked if I had interviewed Ms. Kelly. I was able to reply: 'No, but I recruited women of her ilk'. It is indicative of the rarity of women at the top that only one name comes to mind in the discourse about successful career women.

Ms Kelly has a very public profile and has written extensively about her life, including her migration from South Africa, her work and women's career issues. Among her roles, she is a mother to four children, including triplets. While I aimed to recruit women in the most

senior leadership roles, I realised that Ms Kelly would be a problematic recruit for a number of reasons. If she agreed to participate, it would be challenging to de-identify her information. Indeed, much of the potential value of her contribution may have been lost if it could not be attributed to her. Additionally, possible recruitment would be difficult, as I had no networking link to her.

Her 'glass half full' attitude or her 'choice to be positive' permeated everything I read about her influencing my thinking about how important personal attitude is to being successful. This impacted and contributed to this study's focus on what enables women to become successful rather than what gets in the way. Indirectly, Ms. Kelly also helped me to think about recruitment and selection of participants and how best to maintain confidentiality.

Interviewing the 'elite'

Reasons for interviewing high-achieving women include accessing the valuable insights made possible through their privileged or 'elite' positions and range of experiences considered to be culturally capital rich. As such, they can afford a particularly knowledgeable insight into their experiences suggesting that specialist expertise, years of experience and positional power result in a deep understanding of their situation (Gilham, 2005). However, access to the 'elite' can be challenging and there is no guarantee that the insights of 'elite' participants will be effectively "translated" in the interview context (Harvey, 2010, p. 434). To maximise successful research, careful planning regarding recruitment and access can address certain issues when interviewing the 'elite' (Harvey, 2010).

Public visibility and accessibility to the 'elite' are rarely linked. This presents challenges in recruitment for research purposes. Measures are often put in place to protect them from interruptions and distractions, such as requests for interviews, which can be viewed as an intrusion (Bourdieu, 1996). 'Gatekeepers' or people (e.g. assistants) and processes (e.g.

meeting schedules and phone-answering services) protect them from interruptions and provide them with an opportunity to work undisturbed (Thomas, 1995, in Hertz & Imber), not bothered by non-work distractions. Understanding these difficulties at the outset of the research project enabled planned strategies to be put in place to enable the best chance of accessing potential research recruits. These are detailed in the following section.

Additionally, other considerations for why potential 'elite' participants may be unable or unwilling to participate include limited discretionary time because of multiple responsibilities at work and at home. This can also include the onus of "representing women" (Reinharz & Chase, 2003, p. 78, in Holstein & Gubrium) in various forums, which takes time, energy and commitment. However, this may be viewed as a necessary social responsibility provided by the participant's unique position making 'elite' women more receptive to research participation (Reinharz & Chase, 2003).

Potential recruits needed to be convinced of the value of participation in this study. This was addressed through comprehensive information provided to potential participants about the study during the recruitment phase and through interpersonal communication between them and I. More detail is provided in the next section about how I effectively utilised third party contacts to help me convince potential recruits of the value of this study.

Selection process

While there was no pre-determined number of participants, it was anticipated that 15–20 participants would provide sufficient data-rich information, as similar studies found saturation of new insights occurred using a sample size such as this (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Keown & Keown, 1982). Seventeen (17) participants were recruited and selected for this study. However, the recruitment process went beyond a simply agreement to participate in a research project; it involved being convinced of the value of participation in this specific study and trusting me with their stories. .

As the data collection (e.g. interviews) was carried out over a long period of time (22 months), it was planned to approach participants from the recruitment list as the study developed, in 'batches' of three or four. Recruiting small numbers of participants at a time allowed for interview appointments to be made within a reasonable time frame (e.g. several weeks to several months ahead), facilitating flexibility for solving scheduling problems. It also ensured that the lead-in time was short enough to ensure that the participant's interest in the study was maintained. Recruiting progressively in small numbers also provided flexibility to follow up snowballing recommendations and to seek participants from specific industries to ensure representation across industry categories. Careful diary use enabled effective management of recruitment and scheduling. Additionally, recruiting in 'batches' then conducting small groups of interviews every few months enabled the analysis process to be initiated (see Analysis section for more details).

Recruiting friends as participants was potentially problematic, subjecting participants to a sense of obligation or applying pressure to participate. Existing relationships may have shaped what was shared or withheld. Additionally, friends may have lacked confidence in my ability to maintain of confidentiality.

Keeping the recruitment process in this study at 'arm's length' by using an intermediary in the recruitment process was an attempt to mitigate coercive pressure. Personal contacts and introductions helped to provide the necessary leverage to gain access to potential participants as suggested by Thomas (1995) and Harvey (2010). Mutual friends, colleagues or previous participants were engaged to canvas potential participants' interest in the study and check their availability for interview. This allayed fear of coercion as potential participants could decline before the formal recruitment process was initiated. Thus, keeping potential participants at arms length while they considered participation was effective. The risk is acknowledged that the recruitment process resulted in a degree of sociological homophily – that 'birds of a feather' do indeed 'flock together' – with similarities in participant

characteristics such as socio-demographics, co-membership in networks, types of information transfer and "isomorphic positions in social systems" (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook, 2001, p. 415). While factors of social division (e.g. occupation and positional role and gender) were adopted as recruitment criteria, using additional recruitment factors such as ethnicity, age, religion or education had the potential to result in greater diversity amongst the participants (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook, 2001). These additional factors, however, were beyond the scope of this study.

Four potential participants did not proceed with the recruitment process beyond the initial canvas of interest. Insufficient availability and conflicting time commitments were reasons given for opting out of the recruitment process. All participants (e.g. the final recruits) provided written consent and maintained their involvement throughout the study.

3.4.3. Ethics considerations

Maintaining the trust of participants was crucial in their readiness to open up and share their stories. An important aspect of trust involved assuring participants of confidentiality. The foundation for trust began with approval for this study granted through the University of Sydney, Human Ethics Committee, (Approval Number 2014/147, dated May 1, 2014) and current for four years (see Appendix B). During this time, the data collection was completed.

Ethics approval covered aspects of the design of the study in relation to appropriate recruitment of participants and informative communication with the selected participants (see Appendix C). Approval also covered issues of anonymity and confidentiality and ensured that a safety protocol for both researcher and participants (Appendix D) was established and followed. All mandatory ethics requirements were adhered to throughout the study. See Appendix E for The Ethics Closure Statement. The initial working title of the current study was *Getting to the top; Narratives of Australian Women Executives*. Various restates of the title evolved during the study, some evident in the approval documents (seen

in various appendices). The following section details the ethical considerations for this study.

Information for participants

1.1.1.1.1   Recruitment flyer

An approved recruitment flyer was developed to seek interest from potential participants, outlining the purpose of the study and the commitment required (Appendix C1). This was provided to all prospective participants.

1.1.1.1.2   Participant Information statement

During the recruitment process, potential participants were provided with a Participation Information Statement (Appendix C2), explaining the purpose of the study and the degree of commitment required. The statement specifies that written consent for the recording and use of data is required and explicitly explains that consent could be withdrawn at any time. The Participation Information Statement was provided for participants as a reference document.

1.1.1.1.3   Participant consent form

A Participant Consent Form (Appendix C3) was also provided to participants. Written consent was required prior to the commencement of each interview. The signed form gave permission for an in-depth interview to be recorded and transcribed and the data used in the study. The consent form also allowed for the transcription of the interview to be shared with the participant for verification of accuracy. Also see section 3.5.3 regarding member validation

All documents provided to participants were printed on official University of Sydney letterhead and provided contact details for the Chief Investigator (research supervisor) and the University of Sydney Human Ethics Committee, should participants have questions or

wish to make a complaint.

Copies of all recruitment documents were emailed to participants prior to interview, as a reminder of the purpose and requirements of the study. These documents were also available in hard copy form at the interview. A record of consent was maintained and stored securely following approval guidelines.

Confidentiality of participant identity

Assurance of confidentiality followed the University of Sydney Ethics Approval Guidelines. Participants were assured that identifying information contained in raw data would only be accessible to researchers involved in the study (e.g. the researcher and supervisory team) and that anonymity would be assured through de-identification of names, places and organisations in all circumstances. Participants were concerned about the possible identification of others in their stories. Some questioned that "you won't be using names will you?" or checked that "I can tell you his name but it mustn't be public knowledge". Participants were assured my personal assurances of the continued anonymity of the people in their stories and by the approval mechanisms in place to maintain confidentiality. Further details of how this confidentiality was established and maintained are outlined below.

1.1.1.1.4   Anonymity of participants

Pseudonyms were carefully and thoughtfully assigned to participants in this study for two reasons: the need for anonymity to protect the identity of participants; and the need to contextually reflect the historical and socio-cultural context of the participants.

Participants were influenced by the context of their backgrounds and wider influences of their communities. Names are often an important part of identity, reflecting trends of the times and aligning with historical and socio-cultural influences. In order to acknowledge and

value such trends, pseudonyms were chosen from lists of common names given to Australian girls born in the various decades matching the participants' birth years chosen to reflect their age and background (see Table 2). This consideration aims to present a more comprehensive story or picture of the participants, giving temporality to their voices by labelling them in a significant manner.

Table 2 Anonymity: Pseudonyms and birth decades of participants

Decade of Birth	1940	1950	1960	1970
Pseudonyms	Gloria Stella Sonia	Maureen Colleen Carolyn Denise Elizabeth Jill Tina	Narelle Joanne Michelle Linda	Kimberly Lisa Angela

These single pseudonyms were used in all circumstances relating to this study – presentations to student forums, seminars, and conversations during the preparation of the thesis. Demographic information about family details, background (e.g. schools), geographic locations (e.g. childhood homes) and adult family composition, while discussed, are de-identified. Other strategies for maintaining confidentiality include providing information in generalised terms (e.g. age ranges) and de-identifying of organisations by the use of a general industry description.

Some participants had authored books, articles and online works and had previously been interviewed about their lives or careers, giving rise to the possibility of their comments being publicly available and leading to possible identification. Identification through quotes used in this thesis was assuaged through paraphrasing or omission following careful checking of online materials, magazines and journal articles and books. Additionally, Karen (the subject

in the study catalyst section 1.2) was allocated a pseudonym to ensure anonymity despite not being a participant in the study.

1.1.1.1.5   Confidentiality of data

Confidentiality of recorded audio data is maintained through coded labelling and secure storage. Audio recordings were labelled with a single given name and date. Recordings were sent in a digital form to a professional transcription service with whom a confidentiality agreement was established. Upon return, the data were checked and the original audio recordings saved and stored as mandated and used only for back-up purposes. A copy of each checked audio recording was relabelled using the participant's corresponding pseudonym and saved on a secure computer system. Likewise, original transcriptions (in digital form) were saved using participant pseudonyms as titles, with all identifying information disguised through the use of generalities or symbols.

The storage and management of all data (original audio recordings, transcriptions and field notes) were carried out in accordance with Ethics approval requirements, including the use of secure electronic storage. Following the conclusion of this study, the original data set will be securely stored in the Sydney School of Education and Social Work, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Sydney, for a period of seven years, then erased in accordance with requirements.

Safety protocol

In order to maintain the safety and well being of both the researcher and the participants, a safety protocol (Appendix D) was developed and approved for use during the collection of data. Interviews were conducted off campus, requiring travel using either public transport or a privately owned and fully insured motor vehicle.

The following safeguards were established to ensure the safety of the researcher:

- Interviews were carried out in daylight hours.

- The interview schedule (e.g. place and time) was shared with the Chief Investigator or a delegate of the Chief Investigator.

- The researcher wore a University of Sydney identification badge and carried a charged mobile telephone during the interview process.

- Access to workplaces conformed to 'permission to be on site' guidelines for organisations and buildings. This typically required registration upon arrival and departure and provision of identification to security officers and reception staff.

The following protocols were enacted to safeguard the participants:

- Official identification of the researcher was available and visible

- Participants chose the interview venue

- Interviews were conducted with the knowledge of another person (e.g. executive assistants were made aware of interview time and venue).

3.4.4. Interview process

Developing the interview schedule

The interview process impacts the story shared; the questions asked; the researcher–participant relationship; the management of the interview; timing; and the well being of participants. In this study, interview schedules were carefully customised to suit individual participants. Conversation direction prompters were fashioned from a set of generic indicative questions based on the research questions for this study. Details about the design of interview schedules are explained in the following section. See Appendix F for the generic indicative questions used for customising interview schedules.

The interview schedules were designed using general and open-ended conversation

promoters (e.g. indicative questions). Conversation promoters were developed at the beginning of the study and trialled in Stage 1 interviews (see next section). These interviews assisted in fine-tuning a set of indicative questions into five general areas (demographic information, career journey, ideas about success, support and other) with approximately four subsections in each presented for researcher use as a grid. To familiarise each participants with the study focus the generic indicative questions were shared prior to their interview.

Prior to each interview, the conversation promoters were personalised using information from publically available online sources, personal knowledge and published literature. This required a thorough search into information about the participants. This included reading any books or articles that they had written, checking previous interviews and examining online activity for and about, the participants. This was instrumental in the preparation of personalised interview schedules, especially as possible repetition of quotes or stories had implications for maintaining confidentiality. Participants needed to feel that they were not wasting their time, that their story would be used effectively and that they would remain anonymous.

Personalisation also included information about background and family, workplace, media presence and industry and public awards. The personalised interview grid served as a researcher cue during interviews. Typically, conversations jumped from section to section covering associated areas. The 'non-directive' structure of the interviews allowed participants to attribute importance to aspects without set direction, as suggested by Kvale, (2007). A shortcoming was the potential to skip over sections, although there was triangulation between sectional question areas.

Having a personalised and prepared set of conversation promoters helped to manage the flow and pace of interviews while enabling a two-way discussion. The customised nature of

the questions did, however, increase the variation between interviews.

3.4.5. Pre-interview preparation

Every effort was made to ensure participant comfort and ease, both physically and emotionally. An environment of trust and respect was created by thorough preparation of interview materials and prior knowledge of the participant's career and associated information and friendly and respectful behavior of the researcher.

3.4.6. Stage 1 and 2 of data collection

Stage 1 of the data collection included trial interviews with two participants. These interviews confirmed the appropriateness of the research approach, helped to refine the interview schedule and formulate the indicative questions for interviews. Trialing questions is a way to ensure the quality of questions as well as checking that other aspects of the research design (e.g. wording, order and coding,) is effective (Harvey, 2010) These initial interviews enabled practise and improvement of the interviewing techniques. Stage 1 was also important for trialing analysis techniques and enabling identification of possible key words and concepts. Stage 2 of the study involved the subsequent interviews. Data from both stage 1 and 2 was included in the current study.

3.4.7. Data collection procedures

This section explains the practical data collection process, including how the interview environment was set up and managed and the devices used. Interviews were carried out in mutually agreed venues with efforts made to ensure the setting was comfortable and quiet and interruptions minimised. Two types of recording devices were used to safeguard against potential loss of data.

During the preparatory time the participant was greeted, the core aim of the study reiterated and reminders given about the option to withdraw consent at any time. Any questions or

concerns were answered and the signed Participant Consent Form collected. A copy of all information was provided for participant reference.

The interviews started with open-ended conversation promoters, commonly beginning with topics such as childhood and schooling. The initial parts of the interviews often took on the role of the 'orientation' of the participant's story: setting the scene, introducing the characters (e.g. parents, siblings, home background) and providing the context for the experiences to be explored. As Bazeley (2013) suggests, this storied structure shapes the data so that analysis can begin. This helped the interviews to have a conversational tone and flow and minimised the number of direct questions asked by the researcher.

Conversations were drawn to a close when time expired. Without exception, participants indicated their willingness, if it were not for time constraints, to continue to reflect on and discuss their own careers and the implications of their experiences for other women. All participants offered to answer any further questions or clarify aspects of the interview after the session. Interviews concluded with salutations of thanks for participation. Participants expected to receive the transcript of their interview by email following transcription for member validation, unless they indicated otherwise.

Some participants reflected on the interview as the first time that they had thought about, or been asked about, certain aspects of their careers and their career success. This confirms Reinharz and Chase (2003, in Holstein and Gubrium), who argue that even 'elite' women have a history of not being listened to and, therefore, may be grateful for permission and an opportunity to speak.

3.4.8. Data collection issues

For this study, an agreed 50-60 minute time frame was used. The time frame was established from studies showing an appropriate length for interviewing elites is between 45 minutes (Harvey, 2010) and 90 minutes (Ostrander, 1993; Stephens, 2007). It was difficult,

at times, to adhere to the allocated time frame and there was some variation in interview length. Unforeseen circumstances included, a previous meeting running over time, having to interrupt the interview for the participant to take a telephone call or, in one instance, the participant needing to make a brief farewell speech to a departing colleague, all of which impacted the length of time available.

Interviews were a one-off opportunity to capture the experiences and insight of participants and, consequently, maximum efficiency was needed. With the exception of a few instances, there was no possibility of overrunning the agreed time frame. While Riessman (2008) cautioned that it is preferable to have repeated conversations rather than "one-shot" interviews to "forge dialogic relationships and greater communicative equality" (p. 26), difficulties in scheduling made this one-off opportunity a necessary compromise.

Time limitation was mitigated by the arrangement to send the interview transcription to the participant for member validation, following the interview (also see Section 3.5.3). This allowed for clarification and the addition of extra details if desired. Some participants added more detail to their transcription while others did not. No participant requested a copy of the oral recording from the interviews when offered, saying that they "already knew what they had said", that they "didn't need to hear themselves aloud", or that 'the written transcript would be more than enough'.

Participants needed little prompting and direction to share their stories, although ensuring that the five main areas of the interview schedule were discussed and readjustments made for interruptions required careful management to complete interviews effectively.

3.4.9. Interview partnerships

The success of the interview situation was largely determined by the effectiveness and the authenticity of the relationship between the researcher and the participant. This hinged on how I presented myself and how I managed the interview situation. I was choreographing a

two-person dance with a principal aim to elicit participant response. My role as the researcher, included making participants feel comfortable; as if they were having a conversation with a friend. However, as the researcher, I had to be careful not to talk too much about myself, my work, or other off-topic subjects as this might distract from the task at hand. However, I needed to engage with the interviewee through authentic discourse, with some sharing my project aims and philosophy.

While interview settings were not intended as opportunities for establishing friendships, friendly rapport was needed so participants would want to share their stories with me. Creating rapport involved appropriate behaviour and demeanour, ability to 'look the part' and effectively 'fit in', which was possible to accomplish as a mature-age female researcher.

Participant expectations that I shared an historical and socio-cultural background through similarity in background - and age, in some cases - was beneficial. Factors in common helped to create a comfortable meeting place with commonalities shared. Assumptions about shared experiences were evidenced in participant comments such as 'you'd remember that…' and 'as you would know…' in regard to historical and social happenings and aspects (e.g. impacts of World War II, The Great Depression, women issues). While the spread of participant ages covered 30 years my age placed me in the middle of the study cohort, allowing me, as participants remarked, to be seen as a 'colleague' or 'part of the sisterhood'.

See section 3.6 for further discussion of issues arising from researcher – participant relationships and how these were addressed.

3.4.10. Managing data collection

This section outlines the issues regarding effective management of data including audio recording and transcription and confidential storage of data.

Audio recording and transcription

Personal interviews were conducted and recorded using an audio voice recorder as the primary recording device. The resultant MP3 file was the main record of data and was used for transcription purposes. A secondary recording was made using a voice recording application (the Alon Dictaphone) on a tablet (iPad), as a safeguard against data loss. Using the two audio recording sources and the subsequent transcription enabled careful and accurate checking. The secondary recording, in particular, allowed for convenient stop-start repeated listening, which was helpful in the analysis of data. Ensuring that all recording devices were fully charged and that spare batteries were available also minimised the risk of lost data.

Data storage

Addressing the challenge of successfully and confidentially storing data required tracking the audio recordings and the subsequent transcriptions carefully. The development of a systematic computer management system with a back-up facility ensured appropriate and effective management of data. All copies of raw data are stored securely.

Potential confidentiality vulnerabilities were managed in accordance with the ethics protocols established in the University of Sydney ethics approval process (Section 3.4.3).

3.5. Data Analysis

The data set incorporated audio recordings, transcriptions of interviews, field notes about context and situation. See Figure 1 for a summary of the steps in the analysis process. Details of thematic analysis of the data are provided in the following sections.

Figure 1 Analysis steps
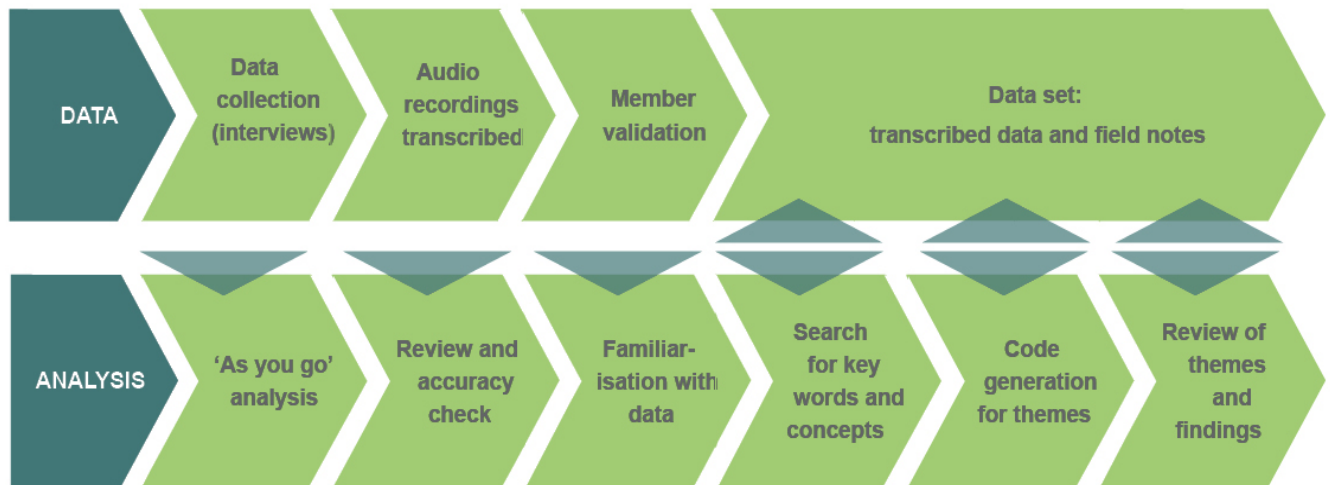
3.5.1. Transcription of interviews

The digital audio file (MP3 file) of each interview was transcribed using a blank formatted Excel template provided to the transcriber. Upon return, the written transcription was manually checked for accuracy and corrections made. Transcribed data formed the basis for thematic analysis.

3.5.2. 'As you go' analysis

Data analysis began during every data collection interview. Interpretation of data started with "as you go" clarification and reiteration of participant information, as suggested by Kvale (2007, p. 102). Attention was given to participant self-realisation as participants discovered new connections and relationships through the two-way discourse with the researcher. Rephrasing gave participants opportunities to elucidate and confirm understandings, or to "self-correct" (Kvale, 2007, p. 102).

3.5.3. Member validation

Following every interview, the audio recording was transcribed and the transcription then sent to the individual participant along with preliminary analysis notes, for member validation.

Participants returned these with any notes and clarifications and verification of accuracy of the transcriptions.

3.5.4. Familiarisation with the data

In order to become familiar with the data, audio recordings were listened to at least twice and interview transcriptions thoroughly checked for accuracy. Revisiting the transcriptions and audio recording of early interviews helped to keep a focus on the individual voices of the participants and familiarise the researcher with the data. Following every interview, the audio recording was transcribed and the transcription then sent to the individual participant, along with preliminary analysis notes, for member validation. Participants returned these with any notes and clarifications and verifications of the transcriptions. Familiarisation with the data allowed for reassessment and confirmation of themes, ensuring that all data were viewed through a similar lens.

Using the first individual data set (interview number one) a set of potential key words and concepts was established, loosely based on the indicative questions used in the interviews. This was repeated for all subsequent interviews with further key words and concepts identified and recorded and cross checked with other data sets. Key words and concepts were sorted into major topic areas (see Appendix G for an example).

During this process, key concepts were sorted and re-sorted as a result of familiarisation with the data, discussions with the research team and new understandings from other data. This process was ongoing, with the data revisited and discussed to ensure that key ideas were not missed and that they were placed in the most appropriate category. These categories were then coded.

3.5.5. Code and theme generation

The sorted key ideas were coded into themes or patterns and an individual analysis

template used for each individual data set, with codes labelled alpha-numerically. See Appendix H for an example (Participant X). Provision was made for additional emergent themes from later data. The building of coded ideas led from the data to the ideas and then linked the like-ideas, looking for patterns or similar responses within individual data and across groups of data. The coding helped to manage data and build categories to facilitate questioning of the data (Bazeley, 2013; Riley & Hawes, 2004).

Finding the themes

Each individual data set was searched 'utterance by utterance' for evidence of the coded themes, based on key words and phrases. Summaries of the relevant conversations were recorded on individual analysis templates aligned with coded themes.. Analysis focused on 'what' was said (e.g. the transcriptions), with consideration for context (as recorded in the field notes) and meaning taken from the importance participants placed upon the information. It must be noted that the analysis process was iterative and ongoing as advised by Hesse-Biber (2012), with the process of moving from "data to description to analysis" using coding in a "cyclical or recursive process" (Bazeley, 2013, p. 126). While themes concerning how women overcame career obstacles were included, themes about impeding career barriers were bracketed out as these were outside the scope of this study.

Review of themes

As the analysis progressed, there was a move away from the individual data, working more generically with the central theme of each category, looking for meaning through comparisons and contrasts, which showed thematic commonalities and differences. Returning to the research questions (also see Literature Review) enabled linkage to and clustering of, codes and categories incorporating interpretive and analytical concepts, as suggested by Bazeley (2013). Central themes about career enabling factors were then tested across the data and their meaning discussed with the research team. The

intersection and connections of the main themes form the basis of the reported findings (Chapter 4).

A potential issue with this type of thematic analysis concerns the possible lack of justification for emergent themes and the subjective nature of their identification (Bazeley, 2013). As a way to remedy these concerns, themes and meanings were discussed in three-way team reviews in doctoral supervisory meetings with links to specific participant examples highlighted.

3.6. Methodological and field issues

3.6.1. Researcher-participant relationships

A potential issue when using interviews concerns the relationship between the researcher and participants. The following sections outline these issues and how they were addressed.

Interviewer self-disclosure

It was important to establish a warm, congenial rapport with the women so that they would feel comfortable and encouraged to share their experiences (Reinharz & Chase, 2003, in Holstein & Gubrium). One way to encourage and empathise with the participants was to share common ideas, experiences and attitudes through interviewer self-disclosure, as guided by Reinharz and Chase (2003, in Holstein & Gubrium). It was necessary to juggle how much and what kind of sharing was appropriate in promoting a close and personal relationship. There was a risk that too much self-disclosure would shift the focus from the participant to the researcher, taking up valuable time or confusing, limiting or directing the participant. A shift of position was necessary, as guided by Harvey (2011), from 'sisterly' with some women to 'collegial' for others and 'well-informed, business-like' for others, or a combination of all three.

The collaborative process acknowledges the perspective of both the participant and the

researcher (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2013). As this research is a shared product of the participant and the researcher and represents their "joint subjectivities" (Josselson, 2013, p. 225). It can be argued this relationship not only impacts the research encounter and the resultant discussion, but ultimately, the research outcomes (Riessman, 1993). In this study, the relationship was influenced by shared gender, personal experience and historical and socio-cultural context. The researcher was an active participant in the research process, with no suspension or bracketing of beliefs and presuppositions (Creswell, 2013). This impacted the nature of the interviews and ultimately the data collected.

As the study progressed, it emerged that my role as the researcher was tied to this study in multiple ways. My identity and beliefs were shaped by similar historical and socio-cultural influences as the participants. Other commonalities also shaped the way I conducted this research. Apart from growing up in a similar historical era and place to many of the participants, I shared age, educational background, a rural upbringing and parents who were influenced by historical and socio-cultural forces to value education above all else. I attended boarding school and took advantage of free tertiary education in the 1970s, as had some of the participants. I brought both 'outsider' and 'insider' status to the interview situation. My age and shared experiences created an 'insider' status. Conversely, my occupation and purpose created 'outsider' status affording advantage by not belonging to the participant's group, thus, providing the potential to be objective in perspective (Harvey, 2010).

I endeavoured to provide enough personal information to make authentic connections with the participants without that information becoming a distraction or shifting the focus from the participant's story. This also influenced my discourse and the way in which questions were asked. The impact of the experiences and understandings of the researcher was embraced rather than avoided (Heggarty, 2011).

Regardless of intent, I viewed this study through a "gender lens" as subscribed by Kolb, Fletcher, Meyerson, Merrill-Sands & Ely (1998, in Ely, Foldy & Scully, 2003) and de Vries, Webb and Eveline, (2006) accepting the gendered nature of Australian society and of organisational culture. My feminist philosophy envisions a society where gender equality is possible (Hutchinson, 2011, in D'Agostin & Levine), Integrating my feminist viewpoint into this study allowed for researcher subjectivity (Hesse-Biber, 2012), which in turn shaped the interpretation of perceptions (Maxwell, 2005). There was a shared assumption that experiences and viewpoints of the participants would be underpinned by issues of inequity and therefore, would raise awareness of women's issues (Kumar, 2011). Thus, women are placed at the centre of this social inquiry, embedding gender in the study (Hesse-Biber, 2012).

Individual life stories are part of a larger story in which the researcher was integrated. Comparisons, contrasts and contradictions made in relation to the researcher's experiences at all stages of the research; from the indicative questions, to the collection of data and final analysis. Constant reference was made between readings and discussion with the research team in order to ensure the trustworthiness of the analysis.

Post-interview relationships

Reinharz and Chase (2003, in Holstein & Gubrium) discuss the existence of 'sisterly bonds' (p. 80) within the research context of women researchers working with women participants. They argue that women who interview women have an obligation to develop and maintain active relationships with their respondents, discounting the more detached and passive interviewing standpoint in some research methodology. This is primarily to establish non-exploitative relationships where there might be a power differential between researcher and participant (ibid).

There was no expectation that participants would wish to establish or extend the researcher–participant relationship; however, some post-interview relationships grew. The development of ongoing relationships was determined by individual circumstances such as on-going interest in the study, personal compatibility and geographic proximity.

Researcher response to both the interview situation and the stories shared is acknowledged to be important. Reinharz and Chase, (2003, in Holstein & Gubrium) contend that researcher response can be powerful, with empathy and the relationship of the participant with the researcher impacting data collection and analysis. The quality of the relationship may have been a factor in the willingness shown by participants to share intimate details about their personal relationships (e.g. marriage, divorce) and losses (e.g. death of parents and partners).

The importance of researcher self-disclosure and the development of post-interview relationships are acknowledged. While every effort was made to ensure participant comfort at every step of recruitment and data collection, it is important to acknowledge the impact of the researcher on the study and the impact of the process on the researcher.

3.6.2. Scope and limitations of the study

This study is a snapshot in time, place and circumstances for the participants at the time of the study. While inferences can be made about the emergent themes, generalisation from participants' experiences is limited by the research approach.

Likewise, this study is not a 'how to' manual; it does not aim to provide step-by-step advice for aspiring women leaders, as there is no guarantee that any formulaic approach to a career will be successful. However, this study contributes to the body of knowledge about how women perceive and define career success and what antecedent factors influence success and be of assistance to individuals and organisations.

The complexity of the research relationship is acknowledged, as are the limitations of reflexive awareness in controlling the research context (Houston, 2017). It is recognised that research context varied from interview to interview as the researcher–participant relationship was different each time. Additionally, the research was constrained by access to participants in terms of contact time, pointing to the recommendation that, in future research, more contact time would enhance the quantity and, potentially, the depth of data.

The sample size of 17 participants of this study can be viewed as a limitation. The sample size allowed the study to give voice to individuals across a broad range of industries. However, a focus on a smaller number of participants may have enabled deeper investigation made possible through a more ethnographical or case study approach.

It is difficult to compare the experiences of women in different industries (O'Neil. Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008) as the context may be a major influencer and may mask important factors. Industry-specific career benchmarks, particularly in careers with more linear progressions, emerged as features of some participant's career experiences so it is recommended to investigate single industry sectors or similar industries as a future research focus. This focus may shed light on industry-specific aspects of career success for women.

There is a risk that participants may have been subject to 'Pollyannaism' or positive bias in presenting the positive aspects of their experiences, feeling pressured into downplaying difficulties and setbacks. This may have been a result of the research design or, alternatively, a 'glass half full' personal disposition.

A further potential limitation of this study involves the problematic nature of interviewing 'elite' participants (Ostrander, 1993) as there is no guarantee that they will provide in-depth insight into their own experiences (Gilham, 2005). The stories shared have may have been highly considered, in fact, manufactured for public consumption and be at odds with the private stories that women tell their intimate friends. Thus, participants may have been

'primed' to present an acceptable version of their story that fits with current social norms and presents their experiences and insights in a favourable light. Furthermore, the incongruity between some advice given to others and recollection of their own experiences points to them overlooking certain aspects of their career journeys. More in-depth investigations are recommended into how women explain these incongruities.

It is recommended that future research focus on a narrower range of career stages (or ages), which may reveal deeper understanding of themes, patterns and relationships not able to be identified in this study. This may show and clarify specific strategies and mechanisms of support necessary for women at different career stages.

A simplistic focus on gender differences can mask the complexity of factors and attitudes. Further research about the differences between how women and men define and perceive their own career success is recommended in order to see if and where, shifts in thinking have emerged and to see if comparisons continue to reveal differences. While the exploratory nature of the present study avoided looking for predetermined ideas, specifically focused research into the emergent career-enabling factors for women (e.g. personal qualities, experiences, supportive relationships) and the antecedent influences (e.g. family background, schooling) in greater depth is recommended. Additionally, the nature and scope of this study precluded using mixed methodologies to collect potentially valuable data on leadership style, loci of control and dimensions of personality, which may also provide further insights.

Additionally, leadership is used as a symbol of career success in this study; however, further investigation of leadership, leadership style and antecedents of leadership for women is recommended as this is beyond the scope of this current study. Likewise, 'power' and 'influence' are viewed as associated with leadership, but are areas that warrant more specific research attention.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.0. Introduction

The findings of this study are organised in five main areas. Each section concludes with an interpretive summary. The first section (4.1) introduces the participants in the study, providing an overview of the shared historical context for each participant as well as a brief description of their individual career and life circumstances. Note: Information about the nature of work and role titles are omitted or generalised to ensure confidentiality.

The second section (4.2) provides the analysis of personal viewpoints of the participants about career success, particularly the way in which they understand and define career success. These findings highlight the personal attributes that participants identify as success enabling in their own careers and which characteristics and qualities are viewed as essential career capital. This section highlights the complexity of what constitutes career success, as the characteristics are difficult to gauge and measure.

The following section (4.3) presents findings about important antecedent influences of family background and early life experiences on the development of career-enhancing personal characteristics and how participants perceive these to link with their own career success. This section also shows how broader historical and socio-cultural forces are perceived to impact families and in turn, shape the development of individuals. The findings in this section centre on participant perception of the impact of The Great Depression and World War II on societal attitudes and their family practices and the influence of the Women's Movement on habitus.

This section also presents findings about how experiences and relationships in adulthood, including at work and at home, influence career success. This includes the role of work

experiences, especially important in early career. Findings about the importance of supportive reciprocal relationships at work including mentoring, networking and role modeling are also presented. The findings about the role of luck and career planning in career success are included in this section. Additionally, the findings concerning the value of supportive spousal and personal relationships and the influence of parenthood on career success are presented.

Finally, Section 4.4 offers a summary of the findings, highlighting the importance of personal, socio-cultural and historical context in the discourse about career success.

4.1. Meet the participants

The seventeen participants work or have worked in a range of organisations across various industries in positions of senior leadership. At the time of interview, the participants were all in active work roles, even those participants aged 70 years or older. In addition to their operational roles, several held board directorships. One older participant was working as an Emeritus Professor in a university, although referred to her previous public service leadership experiences in interview. Table 3 shows the industry area and occupations referenced by participants' as their principal work experience, and the female/ male representation.

A spread of participant ages over a 30-year range (mid-forties to early seventies) suggests that women are not easily identified as 'successful' until they have reached their forties, with the early forties described as a turning point for women, as they begin a transition to mid-life, with careers and career commitments established (Levinson, 1996). This means that as participants were over forty years of age it was assumed that they were established in their careers and were in a position to provide retrospective reflection on their earlier lives and career experiences from the distance of mid-career or late stage career.

Table 3 Key industries identified by participants at the time of interview

Industry *female / male representation	Types of Occupation	Number of participants
Public administration 21.5% / 78.5%	Government administration (central, State, local) justice systems, defence and public order, safety and regulatory services	3
Information, media and telecommunications 39.7% / 60.8%	Publishing, motion pictures, broadcasting, television, internet, on-line content, news collection and broadcasting	2
Financial and insurance services 56.1% / 43.9%	Banking, credit unions, investment services, superannuation services, stock exchange operations, trustee services	2
Education and training 62.4% / 37.6% (< 17% females at leadership level)	Pre-school, primary, secondary, tertiary, adult education services	1
Professional, scientific and technical services 39.2% / 60.8%	Architecture, engineering, legal and accounting services, advertising, marketing, veterinary, meteorological services, photography and computer design services	8
Healthcare and social assistance 69% / 31% (< 17% females at leadership level)	Hospitals, pathology, allied health services, community health, aged care	1

Adapted from Australian Government (2013), *Industry snapshot*, Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency. *Female/ male representation cited in Australian Government (2014), *Australia's gender scorecard*, Workplace Gender Equality Agency

The participants were born between 1940 and 1970 and were subject to the influence of the historical and socio-cultural effects of the Great Depression, World War II and the social revolution that included the Women's Movement, which occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. How these events were viewed as impacting participants was dependent on their age, geographical location and personal and family circumstance. If their parents were directly affected by these events, participants were more likely to identify an influence on their own development.

The participants grew up in families with married parents and most had siblings. Family sizes ranged from one child to five children. Not all families lived happy home lives, with some participants recalling family dysfunction and marital disharmony. Several participants experienced the premature death of their mothers during their childhood, while one participant lost her father to war injuries following World War II. Some participants' families experienced dislocation through frequent relocation for their fathers' work during their childhoods. This resulted in unsettling changes of homes and schools. Despite experiencing adversity, participants described growing up in 'normal' families, perceived as typical of the time.

The participants homogenously share English or European ancestral heritage and identify as Australian. No one reports having a language other than English as their first language, although several recall in their childhood, their European migrant parents or grandparents speaking another language. Likewise, participants shared growing up within a religious background, with a childhood shaped significantly or in part by their family's Christian faith, a common feature of Australian families in the mid 20th century (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994). Interestingly, more than half the participants (about 60%) identified as growing up Catholic, more than might be expected at a time when the incidence of Australians identifying as Catholic was much lower. For example, in 1966, when many of the participants were young, 89% of Australians identified as Christians, although only 25% of these were Catholic. At that time, Australians predominantly identified with Protestant religions such as Anglican. The number of Catholics rose slightly to 27% by the next census in 1971 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994). It was unexpected that the proportion of Catholic participants in this study was so high, suggesting that this was an unplanned consequence of sampling techniques or that a Catholic background was a supportive factor for career-aspiring women.

Religion played a part in the upbringing of the participants' aligning with the social norms of the era (Macintyre, 2009). Many participants grew up influenced by Catholicism, at home and at school, while some reported growing up in Protestant backgrounds and one identified as Greek Orthodox. Most of these women went to faith-based schools, typically run by strong female principals. The older Catholic participants recalled being taught and led by nuns. Most of the participants who identified as Catholic and Greek Orthodox acknowledged retaining some aspects of their childhood faith in adulthood. This was not evident for participants who identified as Protestant.

Participant families were typically described as 'middle class' with the hallmarks being financial security and home and business ownership. They recalled traveling with their families on childhood holidays. Family support for the education of girls was evident for the participants, expressed in the payment of fees and encouragement and express permission to continue education beyond the mandatory years prescribed by the educational authority of the era. Participants almost all attended all-girls schools, mostly operated under the auspices of Christian religions.

Participants characteristically reported working while still young, either in part time jobs in their local communities, or in their parents' shops or businesses. This was viewed as reflective of their family values concerning the importance of hard work and endeavor.

The participants favoured marriage with most marrying in their early or mid twenties. Two participants did not marry until they were aged forty or more, while one participant remains unmarried. Two participants became single parents as they were widowed as young women. Both remarried and subsequently divorced. Divorce was not unusual with almost half the participants divorcing, some up to three times. Marrying several times was commonplace.

Of the participants, 11 are biological parents, typically having small families of one or two children. Only one participant postponed parenthood until her forties, with the others childbearing in their twenties and thirties. A summary of marriage status and parenthood is presented in Table 4, listing the participants from oldest to youngest.

Table 4 Summary of participants' marriage and parenthood status

Participants	Married	Children	Divorced
Gloria	✓	None	✓
Sonia	✓	✓	✓
Stella	✓	stepchild	✓
Maureen	✓	✓	✓
Jill	✓	✓	No
Denise	✓	✓	✓
Tina	✓	✓	No
Elizabeth	✓	None	No
Carolyn	No	None	N/A
Colleen	✓	✓	✓
Linda	✓	none	No
Joanne	✓	✓	No
Michelle	✓	✓	✓
Narelle	✓	✓	No
Lisa	✓	✓	No
Angela	✓	none	No
Kimberly	✓	✓	No

Participants are well educated with all but one holding undergraduate university qualifications. Some have post-graduate qualifications, mostly in the area of business management. One participant holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Medicine.

Several of the older participants report a slow start to their careers, as they were initially supporting their husbands and raising young families in their twenties. This aligns with social expectations of the time (mid 20th century) where wives prioritised their husband's career needs before their own aspirations (Macintrye, 2009).

Participants appeared enthusiastic, energetic and cheerful and were keen to share their personal and career insights. They typically indicated willingness to participate in this study as a way of supporting other women in their aspirations for leadership success.

Participant's stories are shown to share a number of common characteristics, with working hard to make something of themselves, a universal feature. The participants are introduced individually in the following section, in order of age from oldest to youngest. Their stories are briefly summarised with self-identified key aspects featured, and commonalities and exceptions highlighted. Some specific details have been omitted or de-identified to ensure confidentiality.

Gloria

Educated in a private Protestant Girls' school, Gloria was the only participant with a mother who worked outside the home. She viewed her schoolteacher mother as a positive role model in a family of strong independent women. Gloria lost her father as a result of injuries acquired in World War II and lived her teenage years in an intergenerational women-driven home with her mother and grandmother. Gloria travelled to a different city to attend university in a male-dominated faculty where there were only four women in her science-oriented course and travelled extensively as a young woman, working and living overseas for her own work and, at different times, for her first husband's work. She did not have children. Her career was two-pronged; starting out as a veterinary scientist then moving to a long career in the public service sector where she made institutional change for the employment of women.

Sonia

Schooled by nuns and raised in a close-knit Catholic community, Sonia had a close relationship with her father and was influenced by him and his politically active friends. She married early and had children in her twenties, travelling to overseas postings with her husband where she was prohibited from working due to her marital status. Her career had a slow start, with her committing to her career aspirations in her thirties when she returned to Australia as a single mother. She attributes her career start to the support of mostly male friends, who encouraged and championed her. She was strongly influenced by her Catholic education and the experience she gained through activism in the Women's Movement. Her career in male-dominated public service spanned over four decades.

Stella

Losing her mother when she was a child, Stella's largely absent father (due to military service) remarried. Her stepmother did not want children, resulting in an unhappy home life for Stella and her siblings. Stella moved overseas to work as soon as she finished her university teaching degree but become an international flight attendant as a way to travel the world. Ultimately, she changed career direction and moved into a different and male dominated area of the aviation industry. Despite a slow start to her eventual career direction and having to overcome many personal and career obstacles along the way, she was at times the most senior woman in her global organisation. She attributes her success to hard work and tenacity, taking knock-back after knock-back until she was given an opportunity to prove her worth. It was not until she was in her thirties that she established her eventual career direction, 'championed' by a male CEO. She believes his sponsorship escalated her reputation and accelerated her career progression. Initially, she balanced her career with the needs of her husband's work aspirations but divorced when her husband was not willing to reciprocate support for her career aspirations. International work experience was

a feature of her story, a commonality for almost all participants.

Maureen

A private Protestant girls' school alumna, Maureen remembers a school culture that encouraged girls to enter university and seek a career, novel for girls of the time. She was the oldest child in a dysfunctional family, characterised by domestic violence perpetrated by her father. Despite forming a close bond with her mother, she was quick to leave home and married while still at university. Despite marrying early and thrice, she postponed childbearing until her forties. Features of her story are how she valued her overseas work experience and how she effectively changed career direction from the law to business management. Like other participants, she reports feeling a responsibility to ensure that other women who follow in her career footsteps face less obstacles than women of her age and time.

Jill

Jill followed a largely linear career path, historically typical for medical practitioners, becoming a medical specialist and leader in a large teaching hospital. She is married to an engineer and has a small family. Key features in her story include the necessity of hard work for her career success and her persistence in the face of gender-based obstacles in her early career. She describes herself as doggedly determined and independent; able to find a way to overcome any obstacle. Her father, with whom she had a strong relationship, was profoundly affected by his experiences in the Great Depression, subsequently influencing her conservative attitudes to debt, wealth accumulation, property ownership and the value of education and hard work.

Denise

Denise is an only child who at ten years of age lost her mother through alcohol related

illness. Tragedy further dogged her with her first husband dying young, leaving her as a single parent in her twenties. She is the only participant who did not complete secondary school, choosing to leave school early to attend a secretarial college, a common path taken by young women in the 1960s and 1970s. However, she turned to tertiary education later in life. She recalled a bursting passion in her youth for getting started on an adult career, confident that she would be successful at whatever she did. She credits independence and resilience developed in childhood as important coping mechanisms for dealing with setbacks and challenges later in life. Denise achieved CEO status at the age of thirty and led her organisation for more than three decades, maintaining close client and colleague relationships over time.

Tina

Raised in a regional Australian town, Tina was influenced by her family's Catholic faith and an early awareness of the lack of opportunity for young women in country towns. Heading to the city for university, she studied social work, a relatively new profession in the 1970s. Her passion for social justice underpinned her career decisions throughout her multifaceted career, an aspect she attributes to her religious upbringing. She married an engineer in her twenties and took career breaks to have three children (the largest family in the study cohort) and relocate for her husband's work. She viewed career breaks as opportunities to gain different experiences allowing her to work on varied projects, which increased her skills and expertise. Tina credits her breadth of experience as the reason that she was selected to be CEO of a national industry body.

Elizabeth

The eldest of her siblings, Elizabeth left her migrant parents and her rural hometown to attend a city secondary school and then to study accountancy at university, which at the time was viewed as an occupation for men. She worked interstate and overseas in the

early years of her career, eventually settling in the United Kingdom for some time. She reported that while she chose to marry, she chose not to have children, a personal decision not related to pursuing her career. She attributes her career success to an independent nature, hard work, developing a specialist skill set and a strong sense of integrity. This combined with fortuitous luck in meeting the right people at the right time who were able to provide her with access to career opportunities.

Carolyn

As a teacher, Carolyn wanted to make a difference in the world of education, particularly for girls. Over her long career, she worked for a State Education Authority in a variety of leadership roles, including as principal in large secondary schools in the public sectors. She moved to the Catholic sector later in her career, leading both co-educational and girl's schools in two state capitals. Carolyn believes that certain early career breaks, including working as a deputy principal to an "incompetent male boss", provided opportunities to gain important work experience. Similarly, as the Principal of a school that was closing down, she took advantage of a crucial opportunity to access different and rare experiences. She too, was influenced by her Catholic upbringing, citing a strong mother who pushed her to achieve to her potential. Her family were impacted by the effects of World War II, particularly following her father's return: a changed man. Frequent relocation to country postings for her father's work was a challenging feature of her childhood, viewed as a contributory factor in her ability to overcome challenges.

Colleen

Colleen did not commit to career aspirations straight from her Catholic girls' school experience, working in a bank until a friend suggested overseas travel. Later, when she was working as a legal secretary, Colleen studied law at night, so that she would be qualified to do the work that she was already doing. She married in her twenties to a man

who was unwilling to support her career aspirations and coerced her into favouring family commitments over career ambitions. Following her divorce, she recalled being able to "double-down" her career focus, motivated by the necessity of providing for her family. Support from her employer, especially certain senior male colleagues, during the times when it was difficult to juggle home and work responsibilities, was viewed as important to her success. She has remained loyal to the same firm for decades, rising to the senior ranks.

Joanne

Joanne is the only participant without university qualifications. She recalled deliberately choosing not to go to university, following her Catholic girls' school education. She chose to follow a career path featuring practical experience and on-the-job training in media production, with her choice fully supported by her family. Her early career was characterised by misogynistic attitudes and behaviours in her male colleagues in an industry where there were almost no other women. She reported either "managing" or "ignoring" these and in doing so, gained respect from the "right" people even if she did not like them. For her, reputation is everything; central to getting future work and connecting with other technical people. Ratings and awards are central to maintaining her reputation, however, she defines career success as having control over her own time and tasks and control of the projects and people with whom she works.

Michelle

Moving frequently as a child because of her father's military service, Michelle attended Catholic schools in several states of Australia. While she remembers feeling quite confident as a child, she felt largely ambivalent about school and lacked any strong career ambition. She chose to follow in her father's career footsteps because she saw joining the Australian Defence Force (ADF) as a way of gaining a free tertiary qualification and as an

excuse to leave an unhappy home. At a time when special effort was being made to introduce and integrate women into the ADF, she found herself propelled, through aptitude and circumstances, on a fast-tracked career path, which firmed her career aspirations as she progressed. Features of her story are the value of timing, situational luck, further training in a niche area and dogged hard work. Effective employer support is remembered when her husband died in an accident, leaving her as a single mother in her twenties. She noted that throughout her career she engaged in specialist post-graduate study, gaining important knowledge and skills, which paralleled with her work experience.

Narelle

Narelle grew up surrounded by supportive adults including her much older brothers. She attended a prestigious non-denominational girls' school and was School Captain in her final year. She maintains that her school experience influenced her life and career and that she continues to feel the impact of the Principal's support to this day. She is still actively involved in her school with a role on the school management board.

Narelle married a supportive husband in her twenties and had children, crediting her career success to a combination of "compromise, confidence and Claire" (the family's long term child carer). She also credits the influences of family through exposure to role modeling from her parents, grandmother and aunties regarding tertiary education and professional careers. Fast tracked in her early career for training and opportunities Narelle quickly rose through the ranks to executive leadership roles, loyal to one organisation – in the pharmaceutical industry- for many years, noting that her strong relationships with the people in the leadership team were important to her job satisfaction and motivation to stay.

Linda

Linda comes from a large Catholic family, with role modelling from her father and older siblings in regard to going to university and providing familiarity to professional careers.

She had family support for a wide range of post-school choice in occupations, eventually following in her father's career footsteps in sales. Her career as a senior leader in sales in pharmaceutical and medical supplies is characterised by company loyalty evidenced by long tenure with employers and her interest and passion for building and managing high performing teams. A feature of her story was the importance of relationships, both at home and at work.

Lisa

The oldest child of a family of three children to migrant parents, Lisa was encouraged to do well at school and go to university. She spent her holidays from her prestigious Catholic girl's school working in her parent's shop providing her with valuable experience in working with money and interacting with adults. Identified in her early working career as having high potential, she was given opportunities to advance and train well beyond the expectations of her experience and career level. She married a tradesman who was willing to adjust his working conditions to enable her to commit to her career aspirations. She had children in her thirties, acknowledging the hands-on support of her husband and her parents with childcare, as fundamental to her ability to fully engage with her career. The ability to exercise flexible working conditions (maternity leave and working part time) following childbirth helped to minimise interruption to her career progression. Other features of her story include the importance of family support as a child and as an adult. Atypical of many CEOs she was promoted from a non-line position, not from the central profit and loss area, which is characteristically viewed as a pipeline position for CEOs.

Kimberly

Born in regional Australia, Kimberly attended boarding school and university away from home. She credits independence and confidence developed from self-management in her youth as important factors in her subsequent career success. In her twenties, she married

a tradesman and had children in her thirties. Her potential was spotted early in her career and she was offered different roles and fast track opportunities that facilitated her steady rise to national leadership roles in the same organisation. Her story features strong relationships with her father, early mentors and long lasting support from colleagues. Despite having few female role models at work, she identifies her early female employers from her teenage years (a hotel owner and a swimming school director) appreciating their work ethic and how they managed their staff.

Angela

The daughter of migrant parents, Angela worked in the family shop at weekends while attending the local public girl's high school. She stood out from an early age because of her academic aptitude; particularly in mathematics and science. However, she did not feel challenged at school and recalled that her teachers were not particularly helpful beyond recognising her ability. Her parents were supportive of her achievements but not actively involved in her education leaving her to make important decisions alone. She based her career direction decisions on her mathematics ability, studying engineering at university. She considers that fortuitous timing enhanced her career progression, having the opportunity to work on significant infrastructure projects (e.g. Sydney Olympics), which gave rise to a valued professional reputation. Angela highlights hard work, technical ability, a sense of independence and her ability to effectively manage male construction contractors as fundamental to her career success.

4.2. How do participants define and understand career success?

The findings in this section are drawn from participant responses to questions about how career success is understood in terms of definition and what personal characteristics contribute to success.

Section 4.2.1 presents the findings about how participants define their own career success, highlighting the importance of being personally fulfilled at work. Participants noted that as circumstances changed throughout their lives, their idea of what career success looks like evolved (section 4.2.2).

The next section (Section 4.2.3) presents findings about the personal characteristics that participants view as essential building blocks for career success, for themselves and for other career aspiring women. The interpretation of how participants define and understand career success is summarised in Section 4.2.4.

In order to assist with clarity and ease of reading, short participant responses are unattributed (shown within single quotation marks) while longer and specific responses where aligned to individuals are shown within double quotation marks. Brief vignettes describing participant experiences are included throughout this chapter in order to show links to themes. Examples of direct responses aligned with vignettes are located in Appendix A1.

4.2.1. Definitions of career success

A key finding is that how participants feel about their work is a significant factor in their definition of career success. This is described in terms of personal satisfaction and fulfilment, above all other criteria. While this is central to their notion of success, this does not exclude overt success indicators such as prestigious job titles and high salaries from being important factors. However, being happy at work and sharing a purposeful mission with others are key themes.

While participants do not focus on job titles and salaries, traditionally used to define career success (Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2007), they consistently return to them as evidence of success. Even the job title of 'leader' or holding a 'leadership' position is viewed as a label of success rather than the definition of career success. The participants

universally desire to be considered a 'leader', a position that brings power and control of resources and people. This signifies a complexity in how the participants view career success: principally defining career success through terms of personal fulfilment and job satisfaction yet seeing it interrelated with being the 'boss' with the associated symbols of status of high salaries and job titles that come with position. Likewise, leadership was identified as a central career goal and viewed as a symbol of success, but explained as a synonym for career success, or a type of job title.

These findings confirm other studies showing that women value subjective measures of personal fulfilment described as job satisfaction. These include developing and maintaining strong relationships, making a difference to the organisation and the wider world and having the ability to drive change, enthusiasm for work, professional regard and taking control of their own destiny (e.g. Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Buse, Bilimoria & Perilli, 2013; O'Neil, Bilimoria & Saatcioglu, 2004; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Martin & Barnard, 2013; Moran, 2014; Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002; Trahey, 1977). The following section analyses aspects of job satisfaction pertaining to relationships, making a difference, enthusiasm for work, professional reputation and being in control. '

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction' is the core criterion for defining success with participants describing it as working on interesting and important projects and doing challenging and fulfilling work with others with similar purpose. Being able to make a difference to the organisation or the world in work that matters and which one is passionate about is an important factor of job satisfaction. In order to achieve this, participants needed to have control or 'be in charge'. Each factor is detailed in the findings below. See Figure 2 for contributing factors of job satisfaction.

Figure 2 Factors of job satisfaction

Strong relationships

Job satisfaction includes doing work that they love and believe in. Working within reciprocal and strong supportive relationships or "working with good people" helps to sustain interest, motivation and purpose and makes work enjoyable. Being able to "bring out the best in each other" and to "help others to grow" are key for job satisfaction, as is "feeling good working for and with people you believe in" (Angela) and "working collaboratively with like-minded, respected and supportive colleagues… having a belief in what you are doing and trust in those you work with in a shared vision for the future" (Jill). This points to a recurring theme of the importance of interpersonal relationships in

participants' lives, valuing close connections and support from people in childhood and in adulthood (at work and home), as well as the support of friends.

Making a difference

The participants outlined the importance of being able to make a difference to an organisation and to the wider world as integral to the notion of job satisfaction and, thus, how career success is defined. Indicatively Linda describes "seeing that you have made a difference", being able to "influence how people and an organisation can grow". Likewise, being able to "use decision-making position and power to make change" (Stella) as examples of the way in which participants gain satisfaction from their work. The ability to be able to shape and change organisations for a better future is summarised by Linda: "I am creating the future". Thus, belief in the importance of the work is central to the degree of satisfaction participants feel about their work. Participants comment that job satisfaction is contingent on the congruence between their vision for a better future and the goals of their organisations.

Enthusiasm and passion for work

Work that is interesting and worthwhile promotes enthusiasm; an important element of job satisfaction. Enthusiasm is viewed as a sign of a good fit between the individual and the organisation, such as "If you're really happy … you want to jump out of bed every morning and get to it" (Tina); "you feel good about what you are doing and are enjoying yourself" (Elizabeth); and importantly "doing what you love" (Denise). Typical advice is to "follow your heart", "be happy doing what you are doing and follow your passions and interests" (Lisa) and "make sure there is a match between passion and your job" (Stella). Doing satisfying work will lead to whole-hearted engagement as "you'll be more likely to put in everything you have to try to make it work if your role is something you are passionate about. You'll be more likely to take necessary risks". (Maureen). Success is possible

'where passion and vision combine in an environment where there is personal and professional fulfilment' (Maureen).

Maintaining a professional reputation

Loving work and job satisfaction depends on working with great people on interesting and important work, but so too is having a positive public image or repute according to participants. Having ability affirmed through professional reputation is both a facet of job satisfaction and a tangible gauge of success. Being known within an organisation or profession for outstanding competency and performance is perceived as personally satisfying and career enhancing.

Professional reputation is regarded as public acknowledgement of capability. In some industries (e.g. engineering, medicine, media production), participants viewed repute as necessary to attract future clients and create opportunities for collaboration, which in turn enhances individual visibility and is viewed as conducive for further career opportunities. However, all participants report valuing their own repute as personal affirmation of their abilities and achievements. Angela describes "respect from clients and contractors as critical for success" while "respect and trust from patients and staff," level of medical competency and approachability and being held in high regard by professional colleagues perpetuate Jill's reputation resulting in patient referrals. High repute and appropriate remuneration (e.g. often high salaries) are linked, with an expectation "that positions of power and responsibility [are] appropriately financially rewarded" (Jill) and integral to the image of successful leadership and making it to the top.

Vignette 1

Vignette - Reputation

'Awards and high ratings' are signs of Joanne's professional repute and tangible symbols of her success. Awards are important in supporting reputation, which in turn, encourages people to want to work with her. Specific to her industry (media production) professional reputation is important in attracting contractors and contracts as she believes she is 'only as good as my last job', although she acknowledges that, as her career has developed, she has gained a residual reputation, making her the "go-to collaborator". Thus, having a strong reputation gives her the all-important choice over the projects she works on and who she works with and underpins her idea of career success.

Control of time and tasks

Being 'in control' is an important aspect of job satisfaction. The theme of control over time and tasks consistently recurs in this study. Having power to direct themselves and others manifests in a need and want to 'take charge' early in life and have 'control of their own destiny'. This study finding confirms the work of others about the importance of having control and the power to be in charge of wide scale change (e.g. Bagihole, 2006; Buse, Bilimoria & Perelli, 2013; O'Neil, Bilimoria & Saatcioglu, 2004; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Moran, 2014; Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002). Likewise, Fitzsimmons and Callan (2016b) highlight that related characteristics of stewardship, leadership and strategy are considered key cultural capital for CEOs, which enable individuals to realise control in the organisational context.

The need for control is also evident at home, with participants acknowledging that they assume disproportionate responsibility for managing domestic affairs, unwilling to yield control, even to a supportive spouse (see Section 4.6.2) or trusted home help. This points to a fundamental difference between the experiences of women and men who are willing to take control at home (Marvin, Williams, Bryans & Patterson, 2015).

The desire to have control extends to work–life balance, commonly seen as having control of time and tasks as well as "effectively juggling work, family, friends and exercise" (Kimberly). While work–life balance usually means re-balancing the amount of time spent on work, in this study participants reported having control of their time, work tasks and career destiny was more important than balancing leisure time with work time. Long work hours and extensive travel are viewed as acceptable; an inevitable cost and a deliberate choice necessary for success. According to participants, having work-life balance was about having choice and control rather than an actual time balance.

As careers advanced, the participants were able to set their own priorities about management of work and personal lives. Balance is contextually dependent on career stage and family responsibilities and is easier to accomplish "when you have established your career and family responsibilities can be altered and managed" (Colleen). Participants in the later stages of their careers (e.g. aged over 60 years) link work–life balance with increased ability to be selective about work undertaken as they had the power to manage their time and tasks – "Success is having more time for leisure or at least more flexibility" (Stella), even when there is no reduction in workload.

Job titles and salaries are symbols of career success

While job satisfaction outweighs job titles and high salaries as the core criterion for career success, these objective measures are, paradoxically, still very important. Prestigious job titles are perceived as an aspect of, rather than definitive, of career success, although the title of 'leader' is integral to what success looks like. Participants see these job titles as enabling access to power through decision-making "in getting things done" (Angela). Job titles are described as an acknowledgment of professional respect: experience and achievement are only part of the complex notion of what constitutes career success.

In the same way, high salaries are not specifically highlighted as criteria for success,

although they are described as external indicators of success linked to job titles. Participants are motivated by satisfying and challenging work but are not prepared for those efforts to be undervalued. High salary levels are described as "instrumental to professional reputation and access to other opportunities" (Jill) and that "respect and status come with a high salary" (Stella). Appropriately, high salaries are described as "an important affirmation of your value to your organisation with links to recognition of ability" (Angela).

The notion that titles and salary is part of a broader picture is confirmed by participant comments that success is *"*more than money and power" (Kimberly); and that high salaries are both a reward for hard work and an incentive as "money isn't everything, but it is something" (Stella). Titles and appropriate salaries are viewed as markers of success, with participants stressing how important it is for women to be aware of their own monetary value. Angela indicatively encourages others to "research your pay; adjust job or organisation if you are being undervalued moneywise".

Participants viewed career success as an evolving construct, changing with their circumstances over time, but primarily based on their personal and professional contentment and fulfilment described as job satisfaction. This sense of satisfaction is however, influenced by other more objective and measureable factors concerning hierarchical job titles and salaries. See Figure 3 for a summary of the contributing factors of how career success is defined.

Figure 3 How participants defined career success

4.2.2. Definitions change over time

Definitions of success alter over time due to changing circumstances. Definitions are, therefore, contextually determined by industry, career stage, family responsibilities and personal circumstances and viewpoints. Participants report that increased financial security, increased seniority, changed personal and professional needs and altered priorities influence how they perceive success today. For example, "What I see as success has changed, now my career has matured" (Stella). In her early career, Michelle defined success as 'getting through the day' while later on in her career she defines it as "passion, interest and fulfilment in my life and work".

4.2.3. Success enabling personal characteristics

To follow-on from how participants defined career success, this section analyses the findings about personal characteristics identified as career enhancing and what factors are viewed to influence development and agency. Certain personal characteristics in combination

are identified as central to career success as they generate career capital valued in themselves and contributing a habitus in which career advantages can be leveraged.

According to participants, their career success is founded on a triad of characteristics, explained in terms of hard work and intelligence, in combination with a suite of other career-enhancing features, developed and valued in early life and then further developed in adulthood. This triad of characteristics results in participants 'standing out '. This is viewed as adding career value as it allows women to be noticed and attracts important support and career opportunities. See Figure 4. Participants reported these features to be both inherited and developed over time and subject to the influence of early life forces (also see Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2) and historical and socio-cultural forces (4.3.3).

Figure 4 Triad of career success enabling characteristics
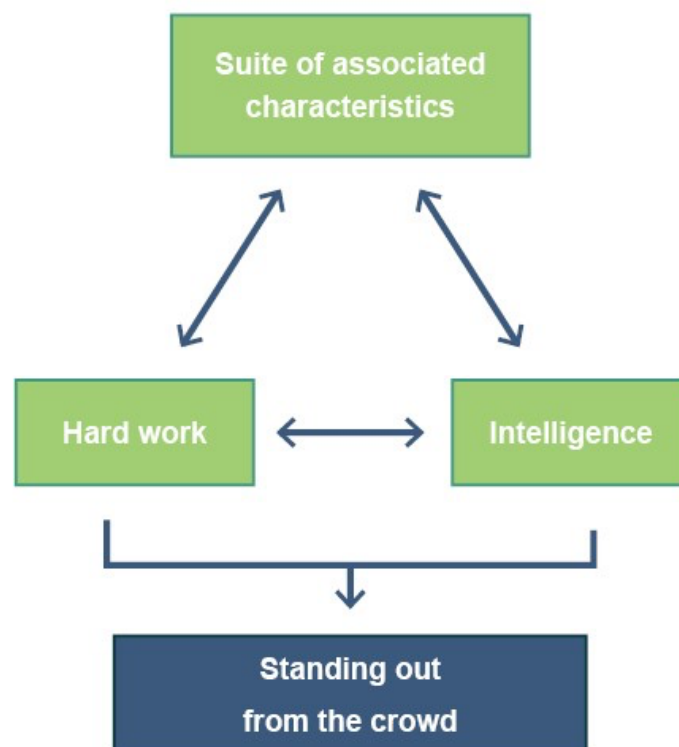
Standing out

A key finding was that participants 'stood out from the crowd'. They recalled being different to other children; smarter and bolder. They remembered being aware of their own capabilities and having these recognised by others at school and in early career. This included intellectual and career potential and in later career they stood out as the 'only woman in the room', the 'only senior woman' or in fact, the 'only woman in the organisation'. Thus, standing out from the crowd was considered to be career enhancing: viewed as an advantage as it positioned them as objects of interest and high visibility.

According to participants, the scarcity of female role models or mentors provided an opportunity to do things differently, in their own unique way. The rarity of a 'female point of view' may have increased the acceptability of their ideas and approach in male dominated workplaces as they recalled attracting strong career support from male colleagues. While 'standing out' has historically been shown to increase negative attention on women, this study confirms that visibility is career enhancing with benefits to reputation and for access to opportunities (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Powell, 2012)

Typically, participants recalled accepting being different, as this had been a life-long experience. Some participants specified their difference as 'intelligence' or 'confidence to do anything', often realised at school, but unanimously identified in adulthood. Standing out within a family could indicate features in the family context that may have impacted on their development. Perhaps parents provided more attention to the first born, or focused family attention on the 'successful' child or the odd one out. Acceptance or rejection of family values may have influenced the type of attention they received, or perhaps it was due to genuine individual differences.

A further feature of the stories from older participants was that they stood out in their early lives because they completed secondary school in the 1950s and 1960s, at a time when

few girls did. They also went to university, again, an unusual choice at a time when most women did not pursue a professional career. It was also a time when a university education was viewed as unnecessary for some industries and often perceived as the purview of the rich (Macintyre, 2009). This points to the value of having appropriate financial support and approval from parents to pursue their tertiary education goals and the courage and motivation to resist gendered societal role expectations.

While they did not try to stand out at work, participants suggested they did so because they were women in a male-dominated business world. However, they recalled wanting to stand out on merit and for their hard work, as they 'worked harder than their male counterparts'. They did not want to 'make a big noise' about their qualities but conversely, advised others to 'try to stand out' by 'asking for what you want', 'selling your ability and skills' and 'making things happen for yourself' rather than waiting quietly for offered opportunities.

These findings indicate that standing out was not perceived as a negative factor contrary to the literature (e.g. Bagihole, 2006; Buse, Bilimoria & Perilli, 2013; Kanter, 1977; Sheridan, 2002). They did not see themselves as 'tokens' and rejected the idea of the incongruity of the 'double bind' dilemma of being a 'good woman' and an effective leader. The Groysberg (2008) image of a 'superwoman' was downplayed. This finding confirms that minority status increases visibility (Powell, 2012), a career-enhancing factor (Holton & Dent, 2016) and questions the idea of vulnerability associated with standing out (Szirom, 1991). Fitzsimmons and Callan (2016b) also show visibility as an important characteristic, as one of a set of key capitals valued by corporate CEOs.

Hard work and intelligence

Hard work and having a strong work ethic are central for career success. This finding supports the notion that participants stand out because of their hard work and other skills with visibility promoting opportunities for career progression.

A strong work ethic with the ability for hard work was seen to be inherited from one or both of their parents, with participants recalling modeling of 'working long hours' and 'having hard working parents' as a significant influence on their future work habits. Participants recalled their own experiences of working hard from an early age as fundamental to their success. Working in weekend and holiday jobs and in family-owned corner stores allowed participants to practice coping with adult responsibilities, involving money and dealing with adults.

The necessity for hard work was exemplified by comments such as "working hard is a given" (Jill) and "hard work is at the heart of success" (Maureen) confirming other studies which identify hard work as a central feature of career success (Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Holton & Dent, 2012; Williams, 2000).

This acceptance of hard work was integrated into adult working lives of participants who cited long hours and wholehearted effort as a demonstration of commitment throughout their careers, necessary for success. They recalled making social sacrifices to ensure they could commit unreservedly to their work, including prioritising work above making time for friends and family relationships. Participants cited an expectation to 'put work first', perceiving this to be a 'reasonable cost' associated with subsequent success.

Universal insistence that hard work was the foundation of success may be explained as a learned and habitual family narrative developed from childhood values. Alternatively, it

might be demonstrating a particularly female hesitation to boasting or self-aggrandizement about other qualities.

Participants also cited a necessary level of intelligence as critical for success. Characteristically, participants described themselves when young as 'pretty smart' or self-deprecatingly 'smart *enough*' to be noticed, later citing that 'intelligence is a critical trait for success'. Having intelligence noticed and rewarded from an early age was seen to build self- confidence with participants recalling recognition by teachers and peers. Perhaps this reluctance to 'boast or brag' was again an attempt to maintain modesty and humility, as part of family values or societal expectations. See section on school success.

While hard work and a strong work ethic were described as essential for career success this was only possible in combination with intelligence, confirming other studies (e.g. Dawkins 1989; Dreher & Bretz, 1991; Judge, Higgins, Thoreson & Barrick, 1999; Schellenberg, Krauss, Hättich & Häfeli; Siegel & Ghiselli, 1971; Strenze, 2007). Likewise, Fitzsimmons and Callan (2016b) highlight cognitive skills as important capital for CEOs in the corporate field. Participants typically reported that 'it is not enough just to work hard' and 'be clever'; success hinges on a combination of these aspects, together with other important characteristics and attributes.

The third part of the triad includes a combination of qualities centred on self-belief, a sense of independence, determination, passion and a positive and hopeful outlook. This includes resilience in the face of setbacks and reliance on personal integrity to 'do the right thing'. These are seen as essential characteristics, born in early childhood but further developed through experiences and relationships in childhood and adulthood. See Figure 5 for the suite of seven success enabling personal characteristics, equating to important career capital, which underpins success. Note the foundational support of integrity on which the

other personal qualities depend, which when combined result in participant ability to 'stand out'.

Belief in yourself

Confidence was identified as an enabling quality, part of the suite of characteristics in the third aspect of the triad. Participants described feeling confident as they moved from childhood, which was further developed by life events and adult experiences and relationships. Confidence was described as an inner strength; a feeling of belief in one's own capabilities, merits and judgment (also termed self-confidence, self-efficacy and self-belief). This was demonstrated through self-assurance, assertiveness and a positive self-image.

In early life, participants recalled 'being successful in all school activities', 'recognised by teachers and parents as clever and capable' or 'I just knew that I could do anything I set my mind to'. Confidence was a feature of childhood and a highly valued feature in adulthood reported as an enabling factor for 'getting what one wanted', for 'having a go' and 'for standing up for yourself and others'. It was recalled as a helpful mechanism for adapting to circumstances and navigating through career obstacles. See Figure 6 for influences on development of characteristics in early life.

In adulthood, confidence was reported to be essential for 'getting your own way' cited as a career enhancing mechanism. Confidence was also necessary to enable participants to 'move on' from job to job without being overly tied to the original task or role. Baxter describes this as taking a "passion leap" (Baxter, 2013 p. 43, in Breekveldt) when one is not entirely ready for change but prepared to take a calculated risk, confident that it will work out well. Women sometimes find 'moving on' difficult (Szirom, 1991).

Participants reported high levels of confidence allowed them to minimalise or ignore problems typically associated with the intangible obstacles of the 'glass ceiling' (Conroy,

1993; Still, 1994; Ryan, Haslam & Postems, 2007). Participants such as Gloria and Maureen cited their confidence as central to their ability to work in male-dominated workplaces at a time when gendered stereotypes set women apart. They recalled ignoring discriminatory practices with the firm belief that they were capable of overcoming any obstacles.

This confirms research that shows a well-developed sense of confidence is a career supporting characteristic linked to early career experiences and developed over time (Coleman, 2011; Fitzsimmons, 2011) with positive outcomes in terms of salary, status and career satisfaction (Abele, Hagmaier & Spurk, 2016). Self-efficacy is shown as key capital by Fitzsimmons and Callan (2016b) including aspects of confidence when under pressure and belief in one's own judgment. In this study, confidence was linked to independence in thinking, decision making and action taking.

Leaving the nest

Independence is another feature in the suite of important personal characteristics, reported to be valuable for realising opportunities through education (leaving home for school or university) and seeking employment interstate and internationally. Independence in making important life decisions and managing without direct family support was viewed as critical for participants in 'leaving the nest'.

Not relying upon others was characteristic, with an ability to 'stand my ground' and to make 'the tough decisions' helpful at all career stages. Common also was the cited instantiation of independence in traveling alone overseas (Gloria, Maureen, Colleen), working overseas (Gloria, Tina, Elizabeth, Stella) and leaving home at a young age to attend a distant university (Kimberly, Elizabeth, Tina). According to participants growing up in the mid 20th Century, leaving home was uncommon for young unmarried women thus the experiences of the women in this study made them stand out further from their age cohort.

Participants value independence as it enabled them to forge their own career paths and moving figuratively and physically away from home and childhood support mechanisms. This was also viewed as helpful in decision-making and direction setting. A sense of independence is also perceived to insulate against dependence on others, with participants needing to have control.

Development of independence was credited to; taking on adult responsibility through caring for others (Denise, Stella); dealing with frequent relocation (Jill, Michelle) and working while still at school (Angela, Lisa) as previously discussed. Other studies outline associated characteristics as the product of taking on adult responsibility early including optimism and a positive attitude (e.g. Coleman, 2011; Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007; Seligman, Reivich, Laycox & Gilham, 1995).

Vignette 2

Vignette - Independence

Traveling to a far-off city at twelve years of age to attend boarding school for Kimberly and her siblings was part of her close-knit farming family habitus, anticipated and accepted as part of growing up. Education for their children was a priority for Kimberly's parents, seen as insurance for their financial future and security. She understood and appreciated the 'push' from her parents, especially from her mother who was insistent that her daughter receive the education that she had been denied. Attendance at a boarding school required a high degree of self-management, viewed as a catalyst for developing a sense of independence and continuing to be demonstrated when she went on to attend university in a different state. Kimberly recalled that years of self-reliance at school and university enabled her to envisage working overseas, experience, which was career enhancing.

True Grit

Determination was another characteristic in the suite; identified as an enabling quality and a 'natural' part of personality that develops with age. This "grit" (Kimberly) provides the force needed to give direction and maintain momentum in career advancement.

Determination is perceived to be fundamental in helping overcome hardships such as family dysfunction, career set backs, personal tragedy (e.g. death of a husband) and the challenges of single parenthood. Determination is recognised as enabling women to 'carry on' and to 'keep going' when times were tough. It was exemplified by terms such as drive, conviction, or resolve and links to an all-important positive optimistic attitude. Also, see section - Hope for the future.

The finding that determination is an important career success characteristic confirms Duckworth and Gross (2014, p. 320) who found that success can be linked to a certain doggedness or 'grit' required when women are faced with setbacks. Likewise, Ryan (1999) describes how high achieving women have 'chutzpah' (Ryan, 1999), a Yiddish word describing determined boldness, cheek or audacity, or as participants recalled a single-minded resolve to persist with career aspirations and to get ahead. Determination is consistently identified as a career enabling quality (Bowman, Worthy & Greyser, 1965; Coleman, 2011; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Holton & Dent, 2012; Trahey, 1977; Tharenou, 2005), confirming a link between determination, hard work and enthusiasm (Coleman, 2011; Holton & Dent, 2012; Trahey, 1977; Tharenou, 2005).

The current study confirms determination and enthusiasm are part of an essential suite of characteristics that complement hard work and intelligence, each one not enough to singularly enable success.

Loving what you do

Passion for work was identified as an important career success factor. According to participants, access to work that was viewed as purposeful, important and satisfying was essential; they needed to love their work. In optimal conditions, participants were able to use their passion and vision as a strong sense of strategic direction, providing a framework for their careers. They described how these qualities are important for 'making a

difference', in both their organisation and the wider world. Participants considered passion (described as an intense desire or compelling enthusiasm for their work) as a personal quality that helped them to enact their vision for a better future.

Indicative of participant sentiments, "passion and vision [are needed] in order to excite others to believe in you and the change you are driving" (Lisa), as well as "following your passion…happy doing what you are doing" (Narelle, Tina). Similarly, Sonia reported that her passion for "big issues; childcare, schools, discrimination, democracy" determined her career direction and helped her gauge her own success. Her measurement of success was described as her ability to 'make the world a better place' through her overarching vision for social change.

Other studies also show passion to be an important trait for career success (Judge, Higgins, Thoreson & Barrick, 1999; Schellenberg, Krauss, Hättich & Häfeli, 2016), often linked to courage and fearlessness (Duckworth, Peterson, Mathews & Kelly, 2007; Duckworth & Gross, 2014; Sinclair, 1994; Trahey, 1977). Passion is considered an element of a strong self-concept (a career anchor) providing drive and sustenance for career direction (Schein 1996; Schein & Van Maanen, 2013).

Hope for the future

According to participants, career success depends on a positive outlook exemplified by hope, optimism and enthusiasm and described as positive qualities. They recalled having a sense of hope from an early age, being energetic children: full of enthusiasm, even when faced with adverse circumstances and taking these attitudes into adulthood. They typically recounted 'looking on the bright side' and being 'optimistic and enthusiastic' all through life. This was demonstrated by their eagerness to go to work, to 'stay the distance' and to persist when problems arose. Participants reported the benefits of having a 'glass half full' attitude in helping them to 'bounce back' after family adversity in childhood and other

setbacks. This extended to dealing with adulthood hardship, such as the death of a husband, divorce, single parenthood, or career setbacks, providing resilience and tenacity to 'get going again'.

Participants valued hopefulness, describing it as a mechanism to change their own thinking and make the best of every situation, necessary in turning situations around to enable them to recognise opportunities and promote new ways of approaching challenges. These findings confirm other studies finding enthusiasm and optimism are linked to career success (Coleman, 2011, Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007; Seligman, Reivich, Laycox & Gilham, 1995) and resilience (Holton & Dent, 2012).

Vignette 3

Vignette - Optimism

Sometimes staying hopeful and optimistic was not easy. There were times when things were really gloomy for Michelle and she wondered if she could hold on. Losing her husband in an accident, when her family was young was a prime example. "Necessity was a great motivator" helping her to stay positive. This would not have been enough without the support of her family and her employer. She remembered times when she was "like a duck paddling furiously under the water" while trying to appear calm and confident on the surface, confident and optimistic that everything would "go well in the end".

Being able to sleep at night

Personal integrity is identified as a keystone quality. Participants typically described integrity as 'being true to yourself', 'standing for what you believe', thus resulting in honest and ethical behaviour valued for transparent and effective leadership (Kimberly, Joanne, Denise, Linda). Integrity was consistently described as an important attribute of success, part of a definition of success and cited as a valued personal quality.

Additionally, incongruity between organisations, other individuals and personal integrity

was given as a reason to move organisations. This finding confirms other studies (Mavens, Williams, Bryans & Patterson, 2015; Parry & Proctor-Thompson). Fitzsimmons and Callan (2016b) show that integrity is one of seven identified key CEO capitals. However, participants cautioned that maintaining integrity is not always simple. Participants highlighted that actions and behaviours were sometimes at odds with personal integrity when others directed their work (e.g. early career). However, Kimberly suggested that "you get braver at maintaining your stand" as leadership skills develop and authority increases, forwarding the idea that integrity is easier to maintain when you are the boss and have power to make change.

Vignette 4

> **Vignette-Integrity**
>
> Elizabeth explained that tough times call for strong leadership with personal integrity at the core. She was proud that her decisions and actions were guided by honesty and trustworthiness. This was instantiated in her "pragmatic, truthful and straightforward manner" in dealing with staff. She recalled that candour, even when "bad news" was delivered such as information about cutbacks and downsizing, enabled her to "sleep at night" confident that she had been honest, trustworthy and fair. It was important to her that she "do the right thing" especially when it was difficult.

Figure 5 Suite of success enabling characteristics

4.2.4. Interpretation of how participants define and understand career success.

Section 4.2. has focused on how participants define, understand and gauge career success and how personal characteristics are viewed as important for career success. This includes how definitions of career success can be viewed differently over time.

Career success was largely defined and understood in terms of underlying personal and relational aspects, highlighting the importance of personal fulfilment. Success was shown to be gauged largely by internal measures of job satisfaction, gained through relationships, the quality of work experience, being held in high regard and having the ability to control one's own life and career. However, status and recognition were also deemed important.

For example, traditional outward success symbols such as prestigious job titles and high salaries were also part of the definition. As such, having a prestigious role title and a high salary was perceived as social capital or "credentials" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243) that afforded the participants' status 'in the field' (ibid). Status through reputation was linked to attracting clients, patients and collegial support, signaling to other players in the same field that participants possessed credentials worth taking note of.

The 'field' or social space in which this study is situated; the corporate world, can be seen as a 'playing field' regulated by a set of abstract rules and conditions (Bourdieu, 1986) and where the success of the 'players' is determined by the volume and type of credentials they possess and by how well they 'play the game' (ibid). Participants identified dispositions (detailed later on), considered to enable them to be successful players.

Cultural and social capital generated through personal dispositions can be accumulated (Bourdieu, 1986), meaning that effective utilisation of dispositions enables individuals to benefit from who they are and where they come from. If the accrued capital is aligned with what is valued in the field (e.g. home, school, corporate workplace) individuals are able to access and acquire further capital (ibid), in this study shown through hierarchical promotion or alliances. Individuals who possess and activate appropriate and valued capital have access to power and dominance in the field. This is important for leadership, which is viewed as the central career goal for participants and as a sign of their success.

However, notions of which social and cultural capital were valued by participants was somewhat contested and at times, contradictory. For example, while participants valued the idea of prestigious role titles and high salaries, it was seemingly also important to downplay the importance of these aspects. As such, participants highlighted the value of these overt symbols in the success of others, yet pointed out that money and status were not how they defined their own success. Furthermore, participants acknowledged that

reputation was often based on these aspects, so *was* implicitly and overtly linked to career success. Participants may have perceived value in presenting themselves in a self-effacing and modest way, wanting to be seen in a good light; conforming to their commonly held belief that "no one likes a showoff" (Sonia) and that career success is about "more than money" (Angela). Perhaps they wanted to reject being viewed in stereotypic terms of "hard nosed, money driven" (Stella) career women.

Participants linked their ideas of career success to power and control of people and money, signaled by job titles such as their own (e.g. CEO, Principal, Managing Director) and described in general by them as 'leadership'. However, a seemingly recurring conflict emerged about how they described themselves and other women. For example, the participating women often made references to other successful women in our interviews, where they would introduce them using their formal career titles (e.g. 'Have you met [name]? She is the CEO of [company name].' However, when describing themselves, such formal titles were never used. Instead, participants used a more modest and general description of their own positions. Perhaps, participants considered referring to their own formal job titles as unnecessary as the discourse was largely focused on their perceptions of underlying enabling factors and their titles were already known through the recruitment process. This was consistent with other findings in the study where participants were reluctant to sound boastful about personal characteristics, such as intelligence.

Participants explained how their definitions of career success had changed over time, determined by temporal professional and personal circumstances. For example, participants recalled seeing success in changing ways as their own career priorities altered through career stages, family responsibilities, socio-historical events (e.g. death of a husband or divorce) and organisational context. Indicatively, in early career, ideas about success aligned with promotion and career advancement, while in later stages when they

had 'made it to the top', participants focused more on the impact their leadership. This highlights that career success was viewed as a dynamic social construct.

Importantly, participants perceive that career success is underpinned by possessing and favouring certain dispositions, with intelligence and hard work identified as essential for career success. Other characteristics utilised in combination (e.g. confidence, independence, determination, optimism, enthusiasm) (see section 4.2.3) were identified as important underlying and enabling dispositions. Participants also placed importance on ethical practices, identifying 'integrity' as a benchmark of success. Kimberly linked this disposition to her ability to 'sleep at night' (see section 4.2.3.8). Choice of organisation, type of work, style of leadership and importance of authentic relationships with others was indicative of the importance of integrity in their practice aligned to a need to do 'valuable work' that 'makes a positive difference to the world' (see section 4.2.1.3). Participants typically presented themselves in a seemingly modest manner, reaffirming apparent conflict about their desire to appear self-effacing.

The value of personal dispositions lies in their combined effect, integrated as ingrained habits, skills and understandings, or habitus (Bourdieu, 1986). The concept of habitus explains governing practices and attitudes, influencing how participants present themselves to others and representing an embodied form of cultural capital (ibid). Habitus is viewed as enduring; important as it is developed early and can effectively be transferred to new settings (Bourdieu, 1977).

Dispositions were viewed as differentiating participants from their siblings in childhood. These differences went beyond genetic make-up, with several participants recognising similiarities with sisters in terms of intellect, but recognising a vast difference in temperament and motivation (see section 4.3.2), which can be viewed as aspects of habitus. Furthermore, many participants recalled optimism and enthusiasm being

persistent characteristics from a young age, shaping their hopeful view of their world. They remembered being rewarded for their aptitude and hard work at school, expecting this to continue. Looking back, they described their positive outlook as enabling them to have a go at anything, able to overcome setbacks and confident of success, developing and drawing successfully on their habitus.

In adulthood, standing out on merit (e.g. formal qualifications, range of work experience, expertise), which reflects valuable cultural, was preferred. However, as standing out as rare women in a male-dominated world, they had to learn the 'rules of the game' in order to attract enough attention to engender support and acceptance, but not "make too much fuss" (Stella) which might disrupt the masculine status quo and "scare the horses" (Sonia). They had to find their own way of 'playing the game' that enabled their acceptance into the corporate field or 'team' as an outsider; 'othered' (Johnson, 2014, in Howley et al.) as a woman. While gender rarity made them highly visible, this was reluctantly acknowledged as an advantage of standing out.

Individuals are able to generate valued social and cultural capital from their habitus, not easily explained by singling out dispositions. In other words, career success can be explained by how effectively individuals can actuate their habitus, accumulating capital and accessing further opportunities to accrue additional capital, although this does not necessarily take into account contextual factors. This study confirms that career success cannot be attributed to a set formula or a list of characteristics and what constitutes success is subject to a multitude of individual differences (Szirom, 1991; Sandberg, 2015). The perceived antecedents for career success are presented in section 4.3.

4.3. Antecedent career success enabling factors

The following section presents findings in response to questions regarding experiential and relational factors considered to be influential in shaping participant development. The key

findings highlight the important role of family background and experiences and educational aspirations and success in supporting the development of career-enhancing personal characteristics before participants entered the adult workforce (Sections 4.3.1 – 4.3.3). Additionally, participants attributed career value to their experiences from all spheres of their lives, not simply their work experiences but an integration of their early family life, their geographical locations and their relationships along the way.

This section also presents findings about the antecedent influence of broader socio-cultural and historical forces on families and society in regards to the development of success enhancing characteristics. A further key finding is that attitudes towards education, safety and financial security and the role of women in the workforce were impacted by the effects of The Great Depression and World War II, especially in terms of how children. Social change brought about by the Women's Movement was also perceived to influence educational and occupational opportunities.

4.3.1. Influence of family background and early life experiences

According to the participants their family background and relationships and childhood experiences both at home and at school, shaped their lives and impacted their careers by enabling them to accrue valued cultural and social capital from an early age. This section (4.3.1) presents the findings drawn from responses about the positive influence of early life experiences and relationships on participants' development.

Key findings show that participants attribute the influence of family and experiences in childhood as important training opportunities and precursors to the development of a range of career-enhancing qualities. Early life events, experiences and relationships were viewed as shaping the development of personal characteristics that guided behaviour and actions, setting them up with appropriate skills and understandings for success at work. See Figure 6 for enabling factors in childhood.

Figure 6 Success enabling factors of childhood
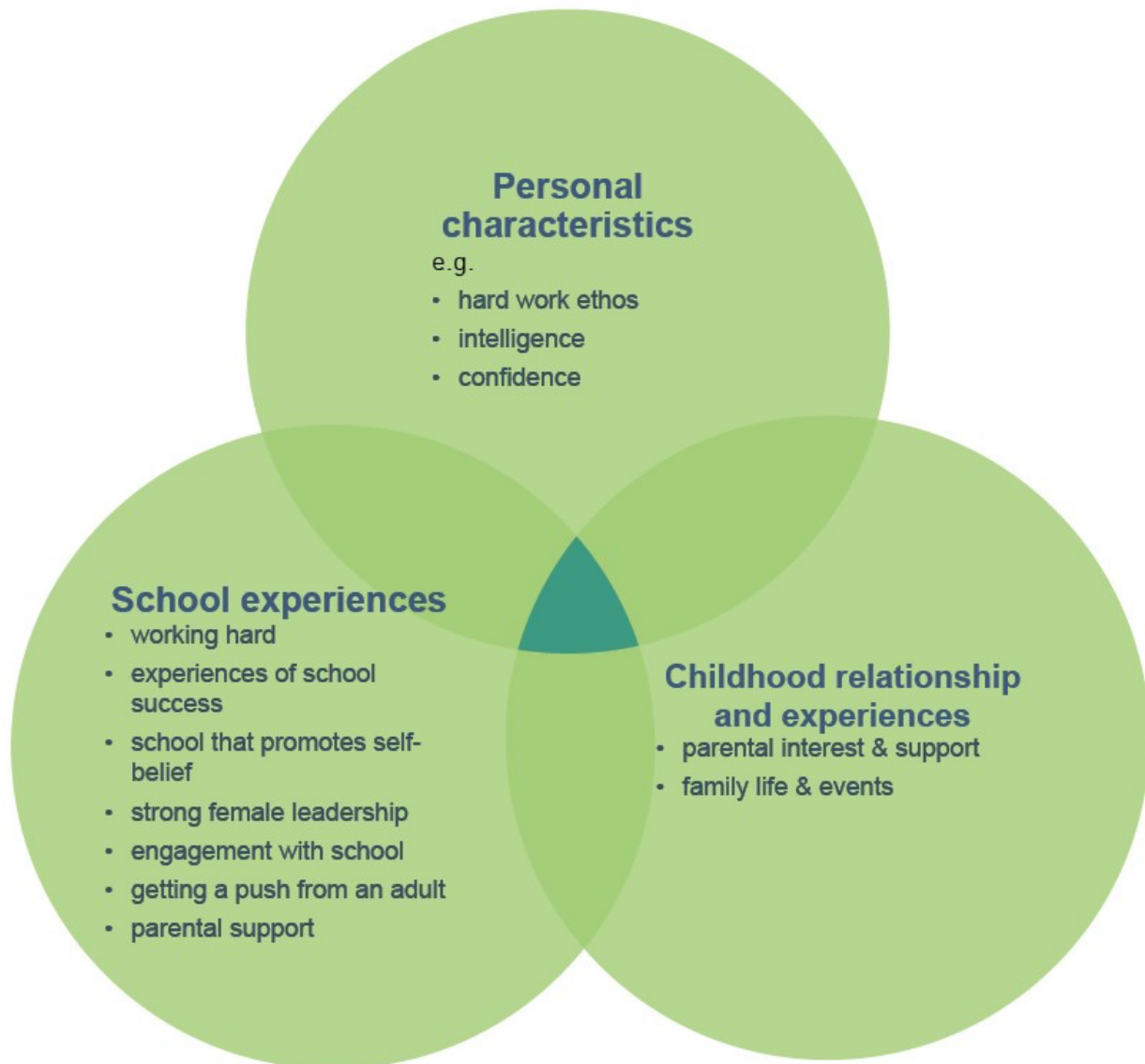
Family Relationships

Key findings are that positive personal characteristics are developed in childhood, resulting from a supportive environment with encouraging parents, but can also be developed in adverse conditions where relationships are dysfunctional or in families who experience loss or dislocation. Participants valued growing up affirmed and encouraged at home, in supportive relationships with one or both parents. A close relationship with one or both parents is seen to contribute to the development of a sense of well being, confidence and independence; important characteristics for career success. Participants recall being

supported by a parent or parents to do their best at school and home, with shared expectations of achievement and that their abilities and endeavours were recognised and valued. These adults provided a gentle 'push'. In the absence of a supportive parent, another significant adult, such as a teacher, filled this role.

While studies of successful women (e.g. Evans & Kelley, 2012; Hennig & Jardim, 1977a) find that close relationships with fathers are key, the findings in this study question the importance of that relationship. For some participants, the father–daughter relationship was strained and these participants recall that their father contributed to an unhappy home live and marital disharmony. Nevertheless, these participants linked their relationships with their fathers to the development of their attitudes of self-reliance and personal strength as a response to these adverse conditions. These characteristics are seen as crucial factors later in life, manifesting as independence and determination and confidence in overcoming challenges. Fitzsimmons (2011) similarly contends that family dysfunction or poor relationships between daughters and fathers does not prohibit career success.

Some participants recalled a close and loving relationship with their fathers, valuing their praise for their achievements and for taking an active interest in their lives and activities. However, family dysfunction or distant father–daughter relationships typically encouraged the participants to forge close, supportive relationships with mothers, perceived as an important support mechanism. Additionally, participants describe the absence of fathers through work or war commitments as decreasing their dependence on their fathers and increasing their reliance on their mothers.

A dominant theme is that supportive relationships with mothers are viewed as important. This was exampled by Maureen who remembered "I was particularly close to [Mum} and I heard that message loud and strong that you do not want to end up without the ability to make your own choices" These relationships are viewed as providing a critical 'push' for

daughters to make something of themselves and are helpful in developing confidence and self-belief. Participants describe how their mothers' support extended to encouragement for them to complete secondary schooling and to attend university. The mothers of participants had a vision for their daughters to have a better life than their own, perhaps to compensate for their own missed opportunities, or as a response to changing social attitudes towards the role of women. The importance of close relationships with mothers confirms other studies (e.g. Goldberg, Prause, Lucas, Thompson & Himsel, 2008; Riggio & Desrochers, 2006). Even ambivalent childhood relationships with parents, described by participants as 'neither close nor distant', were attributed to providing passive support and approval, demonstrated by financial assistance and permission to pursue plans.

Family composition

A key finding was that family composition was not perceived by participants to be central to their career success. However, being an only child, the first-born, or quasi-only child (e.g. significant age gaps exist between siblings) is a commonality among 12 of the participants, consistent with other studies that link birth order to career success (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a). However, while participants acknowledged the value of parental attention, growing up feeling special and being affirmed and praised by adults, this was not exclusively the experience of only or first-born children and not reported to be a critical factor.

Other participants who were the middle or youngest children contradict the idea that birth order is instrumental in shaping the development of women leaders. Some participants have as many as four siblings, countering the idea that high-achieving women come typically only from small families (e.g. less than three children) (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Keown & Keown, 1982) and confirming Evans and Kelly (2002), who found that family socio-economic status and dynamics are more influential than family size. See section on Family dynamics and childhood experiences for details of socio-economic status.

Participants from multi-children families report growing up with siblings and not having the benefit of their parents' undivided attention crediting this as a way to develop interpersonal skills (e.g. negotiation, assertiveness, compromise), resilience and self-confidence in dealing with siblings. Other participants describe having brothers, or brothers and sisters. These findings do not confirm the importance of the absence of brothers (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a), but rather confirms Fitzsimmons, (2011), who contends that the presence of brothers may be beneficial and that family size and composition is less important than previously reported.

All-girl households suggested as a predictor for success (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a) are not universally evident among the participants although some family composition includes all-girls (e.g. Maureen, Jill and Colleen). Maureen, Jill and Colleen do not attribute having only sisters as a key to their success, citing instead their individual differences as enabling-factors.

Participants 'stand out' from their siblings by virtue of their motivations, abilities and personalities. 'Standing out' was a feature of home life and beyond, with acknowledgment of the rejection of role models portrayed by women that they knew (e.g. mothers), isolated participants from their siblings, extended family and the larger community. While participants did not directly follow in their mother's footsteps, they attributed their home life (e.g. relationships with mothers, fathers, siblings, community) as influencing their development and helping them to develop important personal characteristics that were fundamental to their ability to make a success of their career.

This study confirms the idea that social forces in childhood such as parental attitudes and behaviour have more impact than genetic composition (Wojtalik, Breckenridge, Gibson Hancox & Sobehart, 2007) on development. An explanation for why siblings who share biology and environment, can develop so differently points to a complexity as yet

unanswered.

Universally, participants describe developing certain personal characteristics and attributes (e.g. confidence, optimism, enthusiasm, independence, resilience, self-reliance, determination) in childhood regardless of family size, birth order or sex of siblings. However, a key finding was catalysts for the development of these characteristics and attributes were founded in both favourable and adverse conditions.

Family dynamics and childhood experiences

Key findings are that experiences during childhood are viewed as catalysts for the development of a range of positive qualities regardless of the nature of the family dynamics. As described in the previous section enabling characteristics are perceived to be developed in happy family homes as well as in adverse circumstances.

A key finding is that participants felt loved and valued at home regardless of the family dynamics. Some participants describe happy homes while others portrayed adverse home conditions, both perceived to be 'normal', yet they acknowledged developing similar characteristics. Confidence, optimism and independence are born from childhood, seen to be developed as a result of parental support and successful school experiences. Participants who reported adverse home conditions still recalled valuable family support even when there was disharmony or disruption, especially through strong relationships with one or both parents.

A commonality for participants is the identification of growing up in a 'traditional' family between 1940 and 1970, recalling homes where fathers are the main 'breadwinners' and mothers, in general, 'stayed at home'. Participants described growing up in families that were 'normal for the time'. Some participants identified their up bringing as "middle-class", confirming other studies showing that socio-economic status is linked to career success for women (e.g. Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi & Goldberg, 2001). Being middle class is

described as having sufficient financial security to enable travel for family holidays and for children to engage in extracurricular activities such as sport and music lessons. A common feature in the participants' stories is interstate or overseas travel in childhood. Participants regard early travel as an important influence in their development of a worldview or an open mind to possibilities and later career opportunities, confirming other studies (e.g. Assman, 1994; Fitzsimmons, 2011; Webster, 2003).

Despite the similarities in outward appearances in family background and the self-described middle class status of families, there are diverse experiences in family functionality. Participants recall a variety of happy and unhappy childhoods, with differing levels of parental harmony.

Participants describe coping with various adverse circumstances: the death of a parent; extended absence of a parent; assuming responsibility for the care of siblings or dying mother; frequent relocation; and dysfunctional family life. They perceive that good things can came from bad situations, with adversity providing irreplaceable opportunities for development and viewed as ways to develop adult skills and autonomy. Participants recall possessing characteristics of independence, self-reliance, resilience and determination as a result. They recall feeling confident that they could do anything as a result of effectively managing adult responsibilities as children, confirming Seligman, Reivich, Laycox and Gilham (1995).

Participants recall adverse experiences influencing early life-decisions about wanting to take control of their own lives in matters of partnering and financial independence. Additionally, they typically remembered feeling a sense of optimism and enthusiasm for a autonomous future, eager to determine their own destiny and in some cases "wanting to get away from home" (Denise, Michelle) to start their own life.

This suggests that participants were able to make the best of their situation, gaining

strengths from adversity. This finding affirms studies that show that women can leverage dysfunction for their own benefit; developing a "personal drive to achieve" as a response to the "material and emotional insecurity of unfavourable home environments" (Grimshaw & Strahan, 1982, p. 8). Thus, adversity can provide unique catalysts for the development of compensatory characteristics, such as resilience (Fitzsimmons, 2011; Feldt, Kokko, Kinnunen & Pulkkinen, 2005; Masten, Hubbard, Gest, Tellegen, Garmezy & Ramirez, 1999).

Vignette 5

> **Vignette - Childhood adversity**
>
> *Denise experienced a disturbed childhood losing her mother after a protracted illness. Her merchant seaman father was rarely home leaving her with adult responsibilities before her time. As the only child, she learned to effectively manage herself and care for her ailing mother, in the process developing independence and self-reliance. "I knew that after looking after Mum I could do anything." As she grew up, she realised how little control she wielded and looked for ways to allay that in her future life. Despite a childhood punctuated by grief, she felt loved and supported by both parents. Even in her father's persevering sadness, she knew he valued her and wanted her to do well. However, "getting away from the sad silence at home was my teenage goal, so I took off to [Business college] to equip myself for a paying job; my road to financial independence and control of my own destiny".*

Keown and Keown (1982) highlight the importance of a secure, stable family environment as a salient factor in the background of successful women. This type of family background was viewed as underpinning the development of career important characteristics of self-confidence, independence and self-reliance. However, findings in this study suggest that these positive characteristics can also be developed in adverse conditions.

Vignette 6

> **Vignette - Dysfunctional family life**
>
> *Maureen was scared of her father, worried that he would hurt the family. Protecting herself, her younger siblings and her mother from her father's volatility taught Maureen to develop coping strategies and inner strength. She linked the success of these strategies (e.g. keeping quiet, creating a physical barrier, pleading with her father, comforting her siblings) to the development of characteristics such as confidence, independence and self-reliance. She understood later that her mother was tied to her father financially and unable to leave the marriage. Maureen attributes this knowledge as shaping her attitudes towards judicious partnering and the maintenance of financial independence although it took her "three marriages to get it right".*

While frequent relocation is perceived as an unfavourable childhood condition, it is also considered to underpin the development of ongoing independence, confidence and self-reliance, all-important foundational qualities for later career success. Frequent home relocation due to father's work commitments resulted in childhood challenges associated with settling into new schools and making new friends (Jill, Michelle and Carolyn). However, participants acknowledge that overcoming difficulties helped them to develop life-long attributes.

Participants recall developing strategies to mitigate the adversity of relocation such as focusing on academic achievement. Jill describes how playing the role of "the clever new kid", made the transition to a new school easier, ensured attention from teachers and helped with her academic progress. Alternatively, Michelle remembered protecting herself from the impact of frequent relocation by avoiding establishing relationships with teachers or engaging in close friendships with other students. Distancing helped her to cope and helped her develop a sense of independence. According to participants, developing coping strategies to deal with adversity helped them to operate independently without reliance on family, friends or teachers.

4.3.2. Experiences of schooling

Further findings are that hard work and being clever at school are viewed as important factors for the foundation of a successful school career, transferrable as career capital to an adult workplace. Early recognition of capability, the support of a significant adult and completion of secondary school are positive factors linked to later career outcomes. This section presents the findings about the influence of school experiences and relationships on the participant development, especially in terms of how it shaped personal characteristics and qualities.

Hard work brings rewards

According to participants, hard work at school led to school achievement, with the expectation of continued success. They recalled linking persistent effort and perseverance at school to recurring school achievement. Effort was valued and reinforced by teachers and parents. A close relationship between home and school is noted as a commonality, with recollection of parental interest in school activities.

Participants were held to high academic and social standards, which they credited with helping to build a strong work ethic and develop qualities of resilience, determination and self-confidence. They view these as important foundations for their later career success. Likewise, performance skills were practiced and perfected, developed through hard work and persistence. This was particularly relevant for those participants taught by nuns in Catholic schools. Hard work was rewarded with team selection (e.g. sport, debating, choir), praise and awards, motivating future persistence and the expectation of more success, confirming Fitzsimmons, Callan and Paulsen (2014) and Teese and Polesel (2003).

This finding highlights the importance of the early development of a strong work ethic, encompassing qualities such as hard work, resilience and determination, developed and reinforced by similar school experiences in different types of school environments.

Participants possessed the type of capital valued by teachers, principals and parents in the school 'field', supported by their home and school habitus which afforded them advantage in utilising educational opportunities.

The influence of schooling is perceived to be less significant by participants who attended school after 1980. However, participants recall that hard work alone was not enough to succeed at school; they also needed to be clever.

Doing well at school

Being intelligent or clever is viewed as critical for school success and subsequent career success. Participants see 'being smart' as a foundational quality on which their career is built. They describe "being intelligent as a given" (Sonia) for success. Participants perceived their intelligence to privilege them at school in terms of attention and affirmation from adults and key to attaining good grades.

Early recognition of intelligence is perceived as important in school success. Identification of intelligence and capability is made mostly by teachers and sometimes by parents, although commonly participants are aware of their own capabilities and confident of their abilities from an early age. This particular quality was valued at home, at school and later at work, embedded in evolving habitus and valued in overlapping fields. "School and home were linked through the church. There was a great deal of interest and support for what happened at school and at home by parents and the nuns" (Sonia).

Participants recount how attention and affirmation were given to clever girls who worked hard. Sonia recalls being treated as "special" because of her intelligence and her ability to perform, which consequently contributed to her self-confidence and led to her continued expectation of being treated as "special". For participants at school in mid-century, effort was appreciated and valued, meaning that clever girls had a responsibility to do their best and work as hard as possible.

While participants are quick to describe their ability to work hard, they are more reticent in their descriptions of their intelligence. They portray themselves as 'being smart enough' or 'fairly clever', only later admitting to be the 'dux of the school' or 'top of the class'. Universally, participants appear self-deprecating about their intellect. Perhaps hard work was part of their family narrative, valued at home and not perceived as a personal attribute like intelligence. Participants may have been modifying their pride, not wanting to self-aggrandise or boast, or perhaps they had been taught to value self-effacement at school or at home. Sonia acknowledges that humility is a byproduct of her relationship with nuns, keeping her from "getting ahead of herself" or "big-headed".

A feature of participants' school stories involved undertaking senior mathematics and science at a time when girls were not expected to excel in these subjects. In fact, some girl's schools did not provide teachers or curriculum for senior level mathematics and science. Participants typically ensured they were able to take these subjects by negotiating with the school to use itinerant teachers, work alone or with a partner relying on textbooks if these subjects were unavailable (Gloria, Sonia). Parents supported their daughters' choice of senior mathematics and science, seeing long-term value in a broad subject choice at school (Michelle, Gloria, Sonia).

The participants viewed undertaking these subjects as being instrumental in gaining university entrance and later in choices of career direction, even when these subjects were not specific prerequisites. Being good at mathematics and science was perceived to be an enabling factor as career capital, increasing their legitimacy for a place in a male-dominated corporate world. Some participants cited their interest and ability, especially in mathematics and physics, as a catalyst for their choice of career (Jill, Angela).

Some participants describe not needing to be particularly singled out at school – not needing a 'pat on the back' – self-confident their intellect would enable them to cope with

any school task. Participants typically recall that "I always just knew that I was capable of whatever I set my mind to" (Linda), even for those participants who recall "not being anything particularly special at school" (Michelle) or "doing OK at school" (Jill). This suggests that participants may have possessed certain inherent characteristics of self-confidence, which did not always need to be affirmed by public acclamation.

Success at school went beyond prizes and awards, although participants recalled winning prizes, being 'top of the class' or 'dux of the school' and being selected in performing and debating teams. Valued leadership success is evident from a young age. Participants recalled this as 'being in-charge' at school as a 'prefect' or 'head girl', in church groups or later in student politics at university. These successes prepared them for later leadership experiences and provided valuable training.

Participants perceive their success at school as a result of their own effort, but made possible with the support and acclamation of others. The role of parents (particularly mothers) in helping them to engage with school, to complete secondary school and to aspire to further education, is recognised. Success at school provided participants with the expectation of future success and fuelled anticipation for continued achievement and leadership wherever they were.

These cumulative experiences of success and the support engendered can be viewed as generating important transferrable capital. Participants were able to draw on a rich early life habitus developed and maintained at school and home and carried into adulthood.

A 'push' from a significant adult

The support of adult interest and affirmation of achievement by an adult is valued. Participants recall parental pride in their achievements and support for their ambitions to go to university as providing a reinforcing 'push' towards making something of themselves.

A combination of self-motivation and gentle pressure applied by the support of significant adults such as parents (and some teachers) encouraged participants to persevere with schooling, even in an era when it was not common for girls to complete secondary schooling. Maureen recalls her mother's vehement opposition to her father when he "questioned the value of educating girls" and threatened to withdraw her school fees. Only her Mother's threat to leave the marriage saw him back down. In Stella's case, a teacher acted as a 'proxy' parent, enabling her to overcome setbacks following the death of her mother. This support helped Stella to complete secondary schooling and is remembered as important emotional support.

Participants typically recall their mothers having determined resolve for them to have a good education, previously unavailable to earlier generations of women. A complete school education was viewed as a way to widen future options; it was a stepping-stone for entry to university.

Some participants (e.g. Gloria, Sonia, Maureen) recall a close connection and strong reciprocal support between school, home and community, often through religious faith. Success at school was valued by families and contributed to school reputation. However, some participants recall a separation between home and school, with limited parental involvement. Even where this was the case, participants recalled at least one parent pushing them towards academic achievement.

Vignette 7

> **Vignette - A 'push' from a mother**
>
> *Carolyn's mother believed that Catholics were being excluded from positions of power, a belief widely held among Catholics in the 1960s. Thus, she insisted that her "clever" daughter complete her education in order to counter this imbalance. Carolyn recalls her mother's vicarious ambition for her, not shared by her war-affected father who had simple goals to provide a safe home for his family. Carolyn remembers the force of her mother's rage against inequality for Catholics, rather than about discrimination against women. She considered her mother's "not-so-gentle push" as a positive influence on her development.*

Being a Catholic girl

In this study attending a girl's school is almost a universal feature, with a Catholic upbringing, an added commonality. More than half (10) the participants attended single sex Catholic schools. Traditionally, Catholic schools were led by strong female leaders; members of a religious order (nuns). Older participants considered their Catholic education to have a strong influence on their development, while this was less evident for younger participants.

Participants recall instruction in Catholic schools to be largely in the hands of undertrained teaching nuns, who were inadequate in teaching science and mathematics but exacting in English and performance-based curriculum such as singing (often in Latin), debating, public speaking, music and sport. Participants recall practicing until they were word perfect, devoting time and effort to master skills. They attribute this focused diligence as grounding habits of a lifetime of perseverance, resilience and hard work. They remember being held to high academic and social standards, which they describe as building a strong work ethic and characteristics of resilience and determination (confirming Ryan, 1999; O'Brien, 2008). Importantly, they recall that achievement was expected and valued and that their self-confidence developed as a result. They believed they could do anything asked of them.

The participants recall the nuns (teachers and principals) paying close attention to them,

without distraction of their own families or outside interests. Some remembered loving the nuns and being in awe of their clothing (religious habits) and ways of being. With close connections between school and home, nuns became an extension of participant's families, drawing on resources from both. A habitus featuring the attention from nuns and the relationship between school and home was viewed as a support mechanism for some participants.

Developing empathy for others is viewed as a byproduct of educational experiences, perhaps going some way to explaining the importance of relationships with others in definitions of success (see section 4.2). The school environment and culture perpetuated a sense of responsibility for others and humility for their own gifts and talents, demonstrated when describing personal characteristics.

'Clever' girls did well in Catholic schools, even those who were viewed as too "bold" (Sonia), as they brought credit to the school through performance and achievement. Participants recall being enthusiastic at school, high-spirited and energetic which made them stand out from their peers and attracted the attention of teachers and other adults. This, often charismatic enthusiasm was often discouraged, as it was seen to be at odds with what is was to be a 'good Catholic girl', while conversely admired as a endearing feature. There was something about clever, bold, enthusiastic girls that ensured their visibility, affirming attention and subsequent support from adults and their peer group, which enabled them to lead others, to enjoy school success and to enrich their stores of cultural capital.

Younger participants ascribe less significance to the influence of their Catholic schooling on their development, remembering little about their principals and recalling few influencing teachers. This may be associated with changes to Catholic schools after 1970, with a decline of teaching nuns and fewer single-sex schools (Mulvey, Grindley & Gawith, 2007).

Vignette 8

Vignette - Growing up Catholic

Sonia recalls "the idea propagated by some girls' schools was that success of a woman was seen as her ability to marry a successful man. This was never the gauge used by me for judging success" and never perceived to be part her Catholic school's philosophy of "doing the best with what you have been given". She remembered an insular community of strong women at school, but noted close links between school and home, generated through shared Catholic faith. Living in a close-knit community provided opportunities for others to show interest and provide support to girls without separation of school and home. "Growing up in suburban [city x] in the 1950s everyone knew everyone's business. Friends, neighbours and relatives felt it was their place to discuss my doings". "I received recognition and praise for my achievements from the men around me such as my father, the priest, the postman and even the butcher. My easy relationship with men was forged in childhood and I was never overawed or nervous dealing with them". This helped when establishing a career in a male-dominated area.

All-girls' schools

Going to an all-girls' school was characteristic of participant experience with only two participants attending co-educational schools. Typically, participants attended all-girls private schools, either faith based or non-denominational in governance. See Table 5 for types of schools attended. Participants recall all-girl schools' as insular communities of women, where they were encouraged to keep away from boys, who were viewed as a distraction. The absence of boys may have reduced stereotypical role expectations about what boys and girls could do and eliminated comparisons and competition with boys. The link between successful women and attendance at an all girls' school reflects other studies (e.g. Fitzsimmons, 2011). Also, see previous section *Being a Catholic girl* for information about the impact of nuns in an all-girls setting.

Older participants recall how the education of boys was considered more important than for girls at the time. They recall their schools being less well equipped than the equivalent boys' schools. While this made it difficult to access an adequate science and mathematics

curriculum and appropriately trained teachers, it also provided the opportunity for the development of important self-help practices, which trained the girls to be proactive and self- reliant. As an example, Sonia convinced her Principal to let her stay at school even when the school did not have senior classes, although she had to teach herself senior curriculum from text books.

Table 5 Governance of secondary schools attended by participants

School governance	Single sex schools				Co-educational schools
	Catholic	Protestant	Non-denominational	Government	Government
Number of participants	10	3	1	1	2

The presence of strong women in positions of authority in all-girls' schools had a greater positive influence on the participants if they attended school before 1970. Participants who attended Catholic schools recall being influenced by the strong leadership modeling of their female principals (nuns) and the attention of some of their teachers (also nuns) Participants who remembered their school principals as strong women leaders recall them managing people and finances and role modeling leadership. This helped to "normalise the idea of women being in charge and having authority" (Sonia) at a time when there were few role models of women leaders in public life.

Conversely, participants who went to school after 1970 remember their school principal less clearly and recall being less influenced by their teachers than the older participants, regardless of the type of school they attended. Importantly, most participants viewed their school culture as encouraging girls to expect to be 'working women' and 'whatever they

wanted to be' rather than 'wives and mothers', a traditional time-specific societal expectation. See Table 6 for details of the perceived impact of school environment.

Participants ascribe less influence of their schooling on their development if they attended a single-sex or co-educational *government* school, or a Catholic school with lay teachers. These participants do not recall engaging with school beyond 'getting an education' as a precursor to university entry. They largely attribute their achievements to their own intelligence and efforts.

However, leaving school with a sense of self-belief was a common feature for all participants, confirming Fitzsimmons (2011), who finds that a high level of self-efficacy on school completion helps young women to overcome obstacles and to be career confident. Also, see section 4.2.3 Belief in yourself.

Table 6 Perceptions of impact of school environment

Era of secondary schooling	Participant names	Governance of secondary school	Impact of schooling noted	Acknowledgement of supportive relationships with teachers	Recollection of secondary school Principals	Acknowledgement of supportive school culture
1960s	Gloria	Protestant- all girls	yes	yes	strong female leader	yes
	Stella	Government- co-ed	yes	yes	no	yes
	Sonia	Catholic- all girls	yes	yes	strong female leader- nun	yes
1970s	Maureen	Protestant- all girls	yes	in part	no	yes
	Carolyn	Catholic- all girls	yes	in part	female leader- nun	yes
	Tina	Catholic- all girls	yes	yes	nun	yes
	Elizabeth	Catholic- all girls	yes	no	nun	yes
	Colleen	Catholic- all girls	yes	in part	female	yes
	Jill	Government- co-ed	no	No	No	yes
	Denise	Government- all girls	no	No	No	no
1980s	Michelle	Catholic- all girls	No	no	no	in part
	Linda	Catholic- all girls	in part	in part	female- nun	in part
	Joanne	Catholic- all girls	No	no	no	yes
	Narelle	Protestant- all girls	yes	yes	strong female leader- on-going relationship	yes
Early 1990s	Lisa	Catholic- all girls	in part	No	female leader- nun	in part
	Kimberly	Protestant- all girls	yes	yes	strong female leader	yes
	Angela	Government- all girls	No	in part	No	in part

Going to university

Key findings show that university aspiration and the freedom to make a choice about tertiary education are central to career foundation in this study. Completing secondary school, even though it was not compulsory for any participant, is viewed as a success-enabling factor, as university entry was contingent on successful completion. Thus, 'going to uni' is perceived as a key factor in career success, as it enabled participants to accrue important career capital in the form of skills and knowledge. Formal qualifications serve as an outward sign of legitimacy for a professional career, with a tertiary education viewed as a fundamental career building block.

While completing secondary school was viewed as an important success factor, it was not always easy to do. Older participants recall having to overcome challenges to complete school. These included contradicting social norms of the time when many girls left school at 15 years of age, working until they married. Additionally, some participants were faced with limited access to senior secondary schools as they lived in rural areas. Availability of a full range of subject choices was also a problem for some (see earlier section 4.3 about challenges to taking mathematics and science subjects). For Tina, Kimberly and Elizabeth 'staying at school' was problematic through lack of access to a senior secondary school, necessitating boarding away from home or travelling long distances. In such circumstances, high levels of parental support and personal motivation were required to finish school.

Interestingly, participants of all ages demonstrated a common determination to complete school and aspire to university entry recalling limited expectation for girls to stay at school. Further low expectations were remembered in regard to academic achievement in science and mathematics; even girls choosing these subjects was viewed as an oddity., Yet, they were driven to study these subjects and to continue with education beyond expectations

for girls. Despite any shortcomings of their schooling, school experiences are credited as important to their development and central to them getting a university qualification.

A major difference for women in this study from the experiences of their parents was their freedom to choose to finish school and to attend university. Participants pursued educational aspirations well beyond anything their mothers (and many of their fathers) had been able to access. Participants recall strong maternal support to stay at school and attend university.

Vignette 9

> **Vignette - Overcoming difficulties with secondary school completion**
>
> *Gloria was dismayed in her final school years at her all-girls' private school to discover that she was unable to access the senior science curriculum needed for entry into the study of veterinary science at university. She took it upon herself to learn with the aid of textbooks, the occasional visit of an itinerant science teacher and the company of a friend. Together they cobbled together enough science to pass the exams required for university entry. Losing her father and living through the war years created problems for Gloria, who credited support from her mother and extended family and family expectations for tertiary education, as helping her to overcome difficulties and "go to uni".*

Participants recalled school culture is a supportive mechanism in some cases. Maureen recalls social pressure at school to "do well' and to "go to uni" which was helpful in normalising the idea of tertiary education and career aspirations for women in the early 1970s. Almost all of her cohort (all-girls' Protestant private school) went to university suggesting that these girls, who typically came from families with a high socio-economic status, were supported by a early life habitus where wealth was available and education was valued.

Likewise, Jill recalls being part of a highly competitive, academically driven cohort with aspirations for a university education, fueled by a school culture aligned with academic achievement. Jill recounts the 'push' provided for her by academic competition at school (co-educational government school) to do well, which enabled her to set her sights on

studying medicine at university. Gaining university entry was outward proof of her capability, particularly in "showing [boy x] that I was smarter than he thought and smarter than him". She attributes the effect of her competitive school culture amongst her cohort on her motivation as being greater than any help from teachers or principal. However, Maureen and Jill's experience stands out from others, who recall only a few of their cohort going to university making aspiration to go to university an exception amongst their school girl peers.

Other socio-cultural and historical factors were in play by the mid-1970s, broadening opportunities for the education of girls. This includes the introduction of government funded tertiary education, heralding free university education. Jill, Elizabeth and Tina recall this initiative in 1974 relieved financial pressure on their families for them to go to university.

A significant change in the Australian career landscape came about from the 1970s as secondary school completion followed by university entry became more common, with participants representative of the increasing numbers of women attending university and entering the workforce in greater numbers and in a wider range of jobs and roles than ever before (Teese & Polesel, 2003). By then, university qualifications were increasingly required for most professional industries. Participants commonly cited a university education as a foundation for career development and thus a cornerstone of career success.

Participants attending secondary school after 1980 recall completion of secondary schooling as common practice, with family expectations and on-going support to attend university. Broadened access to tertiary education in the preceding decade encouraged girls to stay at school longer, making 'going to uni' less unusual.

Denise was an exception amongst the participants, choosing to leave school early to attend a business college, a common option for girls at the time. She recalls having no

specific career aspirations apart from "wanting to take control of her own future by starting with a paying job". She recalled later completing a university degree, highlighting the importance of the role of education in her "life fulfilment" (Denise).

Joanne was a further exception, completing secondary school but never engaging with formal university study. She explained that, at the time, her industry (e.g. media production) was not linked to tertiary qualifications so "going to uni wasn't necessary" as there was more practical training available "on the job". She remembered working hard at school and achieving grades, which would enable her to go to university, but making a deliberate choice not to go.

Participants perceive education of all types to be important, as career capital can be gained through school, tertiary training, or 'on the job' and through relationships along the way. Sonia illustrates the views of most participants with her comment, "education is the great enabler of my career…I think that having access to education was the key…education gave me the sense you can work out how to do things". This, combined with formal education being a prerequisite for professional occupations, shows the importance of education as career capital.

Educational experiences at school, the influence of school cultures and supportive relationships with teachers and principals shaped the development of participant characteristics and attitudes, with school success supporting engagement with tertiary education, In similar and different ways, they accumulated important cultural capital through their early years, perceived to influence their career success in later life. See Figure 7 for success enabling factors of childhood.

Figure 7 Influences on development of characteristics in early life
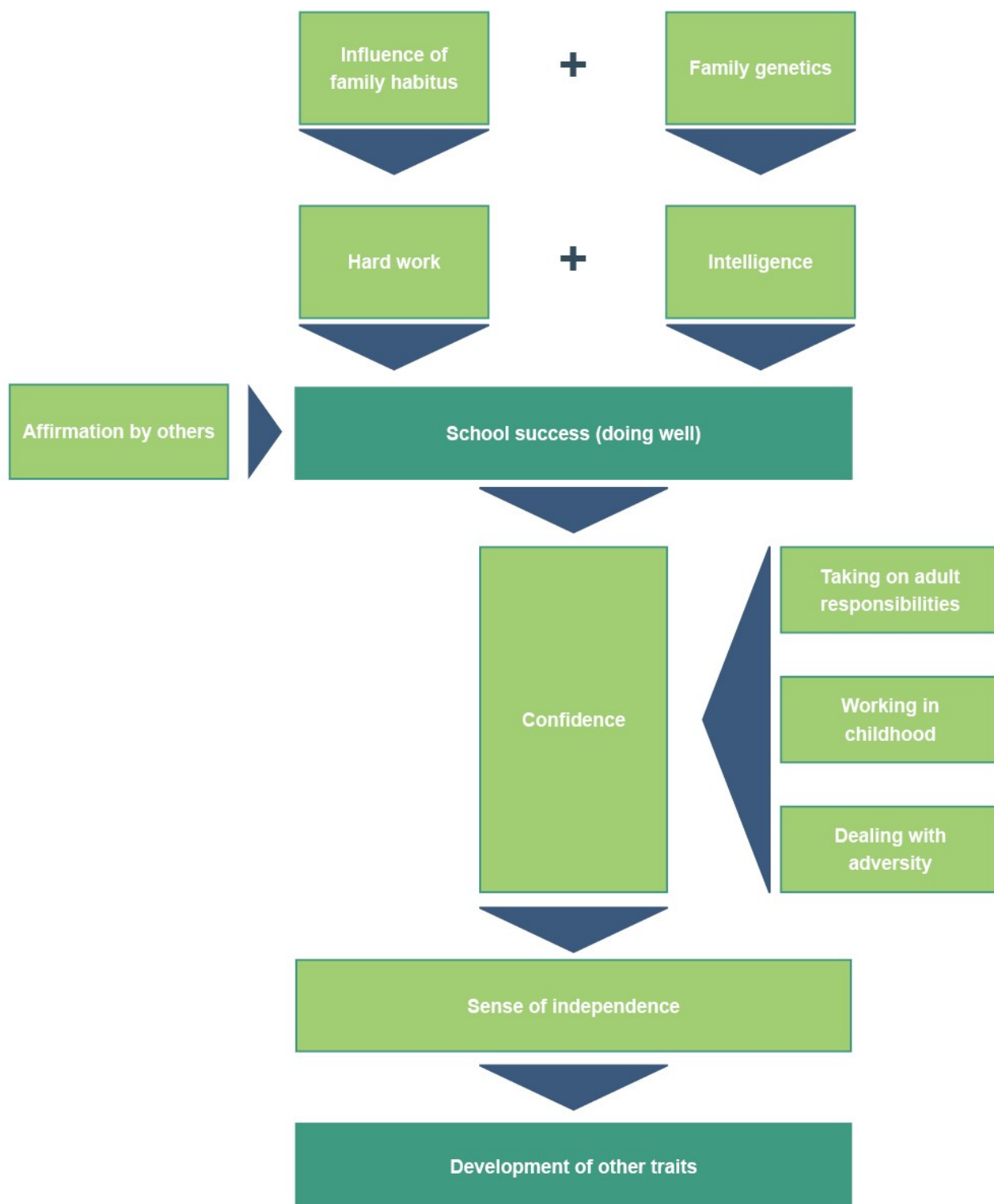
4.3.3. How have historical and socio-cultural contexts influenced participants?

The findings for this section are drawn from responses to questions about the impact of world and local events on participants and their families. The Great Depression, World War II and social change during the 1960s and the 1970s are highlighted as catalysts for societal change, influencing family practices, thus shaping the development of participants as they grew up.

A key finding is that The Great Depression and World War II influenced attitudes towards education, safety and financial security and the role of women in the workforce, particularly impacting how children were raised. Additionally, some participants were affected by the social change brought about by the Women's Movement, changing how some participants thought about their role in society and enabling them to engage with career aspirations. Furthermore, access to free tertiary education in 1974, opened up previously unavailable educational opportunities for some participants. Individual circumstances and participant age impact the degree of influence attributed to social change and certain historical events.

These findings confirm the idea that countries, communities and individuals are influenced by wider historical events. Families are dependent on the communities in which they live (Piterman, 2008), as "no family is an island" (Rodham Clinton, 2006, p. 13). Individuals are influenced economically, politically and socially by what is happening in their local community and by what is happening within their own home (Macintrye, 2009), proving that personal development is shaped by everything that goes on around an individual including family background, societal attitudes and wider world influences (Bourdieu, 1990).

The Great Depression and World War II

Hardships caused by world events influenced how Australian families brought up their children for two generations. The Great Depression (1929–1932) and World War II (1939–1945) greatly impacted intergenerational attitudes about education, safety and financial security. Some participants recall their parents and grandparents experiencing hardships of financial insecurity, the premature death of fathers in war, entry to the workforce at a young age and an inability to complete secondary school. These experiences are perceived as affecting childhoods through the development of protective attitudes to safety, the integration of conservative economic practices and a determination for children to be properly educated, all of which permeated through several generations confirming Macintyre (2009). Participants' parents viewed education as insurance against poverty, with a common belief that hard work, taking opportunities and education would be the differentiating factors in the future.

Vignette 10

> **Vignette - Impact of the Great Depression**
>
> *A common fear of returning to poverty was central to Jill's father's experience. She recounts how "Dad had to leave school at 14 to go shearing when his own Dad died. He had to support his mother and sisters. It was tough during the Depression." His disappointment about having to leave school prematurely permeated his life. Jill considered that the result of his hardship was a resolve to ensure his children received a complete education as security against hard times. Trepidation about debt and economic hardship was central to teaching his children to avoid banks and indebtedness, an attitude that Jill identifies as still influencing her many years later.*

Fear of returning to poverty resulted in continuing self-reliance and financial conservatism. Some participants recall growing up with a "waste not want not" philosophy (McCalman, 1995, p. 108), with parents and grandparents demonstrating self-sufficiency such as growing their own vegetables. Others recall their parents' fear of debt and a mistrust and

even shame, of accepting charity. See section 4.3 for further findings about the importance of completion of secondary schooling.

The absence of fathers during wartime placed increased responsibility for social, economic and emotional management of households on mothers. Gloria recalls her mother working as a secondary school teacher throughout the war and beyond, managing a household and being a sole parent following the early death of her husband from war injuries. In addition, Gloria's mother boarded two teenage boys so that they could complete their schooling while their fathers were at war, eventually fostering one of them when his father was killed. Despite the hardships brought about by World War II, such as the death of her father, Gloria recalls that this provided an opportunity for women to lead and for children to develop attitudes of self-reliance and resilience. She thus, saw first-hand how strong women could "run the country".

Typically, participants describe how the impact of the Great Depression and World War II focused their parents on providing basic requirements such as food, clothing and secure homes to ensure a safe life for their children. Participants remembered their parents being paralysed or "shell-shocked" (Tina) as a result of war, resorting to a primary focus on health and security. In addition, Tina recalls how her parents were emotionally affected by "the economic uncertainly for their own parents and the emotional upheaval of Dad fighting in World War II". This left I them seemingly lacking "self-direction and control over their own destiny, just accepting whatever happened as if it is just our lot in life". She rejected her parents' perceived powerlessness refusing to accept whatever happened as "just our inevitable fate". She recalls conversely wanting to take control of her life asserting "if you don't take control of your own future, fate *will* take over". See section 4.2.1 for further findings on needing to be in control of one's own life.

Likewise, Elizabeth recalls how her migrant parents were affected by the war. They fled the aftermath of World War II, coming to Australia for a better, safer life. She recalls how the impact of the War reduced their ambition to simply creating a safe and secure home to raise a family. Like Tina, Elizabeth recalls rejecting her parents' fatalistic attitudes by "not allowing fate to take a hand", even if her parents were "bewildered by her ambition". Perhaps the circumstances of their migration showed they had greater choice than Elizabeth credited them with despite their experiences during wartime shaping their conservative attitudes.

Additionally, many of the participants grew up in religiously faithful homes where fate was linked to the "will of God", yet the participants insisted on taking control of their lives and destiny. This was at odds with their parents' religious beliefs and points to the development of an inner strength in early life supporting the notion of self-control. Participants took responsibility for their own lives and career success, rejecting the idea that their fate lay in the hands of another. This included challenging that their future could be controlled by a higher power, contesting the precepts of their childhood religious beliefs. Lack of direct experience with the circumstances of war and economic uncertainty may also help to explain this variance from parental attitudes.

Participants acknowledged that their parents' experiences and attitudes in terms of financial security and education influenced the integration of certain characteristics into their own lives. Working hard, valuing financial security and appreciating education as a way of getting ahead are reported as a result of an intergenerational family narrative. However, the need to control their lives is in contrast to the powerlessness and abiding concern with security and safety demonstrated by some parents.

Study participants born after 1960 were less likely to report any influence of the Great Depression and the Second World War on their families and on their subsequent

development. This suggests that time distanced participants from these events. Families began to look beyond satisfying the most basic of human needs (e.g. health, safety and security) (Maslow, 1987), allowing other proximal factors to influence how they lived. However, some participants recall social changes in the 1960s and the 1970s influencing them especially in terms of social norms about what women could do.

Social Change: The influence of the Women's Movement and free tertiary education

A key finding was that with some participants were deeply impacted in complex and unique ways by changed attitudes to the roles of women in the 1970s through the influence of the Women's Movement. The degree of impact is dependent on where participants lived and how old they were in the 1970s.

Gloria and Sonia recall that the heartland of social change was the capital cities, especially Canberra, the centre of the national legislature. They recognised the role of the Women's Movement in shifting attitudes towards the role of women in society and the direct impact of the movement on their careers. They recall that living in [city X] in the 1970s provided access to activism not available to women in more remote regions. Their direct involvement led to networking with others, organising and leading events and being at the forefront of social change. They recall how societal and individual attitudes were transformed as women joined together and questioned the conservative values of the past.

Sonia recalls that her career aspirations were slow to form, as she took on the traditional role of wife and mother, until her divorce in the early 1970s. Her engagement with the Women's Movement changed how she thought about herself and clarified that she wanted to help make the world a better place for women and children. Her 'awakening' provided a catalyst for her own career establishment, prompted also by the financial necessity to support her family.

Likewise, for Gloria who discovered through her involvement with the Women's Movement that she was well placed to instigate ground-breaking change to employment conditions of women, in the public sector. At the time, institutional and social barriers to employment and promotion, especially of married women, prevented most women from committing to a career in public service. Gloria joined others to break down these barriers, instrumental in changing legislation and practices, to support equal opportunity and anti-discrimination.

Vignette 11

Vignette - The Women's Movement

The Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) established in 1972, was critical for Sonia and Gloria. WEL by was designed to "rock the boat" or disturb the status quo, at a time when politicians were almost exclusively male, by getting politicians to focus on the disadvantaged position of women. The women of WEL created a survey designed to apply pressure on politicians to gauge implications for women in their discussions of all parliamentary bills. This allowed open-minded male politicians, the "good guys" as Sonia calls them, to broaden community ideas about role expectations for women. The result was an erosion of prejudices and increased exposure of discriminatory attitudes and practices. Sonia recalls that, while politicians did not perceive the Women's Electoral Lobby as a serious political lever at the time, the women involved understood that they were part of a powerful and unstoppable social change. WEL enabled women like Gloria to agitate for change in employment conditions and discriminatory policies and practices, especially in the public service sector.

Changing awareness shifted Gloria's thinking towards a more "collective'" rather than individual notion of success. Changing the world for all women became her goal. Likewise, for Sonia, who was changed forever as "once she had discovered feminism, she couldn't think another way", needing to change socio-political conditions for Australian women.

Furthermore, as a result of social change in the 1960s and 1970s Government funded tertiary education fees (e.g. free university tuition) were introduced in Australia. This improved accessibility to university, giving women (and men) from all economic backgrounds greater access and was available from 1974 to 1988. Some participants recalled this initiative as helpful in enabling them to attend university, which perhaps may have been hitherto out of their reach.

Elizabeth, Tina, Jill and Carolyn, who were of an age to access Government funded tertiary education, perceived that although they may have gone to university regardless of the cost, this initiative helped to convince fathers to allow their daughters to attend university. Participants recalled that a common obstacle to university attendance was a widely held societal attitude that the education of girls was not worth the money, with Maureen recalling her father's attitude to the idea of his daughters going to uni as a "waste of money". Some participants reported that fathers were open to their daughters attending university, if it was not a financial burden on the family. Free tuition made the transition simpler helping to break down resistance to the education of women.

Joanne recounted how her mother took advantage of the introduction of free tertiary education to enrol at university in her forties, an opportunity previously denied to her. She then embarked on a professional career as a school counsellor, which spanned several decades. Joanne's mother accepted her socially accepted role as mother and wife until the opportunity to go to university arose, at which time she leapt at the chance to realise her career potential through an independent career. Interestingly, while Joanne cited her mother as a role model, she herself did not choose to go to university.

The Women's Movement changed how Australians thought about women in society (Goodwin & Huppatz, 2010) with the 1970s viewed as a time of great social change, widening options for employment and education for women (Macintyre, 2009). However, conservative social attitudes towards the role of women remained in many areas (Dixson, 1984). Younger participants (e.g. born after 1965) and those growing up in rural areas identify less impact of the Women's Movement in their development than the older participants.

4.3.4. Interpretation of participant perceptions of early life antecedent factors of career success

Participants explain the antecedence for their own career success, crediting varying degrees of influence from early life, family background and schooling (Sections 4.3.1 – 4.3.3). Participants perceived the antecedents for career success are a combination of resources (or social and cultural capital); a result of their personal characteristics, experiences throughout their lives, relationships and for some socio-historical forces.

Standing out in families and schools was viewed as a strength, acting as a foundation for career progression; shaping habitus. This was perceived to hinge upon 'who they were'; articulate, socially and academically adept and largely from families with resources and connections within community. Thus, they were able to leverage family cultural capital and their own habitus in accruing further capital. Perhaps a differentiating factor was the unique ways they rejected social expectations (e.g. completing school, studying sciences, aspiring to a professional career) yet embodied other expectations for young women of the time (e.g. engaging with community, church and family activities and marriage).

Social and cultural capital takes time to acquire and accumulate, beginning in childhood (Bourdieu, 1986) with participants attributing much to 'immersion in the socio-cultural milieu of the early family environment and schooling' (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2016a, p. 355) or inculcated within the participants through habitus from an early age. The resultant set of combined, lasting, transposable and differentiating dispositions (outlined in section 4.2) governed actions and attitudes in every field, reflecting family influences and the social conditions of the society and time in which they are acquired and generated and structure practices for the ongoing accumulation of capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

The perceived influence of family background included advantage in being a first born child or an only child as this provided opportunities for developing important characteristics (e.g.

confidence) in childhood through close attention from parents and the benefits resulting from not having to share parent's time and family resources with siblings. However, there was also apparent advantage in growing up with siblings, as the camaraderie and competition involved in family life was perceived to beneficially shape development. An important factor was the socio-economic status of the family perceived to advantage participants in terms of accumulation of cultural and social capital through the trappings of a middle class background such as schooling of choice, extracurricular activities and family travel.

Individuals practice and develop their habitus in specific social contexts or fields (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) with adversity in childhood identified as an opportunity for the development of important personal characteristics, particularly in the form of resilience and independence. This is viewed as worthwhile cultural capital in childhood, which can be leveraged at work later on. Additionally, taking on adult responsibilities at a young age, whether through adversity or through teenage work experience. This offers valuable cultural capital through dealing with adults, money and taking on responsibility and is viewed as important in developing confidence and independence. This contributes to a supportive habitus and is transferrable to adult fields

Regardless of family dynamics, participants attributed value to adult support in their early life with participants typically recalling a childhood background characterised by close and supportive relationships often with mothers. Adult support was viewed as an antecedent factor of success with participants acknowledging the benefits of growing up knowing their efforts and achievements were recognised and valued.

Most participants described presenting at school as bright, socially confident, hard working and talented, or in other words, with reserves of capital which peers (and even their sisters) may not have demonstrated. This capital enabled them to accrue additional capital

as they were 'winners', who expected to continue to 'win'. Success in childhood attracted advantageous attention, affirmation and support from adults and provided long lasting and transferrable capital from field to overlapping field (e.g. singing, debating, school grades, society).

As 'successful children' participants were able to access social networks and gain membership to groups (e.g. teams) as well as having the appropriate credentials and knowledge to 'play the game' (Bourdieu, 1986) in the overlapping fields in which they operated (e.g. home, school, community, work). They were 'winners' in many ways possessing the skills, attitudes and motivation to be dominant in these fields, enabling them to experience early access to leadership and to expect this to be ongoing. These experiences and expectations fueled anticipation for future success.

Typically, participants identified an all-girls school environment, the need to demonstrate a hard work ethos at school and a supportive 'push' from home as important factors in childhood and fundamental for the development of later career-oriented attributes. For many, a Catholic school education was a feature. Attention, affirmation and acknowledgment of achievement at school, was provided, in most cases, by single-minded female teachers and principals who focused on the education of girls without distraction from their own families in a single–sex environment. Inadequacies in participants' schooling were mitigated by the opportunity to overcome obstacles, again perceived to provide opportunity for acquisition of capital through the development of dispositions such as self-reliance. This meant that girls with the appropriate capital and a supportive habitus (e.g. intelligence, a strong work ethos, support from parents) were able to make the best of their school experiences. They were able to build on the advantageous legacy they had brought with them from their family background.

Completion of secondary school and a university degree produced institutionalised cultural capital for most participants, although the effect of this type of capital is subject to myriad social and historical influences (Bourdieu, 1986). Until the late 20th century career expectations for Australian girls were limited, as most girls did not complete secondary school, largely studied social sciences and domestic subjects and attended university in very small numbers. However, uncommon for the time, participants typically completed schooling, studied mathematics and science, attended university and pursued a professional career. These aspirations and the experiences involved in the education process, enabled them to accumulate advantageous and transferrable capital (Bourdieu, 1986), traditionally linked to males and viewed as valuable in a male-dominated corporate field. For participants who were schooled in the 1950s problems finishing secondary school were particularly relevant. "My school didn't go to 5th form but I talked my way into staying on. [Principal's name] didn't want me going off to another school so she made it possible for me to continue on to Matriculation" (Sonia). Likewise, "[School name] did not have fulltime science and maths teachers so I had to teach myself" (Gloria).

The social world is a product of accumulated history within which it is impossible to isolate individuals from their surroundings and their past and present (Bourdieu, 1986). As such, the influence of historical events and socio-cultural changes during the 20th century such as the Great Depression and World War II were highlighted as influencing how some participants were raised, especially concerning the importance given to education.

The relative financial buoyancy and security of Australia in the post-war years (Macintyre, 2009) supported the social position of participants' families, ensuring they grew up in the burgeoning middle class, privileged by socio-economic status. Children who grow up in privileged families have more opportunity for success as they have greater and continuing access to supportive cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1977). Furthermore, widespread

social change in the 1970s, a result of the Women's Movement, was perceived to broadened career options, normalise the idea of working mothers and increase opportunities for tertiary education. Some participants viewed the Women's Movement as a catalyst for changing the conditions of the field of work and the field of family and for disrupting the dominance status quo, formerly held by men. Participants perceived these changes enabled them to gain a foothold in the corporate world as a result of opportunity, habitus and the right type of accumulated capital.

It is problematic to separate the influences of habitus and the overlapping effects of accumulated capital, just as it is difficult to gauge an individual's ability to acquire and leverage capital because of the "arbitrariness of appropriation" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 266). However, this study shows that accumulation of capital is contingent upon what comes before and how effectively individuals leverage their habitus and validate transferrable capital. Not only are the antecedents of career success perceived to be evident in early life habitus, this study shows the accumulation of capital is further influenced by broader socio-historical forces (detailed in the following sections) and by what happens in adulthood. The following section presents findings concerning antecedent factors identified as the result of experiences and relationships in adulthood.

4.3.5. Influence of experiences and relationships in adulthood

These findings (Sections 4.3.5 - 4.3.8) show that participants explain their career success in integrated terms, highlighting how their adult work and home lives are interrelated. Work experiences play an enabling role in accumulation of career capital (e.g. knowledge, expertise, social skills), with professional relationships helping participants to gain access to career-enhancing networks and social systems. Personal relationships outside of work are also important, with participants accentuating the valuable emotional and professional support of family and friends. This section analyses the influence of adult experiences and

relationships on participant career success.

The findings highlight the importance of getting a good start in early career, having one's potential identified, accessing training opportunities, aligning work with passion, accessing a range of strategic experiences and leveraging elements of luck or happenstance along the way. Enabling factors include professional relationships (e.g. role modeling, mentoring, networking, championing), supportive adult personal relationships (e.g. marriage and parenthood, friendship circles) and effective spousal support, all of which help to mitigate the challenges of managing work and home life for women. See Figure 8.

Figure 8 Success enabling factors in adulthood

Getting a good start at work

A key finding is that getting a good career start sets up optimal conditions for career progression. Optimal conditions in early career involve crucial support from a senior colleague; identification of technical, intellectual and leadership potential; and access to a range of opportunities across the business. Illustratively, participants cite the value of being identified as having high potential early in their careers, which helped them to be 'fast tracked' through training and hierarchical and systematic promotions. Additionally, having access to a range of experiences across the organisation allowed them to become familiar with all aspects of the business, including the important money-making aspects or the "profit and loss" or "line" operations. Developing a mentor relationship with a significant senior colleague is also reported to be career enhancing as mentors can champion and promote the interests of their protégé.

Identification of potential

Identification of potential in early career is perceived to be a factor contributing to success. Being singled out in early career, based on potential capability, provides a boost to career progression. Selection for membership of a high-performance team involved in a cutting–edge government project gave Carolyn a "jumping off spot" for future promotions. Likewise, being chosen as a "high potential" early in their career and given opportunities to "fast track" allowed Narelle, Lisa and Kimberly access to training and experiences faster than might have been expected. "Standing out" early was career enhancing with high stakes investment by the identifier and the organisation and applying the pressure of an affirming 'push'.

Vignette 12

> **Vignette - Early career identification of potential**
>
> *Kimberly was identified early on by a senior colleague who ensured that she was well-prepared and trained for a series of planned sequential promotional opportunities grooming her for succession. Early identification, systematic training and access to a broad range of experiences in different roles was key to her success. Changing roles every three years provided extensive work experience, considered being valued career capital. Early career identification increased her visibility to others, built her reputation and fuelled the expectation that she 'was going places'.*

Participants recall having their skills and potential recognised by male friends and colleagues. Support from male friends was important as these 'champions' introduced them to people who could help them as well as 'open doors' to opportunities. They specified male friends and colleagues, as female colleagues were in short supply. They recall their supporters 'pushing' them towards careers through sponsorship and championing, although at the time it was recalled as 'friendship'. Supportive relationships such as these became known as 'mentoring' (Tharenou & Zambruno, 2001). See section on Mentoring (4.3.10).

Sonia recalls being seen as a "clever friend" who deserved to be connected to the right people because of her skills and personality. Sonia was viewed as a "novelty" for both men and women, as they were unfamiliar with women in the public arena at the time.

Being singled out was a common experience for participants, who 'stood out' all their lives. Just like at school, recognition of their potential affirmed them and contributed to a sense of ongoing confidence. Similarly, powerful colleagues in the work place proffered support. They benefited from the power of their colleagues. This support further acknowledged their capabilities, fueled their self-assurance and gave legitimacy to their claims for advancement. This study confirms the value of early identification of talent (Hennig & Jardim, 1990; Holton & Dent, 2012).

Training opportunities

Gaining skills and knowledge aids the accumulation of career capital, especially in early career. Access to training opportunities is viewed as an important factor in career success. Organisational support for training is valued although participants also regard self-development as important.

Investment in elite organisation-funded training courses (e.g. Harvard Master of Business Administration courses) is perceived to be important as affirmation of status and achievement and development of skills. The value of external training opportunities extended opportunities for skill acquisition in preparation for the 'top jobs' (e.g. as CEO). Additionally, attendance at prestigious training courses increased personal visibility and networking opportunities, which contributed to the building of professional reputations. Kimberly recalls results from this type of training were "well worth the time, effort and expense expended by the individual and the organisation".

Participants stress that advancement did not just 'happen' but was linked to the strategic professional development matching the specific skills valued in the industry. A Masters of Business Administration (MBA) is commonly considered a 'passport' to career advancement in the corporate world. However, a few participants reject the idea that external study is required, preferring to gain experience through 'on the job' and 'in-house' training. Investment in planned career development is advised regardless of the nature. Nevertheless, all participants stress that advancement did not just 'happen' but was linked to professional development, however it was gained.

Accessing a range of experiences

Having early access across a range of key areas of business has a positive influence on career success. Broad work experience, visibility within and outside the organisation and alignment with the money-making mechanisms (e.g. line operations or profit-and-loss

areas) of the organisation are key to success. Opportunity to develop relationships with clients was also reported as being important to career progression in most industry areas.

Understanding the core operations of an organisation can be gained through a range of experiences. In some industries, this can be gained through "rotations, working in various departments for short periods of time if available" (Maureen). Colleen warns of the career limitations of doing "backroom law preparation work and never getting to negotiate with clients" therefore missing, not only the "fun parts" but also the aspects that "really count in money terms and where you build your professional reputation".

"Maximise chances to access diverse and broad experiences" advises Carolyn, as "you need to get a range of experiences and not just stick to your technical base" (Angela). Future leadership opportunities are often linked to broad understanding of operations rather than more narrow technical expertise with the 'pipeline for promotion' linked to line operations rather

than to areas such as human resources (Maureen).

4.3.6. Chance, luck and good planning

Optimistic use of luck plays a role in career success but it is only part of the picture. Participants share an optimistic view that 'luck favours the prepared', describing the benefits of 'making space for luck' and being ready to leverage it when it appeared. Participants cautioned that luck cannot be relied upon as a fail-proof career strategy and is only valuable if it is recognised and acted upon.

Opportunities emerge and develop through chance or 'being lucky' (also described as 'fate' and 'happenstance'). Participants described 'fortuitous timing', 'being in the right place at the right time' and 'meeting the right people' as largely unplanned and unexpected instances of luck that have led to career-enabling opportunities. Unplanned opportunities

also arose during career breaks, following childbirth or as a result of relocating for their husband's work. Key to utilising 'luck' is the ability to attract it, to recognise the opportunities arising and to leverage those opportunities. 'Allowing fate to take its course' or 'allowing some room for happenstance; you never know what it might bring' permits 'opportunities to arise that may not necessarily be able to be planned'.

Being 'lucky' Is described as having an early boss recognise potential (Colleen); being chosen for a special training program (Kimberly); being offered a promotion before it was expected (Carolyn, Narelle and Michelle); working and leading effective teams (Linda and Carolyn); and being in the right place when opportunities arise (Angela).

This points to a common optimism and hopefulness of people who are open to the possibility of luck but do not rely on it as a career strategy. 'Being lucky' requires individuals to take opportunities when they arise and not just to wait for good fortune to arrive. Participants unanimously cite luck as subordinate to their own career development efforts, confirming Holton and Dent (2016), who outline that being able to take advantage of "lucky breaks" (p. 24) requires already having a career strategy in place. However, luck and career planning is viewed as non-contradictory.

Vignette 13

> **Vignette - Luck**
>
> *Michelle recalls how "lucky" she was to be working in the United States of America at the time of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. Stationed at the Pentagon, she had first-hand experience with the direct aftermath of the attack, experience she could not have foreseen or expected. She recalls this as an "extraordinarily lucky break" for her. This experience in post-catastrophe management gave her the opportunity to learn unique and valuable skills, acknowledged as a significant career accelerant and direction-changing factor on her life and work.*

Typically, forward planning in three to five year blocks is advised, preparing for each promotional step. Reliance on others for career promotion is ill advised as "no one has a

greater interest in your success than you do" (Maureen). Advice to invest in systematic career development through a range of strategies confirms Mavin et al. (2015) and Holton and Dent (2016).

The participants rejected the notion that their destiny was in the hands of another person, or was controlled by fate. They did not adhere to the idea that their futures were directed by a religious deity (e.g. the will of God), inculcated through religious schooling. They described wanting to take control and direct themselves and their lives

4.3.7. Influence of supportive professional relationships

Strong reciprocal relationships with people at work provide affirming support. A key finding is that supportive professional relationships – strong relationships with people at work, engagement with mentoring and associated relationships, networking and role modeling – are important for career success.

Participants outline the important role of other people in their career success as "getting yourself the best people'" (Kimberly) and "getting the right people on the bus" (Denise) in every area of work and life. Participants explain that strong reciprocal relationships at work can be influential in 'getting things done' and can provide personal and professional support. See section 4.3.11 about the importance of supportive personal relationships outside the sphere of work.

According to participants, strong personal relationships at work allow for effective teamwork. Participants acknowledge the importance of honest self-awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, advising that working with people who have different yet complementary skill sets can be career enhancing. Lisa paraphrased Gail Kelly (former CEO of Westpac) with advice to "surround yourself with the best people and outsource to those who have the right skill sets to complement your skills". A recurring theme is the value that participants place on the support and cooperation of others.

Mentoring

Supportive relationships such as mentoring are highly valued by the participants and viewed as a factor of their success. A range of supportive relationships (e.g. mentoring, sponsoring, championing) was cited as valuable, aligning with broad definitions of mentoring (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Kanter, 1977; Piterman, 2008; Haggard, Dougherty, Turban & Wilbanks, 2011). This centres on support of a trusted senior colleague in early career, a characteristic feature of the participants' stories, confirming the importance of mentoring for women's career advancement (Berman, Bock & Aiken, 2016; Metz & Tharenou, 2001; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Ragins & Scandura, 1994;Tomas & Castro, 2013). Some participants initially described never having been mentored in a formal relationship. However, following discussion about what mentoring may look like, they recognised relationships that had functioned in this way.

Supportive work relationships are described as associations with senior people who singled participants out for special attention, allocated challenging work projects, proffered opportunities and pushed for early promotions and specialist training. Receiving personal and professional advice or being given introductions to the 'right people for new roles' is a feature of these relationships. Supportive relationships are perceived in broad terms to have a mentoring function, which can include aspects of championing and sponsorship. It can also include networking.

In their early careers, participants established professional relationships, mostly with a male boss who "took me under his wing" (Kimberly), or who recognised potential and "helped me to access opportunities" (Linda), giving affirmation of talent and achievement and providing a friendly helping hand. Some participants recall having multiple supportive relationships, some short term or intermittent, while others recall their supporter providing ongoing interest and support over a number of years.

Michelle recalls "getting a tap on the shoulder" from a senior colleague to apply for a particular promotion with "her name on it". She also recalled having other supportive colleagues "go into bat" for her in order to secure promotions and having roles created especially for her by a mentor. However, Lisa remembers how a senior male colleague continued to take an interest in her career development and pride in her achievements, years after she had left the organisation. In later times, this support provided important personal and professional affirmation and encouragement and was described in terms of friendship and mentoring.

Engaging in mentoring is key to career success for women (Berman, Bock & Aiken, 2016) although the effectiveness of the relationship is impacted by the quality of relations, goals, purpose and ways of working together, organisational support, gender of the colleagues and the type of mentoring (Eagly & Carli, 2007, Ragins & Kram, 2007; Zachary & Fischler, 2005).

Most participants recall altruistic mentors with selfless motives for maintaining the relationship, although mutual benefits for individuals and organisations are acknowledged. Studies highlight potential problems with cross-sex mentoring relationships, particularly when there is a power differential between a senior male mentor and a junior female mentee (e.g. Kanter, 1977; Scandura, 1998; Fitzsimmons, 2011). These include the possibility of power struggles, innuendo regarding motive and sexual harassment. In this study, there is no evidence that supportive relationships were problematic in these ways; only positive supportive mentoring experiences were raised. It is acknowledged that the nature of the current study may have encouraged participants to recall positive relationships omitting issues outlined in other studies. Deeper investigation may have revealed a wider variety of relationships.

Participants recall a long-lasting indebtedness to their mentors. Colleen describes "owing a

debt to her organisation and especially the senior partner", whose support went beyond "showing her the ropes". According to Colleen, his support was critical in enabling her to stay with the firm when family responsibilities conflicted with work commitments. Her company loyalty was a result of his support. Likewise, Stella recalls an early career mentor who "paved the way for my next roles and helped to increase my reputation". She identifies her mentor's faith in her and recalls repaying it with hard work and loyalty. Indebtedness for mentor support confirms Fitzsimmons (2011) who finds that women are likely to give credit to mentors, more readily than men and place high value on the discussions arising from these relationships.

Mentoring is perceived to support a sense of competence and professional identity and to enhance career prospects. The value of mentoring confirms other studies (e.g. Fitzsimmons, 2011; Holton & Dent, 2016) that suggest a supporting 'push' by a mentor challenges women to try new things and promotes confidence, much as a 'push' from a parent in childhood.

While participants perceive mentoring from a male colleague to be helpful, confirming Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz & Lima (2004) and Rosser (2005), they suggest that, where possible, women should seek female mentors. Angela advises "getting a mentor… but it's particularly good if you can find an older woman to provide mentoring support as they know what struggles women face". Sonia muses 'I didn't really have female mentors… because there weren't any women in the key positions, but I think it's an important thing". More important than the gender of the mentor is having "access to the right people, who care about investing in the future for both men and women" (Colleen). Narelle and Michelle recalled helpful co-mentoring relationships with female colleagues who were at similar career levels, showing that mentoring is not always a relationship between people of unequal status (Metz & Tharenou, 2001).

All participants indicate a willingness to mentor other people, both women and men and describe value in sharing their experiences and wisdom with others. Many acknowledged a responsibility to mentor younger women to enable their progression. This confirms other studies showing that experience as a protégé increases the likelihood of transitioning to a mentor role (Dinolfo, Silva & Carter, 2012).

Supporting the career advancement of other women is perceived to help all women. Participants are unanimous about their willingness to help other women, insisting that women have a responsibility to support others. Stella describes how necessary it is to "surround yourself with more women; 30 % creates a critical mass" in order to make a real difference for the next generation of women executives. Participants describe involvement in mentoring, networking support groups and organisational initiatives as ways to help reduce career obstacles for all women.

Participants universally dismiss the notion of the 'Queen Bee syndrome', which suggests that women are unsupportive of each other leading to career sabotage (originally outlined by Staines, Travis & Jayerante, 1973). 'There is no place for that in my world' and 'that behaviour is not to be tolerated' exemplify participant responses to the notion of the syndrome, confirming that for these participants it is as Mavin (2006) found more of a myth than a reality.

Networking

According to participants 'who you know' helps with career development, highlighting networking as an effective self-promotional strategy. Mentoring can open up advantageous networking opportunities (Burke & Mattis, 2005) as discussed in the previous section. Networking helps to build career-enhancing alliances (Holton & Dent, 2012) and can connect women with information sources and lead to sponsorship (Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002; Mavin, Williams, Bryans & Patterson, 2015).

The role and function of networking are viewed differently from those of social friendship groups, although social connections can lead to and are not mutually exclusive of professional relationships. Networking is typically described as making and maintaining professional relationships and connections with other women and men who can potentially provide access to opportunities for career advancement. It also allows participants to engage with their organisations and industries on a broader scale (Holton & Dent, 2012; Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002).

Participants consider networking as useful for creating and maintaining alliances and associations mutually beneficial for them and their organisations. Effective networking is perceived to increase repute for both individuals and organisations through increased visibility and to help them keep up to date with what is happening in an industry. Relationships and connections enabled participants to extend their reach beyond their own organisations in a reciprocal manner. Through these relationships, the participants were able to sponsor or recommend other women and to be sponsored or championed themselves for new opportunities. Being 'known' and being 'talked about' is linked to increased visibility, the perpetuation of personal reputation and can be effective in promoting the individual and their organisation.

While effective networking is valued, participants caution about wasting time and energy if it is ineffective. Elizabeth advises "don't network for networking sake, make it strategic." Networking is described as potentially time-consuming and tedious, but a necessary way to 'engage with industry'. Thus, creating a strategic habitus for success requires discernment of what networking is productive or not.

Participants reported an interest in and involvement with, women-only networking groups, although some acknowledged not engaging with rhetoric around women's issues until later in their career (also see Chapter 5 Discussion - Section 5.5). Networking groups are

described as focusing on issues of gender equity, specifically in support of career advancement for women. These groups build cultural and social capital for the women who are involved. Participants reported that engagement with support networking groups is important for the future of women leaders and a necessary responsibility for those already in key leadership positions. A commonality among participants is membership to industry organisations and activism in women's support networks (e.g. Chief Executive Women, Australia). It is in these fields that the participants thought their contribution assisted others in navigating pathways to success for others.

Role models

A further finding was that role modeling influenced participants but in complex ways that went beyond offering an example on which to mould oneself. However, with evidence of few women role models on which to fashion themselves, participants described having to use both male role models and more distant female role models, if they indeed, recalled and identified any role models in their career. Participants described learning what 'not to do' from masculine examples (often male bosses) whom they considered to be poor role models. Thus, same-sex role modeling has not identified as an important factor in career success but role modeling by male bosses was recalled as a feature of experiences.

Participant advice to others highlighted the importance of looking for female role models and same-sex mentors, although in terms of their own experience described leadership modeling of male bosses and ongoing mentoring support from male colleagues. As participants largely chose careers with which they had little direct familiarity, not knowing any other women in these occupations, this study points to something about these women not needing to mirror themselves on other women. This proves that it is possible 'to be what one cannot see' thus questioning the importance of same-sex role modeling and mentoring.

Participants as pioneer women leaders were thus, required to present a new version of how things were done. They recall wanting to be different, not wanting to be 'blokes in skirts' but needing to find new ways that were consistent with their values. See Vignette 14 about male role models and also Section 4.2.3 - Standing out.

Vignette 14

Vignette - Role models

In lieu of female role models, participants used male role models, sometimes learning what not to do. As a woman behind-the-camera in a world of men, Joanne was highly selective about the aspects she was prepared to emulate as her role models were overtly misogynistic. She focused on technical aspects and ways of working that were different to her peers. Jill, likewise, deliberately modelled herself as different to her male role models as she did not admire the sexist leadership examples given.

Role modeling of relatives and childhood examples was cited as influential in how participants developed certain characteristics, although mostly described in a abstract manner. Kimberly recalled liking the way certain women in her community (publican, swimming school manager) managed people, wanting to be strong and kind like them as an adult. Narelle recalled utilising her female relatives as role models of effective working women, although she chose a different career direction. Most participants did not recall having any female role models.

The idea of mothers as career role models is contested. Participants recall their mothers in conservative mother/wife roles and rejecting this in favour of the pursuit of a professional career. Some participants, however, acknowledge the value of their mother's role modelling of character qualities. Mothers as role models can be explained by considering the socio-cultural forces operating when their mothers were younger. Mothers may have had little choice in their career directions, growing up in a different era with more constrained social role expectations. Discriminatory practices such as prohibiting the

employment of married women, lack of career opportunity, limited access to education and limited autonomy of reproduction conspired to keep mothers at home.

However, some participants recall their mothers' willingness to work outside the home in later years. For example, Joanne's mother studied and pursued a professional career, while other participants' mothers worked as secretaries or receptionists. Exceptions were mothers who had always helped operate family businesses and Gloria's mother who continued her work as a secondary school teacher all her life. Perhaps the early lack of occupational choice for mothers may have encouraged them to support their daughters, with the unformed or thwarted ambitions of mothers giving them resolve to support and push their daughters towards education and a career of choice.

In summary, supportive relationships are identified as factors of career success. 'Whom you know' helps with career development, highlighting networking as an effective promotional strategy. Likewise, mentoring can open up advantageous networking opportunities (confirming Burke & Mattis, 2005), which can lead to opportunities to build alliances (Holton & Dent, 2012). Networking can connect women with information sources and lead to valuable sponsorship (Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002; Mavin et al., 2015). Participants were selective about who they modeled themselves on, looking to personal qualities rather than mirroring occupational choices.

4.3.8. Influence of supportive personal relationships

This section presents findings about the influence and impact of adult personal relationships. Relationships include marriage, parenthood and friendship and particularly shine a light on the importance of spousal support on career success. The findings in this section are in response to questions about the impact on careers of personal relationships and family responsibilities in adulthood. The key findings are; marriage and parenthood are not perceived to be barriers to career success. Marriage and spousal support are valued

and the challenges created by family responsibilities can be overcome with careful management, particularly with spouse, family and employer support. Social friendship relationships also offer valued emotional support.

Marriage

A key finding is that marriage is viewed as a support mechanism, helping participants to commit to their career aspirations and contributing to personal wellbeing. Participants universally described their personal spousal relationships as 'marriages'.

According to participants marriage is a desirable state; a supportive relationship providing valued emotional and practical support. Marriage has historically been shown, at best, to have a neutral impact on career success (e.g. Melamed, 1995; Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003), which is at odds with the findings in this study. Marriage is valued as a supportive mechanism, unless it stops fulfilling the desired role. Participants recall wanting to share their lives with a partner but were not prepared to be, or stay, married if the relationship did not align with their career aspirations.

Some participants identify stable, long lasting supportive marriages of more than 25 years. However, around one-third of the women report at least one divorce. Divorced participants typically remarried, with continuing optimism about the supportive benefits of marriage.

While most participants married for the first time in their twenties (older in other studies, e.g. Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Hewlett, 2002; Keown & Keown, 1982), several married much later in life and one never married. Reasons for not marrying or delaying marriage includes "never meeting the right person" (Carolyn), "sacrificing a social life for work for too many years" (Angela), or, "not wanting to subordinate her career goals to those of a partner" (Stella).

Timing and social context make a difference. Sonia and Gloria cite an inability to start or

develop professional careers because of their marital status, as education and employment were limited for married women in the 1960s. Sonia recalls restrictions in subject choice and compromised scholarship funding at university because of her married status. Both she and Gloria experienced an inability to work when accompanying their husbands on overseas postings because of restrictions on wives working. In addition, Gloria recalls restrictions on married women working in the Australian Public Service. Participants identify marriage as limiting the establishment of their careers because of restrictions on employment of women at the time, forcing them to put their careers 'on-hold'. Nevertheless, both women remarried following their initial divorces citing their subsequent marriages as providing greater professional and personal support.

Conversely, divorce is seen in this study as a catalyst for career acceleration with careers 'restarted' or 'redirected'. This is particularly pertinent for the older participants who married at a young age and divorced in the 1960s (e.g. Maureen, Stella and Sonia). Divorced participants recall feeling enthusiastic about their newfound vocational directions and note that a clarity of purpose and a high level of motivation often resulted from having to assume financial responsibility as a single parent. For a few participants, this meant starting their career journey in earnest in their thirties, which is considered to be quite late (Levinson, 1996). However, the socio-cultural and historical forces specific to the 1970s impacted the experiences of these participants. The popularity of labour-saving devices in the preceding decades (e.g. the washing machine), greater control of reproduction through the increased availability of contraception and changing social rules meant that women were less constrained by marriage than ever before in this decade (Macintyre, 2009).

A common theme emerged that unsupportive or failed marriages did not negatively impact the participants' career progression in the long term, but rather encouraged them to greater career engagement. Nor did divorce discourage participants from remarriage. Despite the

demonstrated fondness for marriage, participants are resolute about maintaining self-resilience and control of financial security. Typically, participants caution others to "never be reliant on anybody else; you never know what will happen. You can only bank on yourself" (Michelle) or advised women not to "…change their name if they marry and to keep their own bank account" (Colleen) to ensure economic and social security and to remain self-sufficient.

Cautionary warning is given about the need to choose a spouse carefully, ensuring that potential partners are willing to provide appropriate reciprocal support, including understanding, sharing and supporting professional and family goals. Maureen advises women to establish the "ground rules" early on in order to avoid an unsupportive relationship. Early discussions need to include conversations about mutual career plans and potential childbearing ambitions to establish how aspirations can be shared and supported.

Parenthood

A key finding is that parenthood is also not viewed as an impediment to career success, when the impact is mitigated by key supportive factors. Eleven of the seventeen participants are parents, with most acknowledging challenges in combining parenthood with career aspirations (e.g. career interruptions, managing work and home, accessing quality support). In some cases, parenthood is perceived as a strong motivating force for career commitment, particularly when some of the participants became single parents through divorce (e.g. Michelle, Colleen and Sonia) or death of a spouse (Denise and Michelle).

Key supportive factors include maintaining connections with work while on career 'breaks' (Lisa, Kimberly and Colleen) as these connections can facilitate a supported return to the same workplace. These support factors are perceived as alleviating the disadvantages of

the loss of career place and pace. Engagement with work while on 'leave' is perceived as affirmation of value to the organisation, enabled continued development of skills and helped with the return-to-work process. Lisa describes staying connected as "intellectually stimulating and helpful in maintaining links to projects and clients", ensuring she did not "lose her place".

The more recently participants became parents, the higher likelihood of them accessing supportive leave conditions and receiving organisational support for a return to work. Colleen, Kimberly and Lisa were instrumental in setting up maternity leave structures for their organisations in the early 2000s, considered to be valuable experiences for them affirming their value to their organisation and providing appropriate support for their needs and others.

Participants recall taking 'time out' from full-time work for childbirth and childcare, typically between six weeks and two years. A quick return to work was characteristic, with most participants re-entering the workforce in a part-time or full-time capacity in less than six months. Some participants recall their childbearing years as 'tough times' as they were trying to establish their careers and have children concurrently. Others make light of the difficulties of having children, while others make no mention of challenges. Most recall a hankering to re-engage with stimulating work and the excitement of the workplace while on maternity breaks.

A significant supportive factor is the successful management of family responsibilities. Participants Lisa, Michelle, Maureen and Kimberly report the importance of childcare support from grandparents or a husband, while others recall using paid childcare (e.g. Narelle, Joanne and Colleen) or employer care (Jill). A commonality is the necessity for spousal support in marriage and especially in parenthood with household management and childcare. Support from family, spouse and employer are reported to be imperative in

enabling participants to re-engage with their career commitment.

Vignette 15

Vignette - Parenthood

Maureen was the only 'older' mother among the participants, having a child in her forties. In her third marriage, to an older man, she used assisted-fertility technology to have a baby. Her efforts to become pregnant are recalled as "harrowing and expensive". She highlighted factors such as having an established career with financial security and at-home support of a spouse as mitigating the problems of career 'time out', enabling her quick return to work with no evident loss of 'place or pace'. Additionally, her seniority meant she had a high degree of control over her time and tasks and was able to effectively integrate home and work commitments. These factors minimised the career limitations traditionally associated with parenthood for mothers. While she was able to have a baby and to resume her career without loss of momentum, she vehemently advises others to have babies early to maximise fertility or to "freeze their eggs" to provide a greater timeframe.

Parenthood is viewed as potentially limiting career progression, but only if mitigating factors are not in place. This confirms Hennig and Jardim (1990) whose findings showed the negative impact of parenthood could be balanced and parenthood has the potential to increase motivation for career engagement.

Valued spousal support

Getting good help at home is important, especially when a willing and able spouse supplies it. Spousal support is a key factor in assuaging the perceived negative impact of parenthood and is credited as an enabling factor for career success. Spousal backing provides emotional and personal encouragement and assists with management of family responsibilities. Characteristically, spousal support through childcare and the management of domestic arrangements allows women to concentrate on work commitments. All the mothers in the study acknowledge the value of spousal support.

The willingness of husbands to accommodate their wives' work needs is central to participants' ability to commit to their careers. This means, changing and, in some cases, compromising their career directions (e.g. Kimberly and Jill). As an example, Lisa

acknowledges the importance of her tradesman husband's willingness to change the nature of his work. "XXX changed the sort of projects he worked on so that he was at home more". According to participants husbands in 'white collar' professions (e.g. engineering, law and realty) also accommodated the career needs of their wives (Jill, Elizabeth, Narelle), which is less problematic if there were no children (Elizabeth, Stella and Gloria). Participants note that a supportive attitude is more important than the husband's occupation. This study confirms Tharenou (1997; 2005) who found that having an employed spouse was a supportive factor for women. In this study, no spouses were reported to be 'house husbands' or unemployed.

Typically, spousal interest is acknowledged as personally affirming and encouraging. A husband's pride in his wife's talent and work achievements was viewed as important. Joanne says this form of support was "…uplifting, affirming and sustaining". Likewise, Elizabeth mentions how helpful and supportive her husband's interest in her work was for her well being, encouraging further commitment and persistence. Her husband's willingness to accompany Elizabeth to work functions allowed her to engage with her work without the tension that might have existed over out-of-hours commitments. Other participants recall the support of their husbands who took pride in their achievements and celebrated the highlights. However, not all participants experienced sustained spousal support with divorce reported as the result of inadequate support (Stella, Colleen and Michelle).

Participants report that taking time out for childbirth and the subsequent responsibility for children can potentially slow down career advancement. However, they do not identify parenthood as career limiting finding ways to mitigate the disadvantage of a career break. This contests other research where childbearing and responsibilities of parenthood are traditionally viewed as an impediment to career success because of the inevitable career

breaks required for mothers which interrupt career development (Larwood & Guteck, 1987; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Holton & Dent, 2017). Although participants acknowledge it was sometimes difficult to take a career break and then return to work, difficulties can be overcome with strong spousal, family, employer and personal support mechanisms.

The findings in this study suggest that dependent children can have a positive impact of career development as they can provide strong motivation for career commitment. This contests the literature that traditionally shows that dependent children are considered to hamper career advancement for women. This is quite different for men where the impact of dependent children is shown to have, at worst, a neutral effect (Tharenou Latimer & Conroy, 1994; Vinnicombe & Bank, 2003, Eagly & Carli, 2007).

While participants acknowledge that parenthood necessitates logistical personal and professional organisation, the role is also viewed as providing opportunities for increased motivation for engagement with work. This can increase motivation to commit to career aspirations and to look for opportunities for advancement in order to support a family, particularly when the participant is a single parent (e.g. Sonia, Colleen). Additionally career breaks were viewed as opportunities for participants to extend their skills and experience in different roles and different ways outside of their work sphere, which provided career-enhancing increased breadth of work experience (e.g. Tina, Colleen).

Some participants acknowledged that they stayed better connected with their work if short career breaks were taken rather then extended leave. This minimised the potential negative impact of a career interruption (e.g. Jill, Kimberly). However, Lisa reported taking two years of flexible leave, initially returning to work part-time and working from home in the first year. She stressed that staying connected to her work throughout was central to her effective and successful return to work.

Characteristically, participants took career breaks for childbearing, which was mostly

limited to one or two children and for relocation with their family. In this study having children or working part-time on occasions is not viewed as an obstacle for career success despite still being perceived as a roadblock or an aspect of the 'glass ceiling' in other studies (Holton & Dent, 2017).

Value of friendship

Friendship relationships outside of work are described as offering emotional and social support to participants, acting as social mechanisms to help them 'relax and balance their lives', The value of 'circles of friends' aligns with the importance of strong positive relationships at work, which provide professional and personal support. This section analyses the role of friendship in both social and work situations.

According to participants friendship relationships at work contribute to enjoyment of work and overall job satisfaction supporting findings about the importance of working with the right people and how women need to surround themselves with good people with whom they can work well. See further details in Section 4.3.10. These findings confirm other research valuing strong relationships as a supportive factor at work (e.g. Fitzsimmons, 2011; Piterman, 2008). However, issues are raised about difficulties maintaining authentic relationships with work colleagues when there is hierarchical differentiation or power imbalance.

While friendship at work is valued, it can be a complex process. Participants describe how, as seniority increases, it becomes more difficult to access "truth tellers" (Kimberly) described as trusted people who will give constructive, authentic and honest feedback or "hold up a mirror for you" from the "side and below" (Kimberly). There is increased likelihood of people providing compliments, positive feedback and even cultivating friendship as seniority increases, as a way to seek advantage as "the higher you get the less you can trust people to tell the truth" (Kimberly). Angela, likewise, recalls issues with

work relationships as her growing seniority increased her access to power and authority: "People are likely to tell you what they think you want to hear … and what would have the most benefit for them".

This study confirms some of the documented complexities of work-based friendship relationships, especially issues arising as participants gained positions higher up the organisational hierarchy. This points to the higher up on the promotional structure individuals are, the more social and professional relationships matter, with less focus on technical aspects, confirming other studies (Hennig & Jardim, 1977a; Piterman, 2008). Participants recall valuing their friendship relationships with their bosses and executive peers within their own organisation and in wider industry circles, citing these as "career supporting" (Angela) and "emotionally satisfying" (Kimberly)

Alternatively, friendship circles outside of work are perceived as important support mechanisms, although mostly described as recreational and social in nature with less complications of power balance. According to participant socialising outside of work with trusted friends, regardless of gender, is described as an opportunity to share honest ideas without fear of sycophantism.

Preferred friendship groups are sometimes described as 'mixed gender', although many of the participants describe their enjoyment of meeting up with groups of girlfriends. Their girlfriends are typically friends made at school or university with whom they have forged strong and long lasting relationships. Discussions with girlfriends cover topics such as families, holidays, recreational activities, as well as careers and work. Participants caution that, the more senior their position, the more likely they are to avoid discussions about their work in a social setting. Issues of confidentiality, not thinking that their friends will be interested and wanting to separate work from home by not 'talking shop' were some of the reasons given for avoiding discussions of a professional nature.

Participants who established their careers before the 1980s recall the value of friendships with influential men, sometimes through relationships with their husbands (e.g. Sonia and Gloria). These relationships are perceived as pivotal in early career as the male friends were able to provide access to their social and professional networks (often the same circles), giving participants a career boost by association. Sonia describes how her male friends encouraged her to "get her career started" by making connections with others who could help her: "relationships were the key to opening doors".

4.3.9. Interpretations of the influence of experiences and relationships in adulthood

While early life habitus is perceived to contribute to and shape how participants accumulate capital, this is only part of the story. What happened in adulthood continued to support participants' ability to accrue capital, as they were able to transpose valuable embodied (in the form of habitus), objectified (material capital from family background) and institutionalised (from work in adolescence, school and university) cultural capital to their work field (Bourdieu, 1986). Critical work experiences in adulthood, early career opportunities, aspects of luck, effective career planning, and supportive professional and social relationships are identified as antecedent influences on career success.

'Getting a good start at work' is valued; centred on having key experiences, such as having potential recognised, having access to appropriate training opportunities and gaining a broad range of work experiences across an organisation. These are recognised ways to increase worth in the corporate field, particularly through specific and targeted training that validates institutionalised cultural capital (e.g. technical qualifications) and provides participants with differentiating and valued credentials (Bourdieu, 1986). These experiences were perceived to enable participants to be visible and stand out from others, while earning reputations as 'bright, hard working, enthusiastic women with potential';

sources of cultural capital to be appropriated. Participants perceived 'a good start' as a career advantage, as it also engendered access to networks and relationships reflecting accumulated social capital.

Despite individuals with similar habitus having comparable capital, the structure of the field dictates an inherently unequal distribution of capital (Bourdieu, 1997, in Lauder et al.). Masculine patriarchy, typically a feature of the 20th century corporate field for participants, necessitated finding a new way of doing things. They recalled having to work harder than their male colleagues to accrue similar institutionalised capital (e.g. more qualifications, having to repeatedly prove their worth) and institute ways to compensate for the men-only homogeneous work culture. However, participants described leveraging social capital through their access to networks, which attracted strong supportive relationships (e.g. mentoring). These relationships in combination with participants' habitus supported their ability to understand how to 'play the game' (Bourdieu, 1986) by knowing what capital was valued in the field and how to access this.

Additional acquisition of capital is perceived to come from unexpected opportunities that came with happenstance or luck in connecting with people and prospects. 'Being in the right place at the right time' is viewed as beneficial, although participants noted the importance of 'making space for luck' and being 'ready to realise opportunities when they arise'. As an enabling factor of career success, the role of luck was not viewed as a substitute for career planning, which was advised for others as an important career support mechanism. While participants themselves may not have adhered to firm career planning, they recognised the importance of the decisions they made (e.g. choice of occupation and organisation) throughout their career journey

Participants perceive their professional and personal relationships as enabling factors of their career success, allowing membership to supportive networks and groups. Their

inherent and learned social skills (e.g. in the form of accumulated social capital) were considered key to accessing networks through which they were able to appropriate further capital. However, as the volume and type of social capital possessed by an individual is dependent on the nature of the relationship or group, size of the network and the capital held by those in the network (Bourdieu, 1986) participants noted the importance of support from the 'right' people with powerful alliances. They were able to attract supportive attention through mechanisms such as mentoring, championing and networking; of particular career value if the dominant members were powerful enough to generate worthy capital. Participants perceived benefit from relationships with powerful mentors (often male bosses) who provided access to opportunities and advocated on their behalf, which allowed them to appropriate important cultural and social capital (e.g. access to projects, promotions, establishment of professional reputation, access to wider social networks) and legitimacy to the field.

Furthermore, career-enabling support of relationships with family and friends was identified as valuable. Marriage can be viewed as membership to an influential group with material or symbolic capital exchanged (e.g. recognition, words, gifts) (Bourdieu, 1986), with participants aspiring to a supportive reciprocal marriage relationship. Participants perceived that being married generated important reciprocal capital, prepared to have multiple attempts in order to find a spouse who could provide them with career and personal support. When legitimate exchange in regard to support broke down divorce was viewed as an acceptable solution.

Quality spousal support is perceived to be an important career success factor as this allowed participants to engage with their career aspirations, especially critical if there were family responsibilities. Spouses who are willing to adapt their own careers and able to offer domestic and emotional sustenance provide valued support. Marriage is viewed as part of

a career supporting habitus, providing important personal and professional support and not viewed as a career hindrance as it was in the past.

Parenthood has traditionally been viewed as an obstacle for career progression for women (Eagly & Carli, 2007) but in this study is viewed differently. In order to mitigate the career costs of family responsibilities (e.g. career breaks for childbirth, childcare) participants identified instigating support mechanisms. Characteristically, these included having small families, which minimised the number of career interruptions experienced. Also, quality domestic support (e.g. spouse, families, nannies) helped women to manage home and work commitments and effectively return to work from career breaks. Taking short breaks and retaining close and a supportive relationship with the workplace also minimised the perceived negative impact of parenthood.

However, parenthood can be viewed as a catalyst for accumulation of new capital as career breaks provide opportunities for the development of a wide range of different skills, not necessarily related to an original career direction. This can result in the accumulation of additional and often unplanned, capital. As examples, some participants were able to engage in new kinds of work, such as volunteering (e.g.as a vet in a foreign country) and further study (e.g. post graduate study in English literature) while on career breaks or before the establishment of their career directions providing durable capital that was leveraged later on. Parenthood is also viewed as career enhancing as a result of increased motivation for commitment to career objectives, especially if the family is dependent on the participant (e.g. primary breadwinner, single parent). Universally, participants perceive all experiences in their lives such as school experiences, work in adolescence, career breaks, parenting and work experiences as generating capital and contributing to their broadening worth.

Finally, friendship of family, colleagues at work and friends in social circles is viewed as an important source of support. These relationships have the potential to provide career support, offer emotional sustenance and help to balance work and non-work aspects of life. In particular, social capital gained from these relationships is viewed as helpful in maintaining self-confidence and career persistence, both necessary ingredients for career success.

4.4. Summary of Findings

In this chapter, the stories of the seventeen participants were presented, highlighting differences in career and life journeys. A commonality was forging career paths as rare women in male-dominated corporate environments. Participants were able to gain acceptance to a system established and dominated by men, by developing dispositions that encouraged dominant players to accept them and support their progress. They were able to transpose and leverage cultural and social capital gained over years, with enough of the appropriately valued capital to be able to become dominant themselves and thus were able to influence the corporate field and the governing rules.

Definitions of career success include a range of subjective and objective criteria, largely based on personal dispositions, which provide access to capital linked to leadership in the corporate field. Definitions are perceived to change over time, determined by circumstances and context. Internal measures of personal fulfilment are viewed as key success criteria, going beyond traditional outward symbols of success such as prestigious job titles and salary levels, but do not discount the value these reflect.

Career success hinges on the accumulation of appropriate capital generated through a powerful habitus or system of supportive dispositions and guiding structures, which can be effectively adapted to new fields. In this study, possessing a range of identified dispositions and growing up in a well-resourced family with personal support, enabled the generation

and appropriation of cultural and social capital across overlapping fields of home, schooling and work. In addition, antecedent factors are perceived to include inherited genetic make-up, the influences of relationships and experiences in childhood and formative experiences at school. It takes time to develop and accumulate cultural capital so getting an early and effective start is viewed as advantageous.

Participants were influenced by the volume and type of capital transposed from their family background, as cultural capital can be passed from generation to generation (Bourdieu, 1986), particularly in the form of cultural goods (e.g. books, literacy culture at home) and attitudes to education. Well-resourced middle-class backgrounds ensured participants were well prepared for school success, knowing what was valued at school (e.g. good behavior, academic achievement) and having the ability and insight to 'play the game' (ibid). Mothers recognised the value of education transposing their own cultural capital by providing a supportive 'push' for daughters to complete secondary schooling and to aspire to a university education. When there is alignment between what is valued at home and at school, unity of social class is created, where the dominant members are likely to be successful (Bourdieu, 1998): clever, hard working girls such as the participants

A middle-class background did not preclude childhood adversity, also viewed as an enabling factor from which participants were able to develop characteristics of self-reliance (e.g. independence, resilience, determination), important in helping participants cope with hardship (e.g. death of a parent, violence). Regardless of the dynamics and degree of family harmony, family relationships and experiences in childhood helped participants to develop a suite of personal characteristics (e.g. confidence, independence), which generated transferrable capital to adulthood contexts. Likewise, participants shared optimistic outlooks, which enabled participants to deal with setbacks and to take control of their own life directions, characteristics that were inculcated from childhood.

Participants stood out from others, evident from a young age, as a result of differentiating personal dispositions, but also in the corporate field due to the rarity of women. Participants were able to develop and activate a contextually supportive habitus and able to leverage available and valued capital in ways their sisters could not. Participants were conflicted in how they saw their own success, growing up with dispositions of self-effacement and modesty inculcated in early life, yet recognising the benefits of celebrity as a result of standing out from others.

The development and favouring of dispositions was perceived to be influenced by what had come before, confirmed and reinforced by family and societal forces and was the product of the historical and socio-cultural context of the past and present of the participants through intergenerational capital transfer. Participants were affected in unique ways by their experiences and history (Bourdieu, 1986) with some impacted by the effects of wider historical events (e.g. war, Great Depression, Women's Movement).

Adult work experiences and relationships are perceived to provide important and on-going capital, highlighting the value of optimal conditions for a good career start and access to networks and social systems provided by professional and personal relationships. Strong relationships are valued, especially in terms of mentoring, championing, networking and friendship. Participants appreciated the benefits of personal relationships both at work and outside work, especially with supportive spouses and social friendships as these offered emotional and social support.

In sum, career success is a perceived to be complex and evolving phenomenon, determined by how it is defined and measured and what is most valued at any point in time by the individual and within the field. Antecedents of career success are perceived to include a range of environmental and individual factors working independently and in combination over a lifetime, influenced by individual characteristics, experiences and

relationships along the way. Career success is perceived to be dependent on developing an effective 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 66) in various overlapping fields (home, school, work) with accrued capital transposed to new fields. Habitus (e.g. characteristics, , ingrained habits, attitudes) of the individual shapes behaviours, dispositions and actions and influences the appropriation and accumulation of cultural capital through access to material cultural goods, (e.g. well resourced homes, support) and in an institutionalised form through educational qualifications (completing secondary schooling and achieving tertiary qualifications). It is also dependent on the accumulation of social capital through adept interpersonal skills enabling access to networks and support systems.

It is clear that participants are not simply 'interchangeable particles' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241), in a rigidly ruled life-game, as they acquire capital in different ways. This is due to the individual nature in appropriation and leveraging of social energy through experiences (Bourdieu, 1986) and because the structure of the field or the social space in which they operate is forever changing. Cultural and social capital is uniquely appropriated, based on the individuality, the past and present of the participants and the amount and type of inherited and acquired capital they possess (Bourdieu, 1998) influenced by a wide range of circumstantial contexts. Participants had to make their own way, as there are no blue prints or recipes for guaranteed career success.

Possessing cultural and social capital is career enhancing only if it is valued in a specific field (e.g. corporate world) and can be leveraged to benefit the possessor (Bourdieu, 1986). In this study, participants were able to successfully make their way because they possessed the right capital and they were able to transfer earlier gained capital to new fields. Participants were able to locate themselves in key positions in the family, at school and in the workplace, leveraging cultural capital by effectively using their social capital or their ability to manipulate social systems. This meant they understood the unspoken and

abstract 'rules' of multiple fields and were able to adapt to circumstances and conditions. This enabled them to beneficially manipulate their position and interactions with others (ibid**).**

Individuals cannot be treated as exchangeable game pieces in the 'games of society' (Bourdieu, 1986 p. 241) as the ways and amounts of capital accrued differ, just as the circumstances, personal dispositions of individuals and effects of the times vary. However, these findings show that while a triad of characteristics -hard work, intelligence and the suite of associated qualities- is inherent in childhood, further development enables these to become favoured dispositions, impacting both the habitus and an individual's ability to manipulate the field. These dispositions are further shaped by experiences and relationships and influence behaviours and attitudes in adulthood. The capital accrued because of the amalgam of this triad of characteristics is transferable and adaptable to new fields. This suggests that these leaders possess both personal characteristics and the ability to favour these qualities. See Figure 9.

Figure 9 Summary of chapter 4

Historical and socio-cultural forces

Family background
Parental education levels, resources and socio-economic status, attitudes of parents

Individual characteristics, dispositions and motivations

School experience
Types of school, experience of success

Social and community influences
Church, friendships, networks

Tertiary education

Career Choices and commitment
Timing, career direction, type of organisation

Early career opportunities
Recognition of potential, opportunities

Work Experience
Breadth and range

Supportive relationships
At work and home

Career Success

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.0. Introduction

Much is made of the phenomenon of career success for women, generating multitudes of studies with millions of dollars spent in the 'how to' industry outlining ways in which this can be achieved. A formulaic guide to success does not adequately serve readers because what is missing from this 'how to' discourse is a broader look at the impact society has upon the individual who is striving for career success. This study contributes to the research field by examining women's' leadership within the social milieu of Australian society examining a wider discourse that shares insights into the complexities of the factors leading to what it is to be a woman leader in the Australian corporate workplace. It also adds a unique perspective to exploring and analysing the personal experiences of women who have achieved what they consider to be career success.

This chapter (Chapter 5) explores contradictions and unpredicted issues emerging in the findings. Issues include how career success is based on more than comparable personal dispositions such as intelligence and a hard work ethos, the paradoxical nature of career planning and the contradictions of 'standing out' and 'fitting in'. The following section also teases out the role of historical events in shaping careers. The chapter concludes with an examination of complexities in the construct of the 'glass ceiling' effect and 'glass ceiling' blindness on career success. I draw from Bourdieusian theories pertaining to habitus and capital to bring a deeper analysis to the discussion.

5.1. Career success is more than hard work

'I never dreamed of success. I worked for it.'

Estée Lauder: Businesswoman

An overarching theme was the way in which participants explained their career success. It was described largely in terms of their own skills, abilities and dispositions. However, how these were described pointed to participants wanting to appear self-deprecating and not wanting to 'talk themselves up'. This becomes significant when discussing these participants within Australian cultural context where the cultural habitus for many Australians is to downplay personal talents and abilities, not to be a 'showoff'. Paradoxically, the participants were reticent to claim certain personal positive characteristics and yet identified the same characteristics as qualities that enabled success.

There seemed to be an acceptance amongst all participants to describe themselves principally in terms of their work ethic: as hard workers. Drawing from Bourdieu's theory of habitus (1977), this can be understood when we recognise that since Federation, the 'Australian dream' is built upon members of the nation working hard. It is therefore seen as an admirable cultural value that a person can ascribe to and confidently pronounce 'I work very hard'. The women in this study saw working hard as a foundational building block to success and openly confessed to having this quality. To be a hard worker is a valued Australian quality, shared by the women in this study, with the belief that it is socially acceptable to discuss and attribute success to this quality. Admiration for this quality can be seen in their stories inculcated from childhood; modeled by leadership in their schools and community, fostered and valued within family environments. This underlying habitus of hard work served as a guide to follow; to create a place for themselves within working life (Bourdieu 1977).

However, while essential, it was not enough to explain career success. Other characteristics

were also described as necessary for career success yet the participants did not always attribute themselves with these qualities. Why was it acceptable to be seen to favour some dispositions while downplaying others? What explains women identifying some characteristics for themselves and emphasising other qualities for others? The following section explores these apparent contradictions.

Intriguingly, the women identified intelligence as another important characteristic for career success when the goal is leadership. They elaborated on this quality stressing that it was more than being clever, it was being strategic in how and when to play 'the game'. Yet, the participants downplayed their own intelligence. This quality was not ascribed to themselves but left to the listeners to perceive their intelligence.

They particularly downplayed their own levels of intelligence, social skills and even their expertise while paradoxically describing these as important for success. As an example, it seemed less acceptable to claim or boast about *superior* intelligence for themselves, even when it was identified as an important success factor. Their own intelligence was downplayed with comments such as 'I was smart *enough*', or 'the nuns paid attention to clever girls' without specifying being one of these girls. To be outspoken about their own intelligence would leave them outside the 'immediate adherence to the tastes and distastes' of what is socially acceptable for women to talk of themselves (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 77) within Australian society

Additionally, the recurring theme in this study was 'standing out' as different even though it was delivered with reluctance. Perhaps this continued reluctance to stand out is shown in the way participants described their intelligence. Perhaps this points to a reticence in perpetuating their status of standing out, even within their own family.

While social aptness was alluded to, few participants specified their own ability in getting along with people, although this was valued as a way to develop alliances and support

networks. Furthermore, participants unassumingly described their own expertise as simply 'being good at what you do' and 'doing a good job'.

A disposition of modesty that has been accumulated throughout their lives aligns with the notion that there are certain attributes and practices that need to be masked. In appearing modest about themselves, there were contradictions in their advice to others and what they ascribed for their own success. Other women were urged to self-promote; to 'sell their skill set' and get noticed. They were encouraged to ask for what they wanted and to actively seek promotions and opportunities. However, there was little evidence of participants following this advice for themselves.

While working hard, being clever and doing a good job was central to career success, these practices and dispositions represented only part of the picture. Possessing a range of other characteristics was reported as also necessary as well as the ability to capitalise on the amalgam of these. Participants described a suite of other characteristics (e.g. confidence, determination, independence, optimism, integrity) and practices as important success factors. These personal dispositions are valued in supporting participants to live their lives, engage with work, persist with career aspirations and work with others. However, explaining these can be difficult as the characteristics can mean different things to different people and it is hard to establish or measure the volume of each characteristic. Additionally, how these dispositions are viewed and used by individuals varies.

There was continued incongruity between how participants described their own suite of other characteristics and how they described those of others, shown in their reluctance to attribute some characteristics and a willingness to claim others in regard to themselves. They seemed averse to talking about themselves in terms that could be perceived as sounding boastful or bragging about how good they thought they were. This suggests participants were reluctant to self-aggrandise and disinclined to glorify themselves by

pointing out their own qualities. This revealed a propensity for self-effacement in their stories; in how they presented themselves.

Possibly, the contradictions between advice given to others and explanations for their own success may reflect participants' understanding of changes in the work environment over the last decades. While participants may have expected to 'keep their heads down' in order to 'fit in' to their corporate environments in their early years, greater acceptance and support for women leaders was evident in the modern workplace. Participants may have recognised this changing context, rendering the required personal characteristics and career strategies that worked for them, as less appropriate or out-of-date advice for women in the 21st century.

This seeming self-effacement points to participants preferring modesty in their public stories, unwilling to be perceived as egotistical or conceited and not wanting to stand out as 'show offs'; a particularly Australian cultural characteristic. It seemed to be acceptable to acknowledge tangible personal qualities, which can be seen and measured in terms of hours and output such as hard work, but less so for intangible subjective qualities. Perhaps, they had learned over time that the appearance of a self-effacing disposition was valued in the corporate world, ensuring social acceptability even when this veiled quite a different personality. The ability to present a modest self-image may have been tied to 'fitting in', enabling acceptance in male-dominated occupations by not disrupting the status quo or "scaring the horses" (Sonia).

To achieve career success it is not enough to simply possess a set of personal qualities, as the concept is more complex than a formulaic set of ingredients, especially viewed as more than simply hard work. There are many hardworking women in Australia who possess appropriate dispositions and yet, have not 'made it to the top'. Simply relying on dispositions to explain success ignores personal and contextual factors, which influence how these

dispositions, are actuated. Furthermore, the incongruity of how women explain their own and the success of others further complicate this discussion, questioning the evolution of Australian socio-cultural norms and gendered role expectations.

5.2. Paradox of career planning

'Most professional women – myself included – long since gave up looking for a rulebook or a roadmap; we make it up as we go along. Every day presents a new choice, a new challenge which makes long-term career planning seem like an especially abstract exercise.'

Nancy Gibbs, former editor of TIME magazine

To what extent is career planning a core feature of women's success? Study data seemed to challenge the idea that career success is contingent on career planning. Findings show that a planned and concentrated career direction is not perceived to be an essential prerequisite for success. Participants' stories featured unplanned change in the form of career direction forced decision-making by circumstances beyond their control and opportunities brought about by happenstance or luck. In fact, these unplanned changes were considered to be important factors for future success. Furthermore, career planning for participants was reported to be inconsistent and, at best, careers were only partially and informally planned. Was this because participants regretted their lack of planning or wanted to downplay the extent of control other people had exerted on their careers?

Paradoxically, participants advised other women of the importance of carefully planned careers. Other women are typically advised to plan their careers in three to five year increments. This advice includes regularly planning to seek promotion or change of role, in order to increase breadth and range of work experiences and to access to new networks and alliances.

Advice for career planning went beyond experiences and relationships at work, with some participants guiding others to factor in planning for personal life goals as well. This included

planning for having children (if desired) and for partnering. In fact, several participants suggested that career planning should include very careful selection of a partner in order to set up an optimum personal career support network. This requires early relationship discussions about; having children, reciprocal career support and potential domestic arrangements. One participant went as far as advising women to 'freeze their eggs' to extend the time to find the 'right partner', to broaden the 'window of fertility' and enable the establishment of their career before becoming a parent. Little evidence was given, of participants following their own advice in planning, particularly in matters of the heart.

A lack of early career planning was evident, beginning with an absence of quality career advice, - or any career advice - at school, although not perceived as adversely impacting participants' career journeys. Perhaps this lack of formal planning provided a space in which these women were able to explore what they wanted to do without the pressure of family and societal expectation, providing room to adapt to changing circumstances, opportunities and discoveries of personal interests. Most certainly, women participants benefited from having familial support in the form of a gentle 'push', but perhaps they also benefited from a lack of pressure in their early life to achieve specific planned career goals. This points to the benefits of leaving 'space for the unexpected'; allowing for unplanned changes and viewing these as career benefits not barriers.

Most participants based career choices on contextual considerations such as 'falling into a career' by following her father's occupation, choosing engineering because she was 'good at maths', or 'wanting to prove [her] capability to others' by choosing a prestigious career direction (e.g. medicine). Perhaps, while the reasons for choosing their initial career direction were not necessarily based on carefully considered information, they were supported by habitus or their dispositions to 'give it a shot'. Despite a lack of clear plans as teenagers, they consciously and unconsciously planned to be successful; to be in charge

and have control; ideas inculcated within them from an early age. Significantly, while they aspired to leadership this did not demonstrate any great driving ambition for any particular career direction. This lack of a firm strategic plan may be viewed as providing space to try out different career options. It also may be that because they had few female role models in leadership that they could not imagine such grandiose aspirations. Changes of direction were made along the way when they found what they were passionate about and were able to negotiate opportunity.

Thus, careers were forged without firm plans, some very slowly and sometimes after changes in circumstances. However, each spoke with an attitude of optimism and determination to do well, exhibiting a disposition seen in those who are successful. They discussed the ways they positioned themselves in the field so they could leverage opportunities, and were able to recognise and access these when they arose. Therefore, while not planning specific career moves, they planned to 'get to the top', fine-tuning their career ambitions and directions along the way. While this may look like a lack of planning perhaps it is evidence of a broader big-picture plan.

While plans to go to university sometimes included a choice of course linked to an occupation, almost all participants recalled changing direction in the early stages of their work life. It took some participants years to find their eventual career direction, slowed by family commitments, or chasing career goals that were eventually discarded (e.g. teacher, secretary, flight attendant). However, participants did not perceive this labyrinth nature of career progression (Eagly & Carli, 2007) to be characterised by false starts and dead ends. They were able to recognise this breadth of experience as valuable capital.

An important antecedent factor for career success seems to be a positive participant attitude towards events and circumstances, whether these are planned or not. A commonality seemed to be an ability to view everything that happened during a career

trajectory as a positive and career enabling building block, even adverse events. When unplanned changes could be viewed as career setbacks, they were retrospectively viewed in a constructive light, described as career enabling even though they were unanticipated and often unwanted. For example, Michelle *viewed* the accidental death of her husband as a catalyst for her increased career commitment, at a time when she had planned to step away from her career to raise children. Likewise, Tina recalled taking on a role as change manager in the not-for-profit sector, having taken leave from her "proper" career to support her husband in a relocated job. Although not planned, this came about as the result of meeting someone at a dinner. This role was *viewed* as valuable experience, crucial for her later progression in the private sector.

It is difficult to plan a career when individuals are reliant on the plans of others. Despite participants' professed need to 'control their own destiny', they acknowledged their progress was tied to the progress of others. Some participants acknowledged how their careers played out were largely a result of luck rather than planning; of being in the right place at the right time. There was also an element of luck in who they worked with and the level of support given to them. This was particularly relevant in regard to their relationships with early career bosses, who were able to offer promotional roles, or groom and champion them for new roles. These people may have had self-interest at heart in the support given, planning to profit in terms of their own career success, from the abilities of their young colleagues. Even if these bosses' intentions were altruistic, the pace, momentum and trajectory of participants' careers were still dependent on the type and amount of support proffered. Furthermore, the capital reflected in the position and power of these bosses influenced how participants were able to benefit from the support given. It is problematic to develop a career plan when advancement is contingent upon the plans of others.

The effectiveness of support given to participants was contingent on the quality of their relationships with the people who can make things happen. This highlights the importance of effective interpersonal skills in building strong relationships with people who are able to support and propel the careers of others. However, it is difficult to plan relationships and difficult to plan how events will play out if the control is with others.

Delay in finding an eventual career direction was viewed as beneficial due to the opportunities provided for the accruement of other capital in the interim and was not viewed as an obstacle to career success. Some participants described their careers as being shaped by their personal circumstances, with childbearing and childcare responsibilities altering, but not interfering with their career aspirations. This sometimes was described as taking a less-planned, more circuitous route than anticipated.

Having flexibility to follow and realise opportunities can be viewed as important. In fact, the lack of planning may have helped participants to find their career direction by providing space and opportunity to try out different things before they settled on a committed career path. Moreover, lack of planning may have allowed them to realise opportunities that arose through happenstance, or luck. The incongruity between what they advised others to do and their own personal experiences may reflect an unspoken regret that they did not plan their own careers more effectively or simply be a product of retrospective insight about what might have been an easier route. A lack of a certain future career path and a lack of clear planning emerged, not as a disadvantage but perceived rather as allowing space to realise opportunities as they arose. Participants typically used 'just in time' planning; responding to what was happening in the short term rather than planning for a prescribed three to five year window.

However, as the paradoxical requirement to plan careers contests the reality of participants' own experiences this questions the place of career planning. Their own career success

highlights the incongruity between their advice for career planning and their own partially or inconsistently planned careers. While careful planning may be beneficial, it may also mask possible opportunities and the benefits of allowing space for elements of luck. The participants show there is always a way to be successful, even when the path is uncertain or poorly planned. This finding indicates that more complex and flexible models of career planning may be required; it also questions many of the assumptions presently held about career planning.

5.3. Contradictions of 'fitting in' and 'standing out'

'Who knows what women can be when they are free to become themselves.'

Betty Friedan: Feminist writer and activist

The findings presented in Chapter 4 show complex patterns of conforming and standing out. Participants' ability to conform to and perform the social norms of the fields they were in gave them the cultural capital they needed to stand out. While they contested societal gendered norms by working toward leadership, they also tried to conform to social expectations of women, which at the time favoured the presentation of a modest image. However, participants acknowledge they stood out from early times; 'othered' as different, thus, part of a minority group (Johnson, 2014, in Howley, Howley & Johnson; Johnson, Bottoroff, Browne, Grewal, Hilton & Clarke, 2009). By deviating from the social norm, in being a woman but at the same time exhibiting the same habitus as those within the organisation, made them stand out. Being part of a minority can be considered a disadvantage as power aligns with dominance held by the majority. However, these women found ways to become part of the dominant group, demonstrating enough homophily to be accepted whilst remaining apart. How were these two extremes reconciled? On what basis are decisions made to conform or to challenge societal constraints? Was 'standing out' a choice with benefits or an inevitability linked to their skills and character?

Participants described how they were unable to escape the scrutiny of standing out as a woman, eventually accepting this as normal, but wanting to 'fit in'. They described 'growing used to being different'. In their youth, they were viewed as 'not like other girls'; bolder, more successful, more determined and independent. Later, they were viewed as different to other women as they did not embrace the social norms of the time in following occupations and life styles associated with women. Furthermore, their difference went beyond 'having a job', to pursuing leadership aspirations, unlike women before them. They also displayed attributes such as 'chutzpah' or audacity, not usually displayed by women. They also acknowledged possessing characteristics of courage and confidence, which were required to challenge social conformity. The development of a habitus characterised by such dispositions provided them with credentials, which were valued in a male-dominated world.

Standing out gave participants status as 'special', which attracted career-enhancing attention in male-dominated occupations. It afforded them a reputation and noticeability, which engendered support through championing and mentoring. They were able to navigate their way in a patriarchal culture by working out how to fit in and embody the cultural capital of the organisations, thus being accepted by their colleagues, while inevitably standing out as the only woman around. While they were reluctant to admit their differences were gender based, they conceded this status brought career benefits.

Some participants had initially conformed to role expectations for women, considering becoming school teachers, a role viewed as 'suitable for a woman'. Only one participant persisted with teaching, moving rapidly to school leadership, which at the time was a bastion of male power. Thus, all participants settled in male-dominated occupations, where the very presence of women was a sign of rejection of social conventions.

However, while they stood out as different, participants were also inclined to conform to social norms of the time, to fit in. They conformed at home by following the examples of

their parents in terms of strong work ethos and valuing education. At school, they tried to conform in terms of behaviour, working hard and striving for good grades. Although some remembered the frustrations of trying to fit in, they also remembered being seen as too bold, too confident and too out-spoken. These dispositions are not seen as positive characteristics for a woman in society and therefore seen through a deficit lens. Despite trying to 'rein themselves in', some participants were unable to be what they viewed as 'good girls'. Some teachers viewed these characteristics as deficits yet were seen as the reason participants were proudly remembered. Contrastingly, participants recalled these dispositions as providing agency, allowing them to stand out. These dispositions represented the type of capital that could be transposed and would be valued in later fields.

Perhaps the reasons for their reluctance to stand out on the basis of their gender centres around their early experiences where they stood out on merit in single-sex schools. This may have led to their continued expectation of being 'othered' and anticipation that they would always stand out, not because they were women, but on the basis of skills, abilities and personality. Maybe standing out as women is an accepted by-product, becoming more routine as the years passed. The idea that they were viewed as different may have provided freedom to do things their way, with flexibility to conform to the male culture they worked in or to forge new ways of doing things. The idea that participants considered conforming to the social pressures of the time suggests that they wanted to 'fit in' but were willing to reject or manipulate the social norms when they discovered other possibilities.

Conforming to the workplace status quo by learning how to 'play the game' in a male-dominated occupation was a way to be accepted. This included learning to overlook or ignore misogynistic practices; common for much of the 20th century. This helped them to 'fit in', proving they had a 'thick skin', could 'take a joke' and be 'one of the boys'. However, they also remembered this as 'keeping their head down' and not 'making a fuss', or as they

advised others; 'choose your battles carefully' to ensure continuing support and acceptance. Perhaps conforming to stereotypic expectations for women of the time included presenting a quiet, easy-to-get-along-with disposition as a way to be seen as an acceptable 'good woman' and was part of 'knowing the rules of the game'.

Furthermore, participants still conformed to socially endorsed practices of the time with many participants marrying and becoming parents. However, at a time when divorce was uncommon, participants did not conform to these social expectations. Participants were unable to 'play second fiddle' to their husbands' careers, or stay married when reciprocal support was withdrawn. They rejected social conventions of the time; quick to end unhappy or unsupportive unions but contrastingly were willing to conform by 'trying again' with re-marriage.

Participants wanted to 'fit in' to society; not quite accepted in either a man's world or in the society of women at the time. They reluctantly embraced their 'otherness', rejecting the stereotypic role expectations of the time to be wives and 'stay at home' mothers. This challenged social expectations, at a time when few women combined a full time professional career with family life and the concept of a 'working mother' was unusual. However, participants still wanted to fit in; yearning to be 'like other mothers' who were able to 'drop their children at school and not have to rush off to catch a plane'. A reminder of what it is like to stay at home with children had them quickly acknowledging their rejection of traditional roles of women.

The women were aware of the dissonance in 'standing out', yet as Fitzsimmons and Callan (2016a) point out, 'visibility' is one of the seven valued capitals in the corporate field. Participants were aware that they stood out because they were different to their peers and they used this to their advantage to build social capital. In the beginning they wanted to fit in with society norms but eventually accepted that this was not always possible. They

therefore embraced their positioning as women, by marrying and having children, thus conforming to the social norms of the time. They accrued social capital by 'fitting in'. However, they were able to strategically use their social capital from 'standing out' in male-dominated occupations to aspire to leadership roles. As they worked hard and were successful in their achievements within the workforce the 'standing out' factor afforded the gate keepers in organisations to look beyond the lens of gender and to enable the women gain access to leadership roles.

5.4. Historical and socio-cultural forces shape development

Australians of the 1970s were a "generation shaped by the Depression and the war"

Janet McCalman, Australian author

Participants were part of a historically significant group of women, entering the Australian workforce in numbers, from the 1970s to the 1990s. This was a time when career oriented women were rare; viewed as 'outsiders' in a 'man's world' (Dixson, 1984), and the corporate field was dominated by males who were perceived as having the right social and cultural capital required for leadership. However, at this time the field was beginning to open up to the idea of women as business leaders. These women were different to other women of the era, possessing certain social and cultural capital that enabled them to seize career opportunities that other women were not able or not willing to. How did historical and socio-cultural forces influence and prepare these women to contest social norms to become pioneering women leaders?

The 1970s saw the Women's Movement change how the roles of women were viewed, heralding a new era of opportunities for education and employment for women. Women were questioning the status quo around whether cultural and social capital of leadership is held within gendered attributes. At that time women were supported by early anti-

discrimination legislation and a slow growing social acceptance of women working outside the home and beyond marriage (Macintyre, 2009), However, it was still difficult for women to make their way upwards in a deeply entrenched patriarchal culture. While men had been following their fathers into the corporate world for generations (Leigh, 2013), women did not see examples of other women in professional roles on which they could models themselves and they perceived not to be subject to the same social expectations as their male peers and brothers. Furthermore, they were not expected to aspire to leadership as this was viewed as the purview of men.

Nevertheless, participants persisted and succeeded with their career aspirations. While it was clear that participants were empowered by their own abilities, possessing and developing cultural and social capital from a young age they were reluctant to explain their career success simply as a result of their own abilities. They acknowledged the important role their past had in shaping their development. This went further than simply identifying inherited capabilities and learned dispositions to include the socio-historical forces of the era in which they grew up; the product of an "accumulated history" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241).

Participants were influenced to varying degrees by the effects of The Great Depression and World War II. The effects of hardship and loss impacted families in different ways dependent on when they were born and their socio-economic status, or social class. Many of the parents of participants were children during the Depression and young adults during World War II, experiencing hardships and loss and subsequently inculcating intergenerational lessons learnt from these events over decades. Although participants identified as coming from middle class families, who were less impacted by economic hard times than working class families (McCalman, 1995), participants still identified being shaped by the impact of hardship in their family's past.

Participants growing up in the shadow of war remembered being brought up to be self-reliant, yet optimistic for a future in which they could have a safer and better life than their

parents. They recalled developing attitudes instilled through families about avoiding debt, the need to accumulate wealth, the value of education and the importance of self-sufficiency to protect from returning hardship. They were raised to value education. These attitudes shaped participants' habitus, guiding their practices. They grew up knowing they needed to take control of their own future.

An evolving post-war socio-cultural climate fueled the idea that education would protect children from recurring hardship (Macintyre, 2009). This meant that participants were encouraged and supported to do well at school and complete secondary school, which gave them the option to attend university. Perhaps the cultural capital gained through education helped to prepare them for a professional career, not usual for girls at the time.

In addition to personal dispositions or habitus and educational qualifications, timing can be viewed as an important factor. Growing up in the post-war years was a critical time for participants born during and shortly after the war. Circumstances provided participants with opportunity to appropriate reserves of cultural and social capital through their upbringing and education, which they were able to be transpose from home, to school and beyond. This type of capital (e.g. self-sufficiency, optimism, formal qualifications) was valued at this time in their families and in society.

The Australian social system had been changed by war, creating an increased appetite for egalitarianism in the post-war years. This promoted the possibility of increased social mobility based on merit rather than on luck of birth (Leigh, 2013), providing increased freedom and wider opportunities for people of all socio-economic status. This was nurtured by a widespread belief in that circumstances of birth are less important than personal endeavour, with equality of opportunity a persistent social norm in Australian culture (Argy, 2006). Australia's modern history is built on the idea that motivated, capable individuals, who are prepared to work hard to make something of themselves, are not hindered by rigid

social structures, rules and role expectations; indeed convicts could become millionaires (Leigh, 2013). However, much of the research into social mobility compares the intergenerational mobility of men and their fathers, with little focus on women (Leigh, 2013), thereby reducing expectations of women's roles in the discussion.

Perhaps, this lack of focus and expectation for women in the 20th century, particularly in the mid-century, provided space for women to do the unexpected. This may have freed participants from the purview and restrictions of their fathers' social positions or enabled them to leverage their social position to access opportunities through family networks and connections. Furthermore, there was no social pressure to reproduce or generate cultural capital, which their brothers may have felt, through such achievements as upholding the family name. This lack of expectation for women, may have allowed participants to be and do whatever they wanted, supported by social and family forces, but not subject to societal influence.

Participants were impacted by differing historical and socio-cultural influences, largely dependent on era of birth. Families of participants born before 1960 benefited from an increased socially mobile culture and supported by post-war economic buoyancy, which enabled growing financial security. This benefited some participants' parents who were able to improve their social and occupational status in the post-war years, while others were already in positions of privilege. Fathers moved upwards on the socio-economic status scale: by the 1960s they owned their own businesses, factories, farms and shops, or held professional positions such as bank manager, pharmaceutical company executive, journalist, railway executive, or commissioned officer in the defence force. Participants grew up in homes displaying the economic and social hallmarks of the middle class: full-time employment of the father, home ownership, business ownership, living on one income, aspirations for education for their children and moving away from their place of origin

(Lowenstein, 1978). This positioning in the middle-class ensured families could afford to educate their children at private schools and travel for holidays, features of participant experience.

While participants out performed their fathers (and mothers) in terms of occupational status and earnings, they do not come from a low starting point. Typically, participants grew up in well-resourced families, with beneficial support from parents, relatives and community. Being born to parents with middle-class values and aspirations at a time of increased egalitarianism provided a fertile platform for the participants to use their personal qualities and opportunities to make something of themselves. Participant backgrounds typically featured strong parental support that helped to instill a powerful habitus promoting a sense of self-belief, which together with other personal qualities, helped to accumulate valuable cultural capital needed to get a good start at work.

This study does not reveal a 'rags-to-riches' story, as the participants do not come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. They did not force their way into the middle class and 'make good' simply through personal effort and endeavour. This study points to the ways in which the women took up the habitus of the working-class culture, embodying the values of a middle class background that allowed important cultural and social capital through resources, opportunities and support, as an antecedent factor for career success. However, it also shows that socio-historical forces also influence upbringing and can have long lasting impact in shaping the development of families and individuals. In other words, their family background shaped participants and how they were raised, but they were also subject to broader historical and social influences.

5.5. Glass ceiling blindness

'The goal is to work toward a world where expectations are not set by the stereotypes that hold us back, but by our own personal passions, talents and interest.'

Sheryl Sandberg, COO, Facebook

Studies over decades that show that careers of women leaders are constrained by aspects of gender that create discrimination and prejudice (e.g. Eagly & Carli, 2007). However, the accounts in this study do not confirm constructs of the 'glass ceiling' effect. Participants mentioned the 'glass ceiling' in reference to others but not themselves. Was this because they had succeeded in bypassing the 'glass ceiling'? Was how they presented themselves in terms of their rarity in the workplace an advantage? By being the type of woman who did not make a 'fuss' enable them to be accepted in a man's world? The following section explores the notion of 'glass ceiling' blindness.

Participants were reluctant to view their sex as their difference or 'otherness', wanting to be seen primarily as leaders not women, despite standing out as rare women at work, Likewise, they did not want to present as victims of gender discrimination, downplaying the career obstacles presented to them by the so-called 'glass ceiling' effect (e.g. Holton & Dent, 2017) and making light of stories of gender bias. This was emphasised by their determination to explain their difference as merit based. Paradoxically, participants acknowledge that *other* women might experience and be hampered by difficulties caused by gender discrimination, stereotypes and bias. This study suggests that participants maintained a type of 'glass ceiling blindness', or presented the appearance of this, which may have been advantageous in their career progression.

A willingness and ability to reject gender role expectations and stereotypes may have supported participants in their careers, instilled as part of their habitus from an early age. They recalled growing up recognising and acknowledging few overt gender constraints.

From childhood, strong ambitions for leadership were developed, with participants expecting to be 'in charge' and dismissing the traditional social norms of the mid-20th century that linked leadership ability and aspirations solely to men.

Perhaps the influence of family background shaped how participants perceived gender. They described a variety of family structures (e.g. composition, size) and relationships (e.g. dynamics, levels of support) that may have contributed to their ability to ignore or downplay constraints and to reject the construct of the 'glass ceiling' for themselves. Some participants recalled growing up in families of girls where there was no competition with brothers. They remembered childhoods where the idea of boys was abstract and distant. Some participants were 'only' children, often part of an adult oriented extended family where they were affirmed and encouraged by parents and extended family. Several participants recalled growing up in families with a high level of egalitarian attitudes towards role expectations, which may have underpinned rejection of gender constraints These influences may have helped them to see beyond gender, growing up without explicit gendered role expectations. Furthermore, there may have been something about the attitudes of supportive mothers, who instilled in their daughters enough self-belief and confidence to believe that gender was not a limiting factor. Furthermore, close relationships with fathers may have influenced participants to want to be like their fathers, encouraged to pursue traditionally male occupations.

Additionally, perhaps single-sex school experiences influenced participants to believe that girls could do anything they wanted. Perhaps this type of schooling did not instill in girls ideas about gender constraints, as there was no presence of boys or comparison to them. Additionally, the influence of strong women managing schools may have acted as an example of women in leadership, encouraging the idea that girls can be in charge. Some

suggested that because nuns lacked experience with males they were unable to inculcate ideas about gender comparison.

While participants may have been sheltered from overt gender discrimination in childhood, some participants faced discrimination and bias at university in the 1960s. Prohibition on the study of some subjects and limitations for women in accessing scholarships were problematic. Furthermore, at work in the mid-century, some occupations and promotional paths were closed to women. However, these barriers did not seem to be viewed as career constraints, merely as obstacles to be 'worked around'. Participants described needing to create new ways to reach their goals. This 'can do' attitude was embedded in the habitus of participants and may have influenced them consciously or unconsciously to overlook gender constraints, described as ignoring the 'glass ceiling'. Perhaps this provides freedom to do things differently, without the constraints of a predetermined path, providing space for autonomy and innovation.

Perhaps habitus developed in early life was powerful in insulating participants from internalising the notion of the 'glass ceiling' effect. This may have provided participants with an ability to use this as strength and a source of capital, able to be transposed into new fields such as university and work. Furthermore, participants perceived their sex as a gendered strength; believing women like themselves can do anything.

Participants described not engaging with the rhetoric around gender until later in their careers. This may be explained as a result of individual positioning and socio-cultural changes. With an established career, participants may have felt they had less to lose by 'rocking the boat' or disrupting the status quo through publicly engaging in discussions about women's issues. Furthermore, they may have been more powerful in later career, through their roles, reputations and networks, so more effectively able to direct attention to these issues. They may have simply had more time to engage in wider discourse and with

age, a clearer perspective. Moreover, perhaps the support of socio-cultural forces (e.g. equal opportunity legislation, breakdown of 'old boys' networks, diversity policies) encouraged participants to take up the conversation.

It seems that participants do not want to be perceived as accepting the 'glass ceiling' as an excuse for why women do not advance, especially conscious to avoid blaming this abstract concept for any setbacks in their own careers. Likewise, in rejecting the 'glass ceiling' they did not claim overcoming the barriers of the 'glass ceiling' as antecedent factors of their success. There was apparent strength gained from a 'glass ceiling' blindness, developed as part of their habitus and integral to how they presented themselves to others.

5.6. Discussion conclusions

Throughout this chapter career success for the women in this study has been underpinned by a variety of complex factors and is explained in somewhat paradoxical terms. The issues raised in Section 5.1 outline the important role of personal dispositions and practices as enabling factors. Although a strong work ethos and intelligence are highlighted as essential, these are viewed as relatively powerless if not actuated in combination with a suite of other dispositions. There was a marked difference in how participants described these dispositions for themselves and for others. This paradox shows that participants want to present themselves in a self-deprecating way, suggesting there is value in conforming to cultural norms and presenting themselves in a modest manner.

The paradoxical nature of career planning is discussed in section 5.2. While career planning is recommended as a building block for career success this does not necessarily reflect participant experience and revealed in the contradictions between personal experiences and advice given. Lack of planning can be viewed to provide a freedom to explore possibilities and space to realise opportunities arising from happenstance or luck. While there was little evidence of formal planning, participants may have benefitted from a broader

life plan, established in their youth, aiming to 'get to the top' in whatever endeavours they pursued.

While reluctant to 'stand out', participants were able to benefit from the social capital emanating from this special status as this attracted supportive attention and engendered opportunities. Conversely, they were also able to 'fit in' well enough to be accepted, again a source of social capital, with this contradiction discussed in Section 5.3. Over time they accepted the conflicted position they were in, persevering by choice in non-traditional occupations, while concurrently conforming in other social ways as wives and mothers; attempting to maintain their place in 'mainstream' society.

Families were viewed as dependent on wider socio-cultural and historical forces (Section 5.4), with participants impacted in different ways depending on the era in which they were born. Some participants highlighted how the Great Depression and World War II influenced how their families operated and how they were raised, particularly in terms of education and financial security. Others recalled social change impacting how they thought about the role of women and influencing their own educational and career choices. Peace and economic security in the post-war years enabled families to consolidate their resources, ensuring that participants were able to benefit from their family socio-economic status.

'Glass ceiling' blindness discussed in Section 5.5 shows that while constrained in certain ways by social expectation, participants were unconstrained in many ways. They described overlooking gender discrimination and bias issues of the so-called 'glass ceiling', insisting that their success or failure be viewed as merit based. An ability to ignore gender issues seems to be a career-enhancing disposition. Contrastingly, participants see themselves differently to other women, who they acknowledge may experience the 'glass ceiling' effect, affirming the decades of literature outlining the ways women can be limited by this abstract concept. Perhaps, their rejection of the 'glass ceiling' effect may have provided a freedom

from the constraints of being a woman, allowing them to do things their own: to 'dance to their own tune'.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

6.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions for this study, highlighting how career success is perceived, defined and explained by this group of pioneer women leaders and what enabling factors they consider to be important. The first section of the chapter (Section 6.1) concludes how the study addresses the research questions, originally introduced in the Methodology and the Literature Review chapters. Section 6.2 outlines the contribution this study makes to the research literature and highlights further research recommendations. The penultimate section (Section 6.3) provides an update on the participants and the final section (Section 6.4) revisits Karen, the woman at the centre of the catalytic meeting from which the ideas for this study grew (see Section 1.3 for introduction to Karen).

6.1. Addressing the research questions

In order to understand how the participant women leaders define career success and what constitutes career success the following research questions were posited and addressed.

6.1.1. How do participants perceive and define career success?

This study shows how participants define the social construct of career success and what they perceive constitutes success in highly personal and relational terms. This includes identifying a set of personal dispositions and practices that they possess and which define their own success. A further set of intersecting characteristics is viewed as important in enabling themselves and other career-aspiring women to succeed. Additionally, definitions of career success are perceived to evolve over time as personal, professional, societal and contextual circumstances change.

Career success is defined largely through subjective or internal criteria (e.g. job satisfaction) and gauged using personal measures of fulfilment (e.g. reputation, control, making a difference, relationships, enthusiasm). However, while not recognised as criteria of success, traditional outward symbols of job status (e.g. job titles, high salaries) are acknowledged and valued as signaling success to others, which provides agency for participants to be recognised and legitimised as successful leaders.

Participants stood out from others because of their dispositions and practices. For much of their lives, they recalled being viewed as 'special', standing out from their age peers and siblings. Initially identified by families and teachers because of their talent and ability, they were later singled out by virtue of their rarity as women in the workplace. Even when they attempted to align themselves with socially acceptable practices, they were still seen as different to other girls and women. They acknowledged this status was career benefitting as it provided valued visibility, which attracted attention and support at home, school and work. Thus, while not highlighted as criteria of career success, standing out was acknowledged as part of being successful.

Career success was perceived to include and be dependent on standing out through possession of certain dispositions (e.g. intelligence) and practices (e.g. strong work ethos). However, these are considered insufficient on their own to fully explain the complexity of what career success looks like. In other words, standing out for being clever and hard working is not enough to ensure career success, although it is an effective foundation. Possessing a range of other dispositions from a suite of characteristics is viewed as important for career success, when these are leveraged in combination with hard work and intelligence. These important dispositions include a sense of confidence, determination, independence, resilience and an optimistic outlook. This also includes the ability to maintain personal integrity, which is perceived as a keystone of success, guiding thoughts and actions

and enabling realisation of practices. Likewise, a hopeful and enthusiastic demeanour is deemed necessary to support participants to be 'confident', 'determined' and 'resilient'. These combined dispositions and practices form habitus, valued as it can represent cultural and social capital.

Likewise, while dispositions can be identified, they are difficult to gauge as individual capacity varies and how they are activated or leveraged differs. Career success cannot simply be assured for those individuals who possessed identified dispositions. Dispositions are valuable but the variety of ways participants draw on them makes a difference. Perhaps this can be explained by participants also possessing something else; a sense of "chutzpah" (Ryan, 1999) or "grit" (Kimberly), recognised as a reserve of determination and resilience which was helpful in supporting career persistence. This 'grit' may have been part of the reason they stood out from others, differentiated through their ability to 'stay the distance'.

Participants were able to identify dispositions important for success, but they were reluctant to self-aggrandise their own personal characteristics. However, they were less constrained when speaking in general terms of other women. This points to them wanting to appear modest, conforming to an Australian cultural norm for women.

Success is largely defined and gauged by participants' ability to lead others and impact their environment in a personally fulfilling way. Participants understand career success to be centred on the possession and interaction of a difficult-to-quantify set of personal characteristics and practices, which reflects habitus, enables leadership, and is valued in the corporate field.

6.1.2. How do personality, family background and educational experiences influence enabling factors?

Aspects of personality or dispositions outlined in Section 6.1.1 are viewed as fundamental antecedents of career success: viewed as strengths and developed from a young age.

These are viewed as success enabling, but only when other contextual factors are taken into account. Dispositions are perceived to be largely shaped by genetics and family background, but further developed through life experiences, the inculcation of attitudes and practices from parents, can be viewed as uniquely formed habitus. However, despite environmental and genetic similarities, participants are viewed as advantaged by their differences to their siblings, in terms of their personalities and interests, with their occupational aspirations and achievement levels reflecting these differences. Individual differences of habitus go some way to explaining why participants are different to their siblings.

Countering earlier research, this study shows that family composition does not align with career success, however may go some way to explaining how family background influenced participant development. Growing up with only sisters or growing up in a small family was not necessarily viewed as an important antecedent success factor, although this was a typical feature of some family backgrounds. However, being a first born, 'only' or 'quasi-only child' was common among the participants, with participants valuing their status, confirming literature links to increased achievement levels for women from these types of families.

More importantly, participants viewed close relationships with parents or other significant adults during childhood, as encouraging of career aspirations and supporting well being. Family support, particularly from mothers, helped participants to persist with education and to pursue career aspirations, engendering in their daughters a belief that it was their own responsibility to make something of themselves. Favourable circumstances such as the support of a loving, stable family is viewed as a stimulus for development of career-enabling characteristics such as confidence and independence. Conversely, a response to adverse conditions such as family dysfunction, loss of a parent and frequent relocation is also perceived to help build helpful characteristics (e.g. confidence, independence,

determination and resilience), contributing to the formation of evolving habitus. Other experiences such as work experience in childhood (e.g. part-time or vacation work), was considered to help participants develop a strong work ethic and an ability to deal with others. Likewise, family travel in childhood was valuable in broadening career horizons and developing a worldview, which allowed participants to accumulate valued cultural capital from their experiences. Highly developed interpersonal skills and open attitudes towards the world are viewed as desired characteristics and valued as contributing to success.

Participants were able to draw on their habitus in childhood (e.g. dispositions, ingrained habits, attitudes) enabling them to be successful at school and to 'stand out', which supported opportunities for further success and subsequent capital accumulation. Education is viewed as important career capital; a central factor for career success. A quality education is perceived to facilitate the acquisition of skills and attitudes and represents important institutionalised capital in the form of formal qualifications. Key aspects include developing a strong work ethic and confidence at school, experiencing success at school (e.g. good grades, awards) and qualifying for university entry at the conclusion of secondary school. Single-sex schooling is a feature of the experiences of women in this study, perceived as providing opportunities for the development of personal characteristics such as confidence and self-assurance, as well as for gaining valued critical support and affirmation from significant adults and community. Common characteristics for participants at all-girls' schools (Protestant, Catholic and non-denominational), were strong women leaders as role models, strong links between home and school and support from mothers (or significant others) for the education of girls. More than half of the participants attended Catholic schools. Older participants identified their Catholic school environment as crucial in the development of career-enabling knowledge, skills and attitudes and recognised their school years as a special era for Catholic education, because of the influence of Catholic nuns in the roles of teachers and principals.

6.1.3. How do career experiences impact career success?

What happens at work is shown to influence career development and impact career success, with experiences in early career of particular importance as career directions and commitments are being established. Access to fast-track training and promotional opportunities, exposure to a broad range of experiences across an organisation and access to core business areas emerge as important career-enhancing experiences. These experiences were enabled through early identification of potential because participants 'stood out' from others with visibility reflecting valued capital. Individuals with appropriate volume and composition of capital have increased power and are likely to do well in terms of opportunities and promotions.

The participants did not start work empty handed. They brought with them expectations for continuing success, developed in early life and previous settings, which gave them confidence to seek and engage in career-enhancing experiences. They were also able to draw upon their habitus, through personal dispositions, skills and practices, which ensured their visibility and engendered the possibility of success. Important personal dispositions and practices were identified (e.g. hard work ethos, intelligence, confidence, independence, determination, optimism, social aptness) which represent valued capital, developed in childhood and effectively transposed to the field of work.

Investment in proactive career planning is perceived to have a positive impact on career success, although participant experience conflicts with this belief. Career planning is perceived to enable individuals to organise access to experiences and offers a planned way to attain a range of valued capital. Career planning, while not the universal experience for participants, emerges as a more reliable career development strategy than simply relying on fortuitous luck. Nevertheless, allowing space for luck or happenstance was perceived to enable participants to recognise and utilise career-enhancing opportunities when these

arose. Supportive relationships and career direction changes can be the unplanned and unexpected results of luck.

6.1.4. How do relationships in adulthood, at home and at work, affect career success?

Participants developed and maintained supportive reciprocal relationships as adults, crediting these as career support mechanisms. Relationships at work and outside work were valued as career supporting, but viewed in different ways.

Participants were able to take into their adulthood, important skills and understandings developed in childhood, which enabled them to build relationships. A capacity for getting along well with others, developed through their early life habitus and practiced and utilised at school, was then transposed to work. An ability to develop relationships reflects social aptness enabling participants to access networks, create alliances and engage with social systems, which are viewed as career enhancing. A combination of social skills and technical skills gained through tertiary education or other training, attracted helpful attention and support of others. This gave them access to career advancing experiences and provided professional and personal support, especially helpful in early career stages.

Support from senior colleagues, mostly male bosses, was seen to be career supporting. This was largely in the form of mentoring, championing or sponsorship, and friendship, with relationships often lasting for many years. Early career bosses commonly were credited with 'opening doors' and providing a 'push' to help participants to 'say yes' to new opportunities. Strong work relationships at work were also perceived to promote motivation and support career commitment.

Although there was overlap between work and home relationships, close relationships with family and friends were viewed to have different functions. Friends and family provided important emotional support for participants to engage and commit to their career

aspirations, as well as providing uplifting affirmation and encouragement. Mothers in the study perceived their ability to engage with their work and to fully commit to their career goals was enabled by a combination of supports. These included emotional and practical spousal support, particularly effective when provided by an interested and encouraging spouse, with willingness to share domestic responsibilities in the home and the care and management of children. Close relationships with extended family was also valued, especially for the practical support these relationships offered (e.g. child care, domestic help). Additionally, reciprocal loyalty from work organisations and the financial capacity to employ paid home help was also viewed as valuable. The importance and relative prominence of these factors was determined by the personal and professional circumstances of each participant, although spousal support was deemed a career-enhancing mechanism even when the participants did not have responsibilities for children and family. Thus, marriage was not viewed as career limiting when it offered important personal support. Furthermore, career advancement was perceived to be more complex when there were children, although parenthood was not necessarily viewed as a career limitation. Some participants viewed the inevitable career breaks required for childbirth and childcare as opportunity for skill growth and broadening of work experience.

Divorce was partly explained as a result of inadequate spousal support. The notion of a supportive marriage was widely desired, evidenced by the willingness of divorced and widowed participants to marry again. However, being divorced was seen to bring career benefits in the form of increased commitment to career aspirations and motivations, sometimes to ensure financial security for families.

6.1.5. How do wider socio-cultural and historical contexts influence the development of success-enabling factors?

Experiences at home influenced participants to develop in highly contextual ways, further influenced by schooling and affected by other forces within their environment. Participants were able to leverage cultural capital from their well-resourced family backgrounds, including financial and cultural legacies passed down from previous generations, especially in regard to the value of education and attitudes about the importance of self-sufficiency and independence.

Wider socio-cultural and historical forces were perceived to impact participants, with the Great Depression and World War II highlighted as significant events. Some participants recalled their family's experiences influencing how they and *their* children were raised. These experiences engendered fear of future conflict and a need to insulate against a return to poverty. This fear supported parental resolve to prioritise education for children as protection against recurring hardship. These attitudes were reflected in the expectations of completing secondary school. Attitudes of independence and self-reliance were also passed to subsequent generations, inculcated through parental attitudes towards avoiding debt and owning property. Thus, education and self-sufficiency were viewed to insure financial security and safety. Growing up with these values and attitudes was perceived to shape how participants developed, fueling the growth of dispositions such as determination and resilience.

The Women's Movement had a particular impact on participants who commenced their careers in the late 1960s and during the 1970s, changing how they thought about the roles of women and broadening possibilities for their own careers. In addition, the introduction of government funded tertiary education (e.g. free university tuition) encouraged participants to undertake university study, which may have been previously prohibited.

Younger participants attached less importance to the impact of the Great Depression and World War II on their development. Growing up in well-resourced middle-class homes may have tempered the impact of historical events, just as distance from world events may have also lessened the perceived impact.

6.1.6. Conclusions

This study shows career success to be defined by what can be achieved through the power and influence associated with leadership, rather than how far 'up the ladder', participants have come. Key defining criteria include making a difference to the world and driving positive change through leadership. Success is gauged largely by subjective measures of personal fulfilment through job satisfaction. However, outward symbols of success such as job titles and high salaries provide status and are valued as they signal success to others. Definitions of career success are perceived to vary over time, determined by personal and professional circumstances

Aspects of personality and the possession of certain personal characteristics and practices are perceived necessary for career success, enabling participants to stand out from others. These include intelligence and a hard work ethos, effective in combination with a suite of other characteristics associated with confidence and determination. These characteristics represent valued capital, advantaging participants in their career progression and providing foundations for career success.

The antecedents of career success are perceived to begin in early life with crucial resources or cultural capital stemming from innate personal characteristics and learned practices. These are further developed over time, through experiences and interactions with others. A range of personal characteristics is influenced by contextually driven family and wider socio-historical forces and is further impacted by chance and temporality. The development of a suite of important personal dispositions in childhood is influenced by biological inheritance,

especially in regard to a high level of intelligence, which is considered to be an underpinning and enabling characteristic of a successful professional career. While participants identified possessing certain features of their personality in childhood (e.g. optimism, enthusiasm), they also perceived forces within socio-cultural family and community backgrounds as influencing the development of these and other characteristics. Favouring these dispositions, both unconsciously and consciously, was encouraged by families and at school, even when these did not align with social expectations for girls of the time.

While experiences and relationships in childhood are viewed as shaping development, particularly building characteristics such as confidence and resilience, this does not necessarily occur the same for siblings, despite their similar background environment. Both favourable and adverse childhood conditions are viewed as catalysts for the development of career enabling personal characteristics such as independence and confidence. These personal characteristics are perceived to be valuable cultural capital, transposable to different fields of endeavour.

A typical feature for participants in this study was a well-resourced home life, showing that socio-economic status contributes to a rich habitus, acting as an enabling force in personal development. This points to participants benefitting from growing up in middle class homes, which includes readiness for school, choice of schools, family travel and access to extra-curricular activities, viewed as providing opportunities for development of skills, attitudes and personal characteristics.

This study shows that while proud of their success, participants display a typically Australian characteristic of reluctance to boast or 'big note' themselves. They do not brag about their attributes and achievements, presenting a self-effacing image, especially in terms of their own personal qualities developed. The study shows that all life experiences (e.g. work experience as teenagers, experiences during career breaks, adversity) are valued for their

contribution to the accumulation of career capital with an integration of home and work aspects. Skills and attributes acquired through all avenues and experiences in their lives are viewed as valued career capital. Personal characteristics, attitudes and practices are developed through these experiences and are regarded as important influences on career success. Importantly, the ability to see all experiences as opportunities for growth, not dwelling on setbacks or allowing obstacles to impede progression, is significant to success. Being able to see or reframe experiences in a positive light requires optimistic personal qualities and mindset.

The role of luck or chance plays an unpredictable but important role in career outcomes, although a more critical career success factor is a readiness to leverage opportunities that arise unexpectedly. Freedom to be able to take advantage of opportunities when they arose was viewed as the result of being unconstrained by a set career plan. However, while luck has a place in the discourse about career success, participants advise that this should be subordinate to more strategic career planning and targeted experiences.

Work experiences and relationships impact career outcomes with the participants identifying important early career experiences – such as recognition of talent and accessing a broad range of experiences across organisations – as career enhancing. Other work experiences such as core and broad business experience and access to quality professional learning are linked to hierarchical career success.

Supportive reciprocal relationships – including strong associations with work colleagues, professional networking and mentoring by a senior and powerful colleague, perhaps manifesting as championing or sponsorship – are considered important antecedents for success. Connections and alliances developed through work relationships increase job satisfaction as well as enhance the chances of promotion. Strong relationships increase the likelihood of the participants being noticed, being recommended and being offered career-

enhancing opportunities. The recognition of talent and the gentle push provided by a senior colleague or colleagues are especially important in early career, but can be helpful throughout a career as a long-term support mechanism.

Supportive personal relationships also have an important role to play in commitment to career aspirations and personal fulfilment. Marriage is considered to have a significant enabling influence and, when this was not evident or not sustained, relationships were not prolonged. Participants are optimistic about marriage, with most marrying in their early career and some remarrying following divorce or widowhood. Effective spousal support enables participants to engage with career aspirations in terms of time and energy and supports motivation. It also helps to mitigate the practical challenges of parenthood. Quality support networks including spousal support, family and paid domestic help and friendship circles are also considered to play an important role in career success through affirmation of talent and achievement and emotional support.

Parenthood is not viewed as career limiting, assuaged by effective support mechanisms such as spousal support or other domestic and employer support. Although parenthood is traditionally viewed as a career-limiting circumstance, the participants view parenthood as an opportunity to gain valuable skills through engagement in diverse experiences. Effective use of time during career breaks or 'off-ramps' brought about by parenthood and other family responsibilities is perceived as important for goal setting, exploration of different occupations and career directions and for accumulating different skill sets. The mindset about career breaks is optimistic, interpreting 'time out' as a career-enhancing opportunity for accruing additional and different career capital. Career breaks are not seen as disadvantageous to career progression, but rather as opportunities for different experiences.

Career success is the result of the complex interaction between personality, skills, experience, opportunities, support and experiential and relational factors throughout a lifetime. The participants are influenced in unique ways by their habitus; genetic make-up, dispositions, influences of family relationships and background. Type of schooling and levels of education and degree of support from significant adults also influenced them. Important work experiences and adult relationships influence career success, which is further shaped by the type of organisation or industry environment. The influence of time, place and other socio-historical forces effects how participants develop. Work and home relationships play a role, with participants benefiting from affirmation and support. Even adverse circumstances are perceived to be catalysts for the development of career capital contributing to career success.

While there is no formulaic recipe for career success, there are commonalities in participant stories in terms of career features and personal characteristics. Recurring themes in this study point to valued characteristics, experiences and relationships that underpin career success and highlight the complexity in individual variations and how contextual, socio-cultural and historical forces impact these.

6.2. Contribution of the study

This study contributes in the following ways to the discourse about women and career success. This study allows women to contribute to the discussion on their own terms without predetermined parameters and not restricted to a single or temporal point of view, with value in a whole of career retrospective as recommended by Schellenberg, Kruass, Hättich and Häfeli (2016). Exploration of personal experiences and perceptions goes beyond correlative links gained through quantitative studies reliant on stimulation tasks or data gained from anonymous checklists. The methods used in this study allowed the participants to present

their ideas without the constraints of preset or predetermined ideas and gave an active voice to this group of women.

The study establishes that women beginning their professional careers in the era from the 1970s to the 1990s are a historically significant group; previously under-researched. The participants are representative of a pioneering group of career-oriented and educated women who changed the Australian career landscape by entering the workforce in unprecedented numbers at the time. They were part of the 'first of the firsts' in Australia (e.g. first woman to head up a government department). Thus, there is an impetus in capturing their insights first hand. These women grew up subject to the forces of a unique socio-historical context. This study enlivens a research silence on the type of influences this particular generation of women experienced by seeking their perspective on their own career success.

The study suggests that because the participants were harbingers of Australian business women leaders they were not subject to societal or familial pressure to commit to a career or a career direction at a young age. This provided a degree of freedom in their choice of career directions. There was limited expectation for them to aspire to leadership in their occupational areas, therefore, less pressure for them to persist and less expectation that they would succeed or fail. Perhaps this freedom of choice allowed them to try different things, not settling to their preferred career direction until later, in some cases until their thirties. This lack of urgency to establish a professional career is an area not highlighted in previous research.

This research contributes to the body of knowledge about the role of support in childhood, showing that a supportive and gentle 'push' from a significant adult or adults in childhood and early career is an important success factor. This study shows a shift from earlier studies, to the importance of support from mothers from that of fathers. Despite strong

support from mothers, there was little pressure from parents on career direction or career persistence. There was no social expectation of a long-term career imagined for these women, nor a career in male–dominated occupations anticipated, perpetuating the notion of them as special and extraordinary when they engaged with this type of career. This contributes to knowledge about the role of social expectation in the shaping influences and backgrounds of successful women.

The focus on enabling factors of this study differentiates it. The study acknowledges that women (e.g. in general) face obstacles in their career journeys but firmly focuses on identifying enabling factors of career success. This not only establishes there are success enabling factors, but also acknowledges the positive attitude of the participants in recognising these. A positive and optimistic outlook allows women to identify and focus on positive influences and points to an ability to overlook the barriers of the so-called 'glass ceiling'.

This study addresses the call for more research into the intersection of careers and lives, "deepening our understanding of complex synergies created by the flows of knowledge, skills and experience among women's multiple life roles as a dynamic system" (O'Neil, Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008, p. 737). Opportunities for development are perceived to be found in any situation and circumstance, such as during career breaks due to family responsibilities, or when 'marking time' while supporting spouses (e.g. relocating for their job). This points to the recognition of value in all experiences, suggesting that when participants value the experience as part of their career journey, it then provides career capital for them. These opportunities include the possibility of accumulation of expertise, broadening views, opening up previously unrecognised career directions and space to consider and plan future goals, which supports the notion that the labyrinth nature of women's career journeys is not necessarily career limiting.

Furthermore, this study contributes to the discourse on the importance of role modelling for women by examining the role of same-sex role models in childhood and at work and questioning the notion that 'you cannot be what you cannot see'. In fact, this study points to these women choosing careers in areas where they had little or no experience of role modeling from other women. However, this may have given them freedom to pick and choose the leadership qualities they wished to emulate, not from their scarce immediate female colleagues or family members but rather from their male bosses or by making a new way for themselves.

6.2.1 Recommendations for further research

Given the limitations of the scope and size of this study, the methods used and the resultant conclusions the following recommendations are made for further research directions.

Many of the pioneering women leaders who entered the Australian workforce in numbers in the 1970s and 1980s have reached or are approaching retirement age. It is historically important to further research and document their career experiences while there is access to the primary source. Further focused research is recommended into the details of the socio-cultural and historical forces influencing their lives and careers. Additionally, there is research value in a future focus on women leaders who have grown up in low socio-economic backgrounds, contributing to the literature on intergenerational social mobility, which traditionally has focused on fathers and their sons.

As this study was an open-ended exploration, aspects have emerged which went beyond the scope of this study, warranting further investigation. This study revealed the important intersection of careers and lives for participants, in particular for mothers. Participants were establishing their careers at a time concurrent to the introduction of equal opportunity policies and legislation for working women. Further investigation is needed regarding the

impact of these initiatives on this generation of women. It is particularly important to investigate how pioneer working mothers perceived the impact of these initiatives.

Further research is recommended using an industry-specific focus, contributing to the body of knowledge about the particular nuances of the specific leadership field in which women operate. Likewise, investigating the experiences of women leaders of a similar age or hierarchical role rank may provide further insight into the complexity of career success. While it is recommended that further research focus specifically on the career experiences of women in order to better understand how they perceive their success, similar study of men may confirm a blurring of lines between how women and men view career success.

Further research is recommended into the antecedent factors of leadership, used as markers of success in this study, but largely beyond the scope of this study. Deeper investigation of how leadership is developed by school experiences is warranted.

Further exploration of success factors is recommended; particularly in the area of work experiences such as mentoring, networking and role modeling. The dynamic nature of the modern workplace requires an acknowledgment of a new and more fluid environment, influencing women differently than in the 20th century.

6.3. Where they are now

I have stayed in touch with or have tracked the careers of some the participants following their involvement in this study. In 2018 (e.g. four years after their interviews), it was interesting to see what they were doing. While age of retirement for Australian women is around 64 years (Australian Government, 2018b), participants have continued to work in their 70s, while others have changed their career direction. An internet search or personal communication reveal that many participants were still engaged directly or indirectly with the occupations and industries they discussed in the study. While some were retired, retirement does not seem to align with age. Some older participants were still working in a fulltime

capacity, yet some of younger women have changed how they work. Some participants have moved on from their career focus to pursue personal interests or other career directions.

Older participants, Stella and Maureen, in their 70s, continued to be active as directors of management boards and consultants in their industries, working in a full-time capacity but with flexibility to follow personal interests and take holidays. Likewise, Sonia, of a similar age, maintained her fulltime, high profile role as the head of a government authority.

Others, now in their 60s, said they had retired (Elizabeth and Tina) but they remained active as board members and consultants to their industries. Narelle had temporarily 'retired'; withdrawn from full-time work to care for family members. She however, retains various board memberships and may increase her involvement in the future. As a result of health issues, Carolyn has also retired, however remains active in volunteer work and in school governance as a board member. Only Linda (in her 50s) has retired to "paint and sail", severing her ties with the corporate world.

Some participants, aged 50 years or more, continue with the occupations discussed in the study. Michelle's occupation remains unchanged as a non-executive director on a number of boards and as an advisor to various organisations and public authorities. However, others had changed direction, such as Denise, who retrained as a psychological counsellor and Joanne, who established her own media production company, preferring the flexibility it afforded her.

Some of the other participants were still working in a full-time capacity, as they were at the time of interview: Colleen as a senior legal partner and Jill as a teaching professor and senior administrator in the field of medicine. Younger participants, Lisa and Kimberly continued their career ascension from senior Australasian roles to global CEO roles within their long-term organisations. Finally, Angela, the youngest participant, had been promoted

to a senior role with responsibility for social and economic infrastructure in the public sector. These women show that it is possible to 'get to the very top'.

Philanthropy was a feature in most of the participants' lives, with continued involvement in volunteer work a feature of their more recent stories. They cited projects such as working with; refugees, women's networks, Lifeline, projects to combat poverty in Africa, girls education programs, and mentoring in schools as ways they were able to 'make a difference'. They continued to contribute in different ways to their communities and industries, doing things in their own way; still 'dancing to their own tunes'.

6.4. What happened to Karen?

We left project catalyst, Karen, at the beginning of this report with a 'vase of options' to help her readdress and redirect her career. What did she do? Following the social gathering or 'mentoring session', she took a career break; travelling and studying creative arts. She was able to take stock and prioritise her career aspirations and commitments.

Eventually, Karen returned to work, joining a small retail organisation similar to her original work, although much smaller in scale. After a year or so, the new firm proved to be too small to maintain her interest. Hearing that she was back in the job market, her old organisation 'head hunted' and rehired her. This time it was on her terms, with a greater choice of roles and responsibilities, more aligned with her creative interests and newly minted artistic talents.

Her new role in her former organisation provides her with greater control of her own tasks and time and the ability to be in charge of her own creative team. Her work is now better suited to her disposition and talents. She does not aspire to a global leadership role as she once did, but finds leading an effective happy team doing valuable work, as satisfying reflecting that career success can mean different things at different times. She identifies balance in her life of interesting, stimulating and challenging work with exciting but

manageable travel opportunities, greater flexibility in how she works, acknowledgement of her efforts and appropriate remuneration. She has engaged with her new work with renewed enthusiasm, greater self-awareness of her own motivations and clear career aspirations. Karen describes this as the final chapter in her successful career - one that has her 'dancing to *her* own tune'.

REFERENCES

Abele, A. E. & Spurk, D., (2009), The longitudinal impact of self-efficacy and career goals on objective and subjective career success. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 74 (1), pp. 53-62

Abele, A.E., Hagmaier, T. & Spurk, D., (2016), Does Career success make you happy? The mediating role of multiple subjective success evaluations, *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 17, pp. 1615-1633

Adams, R.B, (2016), Women on boards: The superheroes of tomorrow, *The Leadership Quarterly,* 27, pp. 371-386

Allen, T.D. & Eby, L.T., Poteet, M. L., Lentz, E. & Lima, L., (2004), Career benefit associated with mentoring for protégés: a meta-analysis, *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 36 (1), pp. 120-143

Allen, T.D., French, K.A. & Poteet, M. L., (2016), Women and career advancement: Issues and opportunities, *Organizational Dynamics*, 45, pp. 206-216

Ammerman, N.T. & Williams, R. R. (2012), Speaking of Methods: Eliciting Religious Narratives through Interviews, Photos and Oral Diaries, *Annual Review of Sociology of Religion*, 3, pp. 117-134

Andrews, M., Squire, C. & Tamboukou, M., (Eds.), (2008), *Doing narrative research*, London, Sage

Argy, F., (2006), Equality of opportunity in Australia: myth or reality, Discussion paper, Australia Institute

Arnold, J., (1985), *Mother Superior Women Inferior*, Australia, Blackburn, Dove Communications

Ashby, J.S. & Schoon, I., (2010), Career success: The role of teenage career aspirations, ambition value and gender in predicting adult social status and earnings, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 77,* pp. 350-360

REFERENCES

Asplund, G., (1988), *Women managers: changing organizational cultures*, Chichester, New York, Wiley

Assman, A., (1994), Wholesome knowledge: Concepts of wisdom in a historical and cross- cultural perspective. In D. L. Featherman, R.M. Lerner & M. Perlmutter (Eds.), *Life-span development and behavior,* 12, pp. 187-224. Hillsdale, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Astin, H.S., (1984), The meaning of work in women's lives: a socio-psychological model of career choice and work behavior, *The Counselling Psychologist*, 12 (4), pp. 117- 126

Atkinson, R., (2007), The life story interview as a bridge to narrative inquiry, pp. 224-245. In D. J Clandinin, (Ed.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: mapping a methodology*, Thousand Oaks, CA., SAGE

Australian Bureau of Statistics, (1994), Trends in religious affiliation, http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs, accessed 10/4/2015

Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2016), Gender Indicators: Australia, Aug., http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs, accessed 10/2/2017

Australian Financial Review (2012), Meet Australia's 100 Women of Influence, 12 Oct. Author

Australian Government, (2012), Women on boards but not in pipeline to leadership, Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, *Media release*, November 27, www.australia.gov.au, accessed 2/3/2013

Australian Government, (2013), Industry Snapshot, Australian Workplace and Productivity Agency, www.australia.gov.au, accessed 2/2/2014

Australian Government, (2014), Australia's gender equity scorecard, *Workplace Gender Equality Agency report*, Oct., www.wgea.gov.au, accessed 1/10/2015

Australian Government, (2015), Women in wartime, Black Dog Communications, www.australia.gov.au, accessed 19/10/2018

REFERENCES

Australian Government, (2018a), Women in leadership, *Workplace Gender Equality Agency report* , www.wgea.gov.au, accessed 1/12/2019

Australian Government, (2018b), Older Australia at a glance, *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report* (AIHW), Sep 10, www.aihw.gov.au/reports/older-people/older-australia-at-a-glance/contents/social-and-economic-engagement/employment-and-economic-participation, accessed 19/10/2018

Australian Government, (2019), Gender workplace statistics at a glance, 2017-2018, *Workplace Gender Equality Agency*, Feb., www.wgea.gov.au, accessed 2/3/2019

Australian Human Rights Commission, (2013), Accelerating the advancement of women in leadership: Listening, learning and leading, *Male champions of change*, www.humanrights.gov.au/male-champions-of-change, accessed 6/7/2014

Bagihole, B., (2006), Not a glass ceiling, more a lead roof: Experiences of pioneer women priests in the C.O.E., *Equal Opportunity International*, 25 (2), pp. 109-125

Bandura, A., (1977), Self-efficacy: towards a unifying theory of behavioural change, *Psychological Review*, 84 (2), pp. 191-215

Bandura, A., (1986), The explanatory and predictive scope of self-efficacy theory, *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 4, pp. 359-373

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: the exercise of control*. New York: W.H. Freeman

Barone, T. & Eisner, E., (2006), Arts-based educational research. In J. Green, G. Camilli & P. Elmore (Eds.), *Complimentary methods in research in education*, pp. 95-104, NJ, Erlbaum

Bass, B.M. & Aviolo, B., (1993), Transformational leadership: a response to critics, in M.M.Chemers & R. Ayman, (Eds.), *Leadership Theory and research: Perspectives and directions*, pp. 49-80, NY, Academic Press

Bauch, P., (1989), *Single-sex schooling and women's education*, Chicago, National Catholic Educational Association

Baum, J.R. & Locke, E.A., (2004), The relationship of entrepreneurial traits, skills and motivation to subsequent venture growth, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89, pp. 587-598

Baxter, K., (2013), Against the odds. In N. Breekveldt, (Ed.), *Sideways to the top: 10 Stories of successful women that will change your thinking about careers forever*, Melbourne, Melbourne Books

Bazeley, P., (2013), *Qualitative data analysis*, London, Sage

Becker, G.S., (1993), Human Capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to Education, 2nd ed., NY, Columbia University Press

Bell, D., (1987), *Generations: Grandmothers, mothers and daughters*, McPhee Gribble, Fitzroy, Victoria

Berenbaum, M., (2009), Sons of Bees, *American Entomologist*, 55 (4), pp. 212-213

Blignaut L. & Ungerer, M & Muller, H., (2014), Personality as predictor of customer service centre agent performance in the banking industry: an exploratory study, *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 14 (1)

Berman, L., Bock, H. & Aiken, J., (2016), Data-driven answers to accelerate success for women, *Women Law Journal*, 101 (4), pp. 18-21

Boudreau, J.W., Boswell, W.R. & Judge, T.A., (2001), Effects of personality on executive career success in the United States and Europe, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 58 (1), pp. 53-81

Bourdieu, P., (1974), The school as a conservative force: scholastic and cultural inequalities. In J. Eggleston, (Ed.), *Contemporary research in the sociology of education*, UK, Methuen

Bourdieu, P., (1977), *Outline of a theory of practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Bourdieu, P., (1979), Symbolic power, *Critique of Anthropology*, 4 (13-14), pp. 77-85

Bourdieu, P., (1986), The forms of capital, pp. 241-258. In J. Richardson, (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research in the sociology of education*, Westport, Greenwood

Bourdieu, P., (1990), *The logic of practice*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press

Bourdieu, P., (1997), The forms of capital. In H. Lauder, P. Brown, J. Dillabough & A. Halsey, (Eds.), *Education, globalisation and social change*, Oxford, Polity Press

Bourdieu, P., (1998), *Practical reason: On the theory of action*, Oxford, Polity Press

Bourdieu, P., Chamboredon, J. & Passeron, J., (1991), *The craft of sociology: Epistemological preliminaries*, NY, de Gruter

Bourdieu, P. & Passeron, J., (1977), *Reproduction in education, society and culture*, UK, SAGE

Bourdieu, P. & Wacquant, J.D. (1992), *An initiation to reflexive sociology*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press

Bowman, G.W., Worthy, N.B. & Greyser, S.A., (1965), Are women executives people?, *Harvard Business Review*, 44 (4), pp. 14-28

Breekveldt, N, (2013), *Sideways to the top: 10 Stories of successful women that will change your thinking about careers forever*, Melbourne, Melbourne Books

Briscoe, J.P., Hall, D.T. & De Muth, R.L., (2006), Protean and boundaryless careers: an empirical exploration, *Journal of Vocational behavior,* 69, pp. 30-47

Bronfenbrenner, U., (2005), *Making human beings human: bioecological perspectives on human development*, Thousand Oaks, CA., Sage

Broomhill, R., (1978), *Unemployed workers: A social history of the Great Depression in Adelaide*, St. Lucia, QLD. University of Queensland Press

Bruner, (1990), *Acts of meaning*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press

Bullock-Yowell, E., Andrews, L. & Buzzetta, M.E., (2011), Explaining career decision- making, self-efficacy, personality, cognitions and cultural mistrust, *Career Development Quarterly*, 59 (5).

Burke, J. & Attridge, M., (2011), Pathways to career and leadership success: part 2 striking gender similiarities among $100K professionals, *Journal of Workplace Behavioural Health*, 26 (3), pp. 207-239

Burke R.J. & Mattis M.C., (2005), *Supporting women's advancement: Challenges and opportunities*, Cheltenham, UK. Edward Elgar

Burt, R., (1998), The gender of social capital, *Rationality and Society*, 10 (1), pp. 5-46

Buse, K.R., Bilimoria, D. & Perilli, S., (2013), Why they stay: women persisting in US engineering careers, *Career Development International*, 18, pp. 139-154

Byrski, L., (1999), *Speaking out: Australian women talk about success*, French's Forest, NSW, New Holland Publishing

Carr, A., (2011), *Positive psychology: The science of happiness and human strengths*, 2nd ed., London, Routledge,

Cass, B. & Brennan, D., (2004), Taxing women: The politics of gender in the tax /transfer system, *ejournal of Tax Research*, 1 (1), pp. 37-64, https://ssrn.com/abstrct=624263, accessed 4/11/2017

Cassidy, J. & Shaver, P. R. (Eds.), (2008), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research and clinical applications* (2nd ed.), New York, NY, US, Guilford Press.

Caspi, A., McClay, J., Moffitt, T.E., Mill, J., Martin, J., Craig, I.W., Taylor, A. & Poulton, R., (2002), Role of genotype in the cycle of violence in maltreated children, *Science*, 297 (5582), pp. 851-854

Ceci, S.J., (2006), Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005), *American Psychologist, 61* (2), pp. 173-174

Chase, S., (2005), Narrative Inquiry: Still a field in the making, pp. 421-434. In N.K. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, (Eds.), (2013), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed., Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage

Chief Executive Women, (2013), Organisations need to appoint female executives to break negative gender diversity cycle, *media release*, 6 Feb., author

Cimirotić, R., Duller, V., Feldbauer-Durstmüller, B., Gärtner, B. & Hiebl, M.R.W., (2017), Enabling factors that contribute to women reaching leadership positions in business organizations: The case of management accountants, *Management Research Review,* 40 (2), pp. 165-194

Clandinin, D.J., (Ed.), (2007), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology*, Thousand Oaks, USA, Sage

Clandinin, D.J. & Connelly F., (2000) *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*, San Francisco, USA, John Wiley & Sons

Clandinin D J, Pushor, M. & Murray Orr A., (2007), Navigating sites of narrative inquiry, *Journal of Teacher Education,* 58 (21), pp. 21-35.

Coleman, M., (2011), *Women at the top; Challenges, choices and change*, Palgrave Macmillan, UK

Conroy, D.K., (1993), The Glass ceiling: Illusory or real? *Paper presented at Affirmative Action Agency*, Royal Institute for Public Administration in Australia Conference, Nov 4-5, Sydney

Cook, S.G., (2009), How to raise girls to become leaders as women, *Women in Higher Education,* 18 (11), p. 33

Cook, E.P., Heppner, M.J. & O'Brien, K.M., (2002), Career Development of women of colour and white women: Assumptions, conceptualizations and interventions from an ecological perspective, *The Career Development Quarterly*, 50, pp. 291-305

Cox, E., (1996), *Leading women: tactics for making a the difference*, Random House, Milson's Point, NSW

Creswell, J.W., (2003), *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*, (2nd ed.), Sage, Thousand Oaks, USA

Creswell, J.W., (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.), Upper Saddle River, NJ, Pearson Education

Creswell, J.W., (2013), *Qualitative inquiry and research design; Choosing among five approaches*, (3rd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA., Sage

Crompton, R., (2006), Class and Family, The Sociological Review, 54 (4), pp. 657-677

Crompton, R. & Lyonette, C., (2007), Reply to Hakim, The British Journal of Sociology, 58 (1), pp. 133-134

Cross, C., (2010), Barriers to the executive suite: evidence from Ireland, *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 31 (2), pp. 104-119

Darling, N. & Steinberg, L., (1993), Parenting style as context: an integrative model, *Psychological Bulletin*, 113 (3), pp. 487-496

Dawkins, R., (1989), *The Selfish Gene*, Oxford, Oxford University Press

Desan, M.H., (2013), Bourdieu, Marx and capital: A critique of the extension model, *Sociological Theory*, 31 (4), pp. 318-342

de Vries, J., Webb, C. & Eveline, J., (2006), Mentoring for gender equality and organisational change, *Employee Relations*, 28 (6), pp. 573-587

Dinolfo, S, Silva, C. & Carter, N.M., (2012), *High potentials in the pipeline" Leaders pay it forward,* New York, Catalyst

Dixson, M., (1984), *The Real Matilda: Women and Identity in Australia 1788 to the present*, (revised ed.), Ringwood, Victoria, Penguin Books.

Doogue, G., (2014), *The Climb: Conversations with Australian women in power*, Melbourne, Victoria, Text Publishing

Dreher, G.H. & Bretz, R.D., (1991), Cognitive agility and career attainment: moderating effects of early career success, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 76 (3), pp. 392- 397

Dries, N., (2011), The meaning of career success: Avoiding reification through a closer inspection of historical, cultural and ideological contexts, *Career Development International*, 16 (4), pp. 364-384

Dries, N., Pepermans, R. & De Kerpel, E., (2008), Exploring four generations beliefs about career: Is 'satisfied" the new 'successful"*? Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23, (8), pp. 907-928

Dries, N., Pepermans, R. & Carlier, O., (2008), Career success: Constructing a multidimensional model, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 73, pp. 254-267

Duckworth, A. & Gross, J., (2014), Self-control and grit: Related but separable determinants of success, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23 (5), pp. 319-325

Duckworth, A. & Quinn, P.D., (2009), Development and validation of the short grit scale, *Journal of Personality*, 91, pp. 161-174

Duckworth, A., Peterson, C., Matthews, M.D. & Kelly, D.R., (2007), Grit: perseverance and passion for long-term goals, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92, pp. 1087-1101

Dumais, S.A., (2002), Cultural Capital, Gender and School Success: The Role of Habitus. *Sociology of Education*, 75, pp. 44-68.

Dyke, L.S. & Murphy, S.A., (2006), How we define success: A qualitative study of what matters most to women and men, *Sex Roles*, 55, pp. 357-371

Eagly, A.H. & Carli, L.L., (2007), *Through the labyrinth: the truth about how women become leaders*, Boston, Harvard Business Review Press

Eagly, A.H. & Heilman, M.E., (2016), Gender and leadership: An introduction to the special issue, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27, pp. 349-353

Eccles, J., (1987), Gender roles and women achievement-related decisions, *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 11, pp. 135-172

Eccles, J., (1994), Understanding women's educational and occupational choices: Applying the Eccles et al. model of achievement-related choices, *Psychology of Women's Quarterly*, 18, pp. 585-609

Ellis, C., (2004), *The ethnographic I; a methodological novel about autoethnography*, Walnut Creek, Alta Mira Press

Emden, C., (1998), *Student voices; towards an understanding of nursing*, Flinders University of South Australia, School of Nursing

Encel, S. & Campbell, D., (1991), *Out of the doll's house: Women in the public sphere*, Melbourne, Victoria, Longman Cheshire

Encel, S., MacKenzie, N. & Tebbutt, M., (1974), *Women and Society: An Australian Study*, Melbourne, Victoria, Cheshire Publishing

England, P., (2010), The gender revolution: Uneven and stalled, *Gender and Society*, 24 (2), pp. 149-166

Eskreis-Winkler, L., Duckworth, A., Shulman, E.P. & Beale, S.A., (2014), The grit effect: predicting retention in the military, the workplace, school and marriage, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5 (36)

Evans, C.D. & Diekman, A.B., (2009), On motivated role selections: Gender beliefs, distant goals and career interest, *Psychology of Women's Quarterly*, 33 (3), pp. 235-249

Evans, M.D.R. & Kelley, J., (2002), Family background and occupational success in Australia, Australian Social Monitor, 5 (3), pp. 73-78

Feldt, T., Kokko, K., Kinnunen, U. & Pulkkinen, L., (2005), The role of family background, school success and career orientation in the development of sense of coherence, *European Psychologist* , 10 (4), pp. 298-308

Festinger, L., (1954), *Theory of cognitive dissonance*, Evanston, IL, Row, Peterson and Co. Publishing

Finegold, D. & Mohrman, S.A., (2001), What do employers really want? The perception vs the reality, Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland

Fitzsimmons, T.W., (2011), Navigating CEO appointments: Do Australia's top male and female CEOs differ in how they made it to the top? Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, University of Queensland, Business School

Fitzsimmons, T.W. & Callan, V.J., (2016a), Applying a capital perspective to explain gender inequality in the C-suite, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27, pp. 354-370

Fitzsimmons, T.W. & Callan, V.J., (2016b), CEO selection: A capital perspective, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27, pp. 765-787

Fitzsimmons, T.W., Callan, V.J. & Paulsen, N., (2014), Gender disparity in the C-suite: Do male and female CEOs differ in how they reached the top? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25, pp. 245-266

Fried, M., (1998), *Taking time; parental leave policy and corporate culture*, Philadelphia, P.A., Temple University Press

Fulcher, M., Sutfin, E. L. & Patterson, C. J., (2008), Individual Differences in Gender Development: Associations with Parental Sexual Orientation, Attitudes and Division of Labor, *Sex Roles*, 58, pp. 330-341.

Gelissen, J. & de Graaf, P.M., (2006), Personality, social background and occupational career success, *Social Science Research*, 35, pp. 702-726

Gersick, C. & Kram, K., (2002) High achieving women at midlife: an exploratory study, *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 11 (2), pp. 104-127 Giddens, A., (2005), (4th ed), *Sociology*, Cambridge, UK, Polity Press

Gillham B., 2005, *Research Interviewing: The Range of Techniques*, UK, Open University

Goldberg, W.A., Prause, J., Lucas-Thompson, R. & Himsel, A., (2008), Maternal employment and children's achievement in context: A meta-analysis of four decades of research, *Psychological Bulletin*, 134 (1), pp. 77-108

Goodwin, S. & Huppatz, K., (Eds.), (2010), *The good mother: Contemporary motherhoods in Australia*, Sydney, Australia, Sydney University Press

Grimshaw, P., Murphy, J. & Probert, B., (Eds.), (2005), *Double shift: Working mothers and social change in Australia*, Beaconsfield, Victoria

Grimshaw, P. & Strahan, L., (Eds.), (1982), *The half-open door: Sixteen modern Australian women look at professional life and achievement*, Sydney, Australia, Hale & Iremonger

Groysberg, B., (2008), How star women build portable skills, *Harvard Business Review,* 86 (2), pp. 74-81

Haggard, D.L., Dougherty, T.W., Turban, D.B. & Wilbanks, J. E. (2011). Who is a mentor? A review of evolving definitions and implications for research. *Journal of Management*, 37, pp. 280-304.

Hakim, C., (1999), The models of the family, women's role and social policy; a new perspective from Preference Theory, European Societies, 1(1), pp. 33-57

Hakim, C., (2003), A new approach to explaining fertility patterns; preference theory, Population and Development Review, 29 (3), pp. 1-22

Hakim, C., (2004), Key issues in women's work, female diversity and the polarisation of women's employment, (2nd ed.), UK, Glasshouse Press

Hakim, J., (2004), *The story of science: Aristotle leads the way*, Washington, Smithsonian Books

Hardy, C., (2008), Doxa. In M. Grenfell, (Ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key concepts*, Acumen

Hardy S., Gregory S. & Ramjeet J., 2009, An Exploration of Intent for Narrative methods of Inquiry, *Researcher*, 16 (4)

Harter, S., Waters, P.L., Whitesell, N.R. & Kastelic, D., (1998), Level of voice among female and male high school students: relational context, support and gender orientation, *Developmental Psychology*, 35 (5), pp. 892-901

Harvey, W.S., (2010), Methodological approaches for interviewing elites, *Geography Compass*, 4 (3), pp. 193-205

Haslam, S. A. & Ryan, M. K., (2008), The road to the glass cliff: Differences in the perceived suitability of men and women for leadership positions in succeeding and failing organizations. *The Leadership Quarterly, 19, pp.* 530–546

Heggarty, J., (2011), Exploring mentoring relationships: A phenomenological study of four women's experiences, Dissertation, Doctorate of Philosophy in Composition and TESOL, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Hennig, M., (1973), Family dynamics for developing positive achievement motivation in women: The successful woman executive, *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 208 (1), pp. 76-81

Hennig, M. & Jardim, A., (1977a), *The Managerial Woman,* Pan Books, London

Hennig, M. & Jardim, A., (1977b), Superwomen, *Across the board*, 14 (7), pp. 27-33,

Hennig, M. & Jardim, A., (1977c), Women executives in the old boy network, *Psychology Today*, Jan., 10 (8), pp. 76-81

Hennig, M. & Jardim, A., (1990), The last barrier: Breaking into the boy's club at the top, *Working Women*, 15 (11), pp. 130-134

Herriot, P., Gibson, G., Pemberton, C. & Pinder, R., (1993), Dashed hopes: organizational determinants and personal perspectives of management careers, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 66 (2), pp. 115-123

Hesse-Biber, S.N., (Ed) (2012), *The Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*, Thousand Oaks, Sage

Hewlett, S.A., (2002), Executive women and the myth of having it all, *Harvard Business Review*, April, pp. 66-73

Hewlett, S.A. & Luce, C.B., (2005), Off-ramps and on-ramps, *Harvard Business Review*, 83 (3), pp. 43-54

Hewlett, S.A., Sherbin, L., Forster, D., (2010), Off-ramps and on-ramps revisited, *Harvard Business Review*, June

Holloway, J. & Wheeler, S., (2010), *Qualitative Research in Nursing and Healthcare*, 3rd ed., UK, John Wiley

Holton, V. & Dent, F.E., (2012), *Women In Business: Navigating Career Success*, London, UK, Palgrave Macmillan

Holton, V. & Dent, F.E., (2016), A better career environment for women: Developing a blueprint for individuals and organisations, *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 31 (8), pp. 542-561

Holton,V. & Dent, F.E., (2017), Take control to break the glass ceiling: Ways to help women fulfil their potential, *Human Resources Management International Digest*, 25 (3), pp. 23-25

Houston, S.H., (2017), Towards a critical ecology of child development: Aligning the theories of Bronfenrenner and Bourdieu, *Families, Relationships and Societies*, 6 (1), pp. 53-69

Howard, A., (1986), College Experiences and Managerial Performance, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(3), pp. 530-552.

Hoyts, C.L. & Murphy, S.E., (2016), Managing to clear the air: Stereotype threat, women and leadership, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27, pp. 387-399

Hunt, D. & Michael, C., (1983). Mentoring: A career Training and development Tool. *The Academy of Management review,* 8 (3), pp. 475-485

Huston, A.C., (1983), Sex-typing, pp. 387-467. In P.H. Mussen & E.M.Hetherington, (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology*, vol 4, New York, Wilky

Hutchinson, T., (2011), Feminist Theories and their application to public administration. In M.J.D'Agostino & H. Levine, (Eds.), *Women in Public Administration: Theory and practice*, Sudbury, MA., Jones and Barlett Learning

Ibarra, H., Ely, R. & Kolb, D., (2013), Women rising: The unseen barriers, *Harvard Business Review*, Sep., 91 (9), pp. 60-68

IPED, (2010), Guidelines for editing theses, www.iped-editors.org, accessed 11 Oct 2018

Johnson, A.M., Vernon, P.A. & Feilor, A.R., (2008), Behavioural genetics studies of personality: An introduction and review of the results of 50+ years of research, pp. 145-173. In G.J. Boyle, G. Matthews & D.H., Saklofske, (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of personality theory and assessment*, Vol 1., Thousand Oaks, CA., Sage

Johnson, J., (2014), Grappling with constructs, pp.-18. In C. Howley, A. Howley & J. Johnson, (Eds.), *Dynamics of social class: Race and place in rural education*, Charlotte, N.C., IAP

Johnson, J., Bottoroff, J.L., Browne, A.J., Grewal, S., Hilton, B.A., & Clarke, H., (2009), Othering and being othered in the context of health care services, *Health Communications*, 16 (2), pp. 253-271

Josselson, R, (2013), *Interviewing for qualitative inquiry: A relational approach*, UK, Guilford Press

Judge, T.A., Higgins, C.A., Thoresen, C.J. & Barrick, M.R., (1999), The Big Five personality traits, general mental ability and career success across a life span, Personnel Psychology, 52 (3), pp. 621-652

Judge, T.A., Cable, D.M., Boudreau, J.W. & Bretz, R.D., (1995), An empirical investigation of the predictors of executive career success, *Personnel Psychology*, 48 (3), pp. 485-519

Kanter, R.M., (1977), *Men and women of the corporation*, New York, Basic Books

Kaufman, J., Yang, B.Z., Douglas-Palumberi, H., Houshyar, A., Lipschitz, D., Krystal, J.H. & Gelernter, J., (2004), Social supports and serotonin transporter gene moderate depression in maltreated children, *PNAS*, 101 (49), pp. 17316-17321

Keown, C.F. Jr. & Keown, A.L., (1982), Success factors for corporate women executives, *Group & Organizational Studies*, 7 (4), pp. 445-456

Kingston, P.W., (2001), The unfulfiled promise of cultural capital theory, *Sociology of Education*, 74, pp. 88-99

REFERENCES

Kleinhenz, E., (2018), *Germaine: The life of Germaine Greer*, Melbourne, Vic., Penguin Random House Australia,

Kolb, D., Fletcher, J., Meyerson, D., Merrill-Sands, D. & Ely, R., (1998), Making Change: A framework for promoting gender equity in organizations. In R. Ely, E.G. Foldy & M.A. Scully, (Eds.), (2003), *Reader in Gender, Work and Organization*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishing

Kohn, M.l. & Schooler, C., (1982), Job conditions and personality: A longitudinal assessment of their reciprocal effects, *American Journal of Sociology*, 87 (6), pp. 1257-1286

Kotter, J. P. (1982), *The General Managers*, New York, Free Press

Kumar, R., (2011), *Research Methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*, (3rd ed), New Delhi, Sage

Kumra, S. & Vinnicombe, S., (2008), A study of the promotion to partner process in a professional services firm: How women are disadvantaged, *British Journal of Management*, 19 (1), pp. 65-74

Kvale, S., (2007), *Doing Interviews*, London, UK, Sage

Larwood, L. & Guteck, B.A., (1987), Working towards a theory of women's career development. In B.A., Guteck & L. Larwood, (Eds.), *Women's Career Development*, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage

Leigh, A., (2013), *Battlers and Billionaires: The story of inequality in Australia*, blackincbook.com

Lemoine, G.J., Aggarwal, I. & Steed, L.B., (2016), When women emerge as leaders: Effects of extraversion and gender composition in groups, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27, pp. 470-486

Levinson, D.J., (1996), The seasons of a woman's life, New York, Ballantine Books

Locke, E.A. & Latham, G.P., (Eds.), (2013), *New development in goal setting and task performance,* NY, Routledge

Lowenstein, W., (1978), *Weevils in the flour: An oral record of the 1930s depression in Australia*, Melbourne, Scribe

Luthans, F., Avolio, B.J., Avey, J.B. and Norman, S.M, (2007), Positive psychological capital: measurement and relationship with performance and satisfaction, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 60, (3), pp. 541-572

Macintyre, S., (2009), *A concise history of Australia*, (3rd ed), New York, Cambridge University Press

Macintyre, S., (2013), Women's leadership in war and reconstruction, *Labour History*, 104 (May), pp. 65-80

Marshall, J., (1995), Working at senior management and board levels: Some of the issues for women, *Women in Management Review*, 10 (3)

Marshall, J., (1984), *Women managers moving on: Exploring career and life choices*, London, Routledge

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G.B., (2006), Designing Qualitative Research, (6th ed.), Newbury Park, CA., Sage

Martin, P. & Barnard, A., (2013), The experience of women in male-dominated occupations: A constructivist grounded theory inquiry, *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 39 (2)

Maslow, A.H., (1987), *Motivation and personality*, (3rd ed.), New York, Longman

Massam, K., (2014), *The encyclopedia of women and leadership in 20th Century Australia*, Women's Archive Project

Masten, A.S., Hubbard, J.J., Gest, S.D., Tellegen, A., Garmezy, N. & Ramirez, M (1999), Competence in the context of adversity: Pathways to resilience and maladaptation from childhood to late adolescence, *Journal of Development and Psychopathology*, 11 (1), pp. 143-169.

Mavin, S., (2006), Venus envy: problematizing solidity behaviour and queen bees, *Women in Management Review*, 21 (4), pp. 264-276

Mavin, S., (2008), Queen bees, wannabees and afraid to bees: No more 'best enemies' for women in management, *British Journal of Management*, 19 (1), pp. 75-84

Mavin, S., Williams, J., Bryans, P. & Patterson, N., (2015), Woman as a project: key Issues for women who want to get on. In A., Broadbridge & S., Fielden, S., (Eds.), *The Handbook of Gendered Careers in Management: Getting in, Getting on, Getting out*, Edward Elgar Publishers

Maxwell, J., (2005), *Qualitative Research: An interactive design*, (2nd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA., Sage

McCalman, J, (1995) Journeying: The biography of a middle-class generation 1920-1990, Carlton, Victoria, Melbourne University Press

McCarthy, H., (2004), Girlfriends in high places, London, UK. Demos

McCrae, R.R., Jang, K.L., Angeiter, A., Riemann, R. & Livesley, W.J., (2001), Sources of structure: Genetic, environment and artifactual influences on the covariation of personality traits, Journal of Personality, 69 (4), pp. 511-535

McGuire, G. and Reger J. (2003). Feminist co-mentoring: A model for academic professional development. Feminist Formations, 15 (1), pp. 54-72

McMunn, A., Kelly, Y., Cable, N. & Bartley, M., (2012), Maternal employment and child socio-emotional behaviour in the UK: Longitudinal evidence from the UK Millennium Cohort study, *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 66 (7), pp. 1-6

McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L. & Cook, J.M., (2001), Birds of a feather: Homophily in social networks, *Annual Review of Sociology,* 27 (1)

Melamed, T., (1995), *Career success: the moderating effect of gender*, Journal of Vocational Behavior, 47, pp. 35-60

Metz, I. & Tharenou, P. (2001). Women's Career Advancement: The Relative Contribution of Human and Social Capital. *Group & Organization Management*, *26*(3), pp. 312–342.

Mitchell, M.H., (1977*), Attitudes of adolescent girls towards vocational education*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press

Mitchell, S., (1984), *Tall Poppies,* Ringwood, Victoria, Penguin Books

Mitchell, S., (1991), *Tall Poppies Too*, Ringwood, Victoria, Penguin Books

Moore, R., (2008) Capital. In M. Grenfell, (Ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key concepts*, Acumen

Moran, C, (2014), What helps and hinders women doing well in historically male-dominated careers: A critical incident study, Masters Of Arts Thesis, University of British Columbia, Canada

Morgan, S., (2014), A phenomenological study of the use of psychological capital in the success of the executive women's journey, Dissertation for Doctor of Philosophy, Capella University, Minnesota, USA

Mulhall, A., (2003), In the field: notes on observation in qualitative research, JAN, 41 (3), pp. 306-313

Mulvey, A., Grindley, H. & Gawith, L., (2007), Convent girls, feminism and community psychology, Journal of Community Psychology, 29 (5), pp. 563-584

Nabi, G.R., (2003), Situational characteristics and subjective career success: The mediating role of career-enhancing strategies, International Journal of Manpower, Vol. 24 Issue: 6, pp. 653-672

Naidoo, L., (2009), Developing social inclusion through after-school tutoring: a study of African refugee students in Greater Western Sydney, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 30 (3), pp. 261-273

National Museum of Australia, N.D., Defining moments: Equal pay for women, https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/equal-pay-for-women, accessed 3/12/2018

Nelson, R.L. & Bridges, W.P., (1999), *Legalizing gender inequality: Courts, markets and unequal pay for women in America*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Nichols, W. C. (2003), Family-of-origin treatment, pp. 93-114. In T.L. Sexton, G.R. Weeks, & M.S. Robbins, (Eds.) *Handbook of family therapy*, NY, Brunner-Routledge

Nicholson, N. & West, M., (1988), *Managerial job change: men and women in transition*, UK, Cambridge University Press

Nicholson, N. & de Waal-Andrews, W., (2005), Playing to win: Biological imperatives, self-regulation and trade-offs in the game of career success, *Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 26 (2), pp. 137-154

Ng, T., Eby, L.T., Sorenson, K.L. & Feldman, D.C., (2005), Predictors of objective and subjective career success: a meta-analysis, *Personal Psychology*, 58 (2), pp. 367-408

Ng, T. & Feldman, D.C., (2014), Subjective career success: a meta-analytic review, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 85 (2), pp. 169-179

Nolan, M., (2005), 'The State Changing its Mind? Australian and New Zealand Governments' Post-war Policy on Married Women's Paid Employment', pp. 153-176. In P. Grimshaw. J. Murphy & B. Probert, (Eds.), *Double shift: Working mothers and social change in Australia*, Beaconsfield, Victoria, Melbourne Publishing Group

O'Brien, A., (2008), Sins of omission? Women in the history of Australian religion and religion in the history of Australian women, *Historical Studies*, 27, p. 108

O'Brien, K.E., Biga, A., Kessler, S.R. & Allen, T.D., (2010), A meta-analytic investigation of gender differences in mentoring, *Journal of Management*, 36 (2), pp. 537-554.

O'Neil, D.A., Bilimoria, D. & Saatcioglu, R., (2004), Women's career types: attributions of satisfaction with career success, *Career Development International*, 9 (5), pp. 78-500.

O'Neil, D.A, Hopkins, M.M. & Bilimoria, D., (2008), Women's careers at the start of the 21st century: Patterns and paradoxes, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 80, pp. 727-743

Ostrander, S.A., (1993), Surely you're not in this just be helpful: Access, rapport and interviews in three studies of elites, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 22 (1), pp. 7-27

Owen Blakemore, J.E. & Hill, C.A., (2008), The child gender socialisation scale, *Sex Roles*, 58 (3), pp. 192-207

Parker, B. & Cusmir, L.H., (1992), A generational and sex-based view of management work values, Psychological Reports, 66, pp. 947-951

Parker, S.K. & Liao, J., (2016), Wise proactively: How to be proactive and wise in building your career, Organizational Dynamics, 45 (3), pp. 217-227

Peluchette, J.V.E., (1993), Subjective career success: The influences of individual difference, family and organizational variables, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 43 (2), pp. 198-208

Penney, L.M., David, E., & Witt, L.E., (2011), A review of personality and performance: Identifying boundaries, contingencies and future research directions, *Human Resource Management Review*, 21, pp. 297-310

Parry, K.W. & Proctor Thompson, S.B., (2002), Perceived integrity of transformational leaders in organizational settings, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 35 (1) pp. 75-96

Pinnegar, S. and Daynes, J.G., (2007), Locating narrative inquiry historically, In D. Jean Clandinin, (Ed.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: mapping a methodology*, pp. 3-34

Piterman, H., (2008), *The leadership challenge: Women in Management Report*, Victoria

Piterman, H., (2013), Contemplations on a 30-year journey. In N. Breekveldt, (Ed.), *Sideways to the top: 10 Stories of successful women that will change your thinking about careers forever*, Melbourne, Melbourne Books

Polderman, T., Benyamin, B., de Leeuw, C., Sullivan, P., van Bochoven, A., Visscher, P. & Posthuma, D., (2015), Meta-analysis of the heritability of human traits, based on fifty years of twin studies*, Nature Genetics*, 47 (7), pp. 702-709

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995), Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8, pp. 5-23.

Potts, D., (1994), Tales of suffering in the 1930s depression, *JAS*, 41, June, pp. 56-66

Pouyard, J., Vignoli, G., Dosnon, O. & Lallemand, N., (2012), Career adapt-abilities scale French form: Psychometric properties and relationships to anxiety and motivation, *Journal of Vocational Behavioral,* 80, pp. 692-697

Powell, G.N., (2012), Six ways of seeing the elephant: the intersection of sex, gender and leadership, *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 27 (2), pp. 119-141

Powell, G.N. & Mainiero, L.A., (1992), Cross currents in the river of time: Conceptualizing the complexities of women's careers, *Journal of Management*, 18 (2), pp. 215-237

Powell, G.N. & Butterfield, D. A., (1979), The 'good' manager; Masculine or androgynous, *Academy of Management Journal*, 22, pp. 395-403

Probert, B., (2005), In P. Grimshaw, J. Murphy & B. Probert, (Eds.), Double shift: Working mothers and social change in Australia, Circa, Beaconsfield, Victoria

Proctor, I., & Padfield, M.,(2002), Work orientations and women's work: A critique of Hakim's Theory of the heterogeneity of women, Gender, Work and Organization, 6 (3), pp.152-162

Ragin, C., (1987), The Comparative Method, University of California, Berkley and Los Angeles

Ragins, B. R & Kram, K., (Eds.), (2007), The handbook of mentoring at Work: Theory, Research and Practice. USA, Sage.

Ragins, B. R. & McFarlin D. B. (1990), Perceptions of mentor roles in cross-gender mentoring relationships, Journal of Vocational Behavior, 37 (3), pp. 321-339.

Ragins, B.R. & Scandura, T.A., (1994), Gender differences in expected outcomes of mentoring relationships, Academy of Management Journal, 37 (4), pp. 957-971

Ragins, B.R. & Sundstrom, E., (1989), Gender and Power in organizations: a longitudinal study, Psychological Bulletin, 105 (1), pp. 51-88

Raskfoff, S., (2018), Everyday sociology: social and cultural capital, www.everydaysociologyblog.com, accessed 18/11/2018

Reay, D., (2015), Habitus and psychosocial: Bourdieu with feelings, Cambridge Journal of Education, 45 (1), pp. 9-23

Reinharz, S. & Chase, S.E., (2003), Interviewing women. In J. Holstein & J.F. Gubrium, (Eds.), Inside Interviewing: New lenses, New concerns, pp. 73-90, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage

Reitman, F. & Schneer, J.A., (2002), Managerial life without a wife: family structure and managerial career success, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 37, pp. 25-38

Rennie, A., (2015), *Convent education taught facts but also awakened us to the world*, brisbanetimes.com, accessed 4/10/2017

Richie, L. & Piterman, H., (2011), Women in leadership: looking below the surface, Views from the CEDA Women in Leadership series, September 2011, CEDA

Riessman, C.K., (1993) *Narrative Analysis*, Qualitative Research Methods Series 30, Newbury Park, Sage University Paper

Riessman, C.K., (2008), *Narrative methods for the human sciences*, Thousand Oaks, USA, Sage

Riggio, H.R. & Desrochers, S.J., (2006), Maternal employment relations with young adult, work and family expectations and self-efficacy, *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49 (10), pp. 1328-1353

Riley, T. & Hawes, P., (2004), Researching practice: The methodological case for narrative inquiry, *Health Education Research*, 20 (2), pp. 226-236

Rindfleish, J., (2000), Senior management women in Australia: Diverse perspectives, *Women in Management Review*, 15 (4), pp. 172-180

Roberts, B.W., Kuncel, N.R., Shiner, R., Caspi, A. & Goldberg, L.R., (2007), The power of personality: The comparative validity of personality traits, socioeconomic status and cognitive ability for predicting important life outcomes, *Perspectives on psychological Science*, 2 (4), pp. 313-345

Rodgers-Healey, D., (2012), *Abandoning Leadership for a better way of being for women and man*, Minnamurra, NSW, Australian Centre for Leadership for Women

Rodham Clinton, H., (2006), *It takes a village and other lessons children teach us,* New York, Simon and Schuster

Roe, J., (1985), *Unemployment: Are there lessons from history?* Marrickville, NSW, Hale and Ironmonger

Roof, W. C., (1993), *A generation of seekers*, San Francisco, Harper

Rosa, J.E., Hon, C.K.H., Xia, B. & Lamari, F., (2017), Challenges, success factors and strategies for women's career development in the Australian construction industry, *Construction Economics and Building*, 17 (3), pp. 27-46.

Rosenberg, A., (2008), *Philosophy of social science*, (3rd ed.), Boulder, Westview Press

Rosser, M.H., (2005), Mentoring from the top: CEO perspectives, *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 74 (4), pp. 527-539

Rowe, T. & Crafford, A., (2003), A study of barriers to career advancement for professional women in investment banking, *SA Journal of Human Resources Management*, 1 (2), pp. 21-27

Ruderman, M.N. & Ohlott, P.J. (2002), *Standing at the crossroads: Next steps for high achieving women*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass

Ruderman, M.N., Ohlott, P.J., Panzer, K., King, S.N., (2002), Benefits of multiple roles for managerial women, *Academy of Management Journal*, 45 (2), pp. 369-386

Russo, N., Kelly, M. & Deacon, M., (1991), Gender and sex related attribution: Beyond individualistic conceptions of achievements, *Sex Roles*, 25 (5-6), pp. 331-350

Ryan, S., (1999), *Catching the waves: Life in and out of politics*, Pymble, NSW, HarperCollins

Ryan, M.K., Haslam, S.A. & Postems, (2007), Reactions to the glass cliff: Gender differences in the explanations for the precariousness of women's leadership positions, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 20 (2), pp. 182-197

Sadker, M. & Sadker, D., (1994), *Failing at fairness: How American schools shortchange girls*, NY, Touchstone

Sahlstein, E. & Allen, M., (2002), Sex differences in self-esteem: A meta-analytic assessment. In A. Allen, R. Preiss & N. Burrel, (Eds.), *Interpersonal communication research: Advances through meta-analysis*, pp. 59-72, NJ, Erlbaum

Sandberg, S., (2015), *Lean in: Women, work and the will to lead*, London, WH Allen

Sanders, M., Hellicar, M. & Fagg, K., (2014), Actions speak louder than words: CEO conduct that counts, *Report for Chief Executive Women*, Bain and Co. Inc.

Sanders, M., Zeng, J., Hellicar, M. & Fagg, K., (2017), Advancing women in Australia: Eliminating bias in feedback and promotions, *Report for Chief Executive Women*, Bain and Co. Inc.

Savickas, M.L., (1995), Constructivist counseling for career decisions, *Career Development Quarterly*, 43 (4), pp. 363-373

Scandura, T., (1992), Mentoring and career Mobility: An empirical Investigation, Journal of Organizational Behavour, 13 (2), pp. 169-174

Scandura, T., (1998), Dysfunctional Mentoring relationships and Outcomes, Journal of Management, 24 (3), pp. 449-467

Schein, E.H, (1978), *Career dynamics; matching individual and organizational needs*, Reading, UK, Addison-Wesley

Schein, E.H., (1996) Career anchors revisited, Implications for career development in the 21st century, *The Academy of Management Executive*, 10 (4), pp. 80-88

Schein, E.H. & Van Maanen, J., (2013), *Career anchors: The changing nature of career*, 4th Ed, San Francisco, Wiley

Schellenberg, C., Krauss, A., Hättich, A., Häfeli, K., (2016), Occupational career patterns over 30 years: predictor and outcomes, *Empirical Research in Vocational Education and Training*, 8 (15), pp. 1-22

Sealy, R., Doldor, E. & Vinnicombe, S., (2009), Increasing diversity on public and private sector boards- part 2: What is being done to improve diversity on boards and how effective is this? *Cranford Report*, Government Equalities Office, London

Seibert, S., Kraimer, M. & Liden, R., (2001), A social capital theory of career success, *Academy of Management Journal,* 44 (7), pp. 214-237

Seligman, M.E.P., (2011), Recovering from failure: Building resilience, *Harvard Business Review,* 89 (4), pp. 100-106

Seligman, M.E.P., Reivich, K., Laycox, L., Gillham, J., (1995), *The optimistic child*, Sydney Random House

Sheridan, A., (2002), What you know and who you know: 'successful women's experiences of accessing board positions, *Career Development International*, 7 (4), pp. 203- 210

Sheppard, L.D. & Aquino, K., (2015), Much ado about nothing? Observer problematization of women's same-sex conflict at work, *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 27 (1), pp. 52- 62

Shroedel, J.R., (1990), Blue Collar women: Paying the price at home and on the job, pp. 241-260. In H.Y. Grossman and N.L.Chester (Eds.), *The experience and meaning in women's lives*, Hillsdale, Lawrence Erlbaum Ass.

Siegel, J. & Ghiselli, E.G., (1971), Talent, pay and age, *Management of Vocational Behavior*, 1 (2), pp. 129-135

Silverman, D., (2013), *Doing Qualitative Research*, (4th ed.), London, Sage

Silverman D. & Marvasti A., (2008), *Doing Qualitative Research: A comprehensive guide*, California, Sage.

REFERENCES

Sims, H. & Lorenzi, P., (1992), *The new leadership paradigm: Social learning and cognition in organizations*, Newbury Park, CA, Sage

Sinclair, A., (1994), *Trials at the top: Chief executives talk about men, women and the Australian executive culture*, University of Melbourne, Victoria, The Australian Centre

Sinclair, A., (2009), Seducing leadership: Stories of leadership development, *Gender, work and organisation*, 16 (2), pp. 266-284

Soldz, S. & Vaillant, G.E., (1999), The Big Five personality traits and the life course: A 45 year longitudinal study, *Journal of Research in Personality,* 33 (3), pp. 208-232

Staines, G., Travis, C. & Jayerante, T.E., (1973), The Queen Bee Syndrome, *Psychology Today*, 7 (8), pp. 55-60

Stephens, N., (2007), Collecting data from elites and ultra elites: telephone and face-to-face interviews with macroeconomists, *Qualitative Research*, 7 (2), pp. 203-216

Still, L.V., (1988), Women in management: A review, a reappraisal and a redirection, *Women and leadership Series*, Paper No.11, Nepean College of Advanced Education, School of Business, NSW

Still, L.V., (1993), *Where to from here: The managerial woman in transition*, Chatswood, NSW, Business and Professional Publishing

Still, L.V., (1997), Glass ceiling and sticky floors: barriers to the careers of women in the Australian finance industry, *Report for Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and Westpac*, Commonwealth of Australia

Still, L.V., (2006), Where are the women in leadership in Australia? *Women in Management Review*, 21 (3), pp. 180-194

Strenze, T., (2007), Intelligence and socioeconomic success: A meta-analytic review of longitudinal research, 35 (5), *Intelligence*, p. 401

Sullivan, S. & Baruch, Y., (2009), Advances in career theory and research: a critical review and agenda for the future exploration, *Journal of management,* 35 (6)

Summers, A (1999), *Ducks on the pond: an autobiography 1945-1976*. Ringwood, Victoria: Viking

Super, D.E., (1990), A lifespan, life space approach to career development. In D. Brown & D., Brookes (Eds.), *Career choice: applying contemporary theories in practice*, (2nd ed.), San Francisco, Jossey-Bass

Sutin, A.R., Costa, P.T., Miech, R. & Eaton, W.W., (2009), Personality and career success: Concurrent and longitudinal relations, *European Journal of Personality*, 23 (2), pp. 71-84

Swain, S., (2005) in P. Grimshaw. J. Murphy & B. Probert, (Eds.), *Double shift: Working mothers and social change in Australia*, Circa, Beaconsfield, Victoria

Sydney Morning Herald, (2012), 20 most influential female voices of 2012, 11 Dec., Author

Szirom, T, (1991), *Striking success: Australia women talk about success*, North Sydney, NSW, Allen and Unwin

Tannen, D., (1994), *Gender discourse*, NY, Oxford University Press

Teese, R. & Polesel, J., (2003,), *Undemocratic schooling: Equity and quality in mass secondary education in Australia*, Carlton, Victoria, Melbourne University Press

Tharenou, P., (1990), Psychological approaches to investigating women's career development, *Australian Journal of Management*, 15 (2), pp. 363-378

Tharenou, P., (1997), Explanations of managerial career advancement, *Australian Psychologist*, 32 (1), pp. 19-28

Tharenou, P., (2001), Going up? Do Traits and Informal Social Processes Predict Advancing in Management? The Academy of Management Journal, 44 (5), pp. 1005-1017.

Tharenou, P. (2005). Does Mentor Support Increase Women's Career Advancement More than Men's? The Differential Effects of Career and Psychosocial Support, *Australian Journal of Management,* 30 (1) pp. 77-109.

Tharenou, P., (2005), Women's advancement in management: What is known and future areas to address. In R.J. Burke and M.C. Mattis (Eds.), *Supporting women's advancement: Challenges and opportunities*, Cheltenham, UK. Edward Elgar

Tharenou, P., Latimer S. & Conroy, D., (1994), How Do You Make It to the Top? An Examination of Influences on Women's and Men's Managerial Advancement, *The Academy of Management Journal,* 37(4), pp. 899-931.

Tharenou, P. & Zambruno, E., (2001), Are the links between mentoring and career advancement different for women and men? *Working Paper series*, June, Department of Management, Monash University

Thomas, R.J., (1995), Interviewing important people in big companies. In R., Hertz & J.B., Imber, (Eds.), *Studying elites using qualitative methods*, pp. 3-17, Thousand Oaks, CA., Sage

Ticklin, T., Croxford, L., Ducklin, A. & Frame, B., (2001), *Gender and pupil performance in Scotland's schools*, Centre for Education and Sociology, Edinburgh University of Education

Tomas, M. & Castro, D., (2013), The perspective of women managing research teams in social sciences, *Higher Education Studies*, 3 (40), pp. 15-25

Trahey, J., (1977), *Jane Trahey on Women and Power*, NY, Avon Books

Turban, D.B. & Dougherty, T.W., (1994), The role of protégé personality in receipt of mentoring and career success, *Academy of Management Journal*, 37(3), pp. 688-702

Twenge, J.M., Campbell, W.K. & Gentile, B., (2012), Male and female pronoun use in U.S. books reflects women's status 1900-2008, *Sex Roles*, 67 (9-10), pp. 488-493

Vallerand, R.J., Houlfort, N. & Forest, J., (2014), Passion for work: Determinants and outcomes. In M.M. Gagne, (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of work engagement, motivation and self-determination theory*, Oxford, UK. Oxford University Press

Vinnicombe, S. & Bank, J., (2003), *Women with attitude: Lessons for career managemen*t, London, UK, Routledge

Vinnicombe, S. & Colwill, N.L., (1995), The essence of women in management, Upper Saddle River, NJ, Prentice Hall

Wackerle, F.W., (2010), The right CEO: straight talk about making tough CEO selection decisions, NY, John Wiley and Sons

Wajcman, J., (1998), Managing like a man: men and women in corporate *management*, PA, Pennstate University Press

Webster, J.D., (2003), An exploratory analysis of self-assessment wisdom scale, *Journal of Adult Development*, 10 (1), pp. 13-22

Whiston, S. C. & Keller, B. K. (2004). The Influences of the Family of Origin on Career Development: A Review and Analysis. *The Counseling Psychologist,* 32 (4), pp. 493-568.

White, B., Cox, C. & Cooper, C., (1992), *Women's development: A study of high flyers*, Oxford, Blackwell

Whitmarsh, L., Brown, D., Cooper, L Hawkins-Rodgers, Y. & Wentworth, D. (2007). Choices and challenges: A qualitative exploration of professional women's career patterns. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 55, pp. 225-236.

Wigfield, A., Battle, A., Keller, L. B. & Eccles, J. S., (2002), Sex differences in motivation, self-concept, career aspiration and career choice: Implications for cognitive development. In A. McGillicuddy-De Lisi & R. De Lisi (Eds.), *Advances in applied developmental psychology, Vol. 21, Biology, society and behavior: The development of sex differences in cognition*, pp. 93-124, Westport, CT., US, Ablex Publishing.

Wihler, A., Meurs, J., Wiesman, D., Troll, L. & Blickle, G., (2017), Extraversion and adaptive performance: Interacting trait activation and socio-analytic themes at work, *Personality and Individual differences*, 116, pp. 133-138

Wilensky, H.L., (1961), Career, lifestyles and social integration, *International Social Science Journal*, 12, pp. 553-558

Williams, J., (2000), *Unbending gender: Why families and work conflict and what to do about it*, NY, Oxford University Press

Williamson, A., (2016), Looking back at the Great Depression, www.thecud.au/live/content/cud-history_lookingback-great-depression-australia, accessed 4/9/2017

Wieck, K.E. & Berlinger, L., (1989), Career improvization in self-designing organizations. In M.B. Arthur, D.T. Hall & B.J. Lawrence, (Eds.), *Handbook of Career theory,* NY, Cambridge University Press

Wojtalik, J.R., Breckenridge, M.B., Gibson Hancox, M.K. & Sobehart, H.C., (2007), There's no place like home? The effects of childhood themes on women's aspirations toward leadership roles, *Journal of Women in Educational, Leadership*, 5 (1), pp. 41-67

Wrzesniewski, A., (2011), Callings. In K. Cameron & G.M. Spreitzer, (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*, New York, Oxford University Press

Zachary L.J. and Fischler L.A. (2005), *Creating a mentoring culture: The organization's guide*, San Francisco, John Wiley and Sons

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Example of field notes

Field Notes: Participant X

April 2014

We met at a café outside {participant x} {city name} office- she was gracious and gorgeous although it looked like she didn't spend much time worrying about her hair, wore sensible 'corporate uniform' style clothes – pants and jacket. We didn't get time to talk about 'looks' maybe I can follow that up.
I parked in the building next door

I was very aware of time and tried to subtly look at {participant x} watch upside down- turned out she still had it on AWST time pre-end of daylight saving! Ended up that the interview only went for about 5-10 minutes over time and that was because {participant x} set off on a tangent at the last minute- her choice.

Similar rural background to me. Grew up in {town name} as one of 4 siblings- 2nd oldest. Siblings became farmers and a teacher (sister) who married a farmer. Parents still on the family farm. Clever and ambitious mother - partner in decision making to her father, not just an 'offsider'. Mother identified as a feminist? {Participant x} left home at 12 to go to boarding school- loved it. Remembered being sporty and clever.

{Participant x} married to {name] (electrician)- hinted there may have been domestic issues about moving {name] round the world- coming back to Australia for him and then he was a little dislocated. Would like to know more here. Need to be diplomatic and discrete. Has [children] and wanted to be based in Australia so they could finish high school. {Participant x} travels a great deal but has been doing that for years. Family lived in UK for about 5 years. {Children} want to go to uni elsewhere- ACT or UK.

It is clear that {participant x} has been groomed for succession throughout the last few positions. She seemed a little self conscious about verbalising the prospect of becoming the next CEO- she and {name} (Global CEO) had a conversation where he told her that she was one of two people up for the job (maybe 1-2 years time) and she was embarrassed so changed the subject! Seems acutely aware of her weaknesses and worried about the fact that she isn't 100 % ready.

The Harvard course was 8 weeks x 6 days per week- advanced management course. Paid for by {company name}. It provided a 'sense of calm' that she wasn't an imposter and that she had a right to be there with ' all those brilliant people'. Cost $75000 for the course.

Career wasn't planned but it was systematic and seemed to be in 3 year 'chucks'. Always been with the same organisation although it went from {company name} to {company name} early on. Every 3 years of so offered a new role resulting from an ongoing conversation. Always puts firm first ' What's best for the organisation then what's best for self'. Interesting didn't say 'what's best for me and my family'.

Attributes evident to me through conversation: loyal, hardworking, grateful, not a risk taker, honest. Relationships matter- she says work life balance is important- means different things to different people and at different times. Important to set boundaries of when you are 'on call'- eg phone calls at night. Has worked on minimising over-analysing issues. Has been helped by other women although they are few in number in senior positions.

Keen to 'give back' to old school- annual visit to talk to the girls. Interested in the leadership training provided in the school- outside anything seen elsewhere at the school level.

Notes were taken immediately after the interview while concurrently listening to the interview audio recording. Some notes removed to ensure confidentiality.

APPENDIX A1 - Direct quotes from data

Examples taken from raw data on which vignettes were built (Findings section).

Vignette 1- Reputation

"Yeah. I guess when I look back at the body of work that I've done and given it's been relatively the same industry, now that's 30 years now and there are some times that I'd question whether my focus - if I'd actually, rather than just - hold on, go back. In this business I have never applied for a job, so in my however many years I've never applied for jobs, so I've always been offered work, and that's the way it is, to some degree".

" Like all the guys that have worked on this show now, because they're freelance, so the minute you start you're coming to the end of your contract. I don't know how they do it, then you'll be looking to when your next contract - I'll have a break and then I'll start the next one. So there's a whole lot of that and then people go, oh, there's word of mouth, starting up or if in our company there's another show, kind of gets shuffled around. So it is a little bit like that that you're as good as your last job. So, yeah, subsequently, I've always been offered roles, so to that end, I guess what I'm saying is that I've never had to sit down and go, okay, I've never had a five-year plan, or anything that's sensible. So if I reflect and go, what could I have done - could I have played this better, more strategically, more politically, to a greater end, probably, but do I have any regrets? I don't think so. When I think along the way as women who have had children, I think that's a gift, to be a working woman and a working mother, which I have largely been, and I think there's often regret there".

Vignette 2- Independence

 "I never lived at home since I was 11".

"I lived at home for 11 years of my life - it's not very much but it helps make you - it does make

you who you are. It [leaving home] makes you hugely independent and it makes you unbelievably self-reliant. I think it makes you very resilient because I think your ability to adapt to new circumstances, challenges, the need to get on with people, to look after yourself. Back then we were only allowed to go home once a term. So we saw our parents every five or six weeks. That's a dreadful thing to do to children and to parents".

Vignette 4- Integrity

"People don't mind if people are tough but they need to be fair and consistent, and that's something I've learnt over a period of time. I'd say that when I first started working I wasn't probably as fair and as consistent and probably as balanced as I can be now. And that's just experience".

"I think just being very straight with them, telling them how things were, giving them access to information, being honest with them, and it just took time when they realised that what we were saying wasn't a lie, it was actually the situation. They started to develop some respect, I think. We had difficult discussions and difficult negotiations, because we had three unions, but I think, all of the union officials said to me, "It was an absolute pleasure dealing with you. You were straight and if you said something we knew you'd carry it out and you wouldn't tell us lies." And I think the staff realised that pretty quickly as well".

"The General Secretary of the union who I had been dealing with for years, part way through the negotiations sent the guy from [Company X] to say - and he came and he said, "Oh, Harry's asking for [you]," so I had to go into the room with him and everybody's looking at me. I'd hardly been there five minutes. He just said to me, "I know I can deal with you. If I deal with them it will all be alright and stuff. At least with you I know when you tell me something it'll be the truth [laughs]."

Vignette 5- Childhood adversity

"Well my mother, sorry, I don't know if this is - my mother was a chronic alcoholic...... she didn't do anything, and she died when I was young, and my father was a man who had been in the Navy all his life and then had come off the ships when I was born and was often absent working as a signals officer at Garden Island. So they were just working people. And I guess because I wasn't particularly happy at home I wanted to get out and get some money and get out of home. That was my idea. So I went and did a year's secretarial at secretarial college through TAFE and then got a job as a secretary. That was how I started, I guess wanting to escape my home life helped me, motivated me to get ahead".

Vignette 6- Dysfunctional family life

"I was very close to my mother, always. Probably, well, closer than my older sister was as we were growing up. My older sister went to boarding school when she was 12, which she said was the best thing that ever happened to her. My father was - he was a shocker. He beat my Mum."

"It's really fascinating. And I've done a lot of work, thanks to my father, on our family tree, and there's some really interesting women all the way back. It's fascinating".

"So Mum and Dad had a hugely unhappy marriage and Mum was really strong on never being financially dependent on a man. You must have a financial independence. And that was something that she did with all of us, but I was particularly close to her and I heard that message loud and strong that you do not want to end up without the ability to make your own choices. So she was very much the driver of - there was no question that we weren't going to - well, I wasn't going to university. It was absolutely driven. So the combination of school with being happy, stimulating, good fun and a mother going, "This is where you're going.". He was a miserable man. And she got the worst of it".

Vignette 7- Push from mother

 "What was really important as a child was that my mother valued education and she was adamant that my brother and I would be - would have a good education. And because she was a bit frustrated herself because she lived in Queensland in the thirties and through the outbreak of World War II and her frustration was I reckon that she had to leave school early. She left school at 14 or 15 but she had to help support the family and go to work however she loved school and she was very good at school and I think she felt that her education was cut short and she was adamant that my brother and I would have a Catholic education and have access to good quality education too. She lobbied my father that my brother and I would be educated for our secondary education at Catholic colleges in (capital city x)".

Vignette 8- Growing up catholic

 "So I started there at 4, finished at 17. So I only ever went to one school and it was - because of the Irish background of the women, it was very strict, very - given that the women themselves had hardly any preparation, because in those days they just joined the order, they weren't trained and all that stuff but there was a very high emphasis on reading, spelling, basic skills were extremely well taught to all girls; not just to clever girls. So it was very strict. Very basic. There was no special facilities. So it was all about doing the basic lessons. Well as I said, there were very little distractions because it was a very honest little school. The main distraction of course was involved with participating in the church because the Parish church was right next door and we would sing in choirs.   So we had quite a good education because we were always going around singing - was the old fashioned liturgy then. So everything was in Latin and we'd always be singing the Masses or if there was a funeral, we'd be singing. So that was our main escape. We played basketball, netball but with no-one to train us. So we weren't a champion team but we played, and we learnt tennis. There was a tennis court that was about it".

Vignette 9 - Overcoming difficulties in completing high school

"And there was a physics teacher, a woman, who used to come once a week and she would go around a number of private girls' schools teaching them physics. And she used to leave us these experiments to do. And myself and my friend Julia, whose father was a historian too and he's 'why are you doing science for' - we used to go and do these experiments ourselves. Now what was interesting was - I mean we both got into university and went on and did graduate work - we both became research scientists. We were dropped in the deep end as teenagers. So, I mean, looking back at it - we were doing these sound experiments in a basement at Melbourne in winter and we used to take hot soup in a thermos and when the teacher came the next week she couldn't believe how cold it had been when we were doing these experiments".

Vignette 10- Effects of the great depression

"Yeah, there's no doubt about that; a very strong work ethic. Dad is a very good person and I admire him greatly and there's no doubt that he instilled that upon us. Some of the characteristics that he has are clearly in all of us today, for example, you always pay for something - if you can't afford it you have to pay for it as fast as you can. So every time we got a housing loan, it was paid off as fast as we could and we've never had debt, none of us have, us three girls. We've never gone into debt. We've never had risky investments. Dad had to leave school really early as the Great Depression affected his family and he had to be the breadwinner as his father had died. The lessons he learnt from those times stayed with him all his life".

Vignette 11- The Women's Movement

"And that whole North American experience then, it was during the anti Vietnam days and civil rights stuff and so on, and so that introduced me to a lot of new ideas and the beginning of women's liberation. Because in Boston we lived in a commune. We've had a black panther

downstairs and a women's liberation upstairs and all that sort of thing. So that was an introduction to that and I picked up a lot of the latest women's liberation literature when I came back to Australia at the end of 1970. Canberra Women's Liberation had started in June 1970. I joined in Canberra Women's Liberation. I taught at the Sydney Uni in '71 but I came back at the end of the academic term, to Canberra. I used to go up and down. I was a member of the Glebe Point Road Women's Liberation Group, which is quite a famous group when I was at Sydney University and then I came back and helped start WEL And what lead me into equal opportunity for women as a career change through all the work I'd done and all the discrimination I had discovered, not just my personal discrimination and employment had interested me particularly".

"So a lot of young - well young women in Canberra when I first went there did have degrees and like me, they had come to Canberra for their husband's career. That was the thing, all the guys were coming for their flash public service careers and we came with them and there weren't any jobs for us because there was the marriage bar. I couldn't join the Commonwealth public service, you realise that, because I was married. So you'd get a bit of research work here, a bit of teaching work there but I think there was - when the women's electoral lobby started, particularly in Canberra, it was terrific because there were so many women who were acutely aware that they had their degrees, they were smart, they wanted to work; they couldn't get anywhere. I mean by 1970 you *could* get into the public service but old habits die hard, even though the barrier had been shifted, they were still sort of saying well what are we supposed to do. So that was very influential to me. I was part of a group. I wasn't like Germaine, who just stood out there different from everyone else. I mean there are a lot of us in similar circumstances. So we were able to establish a movement".

Vignette 12- Early identification of potential

 "I had two very powerful teachers I would say. The first one she taught me from about Grade 2 through to Grade 5 and then the second one was my Year 7 teacher both of whom were - the one that taught me from Year 2 to Year 5 she was an old witch really, she was - and everybody

jokes about how tough she is. And she was tough but she also was one of those people that I think encouraged girls to have high expectations and could see potential in me. And I've been really overt about it if I think back now she was one of those women who was very - she had two girls of her own who were younger than me but she was very ambitious I think just generally for women and she was a very - she and her husband were both quite outward looking, if that makes sense. A lot of rural women you can often find that people are only interested in their own little community. So there was the two teachers who I think were ambitious for me and for themselves even then".

"[Mentor X] has always been very open with me that he feels that I have leadership potential, from the beginning. He's always been quite open with me that he feels that I should be a candidate for ultimately being the CEO one day. The first time he actually articulated that to me was when he made a comment something like, you know, you should be the CEO of this company one day. Well it scared the hell out of me, so much so that I changed the subject. I just went right, well about the blah - blah - blah - blah - blah. And it really frightened me and I just thought - and so then we started having a discussion about, okay, so what - if you want to be in a senior leadership role, which is how I always phrased it to him, so what do we need to do to get ready. And it was [Mentor X] that wanted me to go and do the Harvard course, because he'd done it. So he wanted me to go and do something like that so I explored different options. And it was the one that had the hardest core finance and accounting aspects to it. And I knew that was the thing that I was most fearful of so I thought, right, go do the one that's got the most of that in it. So in a way he has been grooming me for a senior leadership role from early on".

Vignette 13- Luck

"Is it good luck or good management or what is it? So I think, for the start of my senior career I had been back to [Capital city Y] as a wing commander, I had decided to get out, my husband was pressuring me to get out and get a real job to earn more money. And so we'd come back from a holiday at the Gold Coast and I was about to ring our posting fellow. He rang me and I was about to say I'm getting out and he said, "We're just doing the posting plot for the Pentagon

job and the protocol is unless you put it down as a preference they won't send. He said, "So you've got 24 hours to put it down as a preference." That changed my career trajectory".

Vignette 14- Role models

"I haven't had mentors or even female role models - not in the traditional sense. Not in that corporate sense. There have been people throughout my career who I would say were role models or influenced me. A couple of people that really have been champions in that sort of way, but not traditionally, no. Some were role models of how not to behave".

Vignette 15 - Parenthood

"And think about the issue of when you're having children. I mean my generation tended to put off having children. And then we were really the first generation that suddenly understood about the declining fertility issue. We sort of all knew that you needed to have your kids before you were in your early 40s, but we had no idea how steeply it declined in your 30s. So I would be big now on - think hard, because it may well be better to have them early than late. And I would also say this, but if it's sourced to me, that's all right - think about having your eggs frozen".

"Men don't have that constraint in their careers and why should women? I mean, I was really fortunate, I was nearly 44 when I had [daughter's name]. And I was just bloody lucky. And we tried IVF afterwards and it didn't work. But, for most people, your best career producing time coincides with your best fertility time. And maybe your 40s is your time when you've made it to a certain point and you think you'll have children and then it's too late. And, look, some people would find that horrible and unromantic, but I'm a big believer that within ethical bounds scientific developments are there to be used by us. So all that advice I would have there ready, if I were subject to the context of the woman. But I also don't like the fact that young, young women are obsessed with being famous and I really worry about that, or obsessed about making lots of money".

APPENDIX B - Ethics approval

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Research Integrity
Human Research Ethics Committee

Thursday, 1 May 2014

Dr Lesley Scanlon
Education and Social Work - Research; Faculty of Education & Social Work
Email: lesley.scanlon@sydney.edu.au

Dear Lesley

I am pleased to inform you that the Humanities Low Risk Subcommittee has approved your project entitled "**Getting to the top: Narratives of Australian women executives**".

Details of the approval are as follows:

Project No.:   2014/147

Approval Date: 1 May 2014

First Annual Report Due: 1 May 2015

Authorised Personnel: Scanlon Lesley; Scanlon Lesley; Koch Shirley; Laws Kevin;

Documents Approved:

Date Uploaded	Type	Document Name
13/02/2014	Advertisements/Flyer	Recruitment Circular Feb 13 2014
17/03/2014	Advertisements/Flyer	Recruitment Flyer Version 2 March 17 2014
17/03/2014	Interview Questions	Interview Schedule/ indicative questions Version 2 March 17
22/04/2014	Participant Consent Form	Participant Consent Form Version 4 April 22 2014
17/03/2014	Participant Info Statement	Participant Information Sheet Version 2 March 17 2014

HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the approval date stated in this letter and is granted pending the following conditions being met:

Condition/s of Approval

- Continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans.

- Provision of an annual report on this research to the Human Research Ethics Committee from the approval date and at the completion of the study. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of ethics approval for the project.

- All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC within 72 hours.

- All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

- Any changes to the project including changes to research personnel must be approved by the HREC before the research project can proceed.

- Note that for student research projects, a copy of this letter must be included in the candidate's thesis.

Chief Investigator / Supervisor's responsibilities:

1. You must retain copies of all signed Consent Forms (if applicable) and provide these to the HREC on request.

2. It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.

Please do not hesitate to contact Research Integrity (Human Ethics) should you require further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

Associate Professor Judith Cashmore
Chair
Humanities Low Risk Subcommittee

> This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), NHMRC and Universities Australia Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007) and the CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice.

APPENDIX C - Information for participants

APPENDIX C1 - Recruitment flyer

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Dr Lesley Scanlon
Room 431 Education Building A35
Faculty of Education and Social Work
University of Sydney
Camperdown 2006 NSW
Ph: 93516380

Dear

I am seeking your interest for inclusion in a research study entitled *Getting to the Top: Narratives of Australian Women Executives* and which will explore the career journeys of successful executive women leaders in Australia. The study will form the basis for my degree of Ph.D. at the University of Sydney. Your suitability for participation in this study has emerged from your inclusion in media honours lists as a voice of influence.

At a time when women have unprecedented educational and employment opportunities in Australia they continue to be underrepresented at executive level in organizations despite their over-representation at graduate level since 1986. Increases in representation do not reflect growing equal opportunity initiatives, changes in legislation, and altered attitudes and expectations towards gender roles. It is appropriate that we investigate how to enable more women to progress to executive level positions.

This study is designed to explore the narratives of successful executive women leaders. As a successful woman leader in your field, you are invited to participate in this study.

Participation in this project will involve taking part in an interview (50-60 minutes) at a venue and time of your choosing. Interviews will take the form of conversations discussing issues such as personal career journeys, ideas about what success means, and social support for women at the top. As part of making meaning of the conversations you will be offered the opportunity to check, negotiate and confirm their interview transcripts which will mean a further small commitment of time.

All identifying information (personal and organization) will be removed from the interview transcripts so that confidentially will be ensured. No preparation is required prior to the interview. Further information is available regarding all aspects of the study.

Recruitment Flyer- Getting to the Top: Narratives of Aust. Women executives 1
Version 2: March 17, 2014

APPENDIX C2 - Participant information statement

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Faculty of Education and Social Work

ABN 15 211 513 464

Dr Lesley Scanlon
Research Supervisor

Room 431
Education Building A35
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA
Telephone: +61 2 93516380
Facsimile: +61 2 98515027
Email: lesley.scanlon@sydney.edu.au
Web: http://www.sydney.edu.au/

Getting to the Top: Narratives of Australian women executives

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1)   What is the study about?

The study explores the career journey of women executives in Australia investigating the factors that have facilitated their success. This study invites women to share their stories to enable greater understanding of how successful women navigate their way through the obstacles, challenges and pleasures of a work/life journey.

(2)   Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Shirley Koch and will form the basis for the degree of Ph.D. at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr Lesley Scanlon and Dr Kevin Laws.

(3)   What does the study involve?

A personal interview will be conducted at a venue and time convenient to the participant and be recorded for analysis. The participant will take part in a single interview during which they can discuss their career journey.

(4)   How much time will the study take?

Each interview will take around 50-60 minutes. The participant will be invited to review the transcript of their interview and/ or the summary of the conversation to check and confirm for accuracy and meaning.

(5)   Can the participant withdraw from the study?

Involvement in this study is completely voluntary - participants are not under any obligation to consent and may withdraw at any time without affecting their relationship with The University of Sydney.

The participant may stop the interview at any time if they do not wish to continue. The audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study. The participant is free to discuss any aspect of their career or life journey and is not restricted in any way. Additionally, the participant may choose to refrain from discussing specific questions or topics during the interview.

(6)   **Will anyone else know the results?**

All aspects of the study will be strictly confidential with only the researcher having access to identifying information about participants. Consideration of confidentiality will be ensured with careful coding and the use of pseudonyms in analysis and reporting.

(7)   **Will the study benefit the participant?**

We cannot and do not guarantee or promise that the participant will receive any benefits from the study however participants may find that being given opportunities to discuss and validate experiences will be useful and beneficial.

(8)   **Can the participant tell other people about the study?**
The participant is very welcome to discuss this study with others.

(9)   **What if further information about the study and participant involvement is required?**

This information sheet is for you to keep

APPENDIX C3 - Participant consent form

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Faculty of Education and Social Work

ABN 15 211 513 464

Dr Lesley Scanlon
Room 431
Education Faculty, A35
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA
Telephone: +61 2 93516380
lesley.scanlon@sydney.edu.au
http://www.sydney.edu.au/

Getting to the top: Narratives of Australia women executives

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I, ...[PRINT NAME], give consent to my participation in the research project;

Study title
Getting to the Top: Narratives of Australian women executives

In giving my consent, I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved has been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

3. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.

4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential. I understand that any research data gathered from the results of the study may be published however no information about me will be used in any way that is identifiable.

5. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice to my relationship with the researchers or the University of Sydney now and in the future.

7. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

Participant Consent Form- Getting to the top: Narratives of Aust. Women executives   1
Version 4: April 22, 2014

333

8. I consent to audio-recording:

          YES ☐   NO ☐

9. I would like to review the transcript of my interview:

          YES ☐   NO ☐

If you answered YES to transcript review, please provide your preferred contact details.

Address: _____

_____

Email: _____

....
Signature

....
Please PRINT name

....
Date

APPENDIX D - Safety protocol

Safety Protocol
Getting to the top: Narratives of Australian women executives.

Safety Protocol

Project title: Getting to the Top: Narratives of Australian women executives

Project number: 2014/147
Student researcher: Shirley Koch

Chief Investigator: Dr. Lesley Scanlon

This research project involves individual in-depth interviews carried out off-campus and within Australia. The interviews will be held in work places and public spaces (such as cafes) in major Australian cities. Travel to and from each interview venue will be by public transport or in the researcher's fully insured private car. The researcher will be alone with each interviewee in a quiet mutually agreed place where it will be possible to have a conversation and for the audio recorder to work successfully.

In order to ensure the safety of the researcher the following considerations and safeguards have been made:

- The researcher will only conduct interviews during daylight hours.

- The researcher will ensure that the supervisor has an interview timetable and knows where and when the interviews will take place.

- The researcher will wear a university identification badge and carry a charged mobile phone at all times.

- Access to workplaces will conform to 'permission to be on site' guidelines for organizations and buildings. This may include registering arrival and departure and providing identification to security officers and reception staff.

- The researcher will dress appropriately for a professional business context.

- The researcher will suggest that interviews are conducted at less-busy times and in quiet venues to facilitate satisfactory audio recording as well as maintaining confidentiality of conversations. It is hoped that participants will make use of office meeting rooms or quiet café areas.

- Extensive interview technique practice has been undertaken through participation in a specialized ACSPRI course completed in January 2014. In addition, the researcher and the supervisor have discussed and implemented interview preparation and practice techniques with planning for any rejections or unpleasant reactions.

The provisions included in this safety protocol have been accepted and agreed upon by the supervisor (chief investigator) and the researcher.

Signed:

Chief Investigator   Researcher
Dr. Lesley Scanlon   *Shirley Koch*

APPENDIX E - Ethics approval closure

Dear Assoc Prof Cruickshank

Project Title: Getting to the top: Narratives of Australian women executives
Project number: 2014/147

Annual/Completion report outcome

A completion report for the above project was submitted.

Your form has been processed and the ethics approval for your study has now been **closed.**

You are reminded of your obligations for data management and storage of research data which are guided by the University's Research Code of Conduct and the State Records Act. Please notify the Ethics Office if your data management plan has changed from that which was approved by the ethics committee.

Thank you for updating us on the status of your project. Please retain a copy of this email with your study records.

Regards,
The Ethics Office

Research Integrity & Ethics Administration | Research Portfolio
THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Level 2 Margaret Telfer Building (K07) | The University of Sydney | NSW | 2006
T +61 2 9036 9161 | E human.ethics@sydney.edu.au | W http://sydney.edu.au/ethics

APPENDIX F - Indicative questions for interviews

Demographic questions				
• Age • Siblings • Birth order	• Marital status • Children	• Geographical background • Education history • Qualifications and attitudes towards education	• Parental influences • Religious/ cultural influences	• Tell me about your childhood....
Career Journey				
You hold a very senior position with .....- Let's talk about how you got here.......	What preceded….. .....experience/ further study.	How planned was your career? What factors impacted the trajectory of your career?	When you look back on your career what surprises you?	How was your journey influenced by your gender/ family responsibilities/ partner / children
	Factors that you can identify that helped you on your career journey.	Who and what helped you shape your career? Early career? Later? Now?	Significant early steps/ enablers/ problems… and how addressed	Female role models?
Success				
How do you define success and has this changed over the years?	Personal traits and attributes that have enabled you to progress to this level	Advice for young women starting out in your industry- regarding career development and wellbeing at work	Life/ work balance- possible? Necessary? Inescapable?	How have your personal priorities changed?

Social Support at the top			
Who has been there with you at the crucial times?	Do you have a circle of friends/ family- do you seek support from them?	Place of friends in career development/ psycho-social well being	Have you ever had a 'champion' or advocate in the workplace? Who mentors you now? How did mentoring help you?	Professional assistance for you- Coaching? Mentoring? Non-professional coaching and mentoring - personal relationships?? Women helping each other ?
Other			
	What underpins your career success? Role of 'luck' Other?	Where there pivotal times in your career? Who/ what helped you make crucial decisions?	What are your thoughts about the place of 'looks' and how you dress in regards to success (yours and others)	Regrets or mistakes you have made that your felt hampered your success/ progress/ career trajectory?
	Significant milestones that positively influenced your success.	Metaphor for your career… Swimming in a river, against the tide, side to side, with the tide), sailing with the wind, going wherever the wind took you, setting the sail)	Where to from now?	

APPENDIX G - Key words and topic areas

Example of initial sorting of key words - established from interview No 1 and added to subsequently.

Key ideas/ words mentioned	Associated ideas	Possible links
Thinkability of women in management / your role	suitability of women for leadership	attitudes towards women in management
Visibility	conspicuousness	'line' function
Role models	others	self as a role model
Championing	female	male
Sponsorship	early career	
Mentoring	formal	informal
Networking	professional	women/ others
Faith / affirmation from others	locus of control	need to be liked
Early career support	first boss important	pushed / pulled to 'have a go'
Spousal / family support	other support mechanisms	
Family relationships	birth order / siblings	mother/ Father
Work ethic	hard work	
Personal traits	optimism	tenacity
	drive	organised
	self confidence	Intelligence
	lack of confidence	
Critical incidents	harassment /discrimination	male dominated workplace
Leadership style	positioning	
Early childhood experience	family influence	intelligence and potential recognized
School experience	teachers as supporters	Nuns as advocates
Influence of women/ family	influence of teachers / friends /parents/ mothers	role of mother in early days
Luck		
Opportunity		
Making a difference	following a passion	
Positive interpersonal relationships important	social connections necessary / evident	sense of belonging
Helping other women	'Queen bee' syndrome	Rapunzel effect
Career development / planning	no career planning	
Marriage/ parenthood	spousal support	making light of life's difficulties

APPENDIX H - Code and theme generation

Example of initial organisation of data sorted into key categories (Participant X).

	Key categories	Descriptors/dispositions	Line number reference	Quotes and summaries
Influence of aspects of 'Self'	**B1** **Personal attributes, attitudes & skills**	B1.1 Able to 'move on'	13	Managed 3 spousal relationships, single motherhood, change in career and entering politics! Moved on and up.
		B1.2 Ambitious for others but less so for self	30	
		B1.3 Care about others	24	
		B1.4 Care what others think of you	60	Important in politics to have public and personal approval
		B1.5 Try not to care what others think of you	60	
		B1.6 High level of self confidence	30	Speaking , debating –strong culture at school- Speak up. In the Women's movement some women were afraid to stand out but not the Catholics! 'Do it yourself attitude' 'Confidence grew when she had babies'
		B1.7 Curiosity	45	
		B1.8 Drive	46	Sense of 'self' is strong
		B1.9 Tenacity/ resilience	56	Always managed through all adversity resilience needed to bounce back from setbacks, finished masters degree through o/s posting, 2 kids and a divorce
		B1.10 Fear of it 'all disappearing'	57	Felt it was up to her to make sure everything succeeded
		B1.11 Guilt	61	NO guilt about being a non-traditional mother
		B1.12 Hard worker	31 34	Always
		B1.13 Strong work ethic	34	Always
		B1.14 Having a 'keystone'	51	Making the world a better place
		B1.15 Integrity/ honesty /	52	

		ethics		
		B1.16 High expectations of self and others	35	No such thing as failure
		B1.17 Independence	21	
		B1.18 Intelligence	1 25 28	Proven intelligence from school days- sure of her own intellect- high achiever at high school and uni.
		B1.19 Interpersonal aptitude	25	Built relationships/ maintained connections
		B1.20 Locus of control	13	Initially swayed by father's opinions but this grew and she wasn't influenced as much by others later on
		B1.21 Loyalty to 'cause'	54	Anti-discrimination for anyone: started with women and then included all people of diversity
		B1.22 Loyalty to individual person/ organisation	13	
		B1.23 'Make light of woes' (difficulties)	51	Changing times- no point in lamenting the difficult times Acknowledges that she makes light of tough times of single motherhood but it was an 'escape from the restricted life women were supposed to lead'
		B1.24 Need to be honest about the 'tough times'	16 17 18	
		B1.25 Not a 'game player'	27	Learnt to be a game player but didn't like having to pretend to be something she was not
		B1.26 Not ego driven	39	
		B1.27 Keen observer of people	39	
		B1.28 Open to new ideas	34	
		B1.29 Opportunistic	61	
		B1.30 Optimism / enthusiasm	32 76	No sense of 'unfairness' in regard to obstacles in career / personal path Despite being the 'wrong sex' she saw that this provided opportunities and new possibilities 'Possibilities are endless and positive'
		B1.31 Organisational skills	25	Carried over from school days
		B1.32	43	Good at marketing a cause

		Sales and marketing skills		
		B1.33 Technical and management skills	36	Good at managing people
		B1.34 Positive self concept	6	'very bold'- self assured from a young age- "as bold as brass' said her principal in primary school
		B1.35 Reflective	50	
		B1.36 Respected by others	50	
		B1.37 Trusted by others	44	
		B1.38 Risk averse	74	Managed risk especially when there is nothing to lose
		B1.39 Risk taker	76	Not overly cautious but able to recover and go on
		B1.40 Rule follower		
		B1.41 Ruthless but kind		
		B1.42 Strategic purpose	67	Big picture aim was to make change- 'rock the boat' 'disturb the status quo'
		B1.43 Team player		
		B1.44 Has vision / passion	76	Commitment to the 'bold course' need a big idea, a version of making the world better 'Need to be able to stick to 'big vision' to sustain you through the tedium and disappointment and the absurdities of life'
		B1.45 Education	30	Key to success- key to everything; Uni opened doors to ideas/ people , saw value of education for it's own sake