Socialized choices: Labour market behaviour of Dutch mothers

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Chapter 2

Theoretical framework and hypotheses

2.1   Introduction

There is a large body of research documenting the influence of social policy and the prevailing normative standards, for example available childcare arrangements and the appropriate gender-division of labour, as major explanatory factors for the substantial differences between female employment patterns across countries (e.g. Aboim, 2010; Daly, 2000; Esping-Andersen, 1990; Kremer, 2007; Mandel, 2009; Pfau-effinger, 2006). Many studies emphasise that in order to understand women's labour market activity, we need to look at institutional factors as well as cultural factors, given that institutional and cultural development can diverge (Aboim, 2010; Daly and Lewis, 2000; Hummelsheim and Hirschle, 2010; Kremer, 2007; Steiber and Haas, 2012, p.249; Pfau-Effinger, 2006). Before elaborating the theoretical framework of this study, I will give a brief impression of these mainly macro sociological studies, and also some micro-economic explanations, since these studies form a comprehensive tradition in enlarging our understanding of why women display different labour market behaviour among countries and in different financial situations.

2.2   Macro structural explanations

Initially, macro-sociological explanations focussed mainly on the social and political institutions in society. These studies explained the heterogeneous employment behaviour of women by the constraints and opportunities offered by limited or more generous welfare states regarding their childcare services and financial (tax) provisions towards parenting (Esping-Andersen, 1990). This theory is largely acknowledged through the work of Esping-Andersen (1990) in *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. He distinguished three welfare state regimes: the conservative corporatist, the liberal and the social democratic welfare regimes, which themselves are categorised by four dimensions: welfare regime (state-market relations), stratification (class structures), social rights (de-commodification), and de-familization (policies that enlarge individual's independence, away from the family) (Kremer, 2007, p.46). Within these theories it is argued that if institutional factors undergo changes, they can explain fluctuations in labour participation patterns over time.

Within social democratic states, such as Sweden and Denmark, "*the state intervenes actively in the stratifications process by providing public services and*

cash transfers" (Mandel, 2009, p.696). These states were initially viewed as the most women-friendly states, giving women social security rights independent from the family, including the provision of affordable, high quality childcare services, long maternity leave and paid absences to care for sick children. In Christian Democratic states, such as Germany, Austria, France and southern European Italy and Spain, the church plays a salient role, and social security is only open for employed people. The state regulates working conditions and provides social protection for sick and unemployed people. The family functions as a social and financial safety net. Dutch scholars in particular have emphasised that the Netherlands also falls into this category, referring to families' responsibility towards childcare, although it was initially placed by Esping-Andersen (1990) under the social democratic regime (Kremer, 2007, p.49). The Anglo-Saxon (US, Canada, UK) countries generally belong to the liberal regime, where individuals are highly dependent on the market and are unable to fall back on state provisions, leading to high activity rates among men and women.

Mandel (2009) has criticised the view of Esping-Andersen (1990) who clustered countries in a regime based on their welfare state characteristics and then validated these clusters with predicted outcomes - mainly women's employment levels. She favoured a holistic perspective by analysing relations between different dimensions of gender inequality within societies, since societies frequently exhibit both gender-egalitarian and inegalitarian features. Analysing societies' specific institutional configurations of gender inequality and placing them in a context, rather than addressing single outcomes, opens a wider perspective on gender stratification (Mandel, 2009, p.694*)*. For example, some conservative welfare regimes, like Spain, have comparatively egalitarian labour markets with respect to occupational segregation and earnings. This can be explained by the fact that women who are employed in these countries are more selective and better educated than in other countries, "*and consequently are better able to integrate into a labour market that does not offer women special terms of employment*" (Mandel, 2009, p.710).

Nonetheless, it is clear that national factors are able to explain differences in labour participation levels between countries. However, they cannot explain variation in the labour participation of mothers in a single country at any one point in time, unless the same policies have a different impact on different groups of mothers – which then would require a separate explanation.

2.3   Cultural explanations

Other theorists have emphasised a second type of macro factor that can explain differences in female labour participation, namely cultural factors. People use societies' normative (gender) standards and culture, such as the definition of appropriate childcare and the valuation of unpaid work, as orientation for their behaviour (Aboim, 2010; Daly and Lewis, 2000; Hummelsheim and Hirschle, 2010; Kremer, 2007; Pfau-Effinger, 2006). Kremer (2007) argued that welfare

state policies would be more effective if they took the concepts of culture and care into account. Mothers base their decisions about how much time to work and how much care to provide not primarily on economic considerations, but rather on dominant cultural norms and values. Mothers ask themselves questions such as, 'who will care for my children when I take up paid employment?' (Kremer, 2007, p.22). Among Western countries, there are differences between the dominant views of the appropriate level of child care when the mother works. Kremer distinguished five cultures of care – full-time motherhood, surrogate motherhood, parental sharing, intergenerational care and professional care – that can be prevalent in countries and affect women's employment aspirations in various ways. The Netherlands has a strong culture of self-care through parental sharing. Professional care is still generally considered to be the 'cold solution'. Dutch mothers in particular continue to be sensitive to this message. However, just as with institutional factors, these cultural factors mainly explain differences in mothers' labour participation *between* countries and not *within* countries.

2.4 Explanations at branch and company level

The second kind of explanation can be found at the meso level of branches and companies. Company policies and cultures, which are often shared at the industry level, limit or expand the options for mothers to choose their ideal work pattern. Women, especially mothers, predominantly work in education, (health) care and other public sectors, which often have family-friendly work arrangements (Hill, Martinson, Ferris and Zenger Baker, 2004; Merens et al., 2012; Tausig and Fenwick, 2001). Portegijs and Keuzenkamp (2008, also Portegijs et al., 2008b) showed that if working schedules were better suited to their private lives, Dutch women would be more willing to work (a few) extra hours. Cloïn and Hermans (2006) demonstrate that such demands relate in particular to working time and location. A previous study of Moen and Dempster-McClain (1987) has indeed shown that the presence of 'flexi-time' schemes at the company level has a positive impact on the participation rate of women. Also other studies have shown that the quality or availability of flexible and attractive jobs, as well as family-friendly arrangements made by companies, can play a significant role in allowing women to choose different employment trajectories (Charles and Harris, 2007; Haas, 2005; Reynolds, 2003). These meso-level approaches explain why there is still a pattern of gender segregation within sectors and occupations. However not all mothers choose to work in family-friendly sectors, and furthermore within these sectors, there are also variations in the hours worked by women.

2.5 Micro-economic explanations

The third external approach is a micro-economic explanation, and focuses on factors at the micro-financial level of the household. This theory posits that

rational agents decide how many hours they should work depending on market wages. *"Individuals constantly face a trade-off between work and leisure as they try to allocate their time. If they supply more labour, they have less time to enjoy life and if they supply less labour they have less money to enjoy life. There is an optimum amount of work that provides individuals with enough compensation for them to enjoy their leisure time"* (Constant and Otterbach, 2011, p.6). Put differently, the optimal number of hours is determined by balancing the marginal utility of leisure with the marginal utility of income from work (Becker, 1965). Hence, financial circumstances are central to economic theories of labour supply. At low-level incomes, people are motivated both to look for employment and to work longer hours, in order to increase their income. When their income approaches an (individually perceived) acceptable standard of living, "*the pull of the income effect reduces, and individuals begin to prioritize 'free time' over additional earnings*" (Fagan, 2001, p.241). The point at which the optimum balance of work and leisure is reached therefore depends on personal preferences. However, explaining the differences in people's endogenous preferences is of no further interest to micro-economic theorists.

Within micro-economic theory, the utility of leisure includes the utility of taking care of one's children, which saves money compared to professional paid child-care. Along the same lines, it can be argued that if there is a substantial difference in earning capacity between husband and wife, a gendered division of labour, in which the father has a paid job and the mother stays at home and takes care of the children, is optimal. This will then maximise the total utility of the household.

The application of micro-economic theory towards families or households has been re-assessed under various other theories, such as the collective model. This theory holds that a household consists of several individuals, each with their own personal preferences. Accordingly, decisions within a family lead to Pareto-efficient allocation (Garcia-Mainar, Molina and Montuenga, 2011). Alternatively, the resource bargaining theory posits that domestic work is unpleasant and that partners will therefore bring their resources to the bargaining table in order to "buy themselves out" of domestic work (Wiesmann et al., 2010, p.343). Either way, a variety of empirical research has shown that weighing up the costs and benefits between partners does play a salient role in women's labour market choices (Cloïn, 2010; Hakim, 2000, 2003 a-d; Kan, 2007; Risman et al., 1999; Stähli, Le Goff, Levy and Widmer, 2009; Van Wel and Knijn, 2006). However this role is limited and individual preferences and personal attitudes towards gender and work play an important role as well (Beets et al., 1997; Bolzendahl and Myers, 2004; Hakim, 2000; Hoffnung, 2004; Hooghiemstra, 2000; Marks and Houston, 2002a, 2002b; Portegijs et al., 2008b; Risman et al., 1999).

Most contemporary micro-sociological studies include both income and attitudinal factors, in explaining differences in female employment patterns (e.g. Cloin, 2010; Kraaykamp, 2012; Steiber and Haas, 2009, 2012). This study builds

further on such scientific work, and tries to combine both in its understanding of female labour market patterns.

2.6   Work preferences and employment behaviour

The central focus of this study is to examine differences between Dutch mothers' labour market behaviour. In order to understand these differences, the theoretical framework of this study incorporates social-psychological and sociological theories, to be able to shed light on the internal or attitudinal factors that influence behaviour.

    The first part of the theoretical framework addresses the factor that mothers' work preferences influence their labour market decisions. Mothers' labour market behaviour can therefore be studied according to the divided decision to either work or stay at home, and so subsequently the number of hours that they choose to work. Work preferences are here defined as the number of hours that mothers prefer to work, and not mothers' occupational choices.[17] The main focus is to understand the variety of women's employment levels, since these are particularly divergent in the Netherlands, as opposed to their diverse choices for different occupations, although both can be perceived as engendered choices (Mandel, 2009).[18]

    The expected relationship between work preferences and labour market behaviour has similarities with the theory of planned behaviour of Ajzen and Fishbein (1973, 1991, 2005). This theory assumes that the behaviour of most interest to social psychology is that which is based on a conscious choice or intention. In a particular situation, a person forms a specific intention towards the particular behaviour, which subsequently influences their conduct (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1973, p.42; Ajzen, 1991, p.182). In other words, intention is an aim that guides the action that is to be predicted. At the foundation lies the assumption that the stronger the intention to take part in certain behaviour, the more a person will be expected perform the behaviour. Ajzen (1991) further recognised that the strength of the intention also depends on the degree of volitional control or perceived self-efficacy or self-agency (also Bandura, 2001), which concept is addressed later in this section. In addition, most behaviour, and this may count particularly for the number of work hours, depends at least to some extent on other factors which are not necessarily related to motivation, such as the availability of requisite opportunities and resources (e.g., time, money, skills and the cooperation of others) (Ajzen, 1991, p.182). The acknowledgement that behaviour is also dependent on external factors, such as people's earning capacity and their social, professional and care networks (Cunningham, Beutel and

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[17]   Question in Dutch: Hoeveel uren per week zou u willen werken?

[18]   To explain the large (much more extensive than employment levels!) variety of occupational choices would mean an essentially different kind of research, more linked to personal characteristics and educational choices (level and direction), and less to do with, for example, economic independence and work or home commitment.

Thornton, 2005; Tomlinson, 2006) corresponds with micro-economic and sociological theories, emphasising the contexts of opportunities and constraints wherein action takes place. In other words, it is understood that individuals' behaviour is intertwined with the distributive dimension of the social system, reflecting a patterning of the allocation of resources (Layder, 1994).

Within this study, intention is seen as the number of hours a woman prefers to work; that is to say, the number of hours she *wants* to work. This work preference can be viewed as a concrete and personal disposition towards a specific single behaviour.[19] The behaviour in this study is the participation decision, and subsequently the number of hours that a Dutch mother actually participates in the labour market.[20] There is therefore a high compatibility between the goal of the preferred behaviour and the action itself, reflected via the number of hours worked. Accordingly, a high correspondence between the preference and behaviour can be expected. Ajzen and Fishbein (1973, 2005) expected a close relationship between intention and behaviour, in particular where the principle of compatibility is met, which requires that measures of intention and behaviour both concern exactly the same action, target, context and time elements (2005, p.183).

Many empirical psychological studies have demonstrated the predictive validity of behavioural intentions, for example in drug and condom use, prisoners-dilemma, migration or in political voting (Sheeran, 2002). In his meta-analyses of intent-behavioural studies, Sheeran (2002) reported an overall correlation of .53 between intention and behaviour (also Irvine and Evans, 1995). Swanborn (1996) described a mean correlation of .62 among 58 studies (p.37). In relation to labour market behaviour, empirical studies on the relationship between intention/preference and action/behaviour are scarce, although certain studies on intentions of migration and entrepreneurship do exist (Carr and Sequeira 2007; Kreuger, Reilly and Carsrud, 2000).[21] For example, Kreuger et al. (2000) have shown in their empirical study among 97 North-American senior business

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[19] *"A single behaviour can be viewed as involving an action directed at a target, performed in a given context, at a certain point in time"* (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005, p.182).

[20] Admittedly, there is a difference between a preferred number of work hours and planned or intended number of work hours. A preference can be interpreted as a wish - I want that, but I do not think it is possible - whereas planned action is defined as intent behaviour that is desired, planned and considered possible under the current circumstances. However, within this cross-sectional study, the preferred behaviour and the overt behaviour are examined at the same time, thus I am not able examine whether a planned action is realised after a certain period of time. Within this limited context, although I also avoid the risk of a self-fulfilling prophecy, it seems more accurate and suitable to understand – at a specific moment in time - whether mothers work the number of hours they want to work, rather than to retrospectively examine whether mothers work the number of hours they had previously planned to. At the moment of enquiry, it immediately becomes clear if there is a discrepancy or correspondence between what mothers want and what they actually do.

[21] This empirical study demonstrates that intentions contribute to the explanation of why many entrepreneurs decide to start a business long before they learn about the opportunities.

students that intentions contribute to explaining why many entrepreneurs decide to start a business long before they learn about the opportunities. Not all studies have emphasised the effect of intentions on behaviours; rather, some studies have empirically demonstrated the effect of past behaviour on intentions (Plotnikoff, Lubans, Trinh and Craig, 2012). However, according to Ajzen and Fishbein, past behaviour, which can indeed be a good predictor of later action, cannot alone be used to explain performance of later action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005, p.201). To argue that we behave the way we do now because we performed the behaviour in the past, begs the question as to why we previously behaved that way (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005, p.201-202).

Returning to the main subject of this study, previous research has shown that most women living in Western societies prefer to work in between 20-34 hours per week, and approximately one third of women (and also men) actually work their preferred number of hours (Jacob, 2008; Fagan, 2001; McDonald et al., 2006; Portegijs and Keuzenkamp, 2008a, p.56; Reynolds, 2003). It can also be seen that Dutch mothers are better able to work their preferred number of hours than those in other Western societies. Explanations for this can be found in, as already described, Dutch prosperity and specific social institutions and laws which are favourable for mothers who desire part-time work (Plantenga, 2002; Portegijs and Keuzenkamp, 2008a, p.57). Van Wel and Knijn (2006) demonstrated that most Dutch women (60 per cent) do not want to work a different number of hours per week than what they actually do: one in five would like to work fewer hours per week, while one in five would prefer to work more. In particular, women with less education tend to want to work more (p.646). However, another Dutch study (Keuzenkamp et al., 2008), showed that among women, 38 per cent work the exact number of hours they want to work, while 41 per cent want to work more (including 72 per cent of women without jobs) and 20 per cent would like to work less (including 56 per cent of women with full-time jobs) (p.74). In summary, there appears a significant correlation between the preferred number of work hours per week (intention) and the actual number of weekly hours worked (action). Nonetheless, there is certainly not a complete overlap, revealing a relevant distinction between the two concepts. Work preferences are clearly not the same as labour market behaviour, nor are they fully determined by behaviour.

Previous sociological studies that include people's preferred number of work hours have mostly focussed on external (structural) causes or the personal and societal consequences of the mismatch between preferred and actual work hours (Holmes, Jacob-Erickson and Hill, 2012; Reynolds 2003). It is important to explore this potential discrepancy, since evidence shows that differences between preferred and actual number of hours worked can have serious harmful effects on people's lives. This can be seen both among both the employed and unemployed, and can furthermore drive adverse effects on the labour supply, with unintended consequences on the labour market in terms of an under-utilised or over-employed labour force (Constant and Otterbach, 2011, p.1; Holmes et al., 2012;

Reynolds 2003). In line with macro-sociological perspectives, people's preferred number of work hours are often not met, with causes cited including the availability or costs of appropriate childcare and parental leave schemes, as well as standardised work weeks or insufficient supply of suitable jobs (Drago, Wooden and Black, 2009; Jacob, 2008; McDonald et al., 2006; Reynolds, 2003; Stone, 2007).

In addition, job characteristics themselves, such as a flexible work hours, working conditions, wages, support from supervisors and the job content itself, can also contribute towards discontent, or as positive stimuli towards more or fewer hours in paid employment (e.g. Brooks et al., 2002; Echtelt, Glebbeek and Linderberg, 2006). Brewer et al. (2009) however, showed that job circumstances affect people's satisfaction with their jobs, while people's intentions and behaviour less so (Brewer, Kovner, Green, and Cheng, 2009, p.941). Moreover, meta-analysis by Irvine and Evans (1995) showed a significant positive relationship between behavioural intentions and labour market activity, but only a small negative relationship between job satisfaction and action, implying the mediating role of intention. From this perspective, intention, which in this study is understood as a person's preferred number of work hours, provides evaluative measurement on a mother's current lifestyle. The discontent of stay-at-home mothers with their situation can lead them to develop a preference to be active (again) in the labour market; conversely, mothers who work full-time but who poorly evaluate their jobs can develop preferences for different jobs, or to work fewer hours in their current positions.

Sociological studies broadly express work preferences from the perspective of current needs, seen within a perceived band of possible alternatives which are presumably capable of changing in different situations (Drago et al., 2009; Fagan, 2001, p.244). Within this present study, and in line with the theory of planned behaviour of Ajzen and Fishbein (1973, 1991, 2005), I argue that the preferred number of work hours, besides being a result of current job characteristics, circumcised possibilities or economic rationalities, is also an outcome of personal dispositions that existed a priori of people's experience in the labour market.

In this light, the variable number of preferred work hours reflects internally driven preferences and appraisals of their current work lifestyle. Following this line, I presume that individuals' perceptions (appreciative and evaluative) are in turn based upon their own values and attitudes, formed and sustained in relation to one's (parental) social relational backgrounds. This is an assumption which I will draw upon in the following sections.

In brief, this study understands the preferred number of work hours as a reflection of personal values, attitudes and the perceived possibilities within their individual circumstances and local structural settings, and that these factors will subsequently affect mothers' labour market behaviour. The first hypothesis is thus that work preferences affect labour market behaviour. This is due to the fact that the preferred number of work hours reflects the relationship between what

mothers like, what they conceive of as possible, and what they perceive others expect them to do.

> **Hypothesis 1:**
> *A mother's labour market behaviour is based on her preferred number of work hours.*

2.7 The influence of values and attitudes on preferences and behaviour

The second part of the theoretical framework, and also second aim of this study, is to reveal the relationship between values and attitudes on the one hand, and work preferences on the other. In this light, the theory of Ajzen and Fishbein (1973, 1991, 2005) appears relevant again, and is therefore to be further explored.[22] The first assumption of the theory of planned behaviour is, as described above, that intention forms the immediate antecedent of actual behaviour. Secondly, intention is, in its turn, affected by attitudes towards behaviour, the subjective norm and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005, p.194).

Attitudes towards behaviour

Attitudes towards behaviour reflect the extent to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the specific behaviour under examination. The concept takes account of instrumental (desirable-undesirable) and experiential (pleasant-unpleasant) aspects (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005, p.199). As a general rule, attitudes based upon direct experience - the majority of cases for labour market behaviour, with the exceptions of adolescents - are more predictive of subsequent behaviour than attitudes based upon second hand information (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005, p.180). Ajzen and Fishbein (2005) assume that automatic attitudinal activations take place when there is a strong link in memory that evaluates (positively or negatively) the object of the attitudes. The strength of the attitude thus relates to the strength of the association: the stronger the attitude, the more automatically and frequently accessible the association is from memory. "*Strong attitudes involve issues of personal relevance and are held with great convictions or certainty. As a result they are assumed to be persistent*

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[22] The model of planned behaviour is not fully used in this study. This study primarily concerns a sociological exploration to understand the heterogeneous employment pattern among Dutch mothers. More precisely: it is aimed at revealing recognisable patterns among groups of Dutch mothers by exploring underlying different decision-making and micro-socialization processes that have led to their current labour market behaviour. This topic is at the junction of psychology and sociology, therefore the theoretical framework is inspired by the model of planned behaviour, but the purpose of this study is not to apply the model thoroughly.

over time and be resistant to attack, to influence perception and judgements and guide overt behaviour'' (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005, p.187). Preference theory of Hakim (2000, 2003a-d) appears to have some similarities with this part of the theory of planned behaviour. Yet, Hakim does not focus on preferences or intentions as mediating factors between attitudes and behaviour, rather puts the importance of personal life goal preferences (which can be best compared with attitudes to behaviour) directly in relation to labour market behaviour. In this study, however, it is argued that attitudes are closer (but not identical) to intentions (work preferences) rather than to behaviour. Later on, I will concentrate further on Hakim's theory.

Subjective and descriptive norms

The second predictor of intention is a social factor termed subjective norms: whether a person expects to receive social approval or disapproval for performing a specific behaviour. Subjective norms could also be defined as the perceived social pressure from close ties. The theoretical notion corresponds with the contingent consistency theory, also formed under the discipline of social psychology, which suggest that the effect of attitudes on behaviour grow stronger in cases where a person perceives there to be social endorsement of their intended behaviour (Grube and Morgan, 1990; also Cialdini, et al. 1990 in Tiemeijer, Thomas and Prast, 2009, p.142). Grube and Morgan demonstrated in their large-scale empirical study among Irish students that individuals will act upon a favourable attitude only if there is reasonable certainty that the behaviour will not be disapproved by personally significant referents (Grube and Morgan, 1990, p.330). The understanding of the impact of the perceived support from significant others on one's behaviour also has important similarities with the theory of socialization and the theory of social learning (Bandura, 1977; Berger and Luckmann, 1967), both of which are described in more detail in the next section.

The distinction between subjective norms and descriptive norms is also relevant. Descriptive norms refer to the perceived *actual behaviour of general* others (Tiemeijer, 2012, p.64), whereas subjective norms can be defined as the perceived *opinion* about *the preferred behaviour of significant* others (Cialdini, Kallgren and Reno, 1991). For example, a descriptive norm could be: I think most mothers are working part-time, so I should do that as well. On the other hand, a subjective norm would be: most likely my parents will give me their approval if I work part-time and disapprove if I work full-time. This study expects that both types of social norm intertwine with work preferences, although the subjective norm will be seen to be more deeply rooted within people as a consequence of primary socialization.

Perceived behavioural control

The third determinant of intention is the degree of perceived behavioural control, corresponding to the extent to which a person feels able to enact the behaviour, which itself is related to the supposed ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour. It is an understanding based on past experiences as well as on expected hindrances and obstacles (Ajzen, 1991). This concept is related to the concept of perceived self-efficacy which refers to a person's judgments concerning how well one can execute the courses of action required to deal with future situations (Bandura, 2001). Behavioural control also affects the behaviour directly, and is therefore considered more important within the decision-making process towards action compared to attitudes and subjective norms (see figure 1). In this study, perceived behavioural control can be compared with the more sociological notion of self-agency, as will be further explored in chapter 3. As a general rule, the more positive and robust (consistent and easily accessible in memory) the attitude and expected approval (subjective norm) towards the overt action, and the greater the perceived behavioural control, the stronger will be the effect of intentions on the performed behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

Behavioural, normative and control beliefs

The third theoretical part of the theory of planned behaviour, and certainly the least developed and empirically explored area, is the view that salient beliefs influence attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Such beliefs are also referred to as accessible beliefs (Sutton, French, Hennnings, Mitchell, Wareham, Griffin, Hardeman and Kinmonth, 2003, p.235). Three kinds of primary belief are distinguished: behavioural beliefs (assumed to influence attitudes toward behaviour), normative beliefs (which constitute the underlying determinants of subjective norms) and control beliefs (which provide the basis for perceptions of behavioural control) (Ajzen, 1991). Once again, the strength of the given belief contributes to the likelihood of the intention being fulfilled. The last part of the theory holds that these behavioral, normative and control beliefs can all be the result of various background factors, such educational level, income, religion or personality.
   Behavioural beliefs are defined as the negative and positive views about engaging in specific behaviours. Accordingly, respondents are asked to consider both the advantages and disadvantages, or costs and benefits, of performing the behaviour of interest (instrumental focus). Similarly they are asked whether they would like or dislike the behaviour in question (affective focus) (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1991, p.191). In other words, behavioural beliefs relate to the desirability of the outcome of behaviour in people's minds, which also can be defined as intrinsic beliefs. *Normative* beliefs concern the underlying *wishes* of individuals to behave consistently with the expectations people who are important to them. And *control* beliefs are the set of more general beliefs behind

behavioural control, which consider the availability of necessary resources and opportunities, based for example on the experiences that friends have had with the intended action.
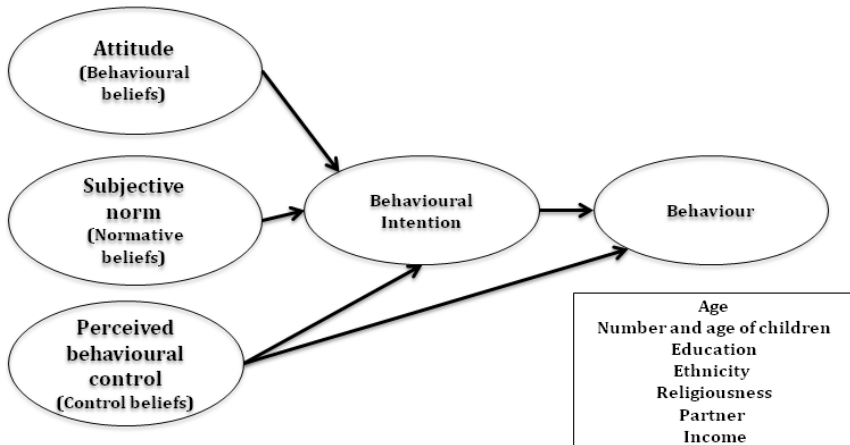

Figure 1. Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991)

The definition of behavioural beliefs has some similarities with the more sociological concept of values, which is one of the key concepts of this study. As a result, I pay extra attention to the concept of behavioural beliefs. Van Deth and Scarbrough (1995) define values as being motives and ideals that are considered worthwhile to pursue. Values are often not concrete, but can be understood as some basic underlying dispositions that conduct attitudes of individuals in a specific context (Van Deth and Scarbrough, 1995, p.38). *"Values only get to see 'the light of day' by their contributions to the formulation of attitudes"* (Van Deth and Scarbrough, 1995, p.40). Examples of values that include perceived consequences of mothers' labour market behaviour are: "A child that is not yet attending school is likely to suffer if its mother has a job", or, "Overall, family life suffers if the mother has a full-time job". These general beliefs or values are clearly distinct from more concrete and personal attitudes (or attitudes to behaviour), such as: "I work in order to be economically independent" or "I want to work, because I would go mad if I stayed home with the kids all day".

Within this study, values are viewed as the elements behind attitudes, which is in accordance with the above sociological perspective of values and attitudes, as well as being in line with the theory of Ajzen and Fishbein (Becker, J.W. et al., 1983, p.19-20). Nevertheless, empirical research on this theoretical distinction, implying a causal relationship between values and attitudes, is scarce.[23] Also,

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[23] Van Deth and Scarbrough (1995) assumed theoretically that values are predictable for attitudes, but they use the value concept heuristically and not empirically. They view values as the

Ajzen and Fishbein admitted that despite there being sufficient empirical evidence for there being significant relations between the different types of beliefs towards attitudes, norms and perception of control, the exact form of these relations remains uncertain. There is certainly room for improvement here, and more work is required at the conceptual level to explain the effect of general values or beliefs on attitudes and specific behaviours (Ajzen, 1991, p.206; Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005). Sutton et al. (2003) concluded that this last stage within the model of planned behaviour has received relatively little attention from researchers (p.235). As a result, a criticism of the theory of planned behaviour is linked to the principle of correspondence between the object of values or beliefs, attitudes and intention, which, for respondents to questionnaires, are particularly difficult to distinguish. As a result, strong correlations are to be expected, and yet these are of less importance scientifically (Swanborn, 1996, p.38).

The theory of planned behaviour has further critics, who address the problem of causality and insufficient consideration of external constraints. Yet because the character of this criticism resembles that of the opponents of the supposed causal attitudinal-behavioural relationship within sociological labour market studies, I will firstly address similar sociological theories about the impact of (general) values and (personal) attitudes on behaviour, before proceeding to concentrate on the critics of Ajzen and Fishbein's theory.

Sociological views on the impact of values and attitudes on employment patterns

Hakim (2000, 2003a-c) was one of the first sociological scholars to argue that women's decisions about how much to work are based on their personal sex role and work attitudes, which are defined as personal lifestyle preferences. Hakim stressed that individual attitudes have important short-term and long-term impacts on labour participation. Due to various social and economic changes that started in the late 20th century, such as the contraceptive revolution, the equal opportunity revolution and the expansion of white collar occupations, individual lifestyle preferences today play a more important role in mothers' decisions to participate in paid work and to make use of childcare arrangements than macro-level institutions do (Hakim, 2000). Hakim also claimed that attitudinal factors have become more important than institutions and structures in explaining female employment, although institutions and structures still play some part as well. "*Preferences do not express themselves in a vacuum, but within the context of local social and cultural institutions*" (Hakim, 2000, p.168). And yet ideas about labour market participation and childcare are now becoming decisive factors for participation in childcare arrangements. "*For example, one young woman*

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conceptions of the desirable, which are not directly observable but are evident in moral discourse and relevant for the formulations of attitudes. The observable patterns of behaviour based on attitudes are seen as evidence of constraints. The constraints are in themselves not directly observable, but it is the assumption of constraint, on their part as researchers, that explains the consistencies between several attitudes (p.40-46).

simultaneously pursues a full-time job, studies for a post-graduate degree on a part-time basis, and gives birth to two children in a quick succession. Another young woman regards the three activities as sufficiently demanding but mutually exclusive. A situation that might present as an impossible stumbling block to one person may be perceived as a stepping stone by someone else" (Hakim, 2000, p.170).

Hakim categorised these personal life style preferences[24] of women in three ideal-typical preferences which are apparent in most Western societies: home centred preferences (consisting of about 20% of women), according to which children and family are a woman's main concern in life; work-centred preferences (about 20% of women), under which a woman's priority in life is employment and/or self-development; and adaptive preferences (about 60% of women), such as when a woman has no explicit priority but tries to reconcile both work and family. Drawing comparisons from two large, nationally representative interview surveys from Great-Britain and Spain, Hakim empirically demonstrated that just three questions on work centrality, lifestyle priorities and life plans can be sufficient to identify the three lifestyle preference groups among women (Hakim, 2003c, p.233).

Several follow-up studies have demonstrated the validity of preference theory (Beets et al., 1997; Cloïn, 2010; Cunningham et al., 2005; Hakim, 2003c; Hoffnung, 2004; Hooghiemstra, 2000; Marks and Houston, 2002; Portegijs et al., 2008b; Risman et al., 1999; Van Wel and Knijn, 2007). For example, in a longitudinal study among Dutch young adults (18 to 26 years old) between 1987 and 1991, Beets et al. (1997) showed that besides the present characteristics of their jobs and educational achievements, young adults' earlier gender- role orientations are an important predictor for their later intentions to reconcile family and work roles. In a longitudinal study of American young adults spanning the period from 1962 to 1993, Cunningham et al. (2005) showed that young adult women who are egalitarian-minded are more likely to engage in full-time employment eight years later than women who had traditional views when they were young. On the basis of her longitudinal study among 178 women of five New England (US) colleges and universities, Hoffnung (2004) also described that senior students' plans regarding their future work and family life were significantly associated with their educational achievement and occupational

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[24] Hakim operationalised lifestyle preferences with three questions: 1) ideal family roles (Which family life is closest to your ideal family life?: egalitarian, compromise or role segregation), 2) would you still work even without economic necessity (such as in the case when a person wins the lottery) (egalitarians: yes): 3) perception of primary earner identity (egalitarians: yes). Lifestyle preferences can as such be identified with just three fixed-choice questions (2003c). Hakim constructs a summary measure of work orientations by combining the questions on work commitment and primary earner identity into an index of work centrality. Work centrality and ideal family models constitute two separate indicators of sex-role ideology which, in combination, define preferences. Hakim reclassified women who claim to prefer the egalitarian family but who were not work-centred as adaptive.

status seven years later. Notably, within all of these studies, the feasible intermediating role of work preferences (intentions) between attitudes and behaviour is not included; attitudes are assumed to affect behaviour directly. Nonetheless, some of these studies do make distinctions between the more general values and personal attitudes, and demonstrate that personal attitudes or preferences are often closer to behaviour than to general values.

For example, Hakim emphasised that it was not patriarchal values (which are seen as being similar to behavioural beliefs or, as used this study, general gender values), but rather personal lifestyle preferences (attitudes to behaviour) that have close correspondence with behaviour.[25] Also Becker et al. (1983) claimed that diverse research in this field demonstrated that there is only a slight direct relationship between values and behaviour. Hakim compared the difference between personal preferences and general values with the dissimilarity between personal goals and public beliefs, between choice and approval, and between what is personally desired and desirable in general (Hakim, 2003b, p.341, 2003c, p.70). She argued that general values are usually vague and malleable, and mostly refer to what people consider to be appropriate for other people regarding the division of tasks between the spouses, while *personal* lifestyle preferences refer to a person's ideal with respect to the division of labour in their own family life (Hakim 2000, 2003a and 2003b). General gender values can be inconsistent with peoples' own personal plans (Hakim, 2003a, 2003 b; Smithson and Stoke, 2005). People do not always act according their general values (WRR, 2003, p.44). For example, a woman may believe that mothers in general should be free to have abortions, and yet she might be unwilling to have an abortion herself (Hakim, 2003b). Alternatively, one might be judgemental about unemployed people in general, but not about an unemployed friend or family member. These inconsistencies can be explained by the fact that what people think is appropriate for others may not be the best choice for themselves or for their close ties in view of their particular circumstances (Marks and Houston, 2002b, p.322). Inconsistency can also be understood in the light of political correctness bias[26], which was revealed, for example, by an empirical study in Spain (Hakim, 2003c; also Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005, p.176). An alternative explanation is that people are either not aware of their true values or they do they not think much about them, and as a result their answers are not particularly reliable or consistent (Bem, 1965). Overall however, the authors agree there is a certain degree of

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[25] Examples of how to investigate patriarchal values may be whether a person agrees or disagrees with propositions such as 'a child that is not yet attending school is likely to suffer the consequences if his or her mother has a job' and 'the father should earn money, while the mother takes care of the household and the family'. Patriarchal values are often measured with a Likert scale.

[26] The social desirability bias is a tendency for people to give a favourable picture of themselves; to enhance positive characteristics and minimise characteristics that would allow themselves to be perceived in negative terms by society. People tend to conform to the believed social standards (Hakim, 2003c, p.63)

consistency between general values and personal attitudes (or preferences), and often significant relations emerge (Ajzen, 1991; Hakim, 2003c). Therefore, values and attitudes, although they are surely related, can be treated - theoretically and empirically - as two different concepts.

Several empirical studies have demonstrated that personal gender attitudes appear more significantly related to labour market behaviour than general attitudes (in this study further addressed to as 'general values') (Cloïn, 2010; Marks and Houston 2002a; Risman et al., 1999). For example, Marks and Houston (2002a) found, in a study of 114 mothers living in Kent, UK, that different personal attitudes towards work and motherhood were significantly related to their actual labour market behaviour. Nevertheless, most mothers agreed that in general motherhood is more important than work (see also Johnston and Swanson, 2006, p.517). Hakim claims that the distinction between choice (personal preferences) and public morality or approval (general values) must now be acknowledged. *"A meta-analysis of 88 attitude-behaviour studies concluded that attitudes predict future behaviour to a substantial degree, but the link only occurs when data measures specific rather than general attitudes"* (Hakim, 2003b, p.341). Also Ajzen and Fishbein argue that broad attitudes have an impact on specific behaviours only indirectly, by influencing some of the factors that are more closely linked to the behaviour in question (Ajzen, 1991, p.181). Based on described theoretical and empirical studies, within this study general values are assumed to be poor *direct* predictors of behaviour in specific situations - their influence on behaviour is firstly mediated by personal attitudes, and subsequently by more concrete preferences or intentions.

Opponents of the theory of planned behaviour and preference theory

The theories of Ajzen and Fishbein and of Hakim have both received similar criticisms, upon which I shall briefly concentrate below. These can be summarised as, respectively, the problem of causality and the constraining effect of external factors or structures.

The problem of causality

The most common criticism of the two models concerns the assumed causal chain that links beliefs and attitudes to behaviour, and as such the assumed parsimony of human behaviour (Crompton and Harris, 1998; Fagan, 2001; French, Sutton, Hennings, Mitchell, Wareham and Griffin, 2005; Kan, 2007; Swanborn, 1996; Sullivan, 2002). The opponents claim that most empirical research, based on cross-sectional research methods, does not provide direct evidence for the causal effects (Cunningham et al., 2005; Kan, 2007; Swanborn, 1996). Moreover there is mounting evidence that experiences in education, work and family life also produce changes in individual attitudes, evidencing a gradual adaptive process (Cunningham et al., 2005; Fagan, 2001; Kan, 2007; Kraaykamp 2012; Steiber and

Haas, 2009, 2012). For example, Kan (2007) demonstrated that the relationship between gender role attitudes and women's participation in labour market work is reciprocal rather than unidirectional (also Jansen and Kalmijn, 2000).[27] In other words, while work preferences will influence labour market decisions, work experiences (which also depend on the conjuncture of the labour market) also effect work aspirations. "*She might acquire skills and resources from employment, which reinforce her employment career orientation; by the same token, constraints on employment might discourage her from devoting further to her work role, and hence she becomes less work-centred*" (Kan, 2007, p.32). Also, Crompton and Harris (1998) perceive the one-sidedly voluntary explanations of women's economic behaviour as inadequate and misleading. They show that women change work preferences and behaviour due to opportunities and constraints at the work place, and less because of individual preferences or family factors (Crompton and Harris, 1998, p.140).

According to the psychological *interest-based explanations* model, individuals adopt and maintain attitudes that facilitate the fulfilment of goals, needs and interests (Kroska and Elman, 2009, p.367). Kroska and Elman (2009) found that when individuals must occupy roles that are inconsistent with their gender attitudes, they adjust their attitudes to match their behaviour (Kroska and Elman, 2009, p.379; also Stähli et al., 2008). Their results correspond with social psychological central models, such as the perception central theory and identity control theory, by which "*individuals are motivated to keep their behaviour consistent with their self-meaning*" (Kroska and Elman, 2009, p.368). Incongruity between individuals' gender ideologies and their backgrounds and activities may well lead them to change their ideologies to be more in line with their background and activities, in order to reduce feelings of discomfort (Kroska and Elman, 2009, p.370). Additionally, it is assumed that preferences explain more about how the situation is evaluated rather than about the career itself, whereas structural or institutional factors are useful in predicting employment activity (Stähli et al., 2008, p.33).

Nonetheless, according to Ajzen and Fishbein and Hakim there is exceeding evidence available, especially within longitudinal studies, showing how attitudes, intentions, and life goals have important causal impact on behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005, p.198; Hakim, 2003c, p.128). In addition, Ajzen and Fishbein admitted that the relationship between intention and behaviour on the one hand, and concepts, attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control on the other, can be reciprocal. Performance of particular behaviours can bring new insights about possible consequences of such behaviour, as well as about expectations of others and issues of control. "*These feedback loops are of course likely to influence future intentions and behaviour*" (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005,

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[27] Jansen and Kalmijn (2000) showed that the relationship between labour market activity and attitudes is reciprocal. The effect of emancipatory attitudes on employment is as strong as the effect of employment on these attitudes.

p.195). Nonetheless, once again the question remains on which (values and) attitudes the initial behaviour was based, and whether these prior attitudes mainly correspond to or differ from later attitudes.

Constraints or preferences?

Other opponents emphasise that people come up against a number of barriers that limit their social actions in their everyday lives. Womens' work decisions are much more multifaceted than the outcome of personal preferences alone (McDonald et al., 2006; Tomlinson, 2006), and stem from a conception of necessity rather than of preference (Debacker, 2008). When it comes to women's choices, their educational achievements presumably have a bearing on their subsequent employment perspectives, as do their ethnic and social backgrounds (class), as well as their previous employment history and their age (Crompton, 2006; Crompton and Harris, 1998; De Beer, 2007; Kangas and Rostgaard, 2007; Lareau, 2007). Tomlinson (2006) has shown that specific features of the social system, such as welfare policies, care networks and work status, together with the distributive character of the social system, can often override and undermine the carrying out of preferences (2006, p.381). Also Crompton (2006) has argued that the ability to overcome constraints is patterned by social structure and/or class, as is apparent in differences in educational levels, social networks or income. Crompton claimed, "*that there is a wide range of macro and micro evidence available that suggest that in aggregate, class-differentiated attitudes and behaviour in respect of mothers' employment may be interpreted as being a substantial part a response to class-differentiated constraints and opportunities available*" (Crompton, 2006, p.671). Other studies emphasised that choices are frequently shaped in the (often hidden) context of inequality, as a result of pre-existing gender assumptions about women's appropriate roles at home and in the labour market (Charles and Harris, 2007; Duncan, 2005; Everingham et al., 2007; Halrynjo and Lyng, 2009; Komter, 1990a-b; McDonald et al., 2006). Duncan (2005) referred to these limitations as "gendered moral rationalities", cultural constructions of choices, and constraints regarding motherhood and work. This level of contextualisation bridges the gap between individuals' preferences and constraints on the one hand, and the wider issues of societies' structural and cultural features on the other. It examines how individual preferences or "free choices" are both socially and culturally shaped, reproduced and constrained (Halrynjo and Lyng, 2009, p.323).

   Hakim acknowledged these constraining influences, for example by showing that 41 per cent of home-centred women actually work out of financial necessity (Hakim, 2003c, p.131). She recognised that both structural and individual perspectives are necessary and complementary (Hakim, 2003c, p.237-240). Nonetheless, she aimed to emphasise the impact of preferences on behaviour, especially in the long-term, which is something that had previously been unrecognised in labour market studies. Ajzen and Fishbein (2005) also noted that

the planned behaviour approach has its limits. Lack of volitional control and unforeseen circumstances can prevent people from carrying out their intentions (p.208).

For the sake of clarity, this study is certainly not aimed at ruling out one approach in favour of the other. It would be unrealistic to deny the reciprocal relation between values or attitudes on the one hand, and preferences and behavioural experiences on the other. And it would be misleading too to concentrate only on attitudes in explaining labour market behaviour, and thereby neglect the macro-institutional surroundings, since these structures enable and constrain free activity (Layder, 1994). Nonetheless, the scope of this study is above all dedicated to shedding light on the social embedding of mothers' individual work preferences. Along these lines, the study theoretically and empirically examines the childhood-based and/or socially ingrained aspects of values and attitudes on a mother's current work preference and subsequent labour market behaviour. This interpretation of values and attitudes corresponds with the *exposure-based* approach (Blunsdon and Reed, 2005; Bolzendahl and Meyers, 2004) which assumes that values and attitudes are shaped by experiences in childhood, during the school period (young adulthood) and in early work experiences, and are relatively, but certainly not completely, resistant to change after that time. The second hypothesis of this study is as follows:

Hypothesis 2:
A mother's preferred number of work hours is influenced by her general gender values and by her personal gender and work attitudes.

In this study, I keep the following definitions for general gender values and personal gender and work attitudes. 'Gender values' are termed as opinions or moral views about what is generally considered to be a desirable division of labour between men and women (in particular between fathers and mothers). *Personal* gender attitudes are defined as the ideal division of labour with one's own spouse.

Traditional general gender values mean consent with the ideology of the traditional division of labour between men and women in general, also referred to as segregated family roles. A traditional personal gender attitude holds that a mother's ideal is a family in which her partner works full-time and in which she is responsible for taking care of the household and children.

Egalitarian general gender values imply that one approves with the idea that partners take an equal or symmetrical share of paid and unpaid labour. An egalitarian personal gender attitude means a personal ideal family life in which a mother shares the paid and unpaid tasks with her own spouse equally.

Situated in between are the values and attitudes that fall between the traditional and the egalitarian - also referred to as transitional values and attitudes (Lavee and Katz, 2002). These attitudes are termed here as adaptive attitudes

(Hakim, 2000). Women with *adaptive* general gender values tend to agree with the modified breadwinner model, where mothers work part-time in order to be able to provide most of the unpaid family work, and fathers work full-time (Haas, 2005, p.496). In case a mother has a personal adaptive gender attitude, her ideal family life is one in which her own partner works full-time and she works part-time, taking the main responsibility of the household tasks and childcare.

Furthermore, I have split attitudes into gender attitudes and work attitudes, because I assume that career ambitions and motherhood ideals, which are closely related to gender values and attitudes, can exist in different spheres. Katchadourian and Boli (1994), for example, concluded that both women and men were better prepared for the world of work than they were for family life (in Hoffnung, 2004, p.712). Once women have a child, contrary to their earlier career expectations, they automatically place family demands ahead of career demands, and anticipate long maternity leaves and subsequent part-time employment. This finding indicates that a mother's personal gender attitude can overrule her personal work attitude. Presumably this is the case because gender socialization is such a persuasive, overarching and encompassing process that society's and one's own internal expectations towards mothering can overrule personal work attitudes (Grusec and Hastings, 2007; Mason, 2000). Nevertheless, I expect that the work and gender attitudes of a mother will often point in the same direction. A work attitude is this study, refers to a mother's personal motivation to pursue paid work.

2.8   The social origins of values and attitudes

The third aim of this study is to enhance our understanding of the origins of mothers' diverse values and attitudes by examining their relationships with specific, latent, intended and unintended messages, as well as support of significant others in childhood, in early adulthood (educational period), and in later adulthood. The study builds further on the theoretical point of view that individuals' values and attitudes are always formed and embedded within the social environment, which starts in early youth, and is central to socialization, social learning and exposure-based theories (Bandura, 1977; Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Blunsdon and Reed, 2007; Bolzendahl and Meyers, 2004; Brinkgreve, 2009; Handel, 2006). A better understanding of the diverse socialization processes and social backgrounds of Dutch mothers may enhance our understanding how and which general gender values and personal gender and work attitudes play an important role in explaining mothers' employment behaviour in the Netherlands, as previous Dutch empirical research has shown (Beets et al., 1997; Cloïn, 2010; Hooghiemstra, 2000; Portegijs et al., 2008b).

Socialization theory

Socialization theory focuses on the social relational context in which specific normative standards and expectations are socially transmitted. Through the process of socialization, people acquire norms and values at different societal levels, and learn to perform their social role as a worker, parent, friend, citizen, and so forth (Wallace and Wolf, 2006). According to Parsons (1951) socialization is the process whereby people make societal norms and values[28] their own (internalization) by learning from others in the social system (normative standards and role expectations) what is to be expected from them (Wallace and Wolf, 2006, p.28).

Berger and Luckmann (1967) have made an important sociological contribution to socialization theory with their treatise "The Social Construction of Daily Life". They describe how the reality of daily life is produced and subsequently reproduced and modified, which is especially relevant for this study. The reality of social life is approached as a socially constructed system in which people give a certain order on everyday phenomena. The reality itself consists of both subjective and objective elements. The subjective element involves a reality which is personally meaningful to the individual. The objective element is the common, taken-for-granted reality – the social order or institutional world - which Berger and Luckmann also view as a human product. Their special interest involves the question of how subjective and personal meanings can become an objective or factual world that people know and understand and share with one other. By answering this question, Berger and Luckmann's treatise can be interpreted as an attempt to bridge the micro- and macro-sociological level of analysis.

According to Berger and Luckmann (1967) the transformation from subjectivity to objectivity is possible through three ongoing processes: externalization ('society' is a human product), objectivation ('society' is an objective reality) and internalization ('men' is a social product) (also Wallace and Wolf, 2006, p.285-292). Externalization and objectivation are only briefly mentioned here, since they function in this study as an introduction for internalization, which is a central theme of socialization theory.

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[28] Norms are here defined as the formal and informal guidelines for actions. Values are defined, as previously described, as motives and ideals that are considered worthwhile to pursue; they are often not concrete but can be understood as underlying dispositions that conduct attitudes and behaviour of individuals in a specific context (Van Deth and Scarbrough, 1995, p.38). Norms and values both give direction to behaviour, but values are more abstract than norms. Values are above all an expression of desirability, an ideal, whereas norms point to specific guidelines for behaviour. Put differently, norms are the concrete translations of values, they show how values should be practiced. Values are more stable than norms and similar values (like taking good care of your children is important) can be translated into different norms (parental self-care or professional care can both be viewed as 'good' or 'appropriate' care) (Becker et al., 1983, p.18-19).

Externalization, objectivation and internalization

Externalization is perceived as the creation of social reality that becomes real in the moment of human production. Society is as a human product, since human beings continuously produce the social world or society by their own human activity, this most important feature of which is the dialectal process between individuals and groups. Within the subsequent process of objectivation, human beings do not perceive the human reality as an on-going process that is formed by themselves, but individuals understand everyday life as a structured, present and permanent reality that has impact on individuals but also exists seemingly independent of them (Wallace and Wolf, 2006, p.288). Within the process of internalization, the individual takes over the world in which others already live: *"I understand the world in which I live and that world becomes my own"* (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.150). The dynamic part of internalization is that people not only understand each other's definitions of their shared situations, but also define them reciprocally. In other words, there is an on-going mutual identification between people and their definitions of the world they share.

Internalization occurs over a long period of time and is only possible through identification with significant others, first and foremost the parents, later teachers, peers, people at work, etc. (Handel, 2006, p.16). When full internalization has occurred, the presented norms and values exist, and are easily accessible, within the person himself, and so they no longer need be presented by its socializing agents.

Reification

When internalization is taken a step further it is called reification: subjectivity meanings seem to become objective facts. Reification means that the people understand products of human activity as if they were something other than human products, such as facts of nature, the results of cosmic laws or the manifestations of divine will. Through reification people forget their own authorship of the human world (externalization). Roles (like the mother-role) as well as institutions (such as bureaucracy and laws) can be reified. Wallace and Wolf (2006) explain that if an individual proclaims "I have no choice" they are displaying a reified lockstep mentality (p.292).

Through the process of internalization, socialization theory assumes that even if people are conscious of the pressure of the norms and values in their cultural system, and start acting against this normative standard, they can never escape it (Risman, 2004). The dominant codes and beliefs (norms and values) continue to affect people's behaviour and feelings of justice, since these dominant norms, values (or codes and beliefs) exist in a person.

It is widely acknowledged that social influential processes are often subtle, indirect, and outside of awareness (Cialdini and Goldstein, 2004). Ridgeway and Correl (2004) also emphasised that people often do not realise that their

behaviour is (partly) shaped by 'other' expectations. Though even in cases where individuals act alone, their actions are social-relational, in the sense that individuals feel their behaviour, or its consequences, will be socially evaluated, by approving or disapproving others (Ridgeway and Correl 2004; also Brinkgreve 2009). For example, men and women may say that they reject the idea that mothers have the prime responsibility for looking after their children, and yet this idea may still shape their behaviour (Mason, 2000, p.241). Or, despite apparent inequalities in the division of labour between men and women, most women do not perceive them as unfair (Milkie and Peltola, 1999). Important within socialization theory (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) is thus the idea that one can produce imitative behaviour without considering the underlying processes. Through a process of abstract modelling and symbolic codes, "*observers derive the principles underlying specific performances for generating behaviour that goes beyond that they have seen or heard*" (Bandura, 1977, p.40). Below, I will describe this process in more detail (section: Theory of social learning).

Stratification theory

Socialization theory often has a somewhat distinct view from the literature on stratification or intergenerational social mobility, although both theories focus on the conduct of previous generations in explaining behaviour. Stratification theory points to *resource transfers* from parents to children (Van Putten, Dijkstra and Schippers, 2008). What parents transmit are social statuses, more than values and attitudes. And subsequently, similarities in social structural position may generate attitudinal correspondence between parents and their offspring (Glass, Bengston, Dunham, 1986, p.686). Under the stratification theorem, resources can be distinguished between three forms of capital: *human* (such as skills and behavioural codes), *social* (professional social network) and *financial* (income that can be spent on means towards enhancing their children's learning processes) (Van Putten et al., 2008, p.438; also Kraaykamp, 2009; Liefbroer and Dijkstra, 2007). The resource transfers between generations will be largely mediated by the educational level and occupational positions of parents, as it is well-known that the educational level and the occupational status of the parents is a good predictor for their children's education and profession (De Graaf and Ganzeboom, 1993; Liefbroer, 2005).[29] With her qualitative research in North America, Lareau (2007)

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[29] Another approach to studying the parental influence of adults' norms and values is known as the sibling design (Huijk and Liefbroer, 2012; Vries, Kalmijn and Liefbroer, 2007). At the base of this design lies the assumption that the strength of parental upbringing practices can be measured by the similarity of attitudes and behaviour among siblings. The more siblings resemble each other, the stronger the assumed normative and behavioural influence of their parents, which corresponds with socialization theory, and/or the stronger the influence of the shared social environment, since they grew up in the same local social environment, which is defined as the shared context approach (Glass et al. 1986; De Roos and Bucx, 2010)

has shown the mechanisms of how parents of different social classes vary in their transmission of social-cultural advantages. These cumulative differences, like fostering children's talents by offering structured leisure activities and wider ways of thinking (defined as 'concerted cultivation'), create advantages for middle-class children in terms of how they interact with professionals (doctors and educators) and other adults outside the home. Kraaykamp (2009) emphasised that while studying the process of socialization one should pay attention to the quality of the home situation. The reproduction of norms and values would proceed much easier and smoother in a warm nest than in a problematic household: trust and the quality of affective relationships are decisive.

The reciprocal character of socialization

Contemporary socialization theory further enhances our understanding of primary socialization processes, and acknowledges how socialization does not have the same effect for every child, since children within one family may pursue different behaviours. The course and direction of primary socialization processes depend, for example, on the child's temperament, talent and intellect, as well as the quality of the child-parental relationship (Grusec and Hastings, 2007; Kraaykamp, 2009). Children within the same family are able to develop disparate personality treats, "*because they draw upon different parental and sibling symbolic attributes*" (Bandura, 1977, p.48). In addition, it is recognised that socialization is characterised by mutual reciprocity. Within the process of socialization, parents and children are continuously structuring and restructuring the rules of the game (Grusec and Hastings, 2007; Huijnk and Liefbroer 2012). Several studies confirmed the bi-directional nature of attitude transmission, and demonstrated that mutual influential nature depends upon the concerned subject and the stage of the life course (Glass, Bengston and Durham, 1986). Although the transmission often remains asymmetrical, it is acknowledged that parents influence their children more than vice versa (Axinn and Thornton, 1993; De Roos and Bucx, 2010; Huijnk and Liefbroer, 2012, p.72).

    Berger and Luckmann (1967) made a distinction between primary socialization (or internalization) during childhood and secondary socialization, also referred to as adult socialization, which occurs throughout life. Primary socialization is the most important process of socialization, which an individual undergoes during childhood as they become a member of society. Secondary socialization is any subsequent process that initiates an already socialized human being into new segments of the objective world that he or she shares with fellow inhabitants (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.150). Firstly, I shall attend to the theory of primary socialization, wherein emotional identification, symbolic learning, and internalization of generalized others, are key concepts.

Primary socialization

Primary socialization takes place in the period during which children meet the parents (or other people who are in charge of upbringing the child), with whom they identify emotionally. Childhood is seen as the most important period in life, where the basic structure of the individual's objective social world (the base-world) is built and with which all later situations are compared. Within childhood, a child proceeds from an unsocialized, new-born state towards increasingly socialized participation in society. From this perspective, socialization concerns the face-to-face social interaction with one's most important significant others - the parents - and the outcomes of those interactions, such as the growth of human sentiments (whereof empathy is especially important), the acquisition of language, and the development of the self (I and me) (Handel, 2006, p.16).

The first step of socialization is social interaction. In the beginning of a new life, socialization largely consists of care-giving activities, which are the first experiences a newborn has with the social world it has been born into (Handel, 2006, p.12). Through the empathy of its carers, their capacity to place themselves imaginatively in the baby's situation and to understand what needs to be done, the child learns what empathy is - a very important ability for functioning in social life. A wide variety of human sentiments are learned accordingly, such as happiness, sadness, anger, loneliness, etc..

The person who cares for the new-born infant also makes use of communication and significant symbols, the importance of which was emphasised by Berger and Luckmann. They defined language as a system of vocal signs, which they view as the most important sign system in human society (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.51). This primary carer also teaches the child to have internal conversations, since not everything that is said is meant in the way it sounds. Internal conversations are also needed to make a correct interpretation of the words that have been said - an important aspect of language. Berger and Luckmann referred to language as the vehicle for the on-going translating process between subjectivity and objectivity within individuals (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.153)

Thirdly, the child develops a self – it becomes aware that it is a person distinct from other persons (objects). The manifestation of a self is only possible when the significant others who take care of the new-born have interests - whether automatically or enthusiastically - in developing the child. This interest can be expressed through various kinds of appraisals (Handel, 2006, p.14).) These initial appraisals construct the beginning of the self: *"the ideas he has of himself are, at first, ideas he gains from others about himself"* (Handel, 2006, p.15). And again, language is imperative in bringing about this process, like 'good child' or 'bad behaviour'.

The concept of the self is developed in particular by George Herbert Mead (1934). Mead theorised the idea about the two-part structure of the self, the 'I' and the 'me'. As the child grows older, the communications, appraisals from

significant others (partners, siblings, playmates, teachers and relatives) as well as their roles and feelings, all become increasingly ingrained in the self that Mead calls the 'me' - the self as the object of (generalised) others' attitudes (Handel, 2006, p.15). The ability to empathise the role of the 'generalized other' has life-long importance, since the same ability is necessary in being able to be (or play a role as) a member of the family, work group, friendship circle, or any group or organisation to which he or she will belong (Handel, 2006, p.15). Besides the 'me', the self also consists of the 'I', which is the more subjective aspect of the self - one's own awareness of the physical self, and involves a certain kind of individuality (Handel, 2006, p.16). We achieve self-awareness, according to Mead, when we learn to distinguish the 'me' from the 'I'.[30] Individuals develop self-consciousness when they are able to see themselves as others see them, which allows for an internal conversation between the individual 'I' and the social 'me' (Giddens, 2009, p.285).

In other words, the self is a reflected entity, reflecting the attitudes first taken by significant others towards themself: "*the individual becomes what he is addressed as by significant others*" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.152). Others are internalized within the self. This is a conclusive point in socialization. A person's quality of generalised identification enables that his or her own self-identification attains some stability and continuity. "*What is real outside, corresponds to what is real within. Objective realty can readily be translated into subjective reality, and vice versa, the realities correspond to each other but are not completely merged. There is always more objective reality available than is actually internalized in any individual consciousness. The symmetry between objective and subjective reality is never a static, once and for all, state of affairs. It must always be produced and reproduced in actu, like an on-going balancing act*" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.154). The development of the 'generalised other' or the 'me' within people is especially relevant in this study. Through specific and different micro-socialization processes, the 'me' – i.e. the way 'others' are internalised in the mother – clearly differs for each mother, which might add to the explanation of their diverse labour market behaviour.

Theory of social learning

Within the scope of primary socialization, the social learning theory of Bandura (1977) is relevant. Bandura argues that most behaviour is learned observationally through modelling: from repeatedly observing the behaviour of others, people

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[30] The 'I' is the unorganised response of the organism to the attitudes of others, a spontaneous bundle of wants and desires, a biological organism, which might be derived from genes together with an evolutionarily program (Wallace and Wolf, 2006, p.206-8). The concept of the 'I' represented the idea that persons have individuality and social characteristics that is shared with others. Mead may have reacted with his concept of the 'I' towards 'the oversocialized conception' of man in that period of time (Handel, 2006, p.16).

form ideas (coded information or symbolic representations) of how behaviours should be performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for appropriate performances (Bandura, 1977, p.22). Bandura describes how observational learning is governed by four component processes. The first is the *attentional* process: attentions to others' behaviour are needed in order to be able to internalise in the person. The grade of given attention depends on the type of person, but also varies by the complexity, salience and attractiveness of the behaviour, which varies for each individual as well. Furthermore, the types of behaviour that an individual repeatedly observes and hence learns most thoroughly, are not infinite, but depend on the people with whom one regularly associates, either through obligation (within childhood) or preferences (in later life). The second component of observational leaning refers to the *retention* process. People must be able to remember the activities that have been modelled at a certain point in time, also when the specific model of behaviour is no longer present. The third part of modelling involves converting symbolic representations into appropriate actions: the *motor reproduction* processes. Mostly these actions are first achieved by a close approximation of the new behaviour, and then they refined through self-corrective adjustments on the basis of informative feedback from performance, and from focused demonstrations of segments that have been only partially learned (Bandura, 1977, p.28). Rehearsal serves as an important memory aid, not only physically but especially mentally; rehearsal helps people to learn and remember the learned behaviour. The last component evolves the *motivational* processes. People are more likely to adapt modelled behaviour if they value the results than if it has unrewarding or punishing effects. By observing the different outcomes of their actions, people can anticipate which responses are most desirable and appropriate in which settings (Bandura, 1977, p. 17). *"Some forms of behaviour are so intrinsically rewarding that they hold the attention of people of all ages for extended periods"* (Bandura, 1977, p.24). At this point the theory of planned behaviour of Ajzen and Fishbein (1973, 2005) and social learning theory of Bandura (1977) are conjoined. The theory of planned behaviour holds that subjective norms and normative believes, expected approval or disapproval of significant others towards the intent action, will automatically and often unconsciously influence people's intentions towards behaviour.

Especially salient in the theory of social leaning is the aspect of symbolic learning, which means that one can learn behaviour by associating with certain symbols towards the behaviour that is learned. In this manner, a certain type of learned behaviour can produce many forms of behaviour that are to be associated with it. Observational learning relies mainly upon two representational systems – imaginable (visual imagery or mental associations with for example the person who was modelling the behaviour), and verbal coding. After modelled activities have been transformed into images and easily assessable and functional mental and/or verbal symbols, these memory codes serve as guides for performance (Bandura, 1977, p.26). For example, where children have learned to be polite and

to behave accordingly at their grandparents' place, the child apprehends that different types of behaviour (formal and informal) are required in different social settings. The symbolic signs that are associated with the behaviour, for example, in the case of visiting their grandparents, drinking tea with a cup and saucer, helps to remind the person how to act in specific situations and also in other comparable (Bandura, 1977, p.25).

According to Bandura it is important to understand that many skills, competencies and appropriate behaviours are learned observationally, since often they cannot easily or immediately be established by overt enactment, due either to social prohibitions, lack of opportunity or physical ability. For example, a young child learns to associate drinking alcohol with festivities or just the end of a working day, but is not yet allowed to drink himself. When the association is firmly built and stored in memory, only observing the association will be strong enough to recall the 'learned' behaviour, which will happen without intention or attention. Labour market behaviour is pre-eminently behaviour that one must, via delayed constructions, visualise and rehearse with verbal symbols. Possible mental and verbal symbols associated with work (either paid or unpaid) that parents have intentionally or unintentionally 'taught' their children are, for example, money, joy, obligation, status, the father, freedom, creativity, boredom and fatigue.

As mentioned earlier, primary socialization involves much more than purely cognitive learning, especially since it takes place under circumstances that are emotionally charged. The child identifies with the significant others in a variety of emotional ways. Whatever they may be, internalization occurs only as identification occurs. And especially during the process of primary socialization, there is often no problem of identification, since there are no significant others apart from the parents or other caretakers.[31] It is the parents (or caretakers) who set the rules of the game. "*The child can play the game with enthusiasm or with sullen resistance. But, alas, there is no other game around. Since the child has no choice in the selection of his significant others, his identification with them is quasi-automatic and quasi-inevitable. The child does not internalize the world of his significant others as one of many possible worlds. He internalizes it as the world, the only existent and only conceivable world, the world tout court*" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.154).

Primary socialization ends when the concept of the generalised other has been established in the consciousness of the individual. At this point he or she is an effective member of society. Yet, socialization is never finished. Although, the objective reality as it is internalised in primary socialization is often maintained, it often admits, outside of individuals' own awareness, to further internalizations – or secondary socialization – taking place in the later life of the individual.

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[31] There are at present many children growing up with more than one or two caretakers which whom they can identify emotionally. Moreover, a child may identify emotionally more with another parent or caretaker than the one who the child interacts with most frequently.

Within the context of this study, it is important to describe the process of secondary socialization as gender socialization – that of how boys learn to be boys and girls learn to be girls – since this is also of primary interest. "*Socialization is the force which defines and establishes gender, the social construction of male and female, in a society*" (Eagle, 1988, p.69).

Gender socialization

Socialization theory also provides us with an explanation of how and why gender-specific labour market trajectories persist. Parental influence on adults' behaviour and attitudes seems especially manifest in the process of *gender* socialization. Culturally defined (gender) roles are taught, meaning that children learn to distinguish female and male role expectations from an early age (Ampofo, 2001). The way gender is acquired, is a complete process and few of the mechanisms concerned can be identified as put-up or manipulated. Parents, grandparents and other adults, together with siblings and their friends in various ways, often subtly and unintentionally play a role in the construction of gender (Mason, 2000, p.240). Mothers and fathers act as role models regarding the division of labour: adolescents tend to see the way in which their own parents divide responsibilities as a model for their own future division of labour (De Valk, 2008). Yet, children do not automatically mimic the parental behaviour. Implicit messages and feelings about the division of labour also are picked up by their offspring, for example, if the mother is employed, but only does so out of economic necessity, and does not enjoy it. Alternatively, the mother may not work, but she dislikes her mother-role and would rather have made a career. For this reason I consider the transmissions of attitudes, norms and values – besides parental role modelling – to be of particular interest while investigating the process of socialization

Not many empirical studies have addressed the influence of parental socialization on adults' attitudes. Nonetheless, Strauss (1969) already stated that intra-familial continuity is likely to become more apparent as the younger generation moves into full adult status, which includes major life transitions such as marriage, parenthood and occupation (in Inman-Amos, Hendrick and Hendrick, 1994, p.460; also Ryan, 2001). Although parents might no longer be able to impose normative standards on their adult children, eventually the younger generation's behaviour as adults is patterned according to the conduct of their parents, as is for example argued by Biddle et al. (1980, p.1072), based on their study among 149 adolescents living in North America. Kossek and Lambert (2005) also showed how people change their identity once they become parents, and use their childhood experiences, as well as examples of other parents in their social context, while taking on their new role. Several studies have demonstrated for example that the division of labour becomes more traditional across the transition into parenthood, with wives increasing their share of family work and decreasing their paid work hours (Kluwer, Heesink and Van Vliert, 2002, p.939).

Relatively few empirical studies in Western societies have shown how adults' attitudes are influenced by processes of parental gender socialization, a few cases of which I will exemplify below. Children of parents with 'modern' values appear to have a more egalitarian perspective on work and family roles compared to children of parents with more traditional values (Barret and White, 2002; Cunningham, 2001; Moen et al., 1997; Trent and South, 1992; Van Wel and Knijn 2006). On the basis of a large cross-sectional survey of Dutch, Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean adolescents living in The Netherlands, De Valk (2008) described, how various characteristics of the parents coincided with adolescents' attitudes. Having religious parents correlates with more traditional preferences among girls and boys. Adolescents tend to have a more egalitarian gender attitude in cases where they had a working mother and grew up in a non-standard family arrangement (single parent or foster families) (De Valk 2008, also Marks and Houston 2002b, p.333). Weinshenker (2006) showed, with a study among 194 middle class North American families, that the expectations of female adolescents' (aged 12 to 18) about their future employment as a mother were associated with their own mothers' employment histories and their support for gender egalitarianism. In addition, several studies have demonstrated that having a working mother has a significant and stimulating effect on the employment behaviour of their daughters (Cloïn, 2010; Sanders, 1997; Van Putten et al., 2008).

The opposite holds true as well. Gove and Herb (1974) argue that pressure on girls to assume feminine gender roles limits their aspirations, behaviour and conceptions of the selves to those matching with their future role of wives and mothers (in Barret and White, 2002, p.453). De Valk (2008), too, finds that having religious parents is related to more traditional preferences of girls and boys. "*The greater religiousness of adult women is consistent with their socialization and internalization of the 'proper' female role*" (Thompson, 1991, p.382). However, it is important to realise that not every religion might have the same effect (Hayes, McAllistar and Studlar, 2000).

Based on socialization and social learning theory, as well as on relevant empirical findings, I hypothesise that the influence of parental upbringing during childhood (including parental behaviour as well as the transmission of values and attitudes), continues to influence Dutch mothers' current gender values and gender and work attitudes. Therefore, the third hypothesis of this study is:

Hypothesis 3:
A mother's gender values and gender and work attitudes are influenced by parental socialization during childhood.

The focus of this study is to investigate the possible patterns within primary socialization among contemporary Dutch mothers that correspond with their diverse labour market behaviour, and subsequently the character – translated in

different mental and verbal codes – of these early socialization marks. Phrased differently, which distinguishing remnants within early childhood socialization still have impact on the current values and attitudes of Dutch mothers, and can explain their heterogeneous labour market behaviour?

2.9 Secondary socialization

As a person lives, they must learn to function in any new group or organisation (sub-world) that they enter. The individual learns not only new practices, but also new values and norms, new vocabulary, and new ways of interacting with others. Secondary socialization is often referred to as the acquisition of role-specific knowledge, or the internalization of institutional or institution-based sub-worlds. These sub-worlds are also more or less consistent realities with normative, affective and cognitive elements, and have their own rituals or material symbols (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.158). When the person is making a major commitment, such as entering a new relationship, a new religion or occupation, they are also making a significant change in life that can be described as developing a new self. Yet, the formal processes of secondary socialization persist with an essential problem: it is always determined by an earlier process of primary socialization. It must deal with an already formed self and an already internalized world (Handel, 2006; Wallace and Wolf, 2006, p.290). "*This presents a problem because the already internalized reality has a tendency to persist*" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.160). Whatever the new contents are, to be internalized they must somehow be superimposed upon an already present reality. There are two specific topics that distinguish secondary socialization from primary socialization, which can be termed as emotional identification and the problem of consistency.

No need for emotional identification

While primary socialization cannot take place without an emotionally charged identification of the child with his significant others, most secondary socialization can occur with a minimum of identification that is necessary for any communication between human beings. Put differently, the individual may internalize different realities without identifying with them. Moreover the reality of the sub-worlds can be 'used' for specific purposes, insofar as it is needed to perform certain roles. The individual keeps a subjective distance from the sub-worlds, and is able to put them on deliberately and purposely, and to allow figurations that are rational and emotionally controlled (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.163). Or as Berger and Luckmann (1967) put it, *"the child lives willy-nilly in the world as defined by it parents, but he can decide at any moment to leave an unpleasant world of his secondary socialization agents"* (p.162). This artificial aspect of secondary socialization makes the internalization of discrepant worlds in secondary socialization an entirely different arrangement. Secondary

socialization can be pragmatically useful, and have much less subjective inevitability compared to the contents of primary socialization. Consequently, the subjectivity reality of internalizations within secondary socialization is particularly susceptible to challenging definitions of reality. "*Not because they are not taken for granted or are apprehended as less than real in everyday life, but because their reality is less deeply rooted in consciousness and thus more susceptible to displacement*" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.167).

The issue of consistency

What is particularly interesting is the character of the transitional process from primary to secondary socialization. Is this process characterised by reproduction and re-enforcement or by recreation? Handel concluded that a satisfactory explanation of the relationships between primary socialization and adult socialization still evades us (Handel, 2006, p.18). As mentioned, according to Berger and Luckmann (1967) within secondary socialization, there is always a problem of consistency between the original and new internalizations, when individuals are confronted with new alternative realities and possible identities that appear as subjective options (p.160). Within and among the different sub-worlds there will be differences and disagreement about values, norms, vocabulary and ways of interacting. At many levels, contradictions between and even within the different settings exist (Bandura, 1977, p.44; Handel, 2006, p.17). The different perspectives of significant others are fraught with possibilities of internal conflict (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.190). People cannot simply accept each set of roles for them (Eagle, 1988). The individual is therefore often confronted with a dilemma of consistency, which he can typically solve either by modifying his perception of reality or by only clinging to reality-maintaining relationships (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.170). Berger and Luckmann's principle assumption was that the individual likes their identity being confirmed, and significant others are important for this ongoing substantiation of their identity (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.170). Within the social process of reality-maintenance, people will make a distinction between significant others and less important others, and tend to avoid the social reality of less important others that have deviant practices, norms and values compared to their own (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.169). Other scholars have argued that people rather establish an acceptable position for themselves throughout their lives out of all these contradictions (Eagle, 1988; Handel, 2006). "*When exposed to diverse models, observers rarely pattern behaviour exclusively after a single source, nor do they adopt all the attributes even of preferred models. Rather, observers combine aspects of various models into new amalgams that differ from the individual sources. Different observers adopt different combinations of characteristics*" (Bandura, 1977, p.48).

Also Berger and Luckmann (1967) acknowledged that partial transformations of identity are common, especially in relation to individuals' social mobility and

occupational training (p.181). However, they also emphasised that even within partial transformation, there is a continuing association with symbols, persons and groups who were significant before. Since these influences continued to be around in people's minds (often also around them physically), they are likely to protest to fanciful re-interpretations of people's new identities. And even within partial transformational processes, individuals must persuade themselves that their personal changes are plausible (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.181). Bandura (1977) also recognised that people are initially reluctant to embark on new undertakings. Moreover, as long as familiar practices and routines work well, people will have little motivation to think about alternatives (Bandura, 1977, p.49). And where they are confronted with new behavioural examples, people will readily take up what they (and their significant others) regard as praiseworthy, but resist new ways of behaviour that violate their social and moral convictions (Bandura, 1977, p.53). As described in chapter 2, during the '70s, women's societal role changed drastically, and the initial advancement of few mothers, by simply entering the labour market, was later followed by many more mothers. However, the particularly ground-breaking behaviour of certain mothers - the group of consciously single mothers and full-time working mothers - did not attract many followers. The innovative behaviour of these mothers did not become socially approved, and therefore remained encumbered by restraints. "*It requires the cumulative impact of salient examples to reduce restraints sufficiently to initiate a rise in modelled behaviour*" (Bandura, 1977, p.55). Put differently, only in cases in which 'innovators' are able to perform new behaviours without experiencing harmful effects, wherein mass communication can serve as an important accumulator, may defensive behaviour by its observers be weakened, fear reduced and imitations created.

In addition, the benefits of new behaviour can only be experienced when the new behaviour is tried.[32] Only after practicing the new behaviour, as is supported by secondary socialization, can agents strengthen or weaken inhibitions over behaviour that has previously been 'taught' (Bandura, 1977, p.49-52). Reflecting a less deterministic view of primary socialization compared to Berger and Luckmann, Bandura argued that, with secondary socialization, successive modelling can "*produce a gradual imitative evolution of new patterns bearing little resemblance to those exhibited by the original models*" (Bandura, 1977, p.48).

The last stage of this study is the examination of whether mothers tend to sustain their (acquired) attitudes through secondary social relations, by creating and recreating the familiar, or whether they are able to reset their attitudes if confronted with new models of behaviour or supportive others. Nonetheless, a limiting frame of this examination is the cross-sectional research design of this study. By employing qualitative and quantitative research methods, mothers are

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[32] Yet people will not adopt innovative behaviour if they lack the money, the skills, or the accessory resources that may be needed (Bandura, 1977, p.55).

invited to look back on their life courses while I attempt to reconstruct patterns within the possible influences of significant others on their current values and attitudes, in order to explain overall Dutch mothers' diverse work preferences and subsequent labour market behaviour. Since I could not investigate the real influence of significant others throughout a mother's life, the study focuses explicitly on whether a mother has perceived support of significant others towards her prior professional choices and career ambitions. This theoretical choice is also induced by the socialization theory of Berger and Luckmann (1967), the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1991, 2005) and the social learning theory of Bandura (1977), as well as by different partial theoretical notions (e.g. Grube and Morgan, 1990). These theories all emphasise that the perceived approval of significant others towards specific behaviour will have a positive impact on people's own values and attitudes towards the behaviour of interest. This will be especially at issue where one feels actively supported towards a certain type of behaviour. The perceived social support that is investigated in this study is the stimulation towards fulfilling job ambitions (which does necessarily mean vertical mobility). Subsequently it is assumed that a mother will endorse more egalitarian gender roles within her general values, as well as her personal attitudes, if she perceives she has been supported in her professional and career choices by secondary socialization agents.

> **Hypothesis 4:**
> *A mother endorses more egalitarian values and attitudes if she has perceived the professional and career support of significant others.*

A concise overview of relevant literature concerning the influence of important 'others' is given below, respectively addressing the possible influence of teachers, partners, friends and people at work. Empirical studies on the influence of these significant others on mothers' gender roles and work values and attitudes appeared scarce. And studies that do address these social influences mostly reveal a lack of encouragement of women's career ambitions as a result of stereotypical gender expectations.

Teachers

According to Berger and Luckmann (1967), modern education is the best illustration of how secondary socialization takes place under the auspices of specialised agencies (p.166). The educational period is seen as an important phase for socializing young people in particular skills and values in society (Bourdieu, 1984; Nagel and Ganzeboom, 2002). However, there is not much empirical research on how teachers affect the gender role and work attitudes of their pupils. Some research has demonstrated that teachers who communicate high expectations can bring positive changes in the behaviour and education interests

of their pupils and students (Grusec and Hastings, 2007, p.391; Wentzel et al., 2010). Teachers can also reinforce gender roles through their different expectations for the boys and girls in their classes (Allana et al., 2010). For example, a recent study among Spanish parents and teachers by Sáïnz et al. (2012) shows how teachers endorse gender stereotypical beliefs about their students' educational preferences (in this study ICT), and only indirectly consider their own role in shaping these preferences.

Partner

The influence of a partner on the wife's gender attitude is perceived as two-directional. On the one hand, based on homogamy in mate selections, people seek marital partners with similar (gender) attitudes (Inman-Amos et al., 1994). On the other hand, it is possible that the partners' attitudes will have become similar over the years, as their marriage or partnership matures. In general is expected that women committed to employment are more likely to share parenting responsibilities than those who are not (Covin and Brush, 1991). Hoffnung and Williams (2013) revealed with their longitudinal study (1994- 2009) among circa 200 women living in the US, that career oriented "have it all" women often found partners who supported their full-time work for reasons of personal preference or situational constraints, or a combination of both. Their 'husbands' appeared more family-oriented and less career-oriented than the partners of traditional women, or else they had a lower educational levels and thus earning capacity.

Furthermore, Vlasblom and Schippers (2005) showed that the decision to participate in the labour market is made within the family, in which the view about the division of care of both partners plays an important role (also Geist, 2005, p.25). Dutch empirical research has also demonstrated that wives' employment decisions are generally not a subject that partners talk about (Portegijs et al., 2008b, p.105). When such discussions take place, mothers are more often motivated by their partners to work less, rather than to work more (also Keuzenkamp et al., 2009). In the survey of Keuzenkamp et al. (2009) only 16 per cent of the women with a small part-time job were prompted by their partner to work more hours (p.76). An unintentional consequence of this process, where mothers are (by absence of encouragement) discouraged in their career ambitions, might be that over time cohabiting partners become more traditional with subsequent division of household tasks, rather than more egalitarian.

Peers

The socialization among peers is conceptualised by Ryan (2001) as a process that occurs through frequent interactions, shared experiences and exchanged information among a relatively intimate group of friends who interact with each other on a regular basis (Ryan, 2001, p.1138). Much relevant research has been

done on adolescents' peer groups (e.g. Biddle, Bank and Marlin, 1980). For adolescents, it is widely recognised that peer relationships or peer group pressures have consequences for emotional adjustment, school achievement and risk-taking behaviours (Biddle, Bank, and Marlin 1980; Carter, Bennetts and Carter, 2003; Windle, 1994). However, there are only a few studies on the outcomes of this process among adult peer groups.

Some social-psychological studies have shown that someone's labour market behaviour can be modified by the behaviour of important people in his or her environment. Kapteyn and Woittiez (1986), for example, demonstrated the existence of a so called 'bandwagon effect' among Dutch women in a social group. This effect refers to the fact that if a member of a social group enters the labour market, his or her entrance motivates other members of the same social group to join the labour market as well. This theory corresponds with sociological notions of role models (Bandura, 1977). A role model can be an inspiring and motivating person, someone from whom one can learn, providing a script for behaviour in particular contexts (Sealy and Singh, 2009). Portegijs et al. (2008b) has found a significant impact on the participation level of mothers if other mothers in their environment work or make use of formal childcare. Also Blaffer Hrdy (2000) concluded that the expectations that mothers have of their own lives are based on their own ideas and on the ideas of how it should be by others.

However, one should realise that in general people choose friends with similar ideas, attitudes, interests or characteristics as themselves. Or, as Brown et al. (1993) argue, people do not haphazardly fall into one crowd or another; similarities are prevalent *a priori* to relationships. Thus, although I primarily investigate how peers influence mothers' attitudes and decisions about employment, I readily concede that this influence must be considered to be a two directional relationship.

Supervisors and colleagues

The influence of supervisors and colleagues on gender attitudes of mothers can be important as well. Previous research has shown, for example, that a supervisor can encourage or discourage a woman's work attitudes and ambitions (Estes, 2005; Moen and Yu, 2000). Work motivation and investments can be enhanced by a supervisor and by organizational support (Karatepe and Kilic, 2007). However, women's ambitions, especially those of mothers, seem to be often neglected or underestimated by their supervisors (King, 2008, p.1703); as a consequence, women receive smaller investments in training than men (Ostroff and Atwater, 2003).

To recap, the four hypotheses addressed in this study are:

1. *A mother's labour market behaviour is based on her preferred number of work hours.*

2. *A mother's preferred number of work hours is influenced by her general gender values and by her personal gender and work attitudes.*

3. *A mother's gender values and gender and work attitudes are influenced by parental socialization during childhood.*

4. *A mother endorses more egalitarian values and attitudes if she has perceived the professional and career support of significant others.*
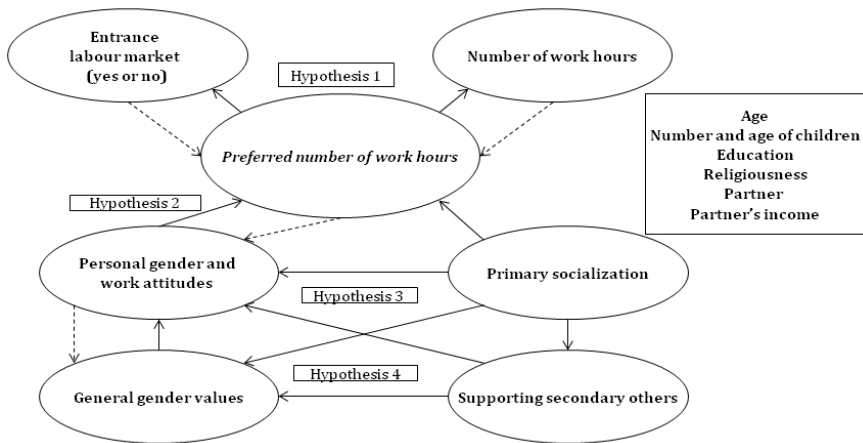
The hypotheses are visualised in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Visualised hypotheses