Motherhood Motivation:
Childhood Experiences, Attachment Style, Feminism,
Sex Role Identity & Fertility Awareness

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Abstract
This study investigated the contribution of demographic and psychological variables such as childhood experiences, attachment and socio-cultural factors to motherhood motivation by utilising both qualitative and quantitative data. Initially, interviews were conducted with 15 women. Results showed that women who grew up in larger loving families and had positive relationships with their mothers expressed being enthusiastic about having their own children in order to offer to their children the positive experiences they had. Having negative memories of one’s parents’ relationship and having grown up with an absent father had a negative impact on women’s motivation to childbearing due to a fear of exposing their children to similar negative environments. All women were aware that ideally women should have their children by 35, however, they all stated that a prerequisite for having children is being in a stable relationship. The interviews showed that women with higher education experienced more conflict about giving up their careers to become mothers. However, women who had available supports (eg., family support, flexible working hours, maternity leave) seemed to be willing to embrace motherhood as they felt they would be able to combine motherhood with their careers. It was reported that the most common advantage of having children was a desire to have them due to a love of children and the excitement of seeing them achieve their milestones, while the most common disadvantage of having children was the belief that children are hard work and would affect women’s freedom, spontaneity, and time commitments. Quantitative data were obtained from 126 female participants who completed online questionnaires measuring demographics, recollections of parents, attachment style, adherence to feminist values, sex role identity and fertility awareness. Standard multiple regressions showed that all the psychological variables combined accounted for 25% of the variance in motherhood motivation and the findings partially supported prior results. It was found that recollections of fathers’ overprotective/controlling parenting style was a significant and negative predictor of motherhood motivation suggesting that women’s recollections of fathers high on controlling behaviour predicted significantly lower levels of motherhood motivation. Women’s recollections of mothers high on care predicted a significantly higher score of positively viewing motherhood and a lower score on belief of conflicts posed by motherhood.
Participants’ higher scores on the feminine scale predicted higher levels of motherhood motivation suggesting that a more traditional feminine sex role identity contributed to higher levels of motherhood motivation while participants’ higher scores on masculinity predicted a significantly lower score on positive values of children suggesting that participants with a higher score on masculinity valued children less positively. Future research is necessary to explore whether there are other predictors of a woman’s desire to have children and whether motherhood motivation is better examined, not on its own, but as a part of a larger scale measuring a woman’s life goals.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank, foremost, my supervisor Dr Roger Cook, for his support, positive attitude, constant reinforcement, encouragement, great humour and belief in me. I thank him for helping me to persist throughout the process of writing up this thesis. I would also like to thank Dr Sue Moore for reading my thesis and for offering me constructive feedback. Also, I would like to thank Dr Ben Williams for his help with my statistics.

This thesis would not have been possible without the participants, and therefore I would like to take the opportunity to thank each one of them for participating in this study. I would like to especially thank the 15 women who were willing to be interviewed. Without them I would not have been able to get some valuable qualitative data.

A special thanks to my dear friend, Sue, for helping me to find participants for the qualitative part of my study. Her continuous support and warm friendship have been very important to me. Finally, I would like to thank all my family and friends for everything they have taught me and for helping me to become the person I am. Each one of them is a true inspiration to me. A big thank you to them for empowering me to persist and to have the strength and determination to finalise this project.
DECLARATION

“I declare that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree at any university, or other educational institution; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text. I further declare that the ethical principles and procedures specified by the Swinburne University Psychology Discipline’s document on human research and experimentation have been adhered to in the preparation of this report”.

Ms Filia Papadimitriou
Researcher
Preamble

This thesis has investigated the topic of “Motherhood Motivation” in two parts. First, there is a qualitative analysis of interviews with 15 women. Second, this is followed by a quantitative study where ideas emerging from the first are investigated with a larger sample. In order for my readers to understand the situation from which I came to the qualitative phenomenological analysis of the first study, I provide a brief personal preamble.

I started this thesis in 2004. At that time I had ended a ten year relationship and was seeking a new path. A path of self-search, advancement and fulfilment. When I met my supervisor I was working on a topic concerned with adult relationships between men and women. However, after a couple of months I came to the realisation that the topic did not interest me enough. I was caught up feeling upset about having spent months working on a topic, in which I was no longer interested, and also feeling frustrated about not being able to find a topic that interested me sufficiently.

Thankfully, with my supervisor’s warmth, supportive discussions, insight and patience we came to the conclusion that “Motherhood Motivation” was a topic that interested me and about which I became very enthusiastic. At the time I was 31 years old and was caught up in a cycle of questioning myself: “Is it normal that up until now I have had no desire to have my own children?”, “Is there something wrong with me?”, “Is it my childhood that has influenced me?”, “Or is it simply my desire to become successful in my profession and to be able to achieve more professionally that prevents me from desiring having children?”, “Does my selfish ambition impact on my lack of desire to have my own children?”, “Or is it the fact that I am not in a relationship?”

All these above questions led me to believe that researching what motivates women to have children would be a very interesting topic. It has always intrigued me given the number of women who have embraced motherhood with no conflict at all, whilst on the other hand there is a number of women, like myself, who keep questioning how children might impact their careers. It seems that women who are motivated to develop their careers are more likely to question how it might be possible
to combine motherhood with a successful career. And so I decided that I would explore these concerns by interviewing 15 women and asking them questions about their education/career, their childhoods, relationships, and fertility awareness. I then decided that an on-line questionnaire, as a second study, would expand my knowledge about the motivation of women who wanted to have both motherhood and a career.

I have always thought that my father had a significant impact upon my life and in particular my relationships with men. When I started this thesis I was really interested to hear how women’s experiences with their fathers might have impacted upon their desire to have their own children. Although that was not the only question I was interested in, I have a particular interest in people’s experiences with their fathers first because of my own experiences with my own father and second because I believe society does not highlight enough the importance that fathers have on people’s lives and well being.

Past research has always highlighted the importance of a positive maternal role model for women’s desire to have their own children. When interviewing women it was obvious that a woman’s relationship with her mother is very significant and impacts upon her motivation to have her own children, but fathers also indirectly seem to affect women’s motivation to have children since their relationships with their fathers impact on the kind of relationships they might develop with men.

I hope this thesis will contribute to a better understanding of what motivates women to have children and shed light on changes that need to be made on a societal level to help women, especially those who hope to combine motherhood and a career. Also, I hope this thesis highlights the importance of men in raising children and in assisting women in raising a family.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Explanation of Structure of this Paper

This paper starts with Chapter 1 introducing and exploring the topic of motherhood motivation and concluding with the purpose and research questions of this investigation. Chapter 2 continues with a focus on the theories relating to parenthood motivation such as “Parental Investment Theory”, “Psychoanalytic Theory”, “Attachment Theory”, “Feminist Theory” and “Sex Role Identity Theory”.

Chapter 3 reviews past literature paying special attention to early and recent studies on motherhood motivation. It concludes with the aims and hypotheses of the two studies. Chapter 4 describes study 1, which is the qualitative study of 15 women who were interviewed and whose responses were analysed according to a phenomenological perspective. Chapter 5 focuses on study 2, a quantitative study consisting of 126 women who answered online questionnaires. The second study drew on and expanded the findings of the first study.

Chapter 6 is an integration of both studies and chapter 7 focuses on the limitations of this research. Chapter 8 gives suggestions for future research and focuses on the implications for counselling practice. Chapter 9 gives some final comments on this investigation and concludes the current investigation.

1.2 Motivation to Motherhood

The decision to have a child or not, one of universal relevance, is one of the many options available to women and is defined as the choice to forego, start or enlarge a family (McNary, 1999). In Western societies increasing numbers of women are choosing to not have children or to delay childbearing (Schoen, Kim, Nathanson, Fields, & Astone 1997). Cultural changes (e.g. feminism) and biomedical advances (e.g. development of contraception) have resulted in fertility levels falling below replacement (Langdridge, Sheeran, & Connolly, 2005). Also, at the same time there have been concerns about overpopulation in developing countries (Connolly, 1989). These issues have caused difficulties in understanding and predicting movement in fertility rates.
Giving birth and raising children is essential for the survival of the human species. It is therefore important that we attempt to understand what motivates women to have, or not to have, children. Also, due to a recent demographic shift in developed countries from overpopulation in the 1950s and 1960s, to a contemporary declining birth rate (Veevers, 1980; Lang, 1992), there has been an increased interest in areas such as motherhood motivation, reasons for delayed parenthood and decisions for voluntary childlessness (Gerson, Alpert, & Richardson, 1984).

According to Gerson (1986), in the last few decades there has been an increase in women taking less traditional roles, such as committing to careers while postponing, or even rejecting motherhood altogether. She argued that if this trend continues, there will not be enough children to meet the population replacement rate. Part of her explanation for this is that more women may be struggling to combine demanding careers with motherhood.

Crittenden (1999) argued, on the other hand, that women are able to achieve both motherhood and a successful career, if they are able to accept that while their children are young they may need to take some time off from their career. Crittenden stated that the average American woman will live eighty years and will probably work for forty of those years. For six to eight years, however, she will typically be spending significant time at home raising her young children. An enlightened society would therefore be at the forefront in assisting women to successfully combine both motherhood and a career, while supporting mothers to re-enter the workforce after some time away from their career (Crittenden).

It has been argued that it is important that both men and women share work and family responsibilities, not just because of equal rights, but because this is the only way both will have opportunities for mastery in their lives (Cannold, 2005). This arrangement is also the best for their children as “quality time” with both parents is a crucial factor in children’s development. Cannold argued that a reduction of the standard working week to around 30 hours, or four 8-hour days, is one solution that would allow for individuals to manage having a career and a family. However, such a reduction need not only apply for parents, but for everyone in the workforce.

A 30-hour week would allow people to have a more balanced life. It would help people to have time to work but also enjoy relationships with family and friends (Cannold, 2005). As a move in this direction, in 2000 the French brought in a 35-hour
week with the aim of increasing productivity and employment while helping the lives of individuals to be more enjoyable and less conflicting. The 35-hour week lowered unemployment for the French (Cannold).

According to Willen and Montgomery (1996) Sweden is a unique Western nation when it comes to family politics. For example, both parents have the right to take a year off from their employment once their baby is born and they are able to share the year as they wish. Also, during this parental leave they are usually paid 90% of their normal salary and are guaranteed their employment when returning.

From a sociological point of view exploring what motivates women to have children is important as changes in fertility patterns have important implications for our society (De Vaus, 2004). De Vaus argued that policy makers have to deal with issues of the economic implications of low fertility, the impact on the tax base and the capacity of governments to sustain current levels of expenditure.

De Vaus (2004) said a rapid decline in fertility contributes to population ageing and meeting future labour supply needs may be difficult. Population ageing means a shrinking taxation base required to sustain current levels of income support, health and other social expenditures (De Vaus). For these reasons the topic of motherhood motivation is highly important for our society on several levels: Economic, sociological and psychological.

It is also important to look at why motherhood motivation has become a complex topic and a somewhat conflictual topic for some women. One can argue that the reason why some women are in conflict about having children is because women of today have a plethora of life choices available to them and these choices make the decision about if and when to become a mother very difficult. It is interesting to contrast this with the situation over 30 years ago when motherhood was perceived as necessary for a woman’s purpose and fulfillment in life and women did not feel they had many choices (Gerson, 1986).

Also, although there has been much focus on childlessness, it is vital not to underestimate the number of women who are in no conflict about becoming mothers. On the contrary they embrace motherhood and greatly anticipate raising children.

The present research looked at various factors that might affect women’s motivation to have children and this was measured using Gerson’s (1983) “Motivation for Motherhood” scale. This motivation for motherhood scale is a multidimensional
construct based on a continuum and incorporates the following six dimensions:

1. Eagerness to have children.
2. Ranking of childbearing relative to nine other adult activities.
3. The appeal of various childrearing stages.
4. Rating of motivation relative to serious difficulties occurring in pregnancy and childbearing;
5. Evaluation of role conflicts and roles issues posed by motherhood;
6. Overall costs and benefits of motherhood.

### 1.3 What Motivates Women to have Children

The decision to become a mother is a multilayered process that is not clear cut or always conscious (Sévon, 2005). However, several researchers have dealt with this issue by relating child-bearing to human values (Willen & Montgomery, 1996). The first attempts to find out what values people associate with childbearing were made by Pohlman (1969) who found that having children seemed to be related to enjoyment of interaction with children, a role for women, a wish to express happiness and love felt toward a partner, identification with own parents and religious beliefs.

To give a complete picture of what motivates women to have children it is vital to take into account values and how they are connected to social factors. For example, Veevers (1980) argued that the wish to have a child is motivation reinforced by social rewards and punishments. In the past a successful adult was viewed as one who was a parent and remaining childless was viewed pejoratively.

In the 1970s Hoffman and Hoffman (1973) argued that to understand one’s motivation to have children it was necessary to look at the values of having children while taking into consideration that any societal changes might change factors that influence motivation to having children. According to exchange theory framework individuals are rational beings and their behaviour reflects decisions evaluated on the basis of costs and benefits (Nye, 1979). According to Seccombe (1991) the decision to have a child is the result of rational decisions based upon the social, economic, and emotional costs and benefits compared to the alternatives.

Hoffman and Hoffman (1973) believed that “to understand motivation to childbearing it is important to provide a conceptual framework consisting of values that are anchored in particular psychological needs, tied to the social structure and
influenced by it, and subject to cultural variation” (p.44). They argued that fertility motivation can be explained by looking at five classes of variables:

1. The value of children (e.g., adult status, social identity, morality, primary group ties, stimulation)
2. Alternatives to the value of children (other avenues besides children for fulfilling a value)
3. Costs of the value of children (what one has to sacrifice or lose to obtain a value)
4. Barriers (factors make it more difficult to realise the particular value by having children)
5. Facilitators (factors make it easier to realise the particular value by having children).

Societal changes have impacted upon our views of what constitutes a successful woman. For example, today a woman who is childless, but is a successful business woman, is still viewed by many as a successful, fulfilled individual. Also, nowadays societal factors might adversely affect a woman’s motivation to childbearing as childlessness is not as much of a stigma as it used to be in the 1960s and 1970s. In other words, having a child today is not viewed as the only prerequisite for a fulfilled, complete woman.

Second, according to Tobin and Aria (1998) in addition to these societal factors that are important when exploring motherhood motivation, many other factors need to be taken into account such as: Demographics (e.g. education, number of children, occupation, age, marital status); cultural influences (e.g. in some cultures there is more pressure to have children once one gets married); opportunities (e.g. career opportunities); family-of-origin experiences (e.g. whether one has positive or negative childhood experiences).

Goodbody (1977) argued that a woman’s decision to have or not to have children is influenced by the complex interaction between cultural expectations on a societal level and internal needs/motivations on an individual level (Goodbody, 1977). In the past the internal factors in combination with social norms led women to believe that motherhood was the only healthy and positive way of adult life (Goodbody). However, a decline in pronatalist values has resulted in some women making the decision to remain childless without fearing ostracism or social criticism (Michaels,
There are other difficulties in measuring motherhood motivation because the most important motive may be the most deeply repressed or it may also be so obvious that the respondent does not think to name it (Hoffman & Hoffman, 1973). This, of course, makes it difficult for accurate measurement to be undertaken by the usual quantitative methods, but which might be helped by the probing interrogation of a focussed interview.

Fertility research primarily focuses on women, however, men’s influences over women’s decisions to have children also play an important role and cannot be underestimated (Kemkes-Grottenthaler, 2003). For example, while men may like to have children, some may be reluctant to have children because they do not want to share all the demands and domestic responsibilities in raising a child as it can affect their freedom and working hours (Kemkes-Grottenthaler). Therefore, this position can affect their spouses’ decisions.

**1.4 Is Motherhood Instinctive?**

A historical overview of the literature on motivation to motherhood begins with the focus on whether there are innate/unlearned factors (maternal instincts) that motivate women to have children or whether motherhood motivation is learned (Michaels, 1988). In the past the prevailing view was that motherhood was instinctive, however, Robinson and Stewart (1989) argued that no one has found clear evidence for an instinctive basis for maternal feelings in human females.

Robinson and Stewart (1989) said that a maternal instinct functions very strongly in lower animals, but as we move up the evolutionary ladder, cultural and environmental factors play a more important role. Therefore, a woman’s desire to have and raise children may be influenced more by her society’s expectations and experiences, than her own wishes (Robinson & Stewart).

The assumption that all women desire to have a child and naturally adapt to the consequential demands has been challenged by feminist historians, psychologists and biologists (Nicolson, 1999). The belief in a maternal instinct rejects the validity of divergence amongst women in their expectations, desires and experiences, not only about motherhood per se, but their other life choices, both domestic and public (Nicolson).
Perhaps the view that motherhood is natural or “instinctive” is associated with many women’s belief that nurturing is fundamental for their fulfillment (Tobin & Aria, 1998). However, it is too simplistic to view motherhood as instinctive and therefore a life-force in all women, because there are many examples of women not being driven to nurture a child so that if motherhood is considered to be instinctive then it implies that these women are not “normal” (Tobin & Aria).

According to Tobin and Aria (1998) it would be more appropriate to say that women are not born with the urge to mother, but are born with a biologically driven capacity for reproduction. This capacity is biological but choice is not, except in cases where choices are governed by being born female in certain cultures/families and/or at a certain time (Tobin & Aria). For example, in traditional Indian, Jewish and other cultures some women feel the pressure to have children once they get married to fulfill their and/or their families’ expectations.

### 1.5 The Decision to Delay Motherhood

Today we seem to live in an era where we all want to have more freedom with fewer responsibilities. This trend indicates a greater acceptance of delayed parenthood or even no parenthood at all for some career women (Wilkie, 1981). The proportion of better educated women delaying first births until their 30s or even late 30s has been increasing (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004). Another important reason for women to delay parenthood is a rising expectation that women need to work and therefore those who do, end up planning to have smaller families. Women with longer work experience have children later in life than women with little or no work experience (ABS).

Wilkie (1981) believed that the trend of delayed motherhood indicates not a rejection of motherhood, but rather an extended preparation to become a mother. He argued that for most people, delaying parenthood is due to wanting to enjoy some freedom for personal development, to attain a stable relationship and to be financially secure before having children. Also, he argued that delaying parenthood might be due to the increased divorce rates that make marriage and/or de-facto relationships a less secure basis for parenthood. Wilkie stated that it is not clear whether changing work conditions, increased community care and other measures will help families to better combine work and parental responsibilities or whether this conflictual situation will
drive more women to not have children.

Veevers (1980) argued that women delay childbearing by continually pushing the clock forward to a time when they will finally have to decide whether to have children or not. According to Veevers there are four stages of postponement that women may go through:

1. Stage one: Postponement for a definite time. There is clear commitment to have children when the time is right
2. Stage two: Postponement for an indefinite time. Women are committed to have children but are vague as to when they will be ready
3. Stage three: Deliberating the positives and negatives of motherhood. There is an open acknowledgement of the possibility to remain childless
4. Stage four: An acceptance of permanent childlessness.

Also, factors contributing to delayed motherhood (American Society for Reproductive Medicine-ASRM, 2005) are:

1. Contraception is readily available.
2. More women are in the workforce.
3. Women are marrying at an older age.
4. The divorce rate remains high.
5. Married couples are delaying pregnancy until they are more financially secure.
6. Many women don’t realise that their fertility begins to decline in their late 20s.
7. Lack of having a committed long-term partner or a partner who wants to have children.
8. Higher educational attainment.

Some researchers have blamed the media for the current situation of delayed motherhood. For example, Kalb (2001) argued that advertising of some celebrity mothers having children later in their lives has set a trend for 40 year old and even 50 plus motherhood that falsely leads women to believe that this is readily achievable. He said that most women are not aware that their fertility starts to drop significantly at about the age of 27 years old. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics the median age of mothers in 2002 was 30, while 25 years ago it was 24 (McLean, 2004).

Hewlett (2003) conducted a national survey of 1,647 career orientated American
women and found that 42% who had greatly achieved in their careers were still childless after age 40. Many other career women were able to have only one child because they started their families too late. Childlessness has doubled in the past 20 years so that 1 in 5 women between the ages of 40 and 44 is childless in the USA (Gibbs & Gorman, 2002).

De Vaus (2004) states in his book “Diversity and change in Australian families” the following interesting population trends:

1. Australia’s fertility rate has been falling since 1961 and since the mid 1970s has been below the population replacement rate.
2. Recently Australian women and men have been restricting their family size to two children with few having three or more children.
3. Fertility levels are higher in the more socially disadvantaged areas and outside capital cities. The more remote the area the higher is women’s fertility.
4. About 2 per cent of all births are due to IVF style technologies.
5. Demographers calculate that Australian women need to have 2.1 children to maintain a stable population size over the longer term. In 2002 Australia’s fertility rate was 1.75 which is well below the replacement level.

The below replacement fertility levels experienced in Australia have occurred in most developed countries (DeVaus, 2004). DeVaus said with the exception of the USA all OECD countries plus Hong Kong and Singapore have fertility rates in 2000-2005 below replacement levels; fertility rates that are at least 30 per cent lower than in 1955-1960. Italy and Spain had the lowest fertility rates followed by Greece, Hong Kong, Austria, Germany, Japan and Singapore. However, DeVaus showed that countries such as the USA, Denmark, Finland and Netherlands have experienced an increase in fertility between 2000-2005. The increase in Scandinavian countries is partly due to policy changes (DeVaus).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2004) states that one in four women in their child-bearing years (15-44 years old) will never have children and at 25% this is a unique rate, a rate higher than the USA (22%) and UK (20%). Many women who delay motherhood believe that they can rely on IVF, however, the reality is that IVF success rates are actually quite low for women approaching 40 years of age, as only
about 2% of all babies are born to women over 40 (Kalb, 2001). While IVF helps women who may have problems such as with their fallopian tubes, and whose partners may have a problem with their sperm, it cannot make eggs better (ASRM, 2005), and therefore it is not always able to help women at the end of their childbearing years. It is also true, that fertility treatment can be financially, emotionally and physically very draining and so some couples will be dissuaded from this treatment.

1.6 Summary

This chapter gave an overview of motherhood motivation, while examining: a) What motivates women to have children; b) Whether motherhood is instinctive, c) Why women delay motherhood and d) Concluded with some statistics on fertility levels.

Humans are complex and therefore there are many factors that might influence a woman’s motivation to have children. Today’s women live in a transitional time and some of them find themselves in great conflict when thinking about various potential roles such as having a career and motherhood (Daniluk & Herman, 1984).

Understanding what motivates women to have children is very important as it can help the planning of effective interventions in relation to population trends, policies and new patterns in family formation, and help us conceptualise sex role issues (Gerson, 1980). To ensure the continuation of any intact social group, children are necessary and although some individuals may avoid having children, the reality is that any society must produce over two children per woman, or it will eventually become extinct (Mackey, While, & Day, 1992).

Cannold (2005) argued that the social conditions under which women choose motherhood and having a career are unequal and therefore women’s decision to have children is compromised. She believed that social changes are necessary to ensure that women who want to have children get the chance and argued that policy makers need to find solutions to enable couples to have the number of children they desire without compromising women’s opportunities (McLean, 2004).
1.7 **Purpose of this research**

The current research will significantly extend existing knowledge on what motivates women to have children by conducting both a qualitative and a quantitative study as past research has only focused on quantitative research. Both studies will give a greater depth of understanding on the topic as variables that have not been examined in past research will be explored. First the qualitative study focused on interviews of 15 women followed by a second study of 126 female participants who responded to online questionnaires exploring the following variables:

1. Would demographic variables such as age, income and education contribute to motherhood motivation? For example, would women with higher income and education be less motivated to have children? Would older women be more motivated to have children?

2. Would participants with positive childhood recollections (eg. caring mothers/fathers) be more motivated to have children than participants with negative childhood recollections (eg. controlling not warm mothers/fathers)

3. Would a feminine sex role identity and feminist sympathies predict a woman’s motivation to have children?

4. Would women with higher levels of fertility awareness be more motivated to have children?
Chapter 2: Parenthood Motivation Theory

2.1 Overview of Chapter

This chapter starts with parental investment theory. An explanation is given from an evolutionary point of view as to why mothers invest more in their offspring than fathers and explains why a decision about childbearing might be a more complex one for women than men. Following this, psychodynamic theory will be examined in order to identify the constructs which seem to address the topic of this research, especially highlighting the importance of parent-child relations in the development of the wish for a child.

Then attachment theory is explored for ways in which an understanding of early and adult attachment models can be useful in understanding why women want to have children. Feminist perspectives are next explored especially as they address matters of women’s choices, while this chapter concludes with an evaluation of the contribution of sex-role identity theory and how it might provide further answers to motherhood motivation.

2.2 Parental Investment Theory

Parents, particularly mothers, devote substantial time and energy to raising their children (Bjorklund, Yunger, & Pellegrini, 2002). To try to understand why parents are so involved in their children’s lives it is important to understand the evolutionary reasons why selection would act to produce parents who invest so much in their children (Bjorklund et al.). They claim children are a parent’s most direct route to genetic immortality.

Women invest more in their offspring than men and this observation and the related theory developed is known as “Parental Investment Theory” and was first postulated by Trivers (1972). Trivers based his ideas on Darwin’s theory of sexual selection in the wider animal community. Bjorklund et al. (2002) said that Darwin believed that sexual selection would occur for two reasons. First, there would be competition with one sex for access to another and second there would be differential
choice of mate selection by members of one sex for members of the other. Sexual
selection is based on males competing with one another for access to females and
females choose among males, based upon signs of male’s genetic fitness, successful
domination over other males, and the likelihood that the male will be able to provide
for her and her offspring (Bjorklund et al.).

Trivers (1972) argued that differential amounts of parental investment occur
before even the child is conceived. Mammalian females produce a finite number of
immobile eggs and males produce an unlimited number of small, mobile sperm
throughout their lifetimes. The female eggs are limited in comparison to sperm. For
women conception happens in their bodies and then they have to carry the children and
usually be responsible for the lactation and care of the infants after birth. Male
investment can theoretically end following copulation. Males have higher
reproductive rates as following insemination of females they can seek additional
mating opportunities, but for females once conception has occurred their mating
opportunities end (at least temporarily) and their parenting efforts begin (Trivers).

Mammalian males invest more in mating than in parenting whereas the reverse
is true for females (Trivers, 1972). More than 95% of mammalian males provide little
or no postnatal investment to their offspring, but human males are an exception to the
typical mammalian pattern (Bjorklund et al., 2002). However, despite fathers’ roles as
providers and to a lesser extent caregivers, women in all cultures provide more support
and engage their children more frequently than men do. Although social changes can
and do influence the degree of parental investment, the overall pattern is still that of
women devoting more time to child care than men, even in the most enlightened and
contemporary families (Bjorklund et al.).

Bjorklund et al. (2002) argued that the consequences of the differential parental
investment in offspring results in gender differences in behaviour such as women
being more cautious in getting sexual mates than men. Women must not only assess
the physical qualities of their mate (eg. healthy, strong) but must also evaluate their
partner’s resources (eg., wealth, power, influence, high status) and of his preparedness
to share these with them and their offspring. Men are more concerned with a woman’s
genetic fitness (eg. health), beauty and her ability to have children and make good
intelligent decisions about childbearing (Bjorklund et al.).

The biology of women makes it certain that they know the baby they are
carrying is theirs. However, for a man there is no such assurance as it is possible that he could spend time, resources and energy investing in another man’s biological child, which would not be adaptive from an evolutionary perspective (Bjorklund et al., 2002).

Men are less likely to invest in a child when the child’s paternity is in question (Bjorklund et al., 2002). Also, men may be more likely to invest minimally in their offspring because they know that women will continue to invest in their child even if the man invests little or deserts her completely. Therefore, evolutionary theory predicts that mothers will be more likely to invest heavily in their offspring than fathers. This is seen cross culturally and in other species of mammals (Bjorklund et al.).

From an evolutionary point of view fathers are more likely to invest in their offspring when they are sure the child is genetically their own and they are sure that the child is healthy enough to reach reproductive age (Bjorklund et al., 2002). This pattern is prevalent in humans today but is widely assumed to be an old pattern that has evolved in our species over the past 5 million years (Bjorklund et al.). However, it is also important to mention that today, due to social changes such as an increase of divorces and stepfamilies, men seem to be prepared to take on the step-father role and parent another man’s child.

2.3 Psychoanalytic Theory

Some of the earliest theories that attempt to explain motivation for having children are theories developed by psychoanalysts. Psychoanalytic or psychodynamic theorists believed that parenthood motivation was due to innate biological factors and to a process of identification occurring in early parent-child relations (Benedek, 1959; Freud, 1933).

Freud (1933) developed a theory of female parenthood motivation based on a woman’s early parental relations. He believed that the desire for a child was the result of penis envy, where the child becomes the substitute for the penis. The girl, disappointed and angry at her mother for supposedly depriving both of them of a penis, rejects her mother and seeks closeness with her father. In her mind, the penis and child are interchangeable and therefore the woman desires a child by her father. This desire becomes repressed as the child resolves the “Electra situation” and reappears in
adulthood during relationships with men other than her father (Freud).

A second psychological theoretical approach to parenthood motivation is object relations theory, which derives from psychoanalytic theory. Here the emphasis is on the relationship between mother and daughter from infancy and the resulting identification process. Benedek (1959) and Freud (1933) argued that essential to a woman’s desire to become a mother is a strong positive identification with her mother. Melanie Klein (1932), founder of object relations theory, emphasized women’s relationships with both parents as fundamental in the wish for a child. The girl identifies with her mother, but is also envious of her. Her mother has the father and the ability to produce rival siblings. The girl is afraid that her mother will get angry and retaliate against her. Therefore, the girl turns to her father. The girl looks to both of her parents to see what she may become as an adult. This is very significant in her developing healthy object relations and her desire for motherhood. Klein (1932) argued that a woman’s reduction of aggressive fantasies regarding her mother is necessary for her own ability to nurture and mother. She believed that for women who could not reduce their anxiety and guilt accompanying their sadistic fantasies, motherhood and the ability to nurture would become problematic.

Chodorow (1978), also an object relations theorist, believed a daughter’s identity evolves through her continuous relating to others, beginning with the earliest maternal identification. Chodorow stated that motivation for motherhood stems from a woman’s desire to replicate her lost mother-infant bond. On the other hand, Michaels (1988) argued that motivation for a child was seen as:

1. A woman’s internalisation of her parents’ caretaking role and her struggle to deal with the concept of being separate from her mother.
2. A woman’s attempt to internalise her mother’s parenting role to recreate the lost infantile relationship she once had with her mother.
3. A woman’s intense competition with her mother.
4. A woman’s unconscious wish to have a baby to replace her mother.

Therefore, exploring whether a woman has had positive or negative childhood experiences is crucial in explaining her desire to have children. There is research (that is discussed in detail in the next Chapter) suggesting that women who remember their mother as being devoted to raising them have a great desire for having children themselves (Lott, 1973) and women who report coming from families where there was
not much warmth have been found to express little desire to have their own children (Houseknecht, 1978). However, there is also the view that some women who had negative childhood experiences, might want to have their own children in an effort to offer to their children the good childhood they would have liked to have experienced themselves (Lott).

Some ego psychologists view motivation for having children as narcissistic (Michaels, 1988). For example, the child is seen as an extension of the ego and the self. The love one has for oneself is invested in the children (narcissistic motivation). The child might be ‘used’ as an instrument to compensate for a mother’s unfulfilled needs. According to the ego’s aspirations a woman might raise a child to fulfill her own aspirations (Benedek, 1959).

However, Erikson (1968), also an ego psychologist, did not view motivation to motherhood as narcissistic, but viewed it as an expression of generativity. This concept was described as wishing to give something altruistic to the next generation. In his theory of psychosocial development Erikson viewed parenthood as one of the eight stages through which an individual progresses in order to achieve lasting ego identity. Erikson continuously argued for the significance of women being mothers, and emphasised achievement of female identity through motherhood. However, his female model of identity development, seems consistent with the lives of traditional women, and does not take into account the impact of social changes and the increasing opportunities available to women (Scott, 1989).

The psychoanalytic psychobiological approach to parenthood motivation is limited in the sense that it does not take into account cultural and psychological factors that impact upon parenthood motivation (Wyatt, 1967). Wyatt believed that the interaction of both biological and social factors influenced a woman’s motivation to motherhood. He argued that becoming a parent is a matter of choice and deliberation where social learning and personal history affect decisions as well as instincts and biology.

Parker, Tupling and Brown (1979) have confirmed the existence of two factors as key dimensions of parental relationships: ‘Care’ and ‘Overprotection’ on the basis of which they developed the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI). The ‘Care’ dimension assesses the child’s experience of being parented, ranging from highly caring to indifferent/rejecting, and evaluates the expression of affection, emotional
warmth, empathy and closeness as compared to emotional coldness, indifference and neglect (Parker et al., 1979). The ‘overprotection/control’ dimension assesses parent attributes ranging from highly controlling and overprotecting to being actively encouraging of the child’s autonomy and independence. It evaluates themes such as control, overprotection, intrusion, excessive contact, and prevention of independence as opposed to allowance of independence and autonomy” (Parker et al., 1979).

According to Parker (1994) it has long been held that inadequate parenting, especially during the first 16 years of a child’s life, is a risk factor for subsequent adult problems in adult relationships. Parker stated that Bowlby (as seen in the attachment theory in the next chapter) believed that these concepts were important as he suggested that caregivers should be available and responsive (care dimension), while knowing how to intervene and how to avoid extremes of overprotection (overprotection dimension).

In the present study childhood experiences with one’s parents were measured by participants’ recollections of their parents’ parenting behaviour during their first 16 years of their life measured by the parental bonding instrument (PBI). Based on psychodynamic theory suggesting that positive experiences with one’s parents (and in particular with a woman’s mother) might influence motherhood motivation, the current study explored whether one’s recollections of childhood experiences would predict one’s levels of motherhood motivation. For example, it was hypothesised that women’s recollections of positive experiences with their mothers and fathers would predict higher levels of motherhood motivation whereas recollections of controlling and overprotective mothers and fathers would predict lower levels of one’s desire to have children.

2.4 Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is a well-researched area and derives from psychoanalytic theory. Recent studies (eg. Rholes, Simpson, Blakely, Lanigan, & Allen, 1997; Rholes, Simpson, & Blakely, 1995; and Bjorgo, 2003) have suggested a connection between individuals’ attachment styles and their desire to have children. However, there have only been the above three significant studies attempting to link the two. Below a history of adult attachment is given (See Appendix A for a detailed explanation of early attachment theory).
2.4.1 Adult Attachment.

Initially, Hazan and Shaver (1987) used self-reports to extend the investigation of Ainsworth’s childhood attachment styles to adult love relationships. They suggested that adults’ beliefs about relationships with romantic partners parallel the categories found for children. Carnelley, Pietromonaco and Jaffe (1994) suggested that just as infants’ attachment styles reflect their experiences with caregivers, adults’ attachment styles also reflect their early experiences with their caregivers and their different mental representations of these experiences. ‘Secure’ adults described themselves as finding it relatively easy to get along with others and to be comfortable depending on others. ‘Avoidant’ individuals described themselves as being uncomfortable when close to others, and as finding it difficult to know when to trust others. ‘Anxious/ambivalent’ individuals described themselves as finding others reluctant to get as close to them as they would like them to be, and these individuals worried that their partners did not love them enough or would leave them (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Main (1996) also related Ainsworth’s infant attachment styles to adult attachment styles. She devised the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), in which parents were asked questions about their attachment relations in childhood and about the influences of these experiences upon their own development. The AAI is a semi-structured interview, in which trained coders judge individuals’ attachment styles, based on how individuals describe their childhood experiences.

According to Main (1996), analysis of many interviews revealed four attachment styles. People coded as having an ‘autonomous-secure style’ gave clear accounts of their early attachments. These individuals acknowledged positive and negative events, valued attachment relationships, were self-reliant and non-defensive. They were able to respond to and empathise with their own babies, using a range of strategies. Individuals coded with an ‘insecure/dismissing attachment style’ (Ainsworth’s anxious-avoidant style) claimed that they could not remember childhood experiences. They distanced themselves from their emotions of childhood, denied negative experiences and presented as strong and independent, while being dismissive of attachment relationships. These individuals denied or ignored their infants’ negative emotions, were unresponsive to attachment needs, were rejecting or
indifferent and seemed controlling and intrusive. Main argued that this style of parenting caused infants to turn inward and expect rejection.

Individuals with a ‘preoccupied style’ (Ainsworth’s anxious-resistant style) gave many conflicting childhood memories with highly charged emotions and were overwhelmed and confused by early attachments. These individuals were likely to give their own children care in an inconsistent and insensitive manner, at times ignoring them, and other times failing to place appropriate emotional boundaries in their relationships with them. This parenting style resulted in the infants becoming ‘clingy’ and seeing others as unpredictable. Individuals with a ‘disorganised style’ (congruent with Ainsworth’s disorganised style) had not resolved traumatic life experiences, and during discussions of loss or abuse showed lapses in reasoning and discourse, such as talking about a dead person as being alive. These individuals were likely to behave in a manner that frightened their child and were hostile, overin intrusive and contradictory (Main, 1996).

As shown in the following figure, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) refined Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) types of attachment by proposing a four category model, that incorporated two types of internal working models suggested by Bowlby’s (1973) original theory: An internal model of self and an internal model of others, both of which can be negative or positive.

![Attachment Model](image)

*Figure 1. An attachment model incorporating a positive model of self/others, and a negative model of self/others, while indicating four different attachment styles.*
A “positive self-model” indicates a sense of self-worth independent of other people’s approval, whereas a “negative self-model” is associated with anxiety regarding acceptance and rejection from attachment figures. A “positive others model” involves positive expectations of others’ availability and support in close relationships, and a “negative others model” involves avoidance of intimacy and giving no support in relationships.

The four-category model (Bartholomew, 1997; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994) proposed that:

1. ‘Securely attached’ individuals have positive models of self and others. These individuals trust other people and are confident that attachment figures will provide them with support and will be available when necessary. They suggested that these individuals had positive childhood experiences with their primary caregivers, which helped them to become autonomous and be intimate in their relationships.

2. ‘Insecurely attached-preoccupied’ individuals have a negative image of self, but positive image of others. These individuals are preoccupied with their own emotional needs, and their self-image is dependent on other people’s approval. Such people tend to blame themselves for negative childhood experiences, such as lack of support and love from their parents, and tend to seek support from others as they value close relationships.

3. ‘Insecurely attached-fearful’ individuals have negative images of self and others. They lack confidence, have a poor self-image, and do not trust that other people will be supportive and available when needed. Based on negative childhood experiences (e.g., rejection by their parents) they expect other people will reject them and therefore avoid closeness. So these individuals would be less motivated than securely attached and preoccupied individuals to have children as they avoid closeness. Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall (1978) reported that many mothers of avoidant infants who were avoidant themselves appeared to be bored and resentful of the maternal role. They seemed to reject the maternal role as much as they rejected their infants.

4. ‘Insecurely attached-dismissing’ individuals have a positive self-image,
in contrast to the fearful group, and negative image of others. These individuals believe that they do not need other people for support. Unsupportive or rejecting parenting has led these people to learn not to ask for support and to preserve their positive self-image by avoiding rejection.

In the current study it was hypothesised that more dismissing (avoidant) women would be less motivated than preoccupied and fearful individuals to have children as according to Bowlby (1973) persons high in avoidance have a history of inadequate attachment relationships during childhood and adolescence and as a result do not seek intimate relationships (Rholes et al., 1997). According to Rholes et al. (1997) dismissing individuals would be less motivated to have children as they avoid rejection in order to preserve a positive self-image. These individuals might be afraid of experiencing rejection from their children and as they avoid closeness they would report being less motivated to have children than fearfully and preoccupied attached individuals.

It was also hypothesised that more anxious-ambivalent (preoccupied) persons would be more motivated than avoidant individuals to have children as they value closeness (Rholes et al., 1997). Also, preoccupied individuals seek intimacy in relationships and are more inclined to become parents than avoidant individuals (Rholes et al., 1995). Rholes et al. (1997) suggested anxious-ambivalent (preoccupied) persons might seek intimate relationships primarily due to their own needs for security and therefore may not function well in relationships where they have to take care of others (e.g., motherhood).

### 2.5 Feminist Theory

Feminism is an ideology focusing on the social, economic and political equality of the sexes and asserting that each individual is a valuable human being in his or her own right. Feminism can also be described as a movement that seeks to enhance the quality of women’s lives by impacting the norms and mores of a society that are based on male dominance and subsequent female subordination. It is a revolution that includes women and men who wish the world to be equal without boundaries. These boundaries or blockades are better known as discrimination and biases against gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status and economic status. Feminists view the world
as being unequal and they wish to see the gender gap and the idea that men are superior to women decreased or even abolished (http://www.megaessays.com/feminsim).

The goal of feminist work is broader than simply a stronger emphasis on women. The goal is to revise our way of considering history and society so that both men and women are seen to be equally conditioned by the gender constructions of their culture. The idea that gender norms can be changed is central to feminist theory. Feminists believe that gender is learned and performed and it is formed by cultural forces that indicate how people should “be” based on their sex. They believe that gender is an identity shaped through interactions with others and that the expectations of men are very different from the expectations of women (http://www.megaessays.com/feminism).

The word ‘féminisme’, meaning women’s emancipation, was initially used in political debates in late nineteenth century France and the first woman to proclaim herself ‘féministe’ was the French woman, Hubertine Auclert (Hannam, 2007). Earlier in the nineteenth century it was common to refer to the ‘woman movement’, ‘women’s movement’ and ‘women’s rights’ (Hannam).

According to Hannam (2007) the first wave of feminism occurred in the 1860s to 1920s and the second wave in the 1960s to 1970s. However, she argued that the ‘two wave’ model, that is drawn from the experiences of Britain and the United States, provides a chronological framework that can be misleading when applied to other countries. For example, some European countries such as Denmark refer to three waves such that they identify a first wave (1860s-1920s), a second wave (1960s-1970s) and a third wave (1990s-2000s).

According to Hannam (2007) during the first wave of feminism there was a separation between the public and private space and women’s identification with the family and domestic duties was used to justify their exclusion from the public world of work and politics. For feminists of that time it was important to dispute their exclusion from public life and in particular from the exercise of citizenship. They challenged definitions of masculinity and femininity and re-defined what meant to be female. They argued that because women were different to men they needed to have an influence in the world beyond the family and needed equal rights in politics, employment and the law (Hannam).

Hannam (2007) argued that during the second wave feminists focused on
sisterhood and attempted to develop politics based on women’s solidarity with each other at both a national and international level. Two widely acknowledged writers of the second wave feminism are Virginia Woolf (with her first publication “A room of one’s own”) and Simone de Beauvoir (with her publication of “Second sex”) (Milner, 1991).

“Sisterhood’ was the slogan of the Women’s Liberation Movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Separate women’s organizations tried to develop a sense of collective identity and a ‘feminist consciousness’. Some feminists focused on gender issues throughout their lives, while others focused on political interests and at times fought against class exploitation and racism rather than women’s subordination to men (Hannam, 2007).

Russell and Carey (2003) have given the following definitions of feminism, claiming that usually people reply to the question of what is feminism with a mixture of liberal feminism, socialist feminist and radical feminist ideas.

1. **Liberal feminism** is based on the desire for equal rights between men and women. Liberal feminism states that if men and women are equally human then women have as much right to do the things that men do, and to have the things that men have. Many people when asked what feminism is give this answer.

2. **Radical feminism** rejects the idea that men and women are the same and focuses on celebrating women’s differences. Radical feminism is a movement of women taking action to create new possibilities and places for women in society, to celebrate women’s ability and what they have to contribute to society. Men are seen as having more power than women and based on this there has been a push for separateness from men and an honouring of women’s relationships. This movement led to a focus on childbirth, sexuality and women’s bodies with a determination for women to gain control over their bodies.

3. **Social Feminism/Marxism Feminism** was the third key grouping of feminism that could be identified in the 1960s and 1970s. Within social/Marxist feminism the struggle against sexual oppression was seen as part of a broader struggle to transform society and communities. Issues of class, worker’s rights and the need to change ways of living
within western societies and gender based oppression were the main focus

4. **Feminisms from Black/Indigenous/Women of colour.** Liberal and radical feminisms of the 1960s and 1970s were based on a white middle-class perspective. The idea of ‘sisterhood’ was challenged by marginalised women due to their race and class. Also, the notion of “having it all” that some liberal white feminists aspired to was not relevant to women who either were never going to have middle class lifestyle or were not interested in replicating such ways of living. Black and indigenous feminists and women of colour have questioned many of the assumptions of western feminists.

5. **Poststructuralist/postmodernist feminism.** Poststructuralist feminism brought an emphasis on plurality of women’s experience as opposed to the idea that women have an ‘inherent sameness’. These feminists challenge the established categories of sex, class, race/ethnicity, and place an emphasis on the various meanings regarding identity.

6. **French feminists.** A number of French feminist writers are located at an intersection between liberal, socialist and radical feminisms of the 1960s and 1970s, and the postmodernist/poststructuralist feminists that developed through the 1980s and 1990s. These writers challenge the ways in which ‘male experience’ is positioned as primary and describe how ‘female experience’ is rendered as inferior. They believe that the unconscious is produced by some underlying universal structure.

7. **Queer feminism.** Queer feminists are interested in destabilising all fixed categories of identity including notions of female/male or homosexual/heterosexual. Self identity is seen as socially constructed and the constitution of self is seen as something that is fluid. The most visible queer activists are transgender and intersex people.

Today, most women in Western countries view feminism as encouraging women to have more choices and to reach their full potential without being limited by their gender (Russell & Carey, 2003). Their feminism is about women having the freedom to choose. Women of today who support the feminist movement want to be able to better combine their choices (Russell & Carey). For example, they want to
have more support from their partners in sharing domestic responsibilities so that they can continue with their careers, careers in which some of the women have invested much effort and time in establishing.

In the current study feminism and its relation to motherhood motivation was explored as past studies (discussed in the next chapter) have found that women who supported the feminist movement tended to show lower levels of motherhood motivation. For example, women who grew up in the 1970s viewed motherhood as a role in its own right and as a threat to having more choices in their lives (Gerson, 1980). Women who supported feminism were likely to be women who wanted to have more choices in life than just motherhood (Gerson).

However, nowadays women view feminism as encouraging them to have more choices, while aiming to combine roles such as motherhood and having a career. Therefore, in the current study it was hypothesised that higher levels of feminism would not significantly predict lower levels of motherhood motivation as motherhood is not viewed as having the same level of threat to women’s freedom as it used to have in the past.

The present study defined feminism as a woman’s adherence to the views and ideology of feminism that advocate equality of the status of women with men and to the notion that women should be treated equally in comparison to men when it comes to issues such as career opportunities, politics and being valued equally as citizens. In this investigation feminism was operationalised by using the Liberal Feminist and Ideology Scale (Morgan, 1996).

### 2.6 Sex-role Identity Theory

When looking at childbearing it is important to look at sex-role socialisation influences. Social influences underline sex role identity formation. In the 1970s the low rates of childlessness across cultures indicated a socialisation process that made parenthood an essential feature of the adult role (Poston & Trent, 1982). As Russo (1979) argued in the 1970s “the centrality of motherhood to a woman’s identity was characterised as a mandate that was built into the social institutions and individual psyches” (p.7). According to Russo the mandate of motherhood in its traditional form required that women had at least two children, raised them well and although women
could become educated, work and be involved in public life, their primary obligation was to have children.

Girls are socialised from an early age to want and need to become mothers (Bem & Bem, 1976; Hoffman, 1977). Schichman and Cooper (1984) argued that sex roles are culturally acquired and learned through the socialisation process that leads to the formation of male and female sex roles. Boys are socialised towards values of the individualistic, rational and achievement oriented style, whilst girls are socialised towards an expressive, emotional and interpersonal style (Schichman & Cooper).

Sex differences are a function of different socialisation experiences and much of the socialisation experience of girls across cultures has been focused towards motherhood (Hoffman, 1977). Parental influences of how they raise little boys and girls also stem from cultural stereotypes as to how girls and boys ought to be raised (Moss, 1967). From a behavioural point of view children are reinforced for normative behaviour and imitating the same sex parent, while their parents encourage them to engage in approved sex-typed activities (Bandura & Walters, 1963).

In the 1960s and 1970s voluntary childlessness was viewed as a deviant behaviour as Veevers argued in 1972 “Voluntary childlessness constitutes deviant behaviour in that husbands and wives who decline the opportunity to have children violate norms both of behaviour and motivation. The voluntarily childless are stigmatised for their “blemished characters”, and are subjected to many pressures to have children” (p.587).

Today this is not the case as contemporary women have more life choices and there is not such a great stigma attached to voluntary childlessness as there used to be (Michaels, 1988). Today’s women have been raised with less traditional values and sex-role stereotypes, while being exposed to various lifestyle options. Nowadays there is less of a differentiation between male and female sex roles.

Today choices about reproduction and motherhood are not fundamental for a woman’s sense of identity and maturity (Robinson & Stewart, 1989). In the past women learned that it was a societal norm to become a mother, however, nowadays the higher rates of voluntary childlessness indicate a socialisation process that accepts childlessness (Scott, 1989). Reproductive choice is viewed as an important component of feminine identity, but having a child is not necessary to feel feminine (Scott).
Smaller family sizes, longer life expectancy, and higher employment rates for women indicated that motherhood has come to occupy less of a woman’s adult life (Hoffman, 1977). Women are physiologically equipped to have children, and so it is often assumed that becoming a mother is essential for being a woman (Robinson & Stewart, 1989), however, being a mother constitutes an element in a woman’s identity, but is not the only defining element (Simons, 1984).

This investigation hypothesised that a feminine sex role identity would significantly contribute to higher levels of motherhood motivation than a masculine sex role identity would as it is expected that nowadays some women still view motherhood as necessary or partially necessary for a feminine sex role identity. For this investigation sex-role identity was operationalised by using the Australian Sex Role Identity Scale (Antill, Cunningham, Russell, & Thompson, 1981) and is defined as one’s self-concept in terms of socially desirable traits.

According the Australian Sex-Role Identity scale (Antill et al., 1981) traits that have been repeatedly judged to be more characteristic of men (e.g., selfish, aggressive) are referred to as a masculine sex-role identity whereas traits repeatedly judged to be more characteristic of women (e.g., helpful, soft-hearted) are referred to as a feminine sex-role identity.

2.7 Summary

This chapter began by explaining parental investment theory from an evolutionary point of view asserting why mothers tend to devote more energy and substantial time to raising a child than men do. Also, this theory explained why women tend to be more cautious in selecting sexual partners as from an evolutionary point of view they need to feel that their partner will be able to provide resources and support for them and their offspring. Therefore, evolution gives us an understanding as to why parenthood can be a more complex and cautious process of decision making for females than males.

Then, psychoanalytic theory and its development, objects relations theory, highlighted the importance of a woman’s early relationships with her parents and in particular the importance of a woman’s positive identification with her mother in her desire to want to have a child. This theory signified the importance of examining one’s early relationships with one’s parents and how these early childhood
experiences might impact upon one’s motivation to childbearing.

Attachment theory, which derives from the psychoanalytic theory, was then described and explanations of early and adult attachments were given. This perspective was used in this research as only three significant studies (as mentioned earlier) have suggested a connection between one’s attachment style and the desire to have children. The different attachment styles were described to give a basic understanding of how these styles developed.

This chapter concluded with different definitions of feminism, a description of how feminism has developed throughout the centuries and how it is operationalised in the current investigation. Sex role identity theory concluded the chapter by highlighting the importance of how sex-role socialisation influences might impact upon a woman’s motivation to childbearing and how nowadays voluntary childlessness is not looked upon as such a deviant behaviour as it was in the 1960s and 1970s.

The following chapter begins with a literature review of past studies on motherhood motivation that have explored variables such as attachment, childhood experiences, demographics, and socio-cultural factors such as feminism, fertility awareness and sex-role identity.
Chapter 3: Review of Studies

This chapter begins with a review of the three significant studies that have explored the association between attachment styles and motivation to parenthood followed by early studies and then the most recent ones relating to motivation to childbearing.

3.1 Attachment and Motivation to Childbearing

The following three studies have explored attachment style and its relation to motivation to parenthood. First, in a study by Rholes et al. (1995) the relationship between adult attachment styles and individual differences in the desire to have children was examined. Rholes et al. argued that according to attachment theory avoidant persons have working models that offer little hope of achieving closeness and intimacy with significant others, and therefore participants high on avoidance would be less likely to want to have children. On the other hand, they argued that persons high on ambivalence are preoccupied with intimacy and being close to others, and therefore participants high on ambivalence would be more likely to want to have children.

Their investigation included 97 Caucasian first year psychology students who had no children, and approximately 48% of these were women. Measures used were (a) Simpson’s “Adult Attachment Inventory” (Simpson, Rholes, & Phillips 1996) to measure attachment, and (b) Simpson’s “Attitudes towards Parenthood” questionnaire (Rholes et al., 1997). The results showed that:

1. Compared to secure participants, avoidant participants were more uncertain about whether they wanted to have children.
2. However, in contrast to what was expected ambivalence (anxious attachment style) was not found to be related to the strength of the desire to have children.

This study suggested that perhaps more insecure (avoidant and ambivalent) persons might not function well as parents, because they might feel less competent as
parents due to their insecurities, and might be less committed.

Second, Rholes et al. (1997) conducted a later study exploring the relationship between attachment styles and the desire to have children. Three hundred and seventy-nine Caucasian students (18-23 years old) in an introductory psychology course at Texas University participated in this study. There were 155 men and 224 women. All participants were not married, had no children and were asked about their desire to have children. Measures used were:

1. The Adult Attachment questionnaire (17 self-report items about one’s general history of close romantic relationships) to measure attachment style (Simpson et al., 1996).
2. The Desire to have Children and Ability to Relate to Children questionnaire (Rholes et al., 1997).
3. The Parent Acceptance-Rejection questionnaire to measure perceptions of participants’ past relationships with their mothers (Rohner, Sasvedra, & Granu, 1979).

It was hypothesised that (a) avoidant persons would be less interested in having children, and (b) ambivalent/anxious persons would be more inclined to want children. The analysis examined these relationships between avoidant and ambivalent attachment styles and the desire to have children. These relationships were examined through a hierarchical regression analysis in which the desire to have children served as a dependent variable. The first predictor entered into the regression equation was gender, followed by avoidance and ambivalence scores entered simultaneously. The analysis showed a significant effect for avoidance, but not for ambivalence.

Therefore the results showed that more avoidant persons reported less interest in having children, but there was no significant effect found for ambivalence. The findings showed that ambivalent and avoidant persons both of whom had a weaker desire to have children than secure individuals approached parenthood with more negative attitudes.

Rholes et al. (1997) suggested that the perceived difficulties of raising children, combined with these people’s negative expectations, might result in parenthood being a quite frustrating experience for them. They explained that these people’s frustrations might be exacerbated by their initial weak desire to have children or negative working models that might guide their behaviour (Rholes et al.).
Third, in a study by Bjorgo (2003) current attachment styles and attitudes towards motherhood were examined. Questionnaires were administered to 127 Caucasian female college students (18-29 years old), who had no children. They were questioned about their attitudes towards their parents, peers, and motherhood. Measures used were:

1. The Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) to measure quality of relationship to parents and peers (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987).
2. The Traditional Egalitarian Scale (TESR) measured attitudes towards traditional-egalitarian beliefs about gender roles (Larsen, & Long, 1988).
3. The Bell Parenthood Motivation Scale (BPM) was used to measure perceived advantages and disadvantages of having children (Bell, Bancroft, & Philip, 1985).

The results suggested that current level of peer attachment was found to be more predictive of the desire to have children than was current level of parental attachment. Also, it was found that the greater one’s sense of alienation from one’s parents the greater was one’s perception of disadvantages associated with having children. Bjorgo (2003) suggested that this might be due to these individuals having developed a sense of advantages and disadvantages associated with having children, based on their perceptions of their parents’ attitudes, as well as their own childhood experiences.

### 3.1.1 Conclusion

There is a need for more studies exploring attachment and motherhood motivation. The aforementioned studies utilised Caucasian participants in their early 20s who had no children and who were not married. Also, when describing attachment styles there was no indication as to how many avoidant and ambivalent participants were in the studies. Therefore, due to design limitations and lack of generalisation, these findings need to be interpreted with caution.

These studies were conducted between 1995 and 2003 and all participants were in their early 20s. As mentioned in the introduction, nowadays young adults tend to delay childbearing to their late 20s and early 30s. Therefore, the inclusion of only young college students in these studies might have limited the findings and interfered with the possibility of getting a more accurate and broader picture of the reasons for childbearing.
3.2 Early Studies on Parenthood Motivation

This section focuses on early studies on motherhood motivation that were conducted in the 1970s followed by studies conducted in the 1980s. First, in 1973 a significant study was conducted by Lott, wherein the relationships between attitudes towards children, childhood experiences and feminist sympathies were explored with 109 male undergraduates and 133 female undergraduates.

The results showed that women supporting feminism were less motivated to have children. Also, the results found that desire for parenthood reflected a positive quality of one’s childhood. In particular young women who looked forward to parenthood were found to remember more nurturing and devoted mothers and fathers who were caring.

Goodbody (1977) interviewed six voluntarily childless women. These women were white, college educated, with no religious orientation and aged (24-45 years). The study was exploratory and it aimed to gather specific data on married women without children. Interviews were semi-structured, one hour in duration and focused on areas such as career, relationship with spouse, childhood and present relationships with family, and reasons for not wanting to have children.

Four of the women described their childhood in predominantly unhappy terms and their unhappiness was due to factors such as critical parents, constraining parents and family arguments. All women were raised in the parental home with two parents and the women spoke predominantly negatively about their fathers. Mothers were seen as having hard lives either because of burdens put on them by others or by their own personalities. Five of the women maintained some kind of regular contact with their families of origin. Women mentioned not wanting to have children because of: (a) A dislike of children and the maternal role, and (b) Unpleasant memories of their own childhoods. All the women supported feminism.

In 1978 Houseknecht explored whether there were family background factors that contributed either directly or indirectly to people’s decisions not to have children. In-depth interviews were conducted with 54 unmarried female undergraduates. Most of them were Protestants and half of them wanted to remain childless while the other half desired to have children.

The results indicated that women who desired no children were found to be more
inclined to identify with the women’s movement. Women who did not want children were more likely to express having life goals involving career successes and other non-familial roles than females who desired having children.

The above three studies were conducted in the 1970s, so feminism was differently defined when compared with the way it is defined today. For individuals who grew up in the 1970s motherhood was viewed as a role in its own right and as a necessary part of a woman’s identity. So women who supported feminist sympathies in the 1970s were likely to be women who wanted to have more choices in their lives rather than only focusing on the sole role of being a mother.

In the 1980s Gerson conducted several studies investigating motherhood motivation. First, in 1980 she studied the ‘lure’ of motherhood and explored motivations for parenthood in 184 unmarried, childless, USA female college undergraduates (16-30 years). Most of the participants were Catholics. Gerson studied the question of why women did and did not look forward to motherhood. Measures used were:

1. The Parent-Child Relations questionnaire to measure childhood experiences (Siegelman & Roe, 1979)
2. The Bem-Sex Role inventory to measure sex-role identity (Bem, 1974).
3. The Dempewolff Feminism II Scale to measure sympathy for feminism (Dempewolff, 1974).

It was found that the following psychological variables were the primary, unique variables able to account for expressed desire to have children: a) Positive memories of early childhood maternal love, and b) Antifeminist sympathy. Also, significantly correlated with parenthood motivation but not contributing uniquely were memories of father’s loving care, perceptions of maternal success at childrearing and happiness of childhood. Religious affiliation was not related to motherhood motivation.

The results of this study supported the view that adult nurturance grows out of a basic trust developed early in the mother/child dyad. The relationship of memories of good mothering to motivation for motherhood is consistent with Benedek’s (1959) theory on early-positive satisfying relationships, and Erikson’s (1959) view that adult nurturance grows out of a basic trust developed in the mother-child dyad.

Gerson (1980) argued that the non-significant correlation between femininity scores and the judged necessity of childrearing to a female identity raises questions
about the frequently stated speculation that the wish to have children is significant for a woman’s sense of femininity. Also, feminist sympathy was markedly associated with parenthood motivation as the negative correlation with feminism scores accounted for more variance in parenthood motivation than any other major variable.

Gerson (1980) argued that this might be due to motherhood being associated with inferior status for liberated women or these women being more aware of the difficulties in balancing career pursuits and motherhood responsibilities. Overall, this study indicated that psychological variables and early childhood experiences play a significant role in childbearing motivation, and accounted for more variance in parenthood motivation than demographic variables.

Second, Gerson (1984) conducted more analyses with her 1980 study. She examined the relationships between feminism and the intensity of the wish for a child as well as the costs and benefits of having children. The results showed that as reported in her earlier study, when several demographic and psychological variables were regressed onto a global measure of motivation to parenthood, feminism accounted for more unique variance than any other variable.

The results indicated that feminism was negatively related to motivation for motherhood and that the perceived costs of having children rather than perceived benefits accounted for this finding. The findings suggested that women who subjectively identify with the feminist movement are less interested in having children and the costs that feminist women reported in regard to motherhood motivation centered on loss of freedom in relation to self and career.

Gerson (1984) found that those with high feminist sympathies were more likely to be critical of their mothers’ nurturing capacities. Gerson speculated that perhaps feminist women are in a period of intense personal struggle for independence from their mothers and that is expressed through criticism of their mother and her traditional role. However, the findings are limited in generalisability in terms of the sample and are representative of young women in the 1970s who were exposed to feminist ideology (second wave feminism) through their adolescent years (Gerson).

Third, in a further study in 1986, Gerson explored parenthood motivation in both men and women. Participants were 113 women and 75 men ranging in age from 21 to 42. They had no children, had varied educational/occupational levels and 58% were married. Most of them were Catholics and Protestants. This age group was chosen as
the focus of the study because according to the researcher this age group represents “a stage in the life cycle during which childbearing is an important concern (Gerson, 1986, p.51).

Some of the variables examined were feminism and memories of parents’ behaviour. Measures used were:

1. The Dempewolff Feminism II scale (Dempewolff, 1974).
3. The Index of Parenthood Motivation scale (Gerson, 1980).

The results showed that although feminism was not significantly related to parenthood motivation for older subjects, psychological variables accounted for greater variance in female motivation than did demographic variables. Memories of father’s love was significantly related to parenthood motivation. Participants’ age was uniquely related to motivation as younger participants wanted children more than older subjects.

Gerson (1986) suggested that perhaps older subjects showed lack of motivation due to an adjustment to psychosocial reality whereas younger subjects might be more idealistic about parenthood. The other demographic variables were not significantly related to motivation to motherhood. The only variable of unique significance with regard to childhood experiences was that of women’s memories of their father’s loving behaviour which was a reverse finding of her previous study in which memories of mother’s love was significant.

Gerson (1986) explained that this finding was perhaps due to older career oriented women drawing on their father’s loving behaviour as a template for their own desired role as a parent. Also, women in their 20s and 30s are negotiating their final independence from their mothers and memories of father’s versus mother’s love may help them to define the parenthood wish as an independent autonomous motivation (Gerson). However, the findings need to be viewed as exploratory given the study’s limitations as most of the subjects were well educated and middle class compared to the general population.

Fourth, in a study by Gerson, Posner, and Morris (1991) it was examined whether couples with no children and with low, high or mixed motivation in regards to having children, differed in personality characteristics. The mean age was 29 years old, most were Catholics and Protestants, and the majority of the couples were
married. Measures used were:

2. The Dempewolff Feminism II scale (Dempewolff, 1974).
3. The IPM (Gerson, 1980).

The results indicated that perceptions of past parental nurturance were not significantly related to parenthood motivation. One explanation was that the effects of perceptions of childhood experiences were not as strong for these individuals who were in their late and middle 30s as for college students. It could be argued that as individuals become more solid about their identity, they become less dependent on childhood experiences in making life decisions (Gerson et al., 1991).

Support for feminism was not significant for predicting differences in couples’ level of motivation. Gerson et al. (1991) suggested that perhaps for these couples who have reached maturity in the era of feminism the prospective role of parenthood does not create conflict to their work related professional identities. It seems that individuals who have reached maturity in the 1990s might not view prospective parenthood as a threat to their professional identities.

According to Gerson et al. (1991) the concept of the full-time mother is outdated where although it might satisfy some women it is not ideal for others, and today’s women need to be able to be given the opportunity to continue with their careers while sharing raising their children with a husband who views fatherhood to be as vital as having a successful career (Gerson et al.).

In agreement with Gerson et al.’s (1991) study, Scott (1989) found in her study, as discussed below, that support for feminism was not significantly contributing to motherhood motivation. As mentioned by Gerson et al. perhaps for women who have reached maturity in the era of feminism the prospective role of motherhood does not create conflict to their work related professional identities.

In her study Scott (1989) studied 80 women (16-42 years old) who had no children and completed a survey questionnaire pertaining to parenthood motivation. Both psychological and demographic variables were included in the analyses, which measured their contribution to an individual’s motivation to have children. Measures used were:

1. The Life Interpersonal History Enquiry (Schutz, 1978) to measure participants’ attitudes towards their parents when they were 6 years old.
2. The IPM (Gerson, 1980).
3. The Dempewolff Feminism II scale (Dempewolff, 1974).
4. The Australian fifty item Sex-Role scale was used to measure sex role identity (Antill, Cunningham, Rusell, & Thompson, 1981).

The results were that those identified as feminine on the sex role inventory did not report significantly higher levels of parenthood motivation compared with those identified as androgynous, undifferentiated or masculine. Scott (1989) argued that it seems that people who have successfully integrated the male and female components of themselves have a healthy desire to reproduce. There was no negative relationship between attitudes to feminism and motivation for motherhood.

Also, it was found that dissatisfaction with the amount of attention received from the mother significantly contributed to motivation for children. The higher the dissatisfaction, the greater the motivation for children was. Scott argued that perhaps that was due to a tendency to make up for an unhappy childhood by giving one’s children what one had missed.

Also, Hanin’s (1987) study was in agreement with Gerson’s (1986) study in emphasising the importance of fathers’ role. Hanin examined attitudes towards motherhood in married and childless predominantly white women. Subjects were 140 women between the ages of 21 and 49. The relationship between the dependent variable, motivation for parenthood, perceptions of paternal/maternal nurturance in childhood, and sex role ideology were examined. Measures used were:

2. The Dempewolff Feminism Scale II (Dempewolff, 1974).
3. The Parenthood questionnaire to measure motivation to parenthood (Kirchner, Seaver, Straw, & Vegega, 1977).

The results showed that perceptions of paternal and maternal nurturance in childhood were both positively related to motivations to parenthood, but paternal nurturance had a higher correlation with parenthood motivation than maternal nurturance, which is in contrast with the traditional emphasis on mother/daughter relationships. Also, a significant negative correlation was found between level of adherence to feminist ideology and motivation for parenthood.
3.2.1 Conclusion

Most of the aforementioned studies on motivation to childbearing suggested that: a) Women who supported feminist sympathies were less motivated to have children; b) Women who were looking forward to having children recollected more positive nurturing parents; c) A more feminine sex role identity was not found to be significantly related to higher levels of motherhood motivation; and d) Demographic variables such as education, occupation, age, and marital status were not found to be significantly related to one’s motivation to childbearing.

In conclusion, the above findings need to be viewed as exploratory due to the different methodologies used, suggesting that comparisons using these studies should be made with caution. Most of the studies used young childless white participants and research might have yielded more interesting results regarding demographics if studies had used participants from varied age groups, women with/without children and from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

3.3 Recent studies on Parenthood Motivation

This section explores studies on motivation to childbearing that were conducted from 1990s onwards. It was important to separate early and recent studies as over the years changes such as economic, societal, cultural and in values (eg., increased materialism) might have impacted differently on women’s desire to want to have children.

First, studies exploring demographic variables (eg., sex, education, religion, age) and motivation to childbearing are examined, followed by two studies that focused on how intentions impact on one’s motivation to have children, then descriptions of studies exploring the reasons to have children are given, concluding with a recent study that has tried to integrate past research.

The following studies report an exploration of demographic variables, values and parental motivation. First, in a study by Chara and Chara (2003) six variables (sex, postgraduate education, religious orientation, skin color, socioeconomic background and value orientation) were examined for their effects on the desire to have children.

One hundred and eighty seven college students (139 women and 48 men
between 18-25 years old) were asked to respond to statements about values and beliefs. The findings showed that the three factors significantly associated with a desire to have children were: Sex of respondent, religious orientation and value orientation (Chara & Chara, 2003).

Chara and Chara (2003) argued that women reported desiring children more than men and participants who did not want to have children were the ones who were endorsing values such as personal growth, money and pleasure. Women who didn’t want to have children wanted to first have a partner with a degree, which tends to correlate with higher earning capacity and more security (Chara & Chara). Single women who wanted children emphasised the importance of having a committed partner with mutual trust and disclosure in the relationship. Also, the study found that atheists were more likely to not want to have children than Christians who were also more likely to desire three or more children.

Demographic variables and how they are related to parenthood motivation were also explored in a study by Jacobson and Heaton (1991). They examined demographic and attitudinal factors associated with childlessness in the United States. They used demographic data from the National Survey of Families and Households collected in 1987 and 1988 and found that the best predictor of childlessness was a combined variable of age and marital status. The second strongest correlate of childlessness was a variable called reasons or motives for having children. Those with antinatalist reasons were more likely to be childless. Married persons were unlikely to be childless and childlessness increased dramatically with age. For example, one in five women over age 35 who were not married were childless.

Attendance at religious services, number of hours women participants desired to work and high levels of education were also related to childlessness. Occupational status, religious denomination and race were not significantly related to childlessness, nor were measures of gender equality. Heaton, Jacobson and Holland (1999) also found that marital status was the most salient predictor for having children and cohabitors were more likely to have children than single noncohabitors.

Martin (2000) used the combined USA Current Population Surveys (1990-1995) to examine fertility patterns across education, age and period from 1975 to 1995. He examined the association between educational attainment and the timing of births, arguing that working women commonly postpone childbearing as a way to coordinate
their work and domestic role (Martin). He found that conflicts between women’s work and family lives reduce fertility in early adulthood for all women, and especially college educated women. However, he found a compensating increase in family formation rates after age 30 only for women with four-year college degrees.

Martin (2000) stated that educated women’s incomes may facilitate childbearing and child raising. He said that as women’s income increases so do their opportunities to substitute income for time in raising children. Available childcare and a family-friendly workplace may enable socially advantaged women to time their births. However, he argued that it is important not to overstate the positive relationship between education and birth rates after age 30 because among college graduates who postpone childbearing to age 30, almost half remain childless by choice or necessity.

Martin (2000) said that although increasing incomes may help women to combine work with family, it’s still very difficult to add a family to an existing work life. He argued that the results of his study showed that the majority of childless women are not college graduates. He believed that this suggests that women, even if they are committed to having children, have little flexibility for timing their births across their lives. Growing income inequalities may explain this lack of flexibility as access to childcare and family friendly workplaces may disproportionately enable socially advantaged women to time their births optimally (Martin). He believed that social inequality can affect flexibility in birth timing.

Pearce (2002) explored demographics such as religion and age in her study with analyses of the Intergenerational Data Survey of Mothers and Children (18-year survey in Detroit and throughout USA over the years). She examined the influences of early religious exposure on young adults’ dispositions towards childbearing. Mothers and children were interviewed over the years. The data suggested that exposure to Catholicism early in life, and especially having a mother who is Catholic, influences the childbearing dispositions of young men and women.

Young adults whose mothers attended religious services frequently while they were young, regardless of religious affiliation, were more likely to be opposed to voluntary childlessness and to want larger families for themselves. Pearce (2002) suggested that religion is an influential institution in the formation of childbearing preferences.

Wu and MacNeill (2002) examined women who were childless at age 30, hoping
to assess the impact of education and employment on their decision to either become mothers or remain childless. They examined delayed childbearing using the Canadian national data from the General Social Survey conducted in Canada in 1995. A nationally representative sample of 10,749 people aged 15 and over was used. Telephone interviews were used to collect information on family, marital histories, children, family origins, schooling, work and family values. The sample was restricted to women who were childless at 30.

The findings showed there was an interaction between education and employment. There was a positive relationship between level of education and a woman’s chances of childbirth after age 30 only in the absence of employment. When a woman is employed she is less likely to give birth even if she has attained high education.

Wu and MacNeill (2002) argued that the way a woman utilises her education is very important to how childbearing decisions will be affected. If a woman is career oriented and uses her education to progress in her career, then education may decrease her likelihood of childbearing. But if a woman studies because she seeks from the knowledge for its own sake, she might just delay motherhood until she finishes her education. So working is the strongest correlate of older motherhood. The impact of education depends on how it is utilised. Wu and MacNeill argued that if a woman has a high level of education and is also employed she is very likely to become one of the 28% of childless women at age 30 who remain permanently childless.

In a study by Kemkes-Grottenthaler (2003) a survey was conducted amongst 193 female academics (64 mothers, 127 childless, 5 involuntarily childless women) who pursued an academic career. A total of 520 questionnaires were sent to female faculty members of all academic departments at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Germany. The survey assessed demographics such as education, income followed by two separate inquiries concerning women’s attitudes towards children, their job and career satisfaction. Perceived career progress and career satisfaction were assessed on Likert scales.

Kemkes-Grottenthaler (2003) argued that education and income play an important role in determining future reproductive decisions. While education may be linked to higher income it is also associated with a greater perception of disadvantages and financial burdens regarding children. In her study it was indicated that many
women merely postpone motherhood until their career prospects have been fulfilled.

It was found that there was an enormous fear that motherhood causes one’s career to stall. Missing career opportunities was a more significant factor than economic disadvantages relating to motherhood. It was found that career advancement after educational commencement is the main motivator in the postponement of motherhood. This study found that career related aspects such as reputation, occupational advancements, job security and opportunity for advancement are very important to childless women. Also, it was found that childless respondents were more career oriented than those who had already conceived. This was especially evident in the intentionally childless women who showed high career fulfilment and were the ones most satisfied with their chosen profession.

When respondents were asked about future intentions, they found that those who desired children hoped to become mothers by age 38. This study also showed that partner effects on women’s reproductive behaviour need to be taken into account. Men can exert power over the decision to have children in various ways. For example, when the childless women were asked about their reasons for not having children, 8% indicated that their partner opposed parenthood. Also, absence of partner is a limiting factor in fertility as 19% of the respondents said they were without a partner with whom they might have children.

Kemkes-Grottenthaler (2003) argued that the issue of men’s impact on the decision to parent is complex because while men may be in favour of raising a family they may not be in favour of sharing all the responsibilities in raising a family. Mothers still spend more time in raising children. The majority of respondents (61%) said that their partner’s involvement in the family would be crucial for continued career success.

However, Kemkes-Grottenthaler (2003) argued that reality betrays this assumption as her study showed that there was only a single case where the husband was the primary caregiver and in the remaining households the father was merely one of several persons involved in the day to day care of the children.

According to DeVaus (2004), childlessness is considerably higher among professional women with a higher education degree. Women from professional white collar occupations have fewer children than those from lower SES white collar and blue collar occupations. He said that the top 20 percent of female income earners had
significantly fewer children than other women. De Vaus argued that this may be due to the effect of income and education on decisions to have children or that maybe it reflects the impact of the number of children on a woman’s income earning capacity as more children would affect a woman’s ability to work full-time and to have an uninterrupted career.

According to De Vaus (2004) in the Western world women are increasingly having their first child at a later age. The proportion of births to women aged 35 and over has increased from 7% in 1984 to 19 per cent in 2002. In 2002 the main ages at which women had children were between 25-34.

Finally, in a study by Ranson (1998) the relationship between educational and occupational choices and decision about having children, amongst a sample of 289 university-educated women (married, or in defacto with children or no children, single, separated/ divorced, pregnant women) was examined.

Ranson (1998) argued that the research attempted to interpret the finding of a longitudinal study of 185 university graduates suggesting that a higher proportion of women in traditional fields like education and nursing have children sooner, by their thirties, than do graduates of more non-traditional fields (eg., engineering). The method chosen for this research was a semi-structured open ended interview which sought information on women’s work, family history, decisions about work, family and circumstances surrounding the decisions.

Ranson (1998) argued that women who are compelled either by economic necessity or personal aspirations to build a career at work may either delay motherhood or face considerable conflict and struggle as they attempt to synchronise motherhood and a paying job. He said they may also find that some jobs make the balance of paid work and motherhood more manageable than others.

The findings showed that educational and occupational opportunities influenced the timing of transition to motherhood. Women whose career paths were less straightforward and women whose careers took longer to establish were generally the ones to prolong the postponement of motherhood. In some cases, difficulties in establishing a career or the need for further education or career shifts resulted in postponing pregnancies but also in prolonged singlehood which all those involved saw as a further barrier to having children.

It was found that women whose training took them to more male dominated
occupations and workplaces or into workplaces perceived as being unsupportive of families seemed to at least take one of two different paths: either to have children and leave the job or remain in the job and remain childless. Ranson (1998) argued that women who make non-traditional career choices may enjoy the benefits of increased pay and promotion but at the price of prolonged postponement of pregnancy and they experience much more of a struggle to combine paid work and children.

Slosar (2003) also found in her study that women’s education affected a woman’s decision for childbearing as she kept delaying it as she continued to study. Also, Lang (1992) showed in her study that women were concerned with career interference when considering having children. In a study by Gormly, Gormly and Weiss (1987) findings showed that women were found to delay parenthood, more than men, in order to fulfill their career goals. This was consistent with other findings stating that women’s higher educational attainment delays parenthood (e.g., Marini, 1984; Callan, 1982; Houseknecht, 1987).

Following the above studies that primarily focused on demographics and motivation to parenthood, the next two studies by Schoen and colleagues explored intentions of parenthood motivation. Schoen, Kim, Nathanson, Fields and Astone (1997) viewed fertility behaviour as purposive behaviour meaning that it is based on intentions. First, they examined whether persons for whom relationships created by children were important (social capital) would be more likely to intend to have children than persons for whom such relationships are not important. Second, they expected that persons for whom economic costs of children are unimportant would be more likely to intend to have children than persons for whom these costs were important. Third, they expected that women who were not concerned about the impact of childbearing on their careers would be more likely to intend to have children than women who were concerned.

Data came from the 1987-88 National Survey for Families and Households; a sample of 13,008 Afro-Americans, Mexican Americans who were single parents, recently married, cohabitating couples and step families. The study sample consisted of 4,358 respondents who were non-Hispanic, White or Black and answered questions on fertility intentions and were aged 16 to 39.

Results showed that persons for whom relationships with children are important considerations in decisions about childbearing, are more likely to intend to have
children. The ‘social capital’ was found to be a strong determinant of fertility intention. Childless white women for whom careers were important were less likely to intend to have a child. The hypothesis that those believing that economic costs of children are not important considerations, would be more likely to intend to have children was not supported. The number of children a person has is the most important predictor of intention to have a child. Therefore, when exploring parenthood motivation it is preferable to include samples with participants who have and do not have children in order to give a fairer and more balanced account of what motivates one to have children.

In a later study, Schoen, Astone, Kim, Nathanson and Fields (1999) conducted research on whether fertility intentions affect fertility behaviour using a sample of 2,812 people non-Hispanic Whites interviewed by the National Survey of Families and Households. It was found that, even after controlling for traditional demographic variables, fertility intentions were strong and persistent predictors of fertility behaviour. The only demographic variable that had an equivalent direct impact on fertility behaviour was marital status.

Schoen et al. (1999) said that fertility research should focus on the interaction between the individual and society and argued that the importance of intentions emphasises the importance of individual motivations. They argued that if intentions add significant information to motivation to childbearing they need to be included. Therefore, Schoen et al. (1999) highlighted the importance of the individual’s intentions when exploring motivation to having a child or not.

The following studies explored various reasons related to parenthood motivation. In 2001 a study was conducted by Grewal and Urschel with 133 Canadian women (Aboriginal, French Canadian, English speaking), between 18 and 35 years old, who were either mothers, pregnant or trying to conceive and were asked open ended questions (e.g. “why do you want to have children”; “why did you have children”) about why they wanted to have children.

The findings indicated that the decision to have children was an emotional one and there were no differences between ethnicity or between the different stages of parenthood regarding motivation for motherhood. The majority of the women answered that either they liked or loved children or that they didn’t know.

Grewal and Urschel (2001) argued that in the last century the perceived values of
children have shifted from economic to emotional reasons. So their study indicated that motivation to have a child is an emotional decision and depends on whether the individual likes or doesn’t like children. Caron and Wynn’s (1999) study also highlighted the importance of personal and narcissistic reasons as to whether one wants to have a child or not. Caron and Wynn examined the reasons for wanting to have children with a sample of 600 Caucasian childless young unmarried college graduates (men= 295, women= 305) who were willing to be interviewed about their intent to parent between the ages of 21 and 30 years old.

The interview opened by asking them whether they planned to have children and to provide three reasons for their intent to stay childless or become parents. The data were divided in coding categories including narcissistic concerns, societal concerns, generative concerns, attitudes towards children and relationship concerns. Findings showed a strong pronatalist bias as 92% reported wanting to have children supported by narcissistic reasons (eg., personal fulfillment, to give me something to do, I would benefit from it, to have someone to love, to have a little person like me). It was found that most people intend to parent and their reasons for wanting to have children suggest that the majority of the respondents seemed to be concerned about themselves and how parenting would impact upon them (Caron & Wynn, 1992).

Among participants who did not want to have children 4% of their responses were concerned with societal concerns (eg., the world is too crowded; I don’t think it is a good world to bring a child into; the divorce rate is too high). Of the participants who wanted to have children 16% reported generative concerns (eg., I could give a child a lot; I would like to share things I have learned; to contribute a useful citizen to society).

Finally, the data showed that relationship concerns played only a minor role in respondents’ intent to parent. For example, only 8% thought children would enhance their relationship and amongst those who didn’t intend to have children 11% reported that children would interfere with their relationship. The authors argued that their study highlighted the importance of self in the intent to parent or not. Also, the authors suggested that from a perspective of a trend towards more equitable sex-role socialization it was positive and men and women didn’t differ in their thinking about their intention to parent.

In a study by Dion (1995) the significance of the self was also highlighted. Dion (1995) examined 114 women (20-40 years old, most women were married) who were
expecting their first child and completed self-report measures on work related measures, family values, personal well being and parenthood motivation [to measure motherhood motivation, relevant items from the Revised Value of Children (Angeles, 1978) questionnaire were used].

Findings showed that for many women the perceived advantage of delayed motherhood reflected factors associated with personal development. Dion (1995) argued that timing of childbearing was related to family values rather than parenthood motivation. Delayed childbearing was related to a more individualistic view of family functioning (eg., valuing personal development, self-reliance and encouraging children to develop individual interests beyond the family context).

Dion (1995) argued that her findings indicated that women may delay motherhood to establish a secure personal life first. Her study also highlighted the importance of women’s partners’ psychological readiness for parenthood as well as their own and job/career related factors for self and spouse. Most of the women reported that the decision to have a child was a joint decision (Dion). Many of the advantages associated with delayed motherhood were a sense of personal security, emotional stability and self knowledge that enhanced their confidence (Dion).

When looking at the self and motivation to motherhood it is also important to take into account unconscious factors towards a desire to have or not to have a child. Only one study has examined that. For example, the only study that has explored conscious and unconscious conflict toward motherhood via semi-structured interviews and projective cards was conducted by Slosar (2003). The subjective experiences of eight childless women (37 to 42 years old), one married, two in relationships, and five single women, nearing the end of their fecundity, and who had delayed childbearing without choosing to do so, were examined.

The results showed that all participants stated a desire to have children, and expressed the idea that forces out of their control led to their delay. The most noteworthy finding was the influence of childhood object relations on childbearing conflict. For example, all subjects reported a lack of parental nurturance, love and affection, a history of significant childhood trauma/loss and disavowal of maternal identification. All participants appeared to externalise the reasons for their delay to the men they had dated or married.

Also, Slosar (2003) found in her study that misconceptions about fertility
contributed to women’s delay of childbearing. She stated that life expectancy has been extended and people’s perception of what constitutes youth, middle and old age have changed too. There are many misconceptions about fertility, and women need to be offered better education in regards to their fertility (Slosar).

Slosar (2003) argued that in 2001 the American Infertility Association conducted a fertility awareness survey, in which over 12,000 respondents answered 15 questions regarding fertility. Only one woman answered all questions correctly, and only 13% answered correctly the age at which a woman’s fertility begins to decline. There is a lot of confusion around fertility, medical advancement in age related infertility, and an expectation that modern medicine cures infertility (Slosar). More studies are necessary to explore fertility awareness.

Following Slosar’s (2003) study which focused on object relations, the following study by Dodson (1990) will be mentioned in which she investigated the relationship between the adult daughter-mother relationship and motivation for motherhood among 126 married and single women (35-44 years old) without children. Fifty seven percent were single, 95% were Caucasian and most of them were raised Catholics and Protestants.

The results showed, as in Hanin’s (1987) study, that subjects’ identification with their mothers was not significantly related to their motivation for motherhood. Both Dodson’s and Hanin’s study were not in agreement with the psychoanalytic view that there is a strong relationship between a woman’s relationship with her own mother (and a positive identification with her) and her desire to become a mother herself. Also, Dodson (1990) found in her study that current religious observance was associated significantly with higher parenthood motivation.

Also, another study by Lang (1992) explored childhood experiences and other psychological and demographic factors motivating one to have children. Motivation to parenthood was measured by the Parenthood Questionnaire (Kirchner & Seaver, 1977). Participants in the study were 259 females and male undergraduate and graduate students ranging from 17 to 58 years of age.

The results showed for women father’s life attitudes related significantly to positive parenthood motivation. Female respondents who perceived their fathers to have had positive life attitudes had higher positive parenthood motivation scores. For women the most important positive motive in predicting motherhood motivation dealt
with items of an affective nature (e.g., fulfillment through nurturance), and a negative motive in predicting motherhood motivation was a concern that motherhood would interfere with their career. Women with higher negative motivation scores were also likely to be non-religious and women who intended to have children had higher positive parenthood motivation than those who were voluntarily childfree or those who were undecided.

Although the above studies focused more on ‘the self’ and how that impacts on one’s motivation to have children, other studies such as by Willen and Montgomery (1996) have focused on how external factors (e.g., number of children) might impact on one’s desire to have children.

Willen and Montgomery (1996) explored factors relevant for childbearing decisions in Sweden. Questionnaire data were collected from a sample of 500 Swedish married couples (divided into 125 subjects of each age group of women, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years of age) and subjected to factor analysis, analysis of variance and LISREL path analysis.

Their findings showed that a wish for a child was dependent on external aspects of family situation such as number of children and duration of marriage. The wish was strong in young couples with no children and was weak when there were more than two children in the family. The authors concluded that if you are married and young with no children you might feel pressure from the norm that people in this situation should try to have children. Also, contrary to what they expected there was lack of causal links between readiness to have children and values such as love, maturity and caring values.

Willen and Montgomery (1996) suggested that as their study found that the first child decreases life quality the question remains as to why people want a second and third child. They asked whether this was due to social pressures or due to individual decisions considering their own life goals. They suggested studying the decision process leading to having the first, second child and so on and that a longitudinal study should be conducted examining the relationship between characteristics of the decision process and the psychological impact of having children by selecting couples in different phases of family cycle (Willen & Montgomery).

Langridge, Sheeran and Connolly (2005) argued that past research has focused on how demographic variables (e.g., social class, age, ethnicity, marital status) and
psychological factors (e.g., social, psychological values of children to parents and costs/benefits of children) might influence fertility, while other recent research has also focused on incorporating intentions into studies of fertility decision making.

Langridge et al. (2005) tried to integrate past and more recent research. They presented the findings from an investigation of the reasons thought to underlie motivations to have a child. They examined the reasons for parenthood with a survey (n= 897) of a representative sample of white married couples in the UK currently without children and a scale of the reasons for parenthood was developed in order to predict intentions to have children.

In their study they brought together the reasons for wanting a child and identified intentions as the key predictor of fertility behaviour. They argued that to understand parenthood motivation it is vital to understand the reasons driving intentions to have children as well as psychological and demographic factors that impact fertility behaviour.

They explored all these matters in their study and it was found that the variable that best discriminates intenders from non-intenders for both men and women is the belief that children will bring fulfillment. Reasons found to be important in predicting intentions to have a child were the central role of becoming a family and having a child that is biologically related to the couple, and a strong emphasis on values concerned with primary group ties and affection (e.g., give love and make a family).

They also found that men and women thought having a child would be a constraint on their career and their freedom to do the things they enjoy. Both men and women who didn’t want children thought other things were more important in life. Only two demographic variables discriminated between intenders and non-intenders: age and marital status: As age and marital length increased, the intention to have a child decreased.

Langridge et al. (2005) argued that understanding the reasons underpinning intentions for and against having children is important for those wishing to understand parenthood motivation. They argued that their work adds to Schoen et al.’s (1999) work which demonstrated that fertility intentions are strongly related to future fertility behaviour by examining the reasons underpinning intentions for childbearing.
3.3.1 Conclusion

In summary, the above studies that were conducted after 1990 and focused on demographics, values, intentions for having children and parenthood motivation showed that:

1. Religion is related to motherhood motivation as participants with a religious orientation show a higher desire to have a child
2. Women’s partners need to be taken into consideration when exploring motherhood motivation. Women have highlighted the importance of having a “stable committed partner” before considering having children
3. One’s individual motivation is very important when exploring motherhood motivation as motivation to childbearing can be an emotional decision. For example, for some having a child can be due to personal reasons (e.g., having someone to love, to have something to do)
4. Marital status predicts motivation to motherhood as married persons have been found to be more likely to have children
5. Studies have found varied results regarding age as some studies (Lang, 1992; Gerson, 1986) have suggested younger participants are more motivated to have children whereas studies such as by Martin (2000) have found the opposite
6. The impact of a women’s employment on motherhood motivation is well established. Although education might affect a woman’s timing of motherhood, it is more a woman’s career aspirations that might affect her desire to have a child or cause her to delay considering having children due to wanting to establish her career
7. Recent studies showed that exploring one’s relationships with one’s parents is also important when exploring motivation to childbearing. Interestingly current studies have also highlighted the importance of fathers in a woman’s life which is in contrast to the early literature that highlights a woman’s relationship to her mother
8. The number of children a couple has was found to be an important predictor of intention to have children
9. Reasons that seem to be important in predicting intentions to have children
children are: a) The belief that children will bring fulfillment, b) The belief that children are the central role of becoming a family and having a child that is biologically related to the couple, and c) The belief that relationships created by children are important.

As seen above past studies on motivation to motherhood have used different methodologies and have explored different factors that might predict one’s motivation to motherhood. All these studies give a great depth to the topic suggesting that when examining what motivates women to have children it is important to acknowledge and understand the great complexity of this issue.

3.4 Aim of Research

Following the literature review on past studies the current investigation aimed to explore various factors that might predict a woman’s motivation to have children. Due to the complexity of the topic the researcher decided that it would be best to explore this topic by using first a qualitative approach followed by a quantitative approach. It was deemed necessary to first interview women in order to explore the various individual and external factors that might motivate them to have children and to further examine whether women would report some issues not mentioned or reported before. Then the interviews were followed by a second study using a larger sample of women who answered an online survey.

The research aimed to explore how demographics, childhood experiences, attachment style, valuing of feminism, fertility awareness and sex role identity issues might predict motherhood motivation. These factors were chosen based on previous findings and based on the researcher’s interests.

Childhood experiences have also been highlighted in the literature review and especially more recently women’s relationships to their fathers. Fertility awareness has only been explored in one past research study and the researcher was interested in further exploring how one’s fertility awareness might impact upon one’s motivation to have a child. Finally, interest in feminist values and a feminine sex role identity have been extensively explored in past studies and therefore were further examined as a way of conducting further comparisons, especially since cultural and historical changes have caused certain changes in concepts such as feminism and sex role socialisation.
The goal of this study was to increase understanding of the topic of motherhood motivation and to substantially add to past research. The following section presents in detail the first study of this investigation that focuses on the interviews of 15 women followed by the second study with a larger sample.
Chapter 4: First Study

4.1 Aim

The first study was based on the interviews with fifteen women about issues relating to family-of-origin, career/education, fertility awareness, feministic views and sex-role identity issues. Using a qualitative design the aim of the first study was to compile a phenomenological account of participants’ views on motivation to motherhood.

4.2 Methodology

The qualitative approach focuses on open-ended discovery, in this case, in-depth interviews without hypothesis testing. According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994) qualitative research assumes that individuals create their own meanings that determine and explain their behaviour. The qualitative researcher tries to understand those being interviewed, and he/she tries to understand the interviewee for the collection and analysis of data. Qualitative research is descriptive and its objective is to identify and define a situation. It is based on knowledge that is inclusive rather than exclusive (Maykut & Morehouse).

The researcher was interested in hearing participants’ stories about their childhood experiences, and their desire to have children or not, as well as to discuss other issues such as fertility awareness, feminism and sex role identity issues. The purpose of the qualitative approach was to provide rich and detailed information, based on the interviews with 15 women, which would serve as a foundation for building a better understanding of what motivates women to have children.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) suggested that the most critical characteristic of a skillful qualitative interviewer is a deep and genuine curiosity to understand the interviewee’s experience. In support of the qualitative approach, they stated that the human instrument is the only data collection that is multifaceted enough and complex enough to capture the important elements of a human person or activity (p.27).

According to Moustakas (1994) there are five major streams of qualitative
methods:

1. Ethnography, which centres on participant-observation data collection methods.
2. Grounded theory research, which focuses initially on individual experiences with the ultimate aim of constructing an integrated theory.
3. Hermeneutics, which considers history, art, politics and other human enterprises to explain human experiences.
4. Phenomenological research which involves a return to experience to obtain participants’ subjective descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of their experiences. The aim is to determine what an experience means for the person who has had the experience and is able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From individual descriptions general meanings are derived.
5. Heuristic research, which aims to discover the nature and meaning of experiences, but also incorporates the researcher’s self-processes.

This study used the phenomenological approach. The steps involved in empirical phenomenological studies are (Moustakas, 1994, p.15):

1. The problem and question formulation.
2. The researcher decides on the focus of the investigation and formulates questions that will be understandable to others.
3. The data generating situation.
4. The researcher starts with descriptive narratives provided by participants. He/she questions the participant and engages in dialogue, or he/she combines the two.
5. Once the data is collected, it is read and analysed so as to reveal themes, meanings, coherence and clustering. The emphasis is on the study of the configuration of meaning involving both the structure of meaning and how it is created.

In the current study the researcher was interested in gathering data based on women’s reports as to various factors that might have motivated them to have or not have children. Below there is a description of the participants, questions the researcher asked the women and data collection/data analysis procedures.
4.2.1 Participants

Participants in this study were 15 women. Participants were recruited through word of mouth. The inclusion criteria were that participants were:

1. Aged 25-44 years old, as this is an age group that represents a stage in the life cycle during which childbearing is an important concern (Gerson, 1986)
2. Preferably in a current romantic relationship, as generally for most women being in a stable relationship tends to be a prerequisite before considering having children
3. Willing to discuss their experiences
4. Clear that they did not view the interview as a substitute for counselling/therapy.
5. Participants from any cultural/ethnical background, but who could converse comfortably in English
6. Participants with or without children were acceptable. Although many studies in the past have focused on only childless women, the researcher thought it was necessary that both groups were included in order to explore whether having or not having children had an impact on women’s desire to have children.

4.2.2 Interview

Before the interview began the interviewer gave the participants a demographic questionnaire (Appendix B) to complete. To investigate motivation to motherhood a semi-structured in-depth interview was used. The interview questions (Appendix C) were aimed to encourage women to reflect on issues they faced and experienced in regard to motivation to motherhood. The seven sections of the interview protocol were:

1. Motivation to have children.
2. Costs/benefits of having children.
3. Career/education.
4. Family of origin issues/attachment.
5. Feminism.
7. Fertility education.

The researcher prompted participants with open ended questions. To maximise reliability of the qualitative data “what” rather than “why” questions were used in order to elicit narratives and participants’ individual experiences (Patton, 1990). The interviewer was careful to probe for whatever emerged and followed the participants’ lead. When the interviewer felt that an unclear or vague answer had been given, thorough follow up questions were used for clarification or additional information. The interview transcripts were reviewed for accuracy and the interviews were sent to participants for checking. None of the participants returned their interviews with any changes.

The researcher ensured protection of confidentiality through altering the names of the interviewees who were allocated pseudonyms. All documents relating to this research were kept in a secure environment and were used only by the researcher and her supervisor. All digitally taped interviews were erased after they had been transcribed and any identifying information removed.

4.2.3 Data collection procedures

All interested participants were screened over the phone by the researcher to ensure that they met the criteria for the study. If the potential participant met the criteria for the study and was willing to be interviewed she was given information about the study and the interview meeting. Each participant who agreed to participate in the study was sent by mail an initial letter to confirm details of the appointment, to provide written information about the study and an informed consent form (Appendix D).

Following signing of the consent form the participants completed the demographic questionnaire and then the interview began. The interview consisted of a brief rapport building session, and an in-depth semi-structured interview. Interviews lasted approximately 45-60 minutes.

4.2.4 Data analysis

Each interview was initially transcribed and checked for accuracy. NVivo 2.0 (2002), a computer program for analysing qualitative data was used. The analysis
employed horizontalization, which involves systematically clustering issues and topics that emerge from the raw data (Moustakas, 1994). All transcripts from digitally audio-taped interviews were analysed to identify common themes described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) as “units of meaningful data”.

Data were systematically sorted through and recurring themes were grouped into appropriate categories. The data were presented in the form of themes and patterns within individual lives and across individual lives as Lincoln and Guba (1985) have suggested. The data were compared with themes relevant to the study based on literature review. Also, the data were reviewed to identify other themes not previously identified in the literature.

According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994) one of the defining characteristics of qualitative research is an inductive approach to data analysis. Inductive approaches aim to collect data that relate to a focus of inquiry. Hypotheses are not formulated and relevant variables for data collection do not exist. What becomes important for analysis emerges from the data itself due to inductive reasoning.

The qualitative analysis of this paper is based on the constant comparative method, which is one way to conduct an inductive analysis of qualitative data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This method combines inductive category coding with simultaneous comparison of all units of meaning obtained. As each new unit of meaning (theme) is selected for analysis it is compared to all other units of meaning and subsequently categorised or grouped with similar units of meaning. However, if there are no similar categories, a new category or theme is formed. This process provides room for the development of new categories, the change of initial categories and new relationships can be developed (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

To maximise reliability and validity of the qualitative results several methods were employed in this study to ensure the results truly represented participants’ responses:

1. First, the interview transcripts were re-checked for accuracy
2. Second, the participants were given the opportunity to review their interviews and to make any necessary changes.
3. Third, quotations were used in the results of this study to more accurately represent the participants’ responses, and these were checked by the researcher’s supervisor.
4.2.5 Demographics of interviewees

Fifteen women were interviewed and Table 1 shows the demographic data.

Table 1
Demographic Information of Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonyms</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>De-facto</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Postgrad</td>
<td>F/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clare</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>P/T/parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>F/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Postgrad</td>
<td>P/T/parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kath</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>De-facto</td>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>Postgrad</td>
<td>Casual/study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>De-facto</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>Study/parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>Postgrad</td>
<td>F/T parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>FT/ parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liz</td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>Postgrad</td>
<td>FT/parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>De-facto</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tania</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Uniting</td>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naomi</td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Uniting</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>PT/parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michele</td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Postgrad</td>
<td>PT/parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>De-facto</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikki</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Postgrad</td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All participants apart from one reported that they were very satisfied with their partners and their relationship with them. All except two were raised with both
parents. Most participants fell in the 30-34 age range followed by the 25-29 range. Most of the women had at least one child and six women had no children. Most women were married or in a de-facto relationship. Only two women reported having no formal religion. Six women had completed postgraduate education and another six completed undergraduate studies. Eight women worked full-time and four of them worked part-time.

4.3 Results/ Themes

4.3.1 Family-of-Origin Experiences

This study explored themes that emerged when participants were asked questions about family-of-origin experiences and how these experiences might have influenced their motivation to motherhood. According to the literature review there have been studies suggesting that negative childhood experiences affect a woman’s motivation to have children (eg., Goodbody, 1977; Slosar, 2003); and in particular positive memories of early childhood maternal love play a significant role in a woman’s motivation to have children (eg., Gerson, 1980; Gerson, 1984). Also, early theorists such as Benedek (1959) and Erikson (1968) have highlighted the importance of early positive childhood experiences with one’s mother on a woman’s motivation to have children. Gerson (1984) also found that memories of father’s love were quite significantly related to motherhood motivation. Based on these past findings this study aimed to explore interviewees’ memories of family-of-origin-experiences.

1st Theme: Loving family.

There were participants such as Clare, Liz, Tania and Amanda who viewed motherhood in a very positive light. They all expressed that coming from big loving families influenced their desire to have their own children. These women had affectionate families and wanted to offer to their children the experiences they had had. They grew up in family cultures of valuing having children. Liz expressed her feelings about her family when she said:

“We were a big loving family and were always doing family activities. Motherhood was always important in my family. It was mum’s job to be a mother and raise children”.

(Trans. p. 51).
Clare also said that she grew up in a big family and her mother was one of thirteen. She explained that having a big family and having friends who in turn had many children had an impact upon her desire to want to have children. Tania also recalled having experienced a positive family culture and indicated that growing up in a big loving family had a positive impact on her motivation to have children. She said:

“It is one of those cultural things. I grew up expected to marry and have children. I suppose I want to have the family we had. We had a lot of extended family and had many cousins. We all grew up together and loved that. We wanted our children to get to know what we had. We were very close families as growing up and still are now. We see the grandparents every week and the children play with their cousins”. (Trans. p.62).

Amanda also talked about having grown up in a big family with four brothers. She talked about being surrounded by nieces and said that loving her nieces so much made her ‘clucky’. She said: “..I can see them being gorgeous and that definitely makes me wanting to have my own kids”. (Trans. p. 13). Jenny reported that she loved raising her younger siblings and reported that seeing a human being growing up was a very fulfilling experience. She said:

“I enjoyed looking after my youngest sister. Seeing her growing up was great. I feel she is my baby although she is my little sister. People thought she was my baby and would assume I was a very young mother. I loved that feeling”. (Trans. p.56)

2nd Theme: Maternal role model.

As mentioned previously early literature suggests a woman’s relationship with her mother is very important for her desire to have her own children, and having a positive relationship with one’s mother plays an important role in a woman’s motivation to childbearing.

Some participants reported being positively influenced by their mothers. Their close relationship to their mothers seemed to have a great impact upon their motivation to become mothers. For example, Katie, Amanda, Jenny and Sara reported having positive relationships with their mothers. They felt that their mothers were very loving
and overall were positive role models for them. These women looked up to their mothers and wanted to have children in order to replicate the loving relationship they had with their own mothers.

These women expressed no fear or doubts about their ability to raise their own children. They embraced motherhood. Their mothers’ support and love instilled in them a desire and commitment towards raising their own children. For example, Katie said:

"Mum is amazing. I look at her and think how she did such a great job with four children. She brought us up without having a car, a job, no disposable nappies and had no support whatsoever. She influenced me and motivated me to have children. I have seen her how she raised us kids and now we all have close knit families. That’s the love that our parents have generated and given us". (Trans. p.21)

Amanda also reported recalling her mother being very loving towards her and her siblings. She said:

"..My mother gave me a pram and a doll when I was very young and told me that this was my baby. She encourages and supports me in whatever decision I make. I would love to have my own children and hope my children will be as close to me as I am to my mother”. (Trans. p.14).

Jenny said that she could always see that her mother was a loving mother and was very committed towards her family. She said that both her mother and grandmother were positive role models and said that she aspired to become like them. Sara said that seeing her mother having such a positive relationship with her children made her want to have her own children. She said that seeing her mother sharing a great relationship with her and her other siblings makes her admire her mother.

On the other hand some participants such as Anna and Kath reported having some negative experiences with their mothers. For example, they said they felt pressure from their mother to have children and that was a contributing factor towards their lack of motivation to have children. Anna said that her mother pressured her to become a mother and “...her attitude puts me off from having children” (Trans. p.29). Kath said:
“My mother wants to have grandchildren and puts pressure on me. When I used to be single she would ask when are you going to give me grandchildren. She puts me off and the more pressure I have the less likely I am to be motivated”. (Trans. p.29)

3rd Theme: Parents’ relationship.

As mentioned earlier, literature suggests that there are individuals whose childhood experiences have negatively impacted their motivation to parenthood out of fear of replicating their parents’ negative behaviours. Nikki and Anna reported that their parents’ negative relationships drove them to not want to have their own children. For example, Nikki felt her mother was always submissive towards Nikki’s father and reported having a lot of resentment about her parents’ relationship:

“My mother was always submissive and I remember always resenting that and still do. I resented feeling that there was inequality between my parents. That made me determined to focus on my career and be less motivated about wanting children. My father had been absent for most of my life. I think that has made an impact on my relationships with men. I am single now and not ready to have a child”. (Trans. p.78)

Anna witnessed her father being verbally and emotionally abusive towards her mother and felt that her mother missed out in life because of the limits that being a wife and mother put upon her life. She said:

“I have a fear dad does not respect mum and that has affected my faith in marriage and subsequently in having children. There were so many things mum wanted to do that she didn’t end up doing because of being a mum”. (Trans. p.4).

Kath also reported that the relationship between her parents is what drives her decision to not wanting to have a child. She said: “Unless I am in a 100% stable relationship I have no desire to have children”. (Trans. p.28). This indicates how some women might put tremendous pressure upon finding a committed and stable
partner before contemplating having children due to fear of having an unsatisfactory relationship. Witnessing a negative relationship between one’s parents may create many fears and anxieties about one’s potential to have a successful adult relationship.

Amanda said: “I keep thinking if this person will end up like my father” (Trans. p.16). Amanda’s father left the family when Amanda was 13 years old. Although Amanda said that she always thought it was better for her parents that they separated she expressed having been affected by her father because she perceived him as not being a good father. She said that whenever she meets men she does a lot of comparing and as a result she seemed to view men in a negative light due to her childhood experiences. Also, Kath expressed having negative childhood experiences due to an absent father. She said:

“Growing up without a father has affected my motivation. I had a quite rough childhood. My parents split up when I was two and my dad was in the army and moved around a bit. I didn’t see him much while I was growing up. Mum was the strong stable one and was always there for me. I always had a very tense relationship with my father. I am not prepared to bring up a child without his father being actively involved in his/her day by day life. I suffered for not having that and don’t want another child to suffer like that. Growing up without a father has affected my motivation to have a child. I have seen how hard it was for mum to juggle work and house chores and bringing me up”. (Trans. pp.27-28).

From these examples, it seems that women who reported having absent fathers generally seemed to lack faith in men. Growing up without a father was a negative experience for them and was reported to have adversely affected their faith in relationships with men.

4.3.2 Summary.

The findings showed that family-of-origin influences emerged as a strong theme for all women. In particular, most women recalled positive childhood memories and felt that their family-of-origin had a positive influence upon their motivation to have
children. That was in agreement with past research by Lott (1973) that suggested a desire to have children reflects a positive quality of one’s childhood, whereas a lack of desire to have children reflects unpleasant memories of one’s childhood (Goodbody, 1977).

The following subthemes emerged as having a strong influence on a woman’s motivation to childbearing:

1. Coming from a big loving family.
2. Having a positive maternal role model.
3. Negative memories of one’s parents’ relationship.

Women who grew up in big loving families expressed being enthusiastic about having their own children in order to offer to their children the positive experiences they had. They felt having children was a natural progression in their lives. One participant described how fulfilling it was for her to have raised her younger sibling and said that her positive family experiences had a significant positive impact upon her motivation to have her own children. She found raising a child a very rewarding experience and wanted to experience that again. A sense of connection and kinship was evident in such families.

Women who had positive experiences with their mothers and viewed their mother as a positive role model were confident in their ability to have their own children and expressed being committed to having their own children. They wanted to have the same positive relationship with their children as they had experienced with their own mothers.

This finding was in agreement with Gerson’s (1980, 1984) studies which found that positive memories of early childhood maternal love correlate with motivation to motherhood. Also, it is in agreement with Benedek’s (1959) theory of early positive satisfying relationships and Erikson’s (1968) view that adult nurturance grows out of a basic trust developed in the mother-daughter dyad.

Having negative memories of one’s parents’ relationship had a negative impact on women’s motivation to childbearing out of fear of exposing their own children to similar negative environments. Also, growing up with an absent father had a significant impact on women’s motivation to have children due to their lack of trust in men. These women expressed that they would not like to risk the possibility of their own children having to be raised with absent fathers. Their pain of having been raised
with absent fathers was quite evident in their responses. This finding was in line with Gerson’s (1986) and Hanin’s (1986) research, which suggested that memories of positive childhood experiences with one’s father was related significantly to motherhood motivation.

4.3.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of having Children

As mentioned in the introduction researchers Hoffman and Hoffman (1973) did extensive research about the advantages and disadvantages of having children. They stated that when looking at motivation to parenthood it is important to take into account societal changes that influence one’s motivation to parenthood while also looking at factors such as value of children, costs of children and alternatives to the value of children.

One of the questions in the interviews concerned the advantages and disadvantages of having children. Most of the participants were quite positive about having children and this might be due to the fact that most already had at least one child. Interestingly, participants did not identify many costs in having children as seen in the following section.

4th Theme: Advantages of having children.

Most women said that the best advantage of having children is loving them and watching them grow, flourish and achieve their developmental milestones. Participants such as Michele, Jenny, Kate and Naomi said that children “make a family” and in particular Michele said that: “I like children. I have two and I like to see them grow and be with them. They give you a good feeling. They are part of nature”. (Trans. p.69). Naomi also said that she liked the little things children do and liked seeing them achieve their milestones. Katie expressed really liking children as she said:

“I like children. They bring so much happiness and joy into your life. Your whole heart is for them and you live for them every day. It is being part of a loving family and doing things together and looking forward to weekends to spend time as a family. It is a wonderful thing. It is worth...

Liz believed that children make a family and said:

“They make a family. They are great to watch grow up and develop. It is great having someone to love and look after”.

(Tran. p.50).

Some other advantages of having children reported by some women were to increase Australia’s population, giving to another human, believing that children will always keep you company, believing that children are a natural progression in the life path and the threat of missing out due to the biological clock. For example, Kath said:

“In Australia we have fewer and fewer people having children. It would be good to increase the number of children. Also, you have somebody to look after you when you are old. They can also complete a couple”. (Trans. p.26).

Jenny said that having children helped women to learn about themselves and it is more about women learning selflessness and being able to give to another human being. Anna expressed worries about her biological clock and also indicated that she would like to have children for personal reasons such as not getting lonely. She said:

“I think it would be a great experience bringing up another person into this world. Being a mum and being involved in the community would be great. It is lousy being lonely. I would always have company. Also, I want to have children because there is the threat of missing out. I am worried about my biological clock if I leave it too late”. (Trans. p.2).

5th Theme: Disadvantages of having children.

Most women reported that the biggest disadvantage in having children is losing the freedom and spontaneity to do things. They believed that children are hard work and when you have children you have no time. Tania said that she believed when a woman has children she always has to plan and therefore loses her spontaneity. Jenny said:

“Once you have children you lose your freedom and you can’t drop everything and do anything you want. You have
to be ready to give few things up and you have less time and less freedom”. (Trans. p.55).

Women who expressed losing their freedom as the main disadvantage in having children indicated that they were aware that the initial stage of looking after a child is very hard work involving lack of sleep. They acknowledged that when children are young a woman has to commit a lot of her time to them. Also, Amanda said that: “. a woman’s social life might stop, especially if her friends don’t have children” (Trans. p.13). Naomi said:

“You lose your peace and can’t go out without organising baby sitters or taking them with you. They are hard work and make you very busy. I have no time. I can’t do anymore”. (Trans. p.55).

These quotes above indicate that women feel the pressure that when the children are young they have not many choices but to care for their babies. Some other disadvantages of having children were beliefs that our society is not ideal for raising children, financial reasons, and the strain the children can put on a couple’s relationship. For example, Kath said:

“I worry a lot about having children. I worry about not having the financial backing or if we would end up in a war situation in the near future with all the unrest that’s happening worldwide. I would not like to bring a child in an environment like that because it wouldn’t be fair. Society is pretty nasty these days and it’s something I would consider quite hard before making any decisions. I am more inclined towards not having children”. (Trans. p.26).

Katie said:

“Children can put tremendous strain on your relationship and the reason for that is you devote so much time and love for the children that you don’t have any time for each other. You know with work and all kids’ activities, keeping up with normal house chores you find there is no quality time for you and your husband. My husband runs his own business and he is quite busy with that. We might sit down by
8.30-9.00 pm and ask how is your day but by that time we are tired and it is time to go to bed”. (Trans. p.20).

“When I had our third child we had a lot of pressure due to lack of time. Children can put a strain on the relationship due to lack of time. My husband felt ignored and rejected when Dave came along. He wanted more of me but I didn’t have time”. (Trans. p. 23).

Also, Chris reported:

“Having a baby puts a lot of pressure on the relationship. He is 9 weeks old and we have been together for 6 years. When they are infants you get absolutely exhausted and I can’t meet anybody else’s needs. I can only meet the baby’s needs, not even my own and that’s tough. I think it will get easier and it has gotten easier but in the first couple of weeks we had lots of arguments. It’s very stressful. All my energy is being taken from the baby. We have a good marriage but it has put strain on us. It’s tough but getting easier”. (Trans. p.42).

Also, Chris expressed worry about the financial pressures of raising children:

“I worry a lot about being able to financially cope. All of a sudden I have someone being more dependent on me and I suppose financially I feel that I need to be able to ensure that we have a house and can always provide for our children”. (Trans. P.39)

4.3.4 Summary.

The findings indicated that the most commonly expressed advantage of having children was “loving them” and “seeing them achieve their milestones”. This finding was in agreement with Grewal and Urschel’s (2001) study that found that the decision to have a child is an emotional one and the majority of women answered that they liked and loved children. Also, Caron and Wynn (1999) found that most of the participants reported wanting to have children for narcissistic reasons (eg., “to give me something
to do”, “to have someone to love”).

Landgridge et al. (2005) found that reasons to be important in predicting intentions to have a child were the belief that children bring fulfillment and a strong emphasis on values concerned with primary group ties and affection (eg., “give love” and “make a family”). The decision to have children seems to involve one’s desire to have them due to loving and liking children, having something to do and the belief that children bring fulfillment and make a family.

In the current study some other advantages reported by women were having children in order to increase Australia’s population and viewing children as the natural life progression path. The most commonly expressed disadvantage of having children was the belief that children are hard work and would affect a woman’s freedom, spontaneity, and time commitments. Some other reported disadvantages of having children were financial costs, putting strain on a couple’s relationship, living in a less than ideal society for raising children and simply not liking babies.

In line with the current findings, in Caron and Wynn’s (1992) study it was found that among participants who didn’t want to have children some of their responses were concerns with societal problems (eg., “the world is crowded”, “it’s not a good world to bring a child into”). Also, Chara and Chara’s (2003) study, in line with present findings, found that participants who did not want to have children were the ones who were endorsing values such as time and money, arguing that children affect one’s time commitments and money.

This study showed that the most commonly reported advantage of having children was ‘self-centred’ (eg. “loving children”, “watching them grow”), while others were “other-centred (eg. “to increase Australia’s population”, “giving to another human being”). Caron and Wynn (1999) argued that when considering having children the majority of the respondents in their study seemed to be concerned about themselves and how parenting would impact upon them. There is agreement here with Dion’s (1995) study which highlighted the importance of self when considering motherhood and argued that women delay motherhood in order to secure a personal life first.

Finally, the results of this sample suggested some women struggled to think of any disadvantages in having children. This might have been partially due to the fact that most of the women in this sample had already one child and once you have
children it might feel disloyal to talk about disadvantages.

A larger sample of career driven and highly educated women might have yielded different results as women with higher education and who invest more time on their careers might have shown that losing one’s freedom and time might have had a more negative impact on their motivation to have children.

4.3.5 Fertility Awareness

As mentioned in the literature review misconceptions about fertility have been found to have contributed to women’s delay of childbearing (Slosar, 2003). Slosar argued that there are many misconceptions about fertility, and women need to be offered better education in regards to their fertility (Slosar). She said that in 2001 the American Infertility Association conducted a fertility awareness survey and only 13% answered correctly the age at which a woman’s fertility begins to decline.

6th Theme: A woman should have children by 35.

In this study, almost all the women interviewed were aware that the best age to have children is before 35 due to risk of fertility problems after this age. There were four women in their 20s who said that they believed a lack of having committed male partners is an important reason for why many women delay childbearing despite their willingness to have a child before 35.

Anna was aware of fertility issues and reported being worried as to how her body would cope with a pregnancy after 35. She also reported possible health concerns affecting the baby such as ‘Down Syndrome’. As shown below she said:

“Women should have children between 26 and 35 years old. It is nice to think women have experienced being single before they become mothers, but I wouldn’t want to have children late because I would be worried about how my body would cope. There are also more health risks such as Down Syndrome and having a caesarean”. (Trans. pp.6-7).

Clare reported that she enjoyed having children before 35 because she liked to be a young fit mother. She said she liked seeing her in-laws being young grandparents and also expressed “concerns about birth complications” (e.g, blood loss) for older mothers. She reported:
“I wouldn’t have any more children after 35. I like to be a young mother. I see my in-laws they had children in their 20s and I like that. You should have them young and be a young parent. If you are old you might not be fit because age catches up with you. You are probably more tired and you are working more. I know my aunt had children at 40 due to marriage breakdown, but she had a lot of blood loss. Health wise there are more health risks having children when you are older”. (Trans. p.12).

Jenny was aware that for a woman the older she is the harder it is to get her body back to normal. She felt an older woman would have less energy than a younger mother. She said:

“Things have changed over the years. You see older women having children. My ideal age used to be before I was 30. However, now I am thinking I would like to have children before I am 35. However, my mother had my little sister when she was over 40 and have seen that the older you are the harder it is to get your body back to normal. Physically it is harder. I can see with my mother the older you are the less energy you have”. (Trans. p.59).

All women reported having been educated at school about fertility issues and most of them said that their mother taught them a great deal too. Some mentioned that the book “Where do I come from” was given to them by their mother as a way to educate them about reproduction issues. Sara said:

“Primarily my mother taught me about reproduction and I also learnt a bit at high school. My mother was pretty open about these sort of issues. I imagine I would have spoken to friends, but I remember my mother used to buy books such as “Where do I come from”. I will never forget them. I used to talk to my sister about it and laugh”. (Trans. p.38).

The above quotes show that some of these women were aware of how age can affect fertility and cause birth complications. Also, when women such as Jenny and Anna, who had no children, were asked about when would be the right age to have...
children they mentioned that being in a stable relationship was a very important factor before considering having children. For example, Jenny and Anna reported, respectively:

“It’s important for me to be in a stable relationship before considering having children. It’s early days with us, we both like kids but he knows I am not ready. It’s too soon to start talking about having kids. I want to know we are in a stable long-term relationship first. I am aware of issues regarding my biological clock but being in a stable good relationship is very important for me before considering having children”. (Trans. p.58).

“We have been together for four years but we have not lived together so it’s hard to tell how we would get along living together. Although I know by this age I should consider having children due to my biological clock, I am not ready to have them yet because I need to know that we can live together and have a stable and good relationship before we have children”. (Trans. p.4).

The above quotes show that women want to be in a stable and committed relationship before considering having children, despite their awareness of fertility issues. However, nowadays factors such as the rising divorce rates indicate that some people find it difficult to maintain long-term relationships and intact families. Also, fears and anxiety about becoming another statistic of the ‘divorce epidemic’ might make it more difficult for people to achieve successful stable relationships or at least to begin to try.

4.3.6 Summary.

In summary, all the women were aware that ideally a woman should have a child before the age of 35 and that was in line with Kemkes-Grottenthaler’s (2003) survey which found that women who desire to have children hope to become mothers at the latest by age 38. Based on this sample, it appears that women are happy to have
children, given the right circumstances such as having a stable relationship and a committed partner. For women being in a stable committed relationship seems to be a prerequisite for having children.

Women such as Jenny and Anna, who were not married, indicated that it is important to be in a stable long-term relationship before considering having any children. It was clear that women need to feel secure and that they will have a partner to provide for their children. This finding is in agreement with Chara and Chara’s (2003) study which showed that women who wanted to have children emphasised the importance of having a committed partner.

Also, Kemkes-Grottenthaler (2003) found that absence of a partner is a limiting factor in fertility as 19% of the childless respondents in their study said they were without a partner. Therefore, the issue of whether women are in stable and committed relationships needs to be taken into account when looking at motherhood motivation.

4.3.7 Career & education.

Previous studies (eg Slosar, 2003; Lang, 1992; Marini, 1984; Dodson, 1990) have consistently found that education attainment has a delaying effect on entry to motherhood, and therefore participants were asked questions about their career and education.

7th Theme: Flexible working hours.

Four women in this sample had jobs in nursing and academia and reported that the flexibility of their careers assisted them with motherhood. These women stated that when women are offered flexible hours and maternity leave they are happy to become mothers as there is no threat of losing their jobs. For example, Amanda said that being a nurse allows her to work flexible hours and she knows that her job won’t interfere with motherhood. She expressed looking forward to having children. Katie also said:

“I am a nurse. Nursing is a great job because you can always go back and I have done that. It is a very flexible job and supported my decision to have children because I knew I could always go back to work casually”. (Trans. p.20).

Sara, a lecturer, also talked about the flexibility of her job and said that working
at a University has great maternity benefits and the job helped her with motherhood. Liz, also a University lecturer, said:

“It was an easy decision to have children because I was lecturing at a University at the time and the maternity benefits were great. So it made it easy to get pregnant, to have enough time with the children and be able to go back to work. The career if anything supported me. The hours were so flexible and I could also take the little one with me. It was very flexible. It was 12 years ago and at the time 3 months maternity leave was not heard of”.” (Trans. p.50).

Based on the interviews with the participants of this study it was obvious that women seemed to be willing to have children if they had the necessary support such as flexibility of working hours and maternal benefits.

8th Theme: Career and education.

There were some women in the sample who said that having a career was not very important to them and this had no effect upon their decision to become mothers. They reported that they happily embraced full-time motherhood. These women didn’t experience any conflict between motherhood and their career and education. Tania said:

“I was happy to be a full-time mother. I did a BA at RMIT and hated studying. I couldn’t think of going back to studying or work. It is not for me”. (Trans. p.61).

Also, Clare said that she was happy raising her children and didn’t want to leave her children while they were young. She expressed being quite relaxed about the possibility of going back to study when her children were older. Naomi also was not too focused on her job as she said:

“At the time I had my first child I was working as a bank teller and was very happy to stop full-time work and be a full-time mother”. (Trans. p. 65).

These women did not place any significant emphasis on maintaining a career. Women such as Clare and Naomi had only secondary education and were not career driven. Tania had a BA and reported that she ‘hated studying’ and was happy to be a full-time mother. It appears that the less educated and career driven a woman is the
less conflict she will experience about becoming a full-time mother. Less educated women might have fewer career choices and might not get the same intellectual stimulation from their jobs as more educated and career driven women would do. Therefore, for less educated and less ambitious women there might not be a significant loss associated with having children and leaving the workforce.

On the other hand, as seen below, women such as Michele and Chris, who were highly educated and wanted to continue with their careers found a way to combine both motherhood and a career. These women did not allow their careers to interfere with motherhood. As shown below Michele wanted to study Law when she was having children and managed to have support when raising children. She said:

“I finished my degree in Law while I was married and looking after my children. If you have determination you can do both. Of course it is important you have support too. I had my mother’s help and back in my home country, Sri Lanka, we hire people to help us with the home duties. I never let my career affect my motivation to have children. I went back to work when they were 5 and 6. I had my first child when I was 23”. (Trans. p.69).

Liz, as seen below, had almost finished her postgraduate studies by the time she had her oldest child. She reported that when children are older it is easy for women to go back to studying. She said:

“I have a Masters in Applied Science and am doing my doctorate. When I did my Masters I had already done three years before I had my oldest child. I then spent six months to finish it once I had my children. There was no influence on my motivation. Now that my children are older I am doing my doctorate”. (Trans. pp.50-51).

The above quotes indicated that Michele and Liz managed to successfully combine both motherhood and education and careers, due to factors such as right timing, having the determination to combine both and also having the support from other family members.

There were also some women in this sample (Anna, Kath, Nikki) who reported that their education and career had a negative impact upon their motivation to have
children. For example, Anna had a career change and went back to studying. She expressed feeling that she had invested too much time in her studying and felt that she was not ready to have children before she was able to establish her career. She said:

“Education and career affected my motivation to have children quite a lot. I returned to University because I was unhappy in my previous job. The fact that it has taken me so long to get somewhere affects my motivation to have children. I am finally in a good working environment and feel happy. It was a real battle to get where I am today and I am 31. It is like I haven’t had enough time to enjoy that yet. I need to be in a full-time secure job with maternity leave before I consider having children”. (Trans. p.2).

Also, Nikki said that she loved her job and didn’t feel ready to have children. She said that she was ambitious, wanted to succeed in her job and wanted to further her career and education. She wasn’t ready to have children. Kath, being a University student, said:

“I am a University student at present doing my honours in linguistics. I am not ready to have children. I want to further my studies. I am focused on my achievements and myself. I am not ready to share that with anyone. I want to establish myself permanently in a job first before I consider having children. I just want to have financial stability because that will enable me to do a lot of other things. The decision to have children would be based upon having a stable job”. (Trans. p.27).

Anna, Kath and Nikki had postgraduate education. The above quotations show that Anna felt she had invested a lot of time in her education and career, especially because she went through a career change. She wanted to establish herself professionally before she was ready to have children. Also, Kath and Nikki were quite ambitious and wanted also to first establish themselves in their careers before considering having children. These data show that some women with postgraduate education can seem to experience more conflict about giving up their careers to become mothers. Educated women have more to lose and sacrifice than women who
have not invested a great deal of time in their careers.

An interesting observation is that Kath and Nikki who were both ambitious women and who prioritised their careers, were also women who grew up with absent fathers and had no male role models when growing up. It could be argued that growing up with absent fathers resulted in them focusing more on their careers and these women might have been compensating for a lack of male role model in their family-of-origin by pursuing more ‘masculine’ sex roles.

### 4.3.8 Summary.

In summary, women who were in jobs such as nursing and lecturing that offered flexible hours and good maternity leave benefits were motivated to have children. This was in agreement with Ranson (1998) who argued that some jobs make the balance of paid work and motherhood more manageable than others.

This finding suggests that women are willing to have children if they have the necessary support. Also, two women said that they were able to combine both having children and having a career suggesting that it is possible to combine both motherhood and a career as long as women have available family supports and are determined and confident to combine both roles.

Martin (2000) argued that educated women’s incomes might facilitate childbearing and child rearing. He believed that as women’s incomes increase so do their opportunities to substitute income for time in raising children. Therefore, his view is in agreement with current findings that suggest if women perceive they have the necessary supports regarding child rearing they are willing to have children. Also, Dodson (1990) agreed that perhaps women with higher education are established in careers that might offer them more flexibility and provide them with financial security for motherhood.

The interviews also showed that some women with postgraduate education seem to experience conflict about giving up their careers to become mothers. Educated women have more to lose and sacrifice than women who have not invested a great deal of time in their careers. Women with postgraduate education seemed to experience more conflict about giving up their careers to become mothers.

This was in agreement with studies such as by Kemkes-Grottenthaler (2003), Slosar (2004), Lang (1992) and Ranson (1998) which found that education plays an
important role in motherhood motivation as women postpone motherhood until their career prospects have been fulfilled.

On the other hand, the less educated/ambitious women of the present study were happy to be full-time mothers without placing much emphasis on having a career, a good job and education. For less educated and less ambitious women it can be argued that there is not a significant loss associated with having children and leaving a career behind.

For Wu and MacNeill (2002) the way a woman utilises her education has an important effect on childbearing decisions. If a woman is career oriented and uses her education to progress in her career, then education may decrease her likelihood of childbearing. But if a woman studies for personal development she may just delay motherhood until she finishes her education. According to Wu and MacNeil, work is the strongest factor of older motherhood and the impact of education depends on how it is utilised.

4.3.9 Feminism.

Past studies (e.g., Gerson, 1980, 1984; Goodbody, 1977; Houseknecht, 1978; Scott, 1989) have found that women with feminist sympathies show lower levels of motherhood motivation. However, this might be due to the fact that most of these studies were conducted before the 1990s, where the definition of feminism was quite different from how it is being defined today. For example, in a study by Gerson et al. (1991) feminism was found not to be a significant factor for predicting differences in parenthood motivation. They suggested that people, who have reached maturity in the 1990s, the era of active feminism, might not view parenthood as a threat to their professional identities. They stated that the concept of the full-time mother is outdated and nowadays both men and women need to be supported equally to both share the duties of raising children.

The present study measured feminism by asking women questions about their views on equality between the sexes and how they felt women are treated in comparison to men. Most of the women seemed to believe that when it comes to equality between the sexes things are gradually improving. Their view on equality between the sexes did not seem to have an effect upon their motivation to motherhood. For example, Clare expressed having been sexually discriminated against in the
workforce but indicated that having children is the best thing a woman can do. She said:

“In the workforce there are not many women bosses. Even when you go for interviews, there are certain times that they ask you if you are married and whether you are going to have children. I don’t know if they can ask that but they have asked it. They think that you will leave in a year and get the benefits. That’s why they put you in low category jobs where they don’t care. However, it never affected me. There is always something better out there”. (Trans. p.11).

Also, Kath expressed having experienced inequality in the workforce

“I encountered inequality at work recently. My boss, a 65 year old male applauded the gentleman I was working with on a project and said nothing to me and it was entirely what I had been doing. That guy got more responsibility given to him and more work. Women do some things better and men do some things better. We need to respect differences and abilities”. (Trans. pp.30-31).

All participants, except Anna, reported that whether they felt there was equality between the sexes or not there was no effect on their motivation to motherhood. However, Anna reported that inequality made her angry and resulted in her wanting to hold off motherhood. She said:

“In male dominating fields males have more opportunities. It affects your confidence, makes you angry and results in you wanting to hold off motherhood. I think “I will prove you otherwise, I will climb the corporate ladder. It makes you anti-male because you want to prove you can do what they do”. (Trans. pp.5-6).

Finally, Chris and Liz felt that society devalues motherhood. They believed that there needs to be a shift in how society values and views motherhood. Chris said that society supports people going to work. She said:

“Society doesn’t support motherhood but supports people having a career. I am realistic and know I won’t earn as
much as my husband”. (Trans. p.43).

Liz also expressed feeling that mothers are devalued by both men and women. However, she also said that society’s view on motherhood didn’t affect her. She reported:

“I think mothers will always be devalued. There is a whole stigma about being a mother. I chose to be at home with my children until their preschool years and the fact that I had a degree people would ask why would you stay at home with the kids. However, it didn’t influence my motivation”. (Trans. p.52).

Amanda acknowledged that as far as laws go women are treated better and when it comes to family issues such as divorce and childcare, men are treated more harshly. She said:

“We are treated better as far as the family laws go. Men get it harder, but in the workforce they generally get paid more. However, I think more and more we are treated more equally”. (Trans. p.16).

Participants such as Katie said that they believed women are becoming more recognised for their career orientation and thought that there was equality now. Also, Tania thought that things are getting better and that there are more work places that treat employees of both genders equitably. Tania felt very positive about future generations having more equality in the workforce. The quotations below show what these women said:

Katie said:

“When it comes to work and career these days women are becoming more recognised as career oriented women and mothers. I think there is equality now. In families women are still seen as being the primary care takers because their husbands work full-time but I see with my husband we work as a team”. (Trans. pp.23-24).

Tania said:

“Things are improving. Most workplaces are pretty equal now. There has been the stigma still as to whether a woman
will get married and have children, but things are getting better. My view on equality between the sexes has not affected my motivation to have children. For my children there will be even be more equality” (Trans. p.53).

4.3.10 Summary.

In summary, whether women believed there was equality between the sexes or not they reported that such views did not have an impact on their motivation to have children. Only one woman reported that inequality between the sexes made her angry and resulted in her wanting to hold off motherhood. This particular woman had gone back to studying due to a career change and felt she had invested a great deal of time establishing her career.

Also, participants like Liz and Chris felt that motherhood is not valued by society as much as having a career. On a positive note, participants such as Naomi, Katie, Tania and Amanda acknowledged that things are getting better when it comes to equality between the sexes.

These findings are not in agreement with findings in the 1970s and 1980s (eg., Goodbody, 1977, Houseknecht, 1978, Gerson, 1980) that suggested that women who adhere to feminist sympathies tend to be less motivated to have children. However, this might be due to feminism having been defined differently in the current and past studies. Also, motherhood in the 1970s was viewed as limiting women’s choices. However, nowadays women define feminism as having many choices while trying to achieve roles such as the combination of a successful career plus motherhood.

In agreement with present findings were later studies by Gerson (1986), Gerson et al. (1991) and Scott (1989) that showed no significant relationship between feminism and motherhood motivation. Perhaps for individuals who have reached maturity in the era of feminism the prospective role of motherhood does not create conflict and does not threaten their identities.

4.3.11 Sex-role Identity Issues

In the present study women expressed varied opinions as to whether they believed that men are the primary breadwinners and women the primary caregivers. Their views on sex-role identity issues did not seem to have an impact on their
motivation to have children. It can be argued that in recent times women have a more integrated sex role identity and therefore there is no longer a clear relationship between a feminine sex role identity and motivation to motherhood.

9th Theme: Sex-role identity issues.

Naomi and Clare supported the view that men are the primary breadwinners and women the primary caregivers. They both expressed being happy to be full-time mothers. Naomi said that it was her choice to stay at home and she was happy to be actively involved in her children’s lives. She said:

"Being a full-time mother is natural I support it. I don’t want to work full-time. I don’t know how women do it. There needs to be someone at home full-time. I wanted to stay home and help the children with their school and activities. I help at school a lot". (Trans. p.67).

Also, Clare said that she was very distressed when having to separate from her young children to go to work. Clare expressed really wanting to stay home full-time. She said:

"I want to be home with my children. My ex was very controlling and sent me to work. I was traumatized and my child was distressed crying every day. I couldn’t do it. I wasn’t coping and the child was distressed. In the end I said I would stay home full-time. I guess everyone thinks the man is the breadwinner and I suppose it is because they can’t have kids full-time because they have better jobs and higher salaries”. (Trans. p.12).

Amanda and Chris expressed a belief in women’s natural nurturing instinct. Amanda said that she felt women have the natural nurturing instinct, while men are the full-time breadwinners because they are not as able to nurture as well as women. Chris felt that men can do the nurturing too but perhaps not as well as women, but not to the point that it would be detrimental to her child’s wellbeing. She said:

"I support that women are the natural nurturers. You can’t deny genetics of being a mother and being nurturing. There is a genetic make up for women to be more nurturing but I don’t deny that men can do that role as well. When I
go back to work my husband will be the primary caregiver. I know he can do it. I know he cannot breastfeed and won’t give the same nurturing I can give, but I don’t think that’s necessary a bad thing. It won’t jeopardize our child’s development”. (Trans. pp.43-44).

Therefore, women such as Chris believe men and women can swap roles with the right support despite believing that from nature’s point of view women are better nurturers. However, in contrast to the above views, Jenny, Tania and Sara stated that they didn’t agree with the view that women are the primary caregivers and men the primary breadwinners. Jenny believed that although women need to stay with the children during the initial stage of breastfeeding, men can then stay home and look after children. She reported:

“I don’t agree with the view that women are the primary caregivers and men the primary breadwinners. Men can stay at home and look after the kids apart from the initial stage when the mother has to breastfeed. There are some things you can’t help. Men can’t breastfeed. However, men can stay home and look after the kids. I know a couple who has decided that once they have kids the wife will work and the man is happy to stay home. It is hard for me to say because I don’t have kids but I would like to think my partner would be flexible about it”. (Trans. p.59).

Tania believed that what was important was that there was one parent full-time at home and didn’t matter if it was the man or the woman. She said:

“As long as there is one parent home full-time to provide the kids with stability then that’s fine. I don’t mind if it is the man or the woman. The important thing is to have one parent full-time at home. In the past there used to be expected sex roles such as girls play with dolls and boys play footy, however, nowadays roles are not so defined”. (Trans. pp.63-64).

Sara believed that the person who makes more money needs to be the full-time working parent and didn’t matter if that was the male or female. She said:
“I am earning more and my career takes precedence. Before having kids we agreed that whoever was earning more would stay in the field. However, we both work full-time as it happened. But if it came to it he will have to work less but he wouldn’t be able to cope with them. Maybe men don’t try hard enough. Maybe it is natural for women. Maybe women are always there and men don’t have to try enough”. (Trans. pp.37-38).

The above quotations indicated that these three women expressed more radical and flexible views about who needs to be a stay at home parent. These women felt that both men and women could be the full-time carers depending upon their circumstances. There were also some participants such as Michele, Kath and Nikki who expressed some confusion regarding their views as to who the breadwinner should be.

Michele who recently came to Australia from Sri Lanka expressed fears about losing her independence if she decided to become a full-time mother. She felt that being a full-time mother in Sri Lanka resulted in some men taking control and abusing their wives. However, it is important to mention that Michele had recently separated from her husband in Sri Lanka and due to her current circumstances her view about Sri Lankan men might have been quite negative. She said:

“I think the mother needs to be with the kids if she can until they are 10. However, if women in Sri Lanka are not independent men control and abuse them. I would like to stay home in some ways but if you stay home you lose your independence and men can take advantage of you. I am in conflict about it”. (Trans. p.72).

Kath and Nikki said that they thought that it is always good for the child to have his or her mother full-time at home, especially during his or her first years. Kath said that she felt men can bring home more money and that’s why it might be more convenient for the woman to stay at home, but she also expressed being torn on this issue because she said she was competitive and didn’t want to financially rely on the man. She said:

“It is important for the mother to be at home the first 18
months of the child’s life. Also, men have more job opportunities and can bring a higher income. It would be easier for one partner to hold a full-time job than two parents having part-time jobs. From a financial perspective that makes sense, but am kind of torn on that point. I want to bring the same income. I am a bit competitive and don’t want to rely on him”. (Trans. p.31).

Nikki also expressed the belief that it is better to have the mother full-time at home for the first two years of the child’s life, but said she was in conflict about it because it was important for her to be financial independent. She said:

“It is important to stay home with the child for the first two years but I want to maintain my independence and not rely on him. It is a difficult issue because from a financial point of view maybe the man would earn a higher income and it is better for him to work full-time but I enjoy my job and would love to work too. It is a hard one. Maybe you can have two parents working part-time jobs if they earn good money”. (Trans. p.80).

As can be seen from these women, they have expressed concerns regarding losing their financial independence if they decided to be full-time mothers. Also, Kath and Nikki thought that men would probably earn a higher income and from a financial point of view it would be more practical to have the man being the primary breadwinner. However, from a personal point of view they both expressed wanting to stay actively involved in their prospective careers. Finally, for Anna the issue of whether the man or the woman should be the primary caregiver was a matter of choice. She expressed the belief that it is up to the couple as to what they decide to do and highlighted the importance of women having options. She reported:

“It all depends. If a man and woman want that, then it is their choice”. (Trans. p.6).

4.3.12 Summary.

Sex role identity issues did not seem to have an important influence on a woman’s motivation to motherhood. Some women in the present study expressed
believing that men are the primary breadwinners, whereas other women did not agree with that view. The present results were in agreement with Gerson’s (1980) and Scott’s (1986) studies which showed that feminine sex role identity was not significantly related to motherhood motivation.

Gerson (1980) argued that these findings question the old held belief or assumption that motherhood is necessary to a woman’s identity. Also, Caron and Wynn (1999) argued that their study highlighted a trend towards more equitable sex-role socialisation as both men and women in their study did not differ in their thinking about their intention to parent.

The interviews did not show the historical transition that has occurred when it comes to sex role identity issues. For example, over the years there has been a transition from traditional to liberal sex role identity roles. However, nowadays there seems to be less of a distinction between male and female sex roles. Based on these data it appears that that some women are happy to take up the role of the primary breadwinner or primary caregiver as long as they feel it’s the best choice for their family. Also, overall women accept that for the first two years of their child’s life they need to be able to stay home to look after and breastfeed their child.

4.4 Discussion

Most of the women interviewed were married or in de-facto relationships and all participants apart from one reported that they were very satisfied with their partners. Most participants fell in the 30-34 age range followed by the 25-29 range and most of the women had at least one child. Only three participants reported being non-religious and the majority of women had undergraduate and/or postgraduate education and most of them worked (eight full-time and four part-time).

Most of the women were in committed relationships and it would have been interesting to have interviewed more women who had no partners in order to compare motivation to motherhood between women with and without partners.

Jacobson and Heaton (1991) argued that the best predictor for childlessness was a combined variable of age and marital status. They argued that childlessness increased with age (over 35) and married persons were unlikely to be childless. This is in line with the present demographic variables which showed that most women were married or in defacto relationships, between 30-34 years old, and had at least one
Past findings (e.g., Chara & Chara, 2003; Pearce, 2002; Lang, 1992), that are based on USA data, have shown that religious participants tend to show a higher motivation to have children than participants who don’t follow a religion. In the current investigation all the Australian interviewees, apart from three, were religious and all showed a positive motivation to childbearing.

The interviews explored themes that emerged when participants were asked questions about: a) Family of origin experiences, b) Advantages and disadvantages of having children, c) Fertility awareness, d) Career and education, e) Feminism and f) Sex role identity issues. The results showed the following:

First, when exploring family-of-origin experiences it was found that most women recalled positive childhood memories and felt that their family-of-origin had a positive influence upon their motivation to have children and that was in agreement with past research (Lott, 1973; Goodbody, 1977).

In particular, women who had positive experiences with their mothers and viewed their mother as a positive role model were confident in their ability to have their own children and expressed being committed to having their own children. That was in agreement with past research (e.g., Gerson, 1980, 1984; Benedek, 1959; Erikson, 1968).

Also, growing up with an absent father had a significant impact on women’s motivation to have children due to their lack of trust in men. These women expressed that they would not like to risk the possibility of their own children having to be raised with absent fathers. This finding was also in line with past research (e.g., Gerson, 1986; Hanin, 1986).

Second, when exploring advantages and disadvantages of having children it was found that the most commonly expressed advantage of having children was “loving them” and “seeing them achieve their milestones”, which was in agreement with past research (e.g., Grewal & Urschel, 2001; Caron and Wynn, 1999) suggesting that the decision to have a child is an emotional decision that involves its impact upon one’s self.

The most commonly expressed disadvantage of having children was the belief that children are hard work and would affect a woman’s freedom, spontaneity, and time commitments, which was in agreement with Chara and Chara (2003) who found
that participants who did not want to have children were the ones who were endorsing values such as time and money.

Third, when exploring fertility awareness all the women were aware that ideally a woman should have a child before the age of 35 and that was in line with Kemkes-Grottenthaler’s (2003) survey which found that women who desire to have children hope to become mothers the latest by age 38.

This sample indicated that women are happy to have children, given the right circumstances such as having a stable relationship and a committed partner. For women, being in a stable committed relationship seems to be a prerequisite for having children. This finding was in agreement with past studies (eg., Chara and Chara, 2003; Kemkes-Grottenthaler, 2003) which have emphasised importance of male partners when looking at motherhood motivation.

Fourth, education and career issues were examined. The current sample showed that women who were in jobs such as nursing and lecturing that offered flexible hours and good maternity leave benefits were motivated to have children. Women with postgraduate education seemed to experience more conflict about giving up their careers to become mothers. That was in agreement with studies such as by Kemkes-Grottenthaler (2003), Slosar (2004), Lang (1992) and Ranson (1998), that found that education plays an important role in motherhood motivation as women merely postpone motherhood until their career prospects have been fulfilled.

Wu and MacNeill (2002) argued that there is an interaction between career and education on motherhood. For example, they said that if a woman is career oriented and uses her education to progress in her career, then education may decrease her likelihood of childbearing. But if a woman studies for her personal development she may just delay motherhood until she finishes her education. According to Wu and MacNeil, work is the strongest factor of older motherhood and the impact of education depends on how it is utilised.

Fifth, feminism issues were explored and the results showed that whether women believed there was equality between the sexes or not, they reported that such views did not have an impact on their motivation to have children. These findings are not in agreement with findings in the 1970s and 1980s (eg., Goodbody, 1977, Houseknecht, 1978, Gerson, 1980) that suggested that women who adhere to feminist sympathies tend to be less motivated to have children.
However, this might be due to feminism being defined differently in the current and past studies. Also, nowadays feminism is defined as having more life choices and motherhood is not viewed as a threat to women’s choices. Most women try to combine both motherhood and having a career.

In agreement with present findings were later studies by Gerson (1986), Gerson et al. (1991) and Scott (1989) that showed no significant relationship between feminism and motherhood motivation. Gerson argued that perhaps for individuals who have reached maturity in the era of feminism the prospective role of motherhood does not create conflict and does not threaten their identities.

Finally, sex role identity issues were examined and did not seem to have an influence on a woman’s motivation to motherhood. The present results were in agreement with Gerson’s (1980) and Scott’s (1986) studies which showed that feminine sex role identity was not significantly related to motherhood motivation suggesting the perhaps nowadays there is less of a distinction between male and female sex roles.

4.4.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, this qualitative study showed that positive family-of-origin experiences do influence a woman’s motivation to have children whereas negative childhood experiences have an adverse impact on women’s motivation to childbearing. When women consider having children they predominantly seem to focus on advantages that positively impact upon the self (e.g., love seeing them achieving their milestones) and the most negative disadvantage of having children seems to be lack of time and freedom.

Most of the participants seemed to be aware that it is best for a woman to have a child by 35 and women with higher education seemed to experience more conflict about having children than less educated women. Moreover, feminism and sex role identity issues did not seem to have an impact upon a woman’s motivation to have children. It also takes a quantitative approach to these issues.

This study suggested a woman’s motivation to childbearing is an emotional decision. Women seem to be influenced by their childhood experiences and by assessing how children might impact upon their lives. The following section focuses
on the second study which examined the aforementioned issues in further detail and with a larger sample.
Chapter 5: Second Study

5.1 Aim

This second, quantitative study aimed to explore the following hypotheses. It was hypothesised that:

1. Demographic variables such as age, income, religion and education would significantly contribute to motherhood motivation. In particular, higher income and education would negatively contribute to and predict motherhood motivation.

2. An anxious (preoccupied/ambivalent) attachment style would contribute significantly to higher levels of motherhood motivation, whereas an avoidant (dismissive/fearful) attachment style would contribute to and predict lower levels of motivation to have children.

3. Participants who recollected mothers and fathers high on care would show and predict higher levels of motherhood motivation whereas participants who recollected mothers and fathers high on overprotection would show and predict lower levels of motherhood motivation.

4. Higher levels of a feminine sex role identity would significantly contribute to and predict higher levels of motherhood motivation.

5. Feminist sympathies would not significantly contribute to and predict lower levels of motherhood motivation.

6. Women with higher levels of fertility education would show and predict higher levels of motivation to have children.

5.2 Methodology of second study

The second study used quantitative data in order to provide data for a further empirical analysis of the findings of the qualitative study. This study aimed to explore whether the online questionnaires would provide more answers to the questions that
The quantitative approach is theory driven and focuses on measurement of operationally defined variables and hypothesis testing. A quantitative researcher tries to achieve increased objectivity through the use of standardized reliable and valid psychometric instruments of data collection and statistical analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

**5.2.1 Participants.**

Table 2 shows the demographics. Most of the 126 female participants were married and were between 25-34 years old. Regarding relationship satisfaction with their romantic partners, most of them reported being very satisfied with their partners and most of the participants had no children.

Almost half of the participants reported being non-religious, had postgraduate qualifications and more than half worked full-time. The majority of the participants grew up with both parents.
Table 2

Demographics of Participants.

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5.2.2 Materials.

Participants accessed an online questionnaire with an introductory statement explaining the study, a demographic questionnaire and six self-report questionnaires as explained below and included in Appendix E. The questionnaire was placed on the internet using the Opinio Program.

1. Demographic questionnaire

This questionnaire sought information about participants’ age, religion, marital status, education, employment, income, satisfaction with their current romantic relationship, family background, and number of children/stepchildren.

2. Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) (Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979)

The Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) is a 25-item questionnaire that seeks information about the respondents’ separate recollections of their father’s and mother’s parenting behaviour during the first 16 years of their childhood. Participants respond on a four-point Likert-type scale, from 1 (very like) to 4 (very unlike).

The PBI contains two scales, these being ‘Care’ and ‘Overprotection’. The ‘Care’ scale has 12 items (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 24) allowing a score range of 12 - 48. High scores reflect high affection, emotional warmth, empathy and closeness, while low scores reflect emotional coldness, indifference and neglect. The ‘Overprotection’ scale has 13 items (3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25) allowing a score range of 13 - 52, and measures perceived level of overprotection. High scores indicate control, overprotection, intrusion, excessive contact and prevention of independent behaviour, while low scores reflect allowance of independence and autonomy. The scores were obtained after reversing 13 items (1, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19, 20, 23) and adding the relevant item scores together.

According to Parker et al. (1979) high care is defined as a score at or above the mean on the ‘care’ scale and low overprotection as a score below the sample mean on the ‘overprotection’ scale. Parker et al. (1979) reported .70 internal consistency for the PBI, and test retest reliabilities of .76 and .63 for the ‘care’ and ‘overprotection’ scales, respectively.


Fraley, Waller and Brennan (2000) developed the Experiences in Close
Motherhood Motivation

Relationships-R questionnaire based on Item Response Theory analysis (IRT). They argued that self-report measures of attachment are scored in ways (e.g., averaging or summing items) that can lead to erroneous inferences about important theoretical issues such as the degree of continuity in attachment security and the differential stability of insecure attachment styles. To determine whether existing attachment scales suffer from scaling problems the authors conducted IRT analysis for items for the following four commonly used attachment self-report measures:


2. Collins and Read’s (1990) Adult Attachment Scale (AAS). The AAS assesses three dimensions: a) closeness, b) dependency, and c) anxiety.

3. Griffin and Bartholomew’s (1994) Relationships Style Questionnaire (RSQ). The RSQ measures a person’s relative fit to four theoretical attachment types: a) secure, b) fearful, c) preoccupied, and d) dismissive.

4. Simpson’s (1990) attachment questionnaire. The Simpson questionnaire assesses people’s relative fit to three attachment types: a) secure, b) avoidant, and c) anxious attachment.

They showed in their paper that three of the above four widely used attachment scales exhibited undesirable features from an IRT perspective. Of the four inventories examined they found that ECR scales had the best psychometric properties, and found that ECR could be improved by using IRT to select items with optimal psychometric properties. By doing so, they created scales that increased measurement precision without increasing the total number of items.

The Experiences in Close Relationships-R (ECR-R) is a 36-item questionnaire that assesses current attachment. Participants respond on a seven-point Likert type scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The items are worded to be relevant to romantic relationships. Items in this questionnaire are from the above commonly used attachment questionnaires.

The ECR-R assesses two dimensions: a) avoidance (fearful/dismissive style) and b) anxiety (ambivalent/preoccupied style). An 18-item subscale measures each dimension. The first dimension reflects the extent to which individuals exhibit
avoidance, that is, the degree to which they have negative views of others and tend to avoid or withdraw from closeness and intimacy in relationships. The avoidance dimension consists of items taken from Simpson’s (1990) questionnaire and Simpson’s avoidance dimension consist of items taken from Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) secure and (fearful) avoidant vignettes.

The ambivalence dimension reflects the degree to which individuals possess negative self-views in regard to their relationships and are excessively preoccupied with issues of abandonment, loss and partners’ level of commitment. This dimension consists of some items from Simpson’s (1990) questionnaire and in Simpson’s questionnaire the ambivalent dimension consists of items from Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) anxious-ambivalent vignettes along with items that assess the absence of worries about reciprocation of love or abandonment.

According to this measurement model, secure individuals tend to score low on both dimensions, displaying a positive orientation toward self and others; and not possessing the aforementioned emotional and behavioural characteristics of either highly avoidant or highly ambivalent people. The following items (9, 11, 20, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36) were reverse scored when coding.

Items for the ECR-R were used from the aforementioned four attachment measures, which are reliable and valid measures. Test-retest reliability coefficients range from .51 to .85 (Scharfe & Bartholomew). Also, Brennnan et al. (1997) found strong internal consistency for the two 18-item scales with alpha coefficients for Avoidance and Anxiety of .93 and .91 respectively.

4. Liberal Feminist Attitude & Ideology Scale (LFAIS) (Morgan, 1996)

Support for feminism was measured with the short form Likert-type Liberal Feminist Attitude and Ideology Scale (LFAIS). The LFAIS asks participants questions that measure their view on whether they believe women are or should be treated equally in comparison to men (eg., “A woman should have the same job opportunities as a man”).

From the short-form questionnaire the wording of Question (1) and Question (10) was changed so that it was relevant to the Australian population, and question (7) was not included as it applied to only to the American population (eg. America should pass the Equal Rights Amendment). The LFAIS reflects the three general themes of women’s discrimination and subordination, collective action for women’s equality,
and sisterhood. Participants respond on a six-point Likert-type scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), where (6) indicates strong agreement with a feminist position. Items 2, 5, 9, and 10 were reverse scored when coding.

Morgan (1996) used the short-form of LFAIS and found that the 11 items provided a reliable short form of the LFAIS, Cronbach’s alpha for the short-form was .81. The LFAIS has good convergent, divergent, and known-groups validity and demonstrated reliability. The 11-item short form has high internal reliability and correlates significantly with behaviours such as writing letters in favour of women’s rights, responses to sexist insults, and the recognition of sexism in a commercial. The LFAIS appears to be a subtle measure of feminism, and as it doesn’t use the words “feminist” or “women’s movement” it represents a more “covert” type of feminism (Burn, Aboud, & Moyles, 2000).

5. **Australian Sex-role Scale (Antill, Cunningham, Russell, & Thompson, 1981)**

The development of two 50-item parallel forms of an Australian sex-role scale was based on the ratings of 2,427 subjects of 512 adjectives in terms of their desirability for Australian males and females, the degree to which they are expected in Australian males and females, and their self-applicability. Two scales were constructed, the “Personal Descriptions Questionnaire” Forms A and B.

Each scale comprises 10 masculine positive, 10 masculine negative, 10 feminine positive, 10 feminine negative, and 10 social desirability items. Participants are asked to use a list of personality characteristics to describe themselves on a scale from 1 (Never or almost never true) to 7 (Always or almost always true) how true of them these various characteristics are. As an example, masculine positive items are those seen as significantly more desirable and typical of men than women.

The method used for scoring involved the two masculine scales being added together as were the two feminine scales (ignoring the negative signs) to give masculine and feminine scales. High internal consistency (coefficient alpha) among the scales was demonstrated. The coefficient alpha for the masculine scale was .81 and for the feminine scale was .77. The correlation between the masculine and feminine scale was -.10. There is a need for a range of validity studies and for further norms to be provided from a variety of samples (Antill et al., 1981).

6. **Australian Fertility Scale (AFS)**

The two researchers devised a 19-item scale to measure participants’ fertility
awareness on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). The coefficient alpha of the scale was .72. When checking the “corrected item-total correlation” item six was taken out to improve the reliability of the scale. There is a need for validity studies for this scale to examine this scale’s construct and convergent/discriminant validity.

7. **Index of Parenthood Motivation (IPM) (Gerson, 1983)**

The Index of Parenthood Motivation (IPM) was selected to measure the strength of motivation for motherhood. IPM is a measure of intensity of parenthood motivation and an assessment of the important categories of parenthood motivation. Gerson (1983) believed that her study was the first to measure intensity and degree of parenthood motivation. The IPM consists of six components of motivation that are standardized and summed to obtain a global measure of motivation for motherhood. These components are:

1. **Eagerness to have children**

   This component consists of rating the question “How eagerly do you anticipate having children?” on a scale of 1 “not at all” to 9 “more than anything”.

2. **Interest in childbearing versus nine other adult activities**

   This component requires the respondent to rank order 10 avocational/vocational activities on the basis of the participants’ interest in pursuing them. The activities are: athletics; art; music or writing; business; child raising; community service; foreign travel; health services; political activities; research; and teaching. A score is obtained by utilising only the score on item 4 (measures child raising) in column C (measures personal interests).

3. **The appeal of various stages of childbearing**

   This component asks the respondent to rate six aspects of parenthood on a scale from 1 “extremely unappealing” to 7 “extremely appealing”. The six aspects are: pregnancy; childbirth; having an infant; having a preschool-age child; and having a grown up child. The score is the mean of the sum of the six ratings. The score is the average of ratings on the six aspects.

4. **Evaluation of the difficulties of pregnancy and childrearing**

   This component measures motivation in relation to potential difficulties of parenthood. The subject is asked how many children are desired and to answer “yes” or “no” to items involving the following areas: Financial hardship; risk to health;
having a child who is not normal; willingness to have an abortion if the pregnancy was unwanted. Score is the sum of A-E (6 items)

5. Evaluation of role conflicts and role issues posed by motherhood

This component is a composite of 11 statements dealing with the role issues and conflicts posed by parenthood. Score is the sum of ratings. Items 8, 9 and 10 are reverse scored.

6. Evaluation of the reasons and problems of having children (value of children)

This component measures the reasons (sum is percent of summed ratings divided by 64) and problems (sum is percent of summed ratings divided by 92) with having children. The score on this subscale is reasons minus problems percentage.

The IPM was an attempt to sample a wide domain of aspects of parenthood motivation and was developed in two stages. The fifth part of the IPM consists of Kirchner and Seaver’s (1977) Parenthood Questionnaire (PQ), which according to Gerson has “significant discriminant validity for known groups including adoption-seekers, members of the National Organisation of Non-parents, and couples avoiding and trying to conceive” (Gerson, 1986, p.54). The PQ was also found to be valid in predicting pregnancy initiation versus avoidance in a longitudinal study of 294 couples (Kirchner & Seaver, 1977).

The total index score is obtained by summing up the component scores, each of which is standardised to equalise variance differences between the various scales. The total index has an alpha coefficient of .85 (Gerson, 1980). The average intercorrelation among the six components is .49 (Gerson, 1980).

Validity data are exploratory at this stage, however, in two studies by Gerson (1986) it was found that the scale had high positive correlation with desired number of children (Study 1: \( r = .74, p<.0001 \); Study 2: \( r = .70, p<.0001 \)). Convergent validity for the IPM is supported by its highly significant correlation with the Parenthood Questionnaire: \( r = .81, p<.0001 \) for women; \( r = .76, p<.0001 \) for men (Kichner & Seaver, 1973), which exceeds the part-whole effect because the Parenthood Questionnaire serves as one of the IPM components.

Those who achieved high scores are those expressing greater motivation to have children compared with those achieving lower scores. The IPM is a useful instrument to measure the intensity of the wish to have a child. Its wide-band construction
indicates the varied nature of parenthood motivation.

5.2.3 Data collection procedure.

The questionnaire was placed online by using the Opinio Program. The study was explained to the participants before they proceeded with the online questionnaire. The participants were assured the information they would provide would remain confidential and anonymous. Names were not required on the questionnaire. Participants were told that if they had any concerns or questions about the study they could contact the researcher or her supervisor, and that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

5.2.4 Quantitative data analysis.

Responses on the questionnaires were entered into a data file using version 14/15 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS+14/+15). The SPSS+14/+15 Packages were used to calculate descriptive statistics, reliabilities, correlations and regressions.

Descriptive statistics were compiled on all the variables in this study. Pearson product-moment correlations and standard multiple regression analyses were performed to analyse the hypotheses. The hypotheses were tested using motivation for parenthood (IPM) as the dependent variable.

5.2.5 Preliminary analyses.

Data screening was conducted in order to protect against errors that might have arisen due to violations of the assumptions underlying the statistical analyses performed. The raw data were screened for any outliers and any out of range or improbable values were checked using frequency tables and an inspection of the descriptive statistics. Data input errors were also checked and normality checks were made on all variables. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) a variable is substantially skewed when the value calculated for skew (skewness divided by its standard error) is greater than 3.29 and the value of kurtosis (kurtosis divided by the standard error) is greater than 3.29. The ECR avoidance, PBI (care mother) and PBI overprotection (combined parents) scales had positive skewness and the PBI care
(combined parents) had negative skewness.

Transformation of these variables was considered but rejected as when a sample is large (over 100) a variable with significant skewness often does not deviate enough from normality to make a substantial difference in the analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, p.74). In other words, as Tabachnick and Fidell suggest with large samples, the significance level of skewness is not as important as its actual size and the visual appearance of the distribution, which was satisfactory for all variables. Also, in a large sample the impact of departure from zero kurtosis also diminishes. Underestimates of variance associated with positive kurtosis disappear with samples of 100 or more cases (Tabachnick & Fidell, p.74). Therefore, it was decided to not make any transformations to any variables.

Frequency tables were produced to assess the extent of missing data in the sample. Cases identified as having excessive missing data due to partial completion of the questionnaire were removed, leaving a total of 126 usable questionnaires. The SPSS package recognises any blank cells in the data file as missing values and therefore missing values were left blank. If a questionnaire included substantial missing sections (e.g., more than half of some scales) the questionnaire was also excluded.

When correlations between the variables were examined checks of linearity were made by examining their bivariate scatter plots. Multicollinearity was checked by investigating whether any Pearson’s correlations were above 0.9 for the variables examined (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001), as Tabachnick and Fidell suggest multicollinearity occurs when one variable is very highly associated with another variable. There were no variables correlated to such an extent, suggesting no significant multicollinearity. Also, multivariate outliers were checked with examination of Mahalanobis distances and there were no cases that exceeded the critical values (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, p.933).
5.3 Results

5.3.1 Descriptive statistics of all scales.

The means, standard deviations and possible score ranges for measures employed in this study are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3
Means, Standard Deviations, Score Ranges for the PBI, ECR-R, LFAIS, ASRS, AFS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Possible Score Ranges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PBI- Parental Bonding Instrument (Parker et al., 1979)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother, care</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>30.15</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>12 – 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother, overprotection</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>35.19</td>
<td>8.93</td>
<td>13 – 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father, care</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>12 – 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father, overprotection</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>24.21</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>13 – 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECR-R- Experiences in Close Relationships-R (Fraley et al., 2000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxious Attachment Scale</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>40.19</td>
<td>19.63</td>
<td>18-126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidant Attachment Scale</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>41.54</td>
<td>16.93</td>
<td>18-126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFAIS- Liberal Feminist Attitude &amp; Ideology Scale (Morgan, 1996)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>124</td>
<td>48.64</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>10-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASRS-Australian Sex-role Scale(Antill, Cunningham, Russell, &amp; Thompson, 1981)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>75.93</td>
<td>11.85</td>
<td>20-140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>92.22</td>
<td>12.32</td>
<td>20-140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFS- Australian Fertility Scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>124</td>
<td>61.10</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>19-95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The different numbers for the Ns are due to missing values.
As shown in Table 3 the means for the PBI mother ‘care’ and ‘overprotection’ scales were higher than the means obtained by Parker et al. (1979). Therefore, participants in this study reported recollections of mothers higher on care and overprotection than in Parker et al.’s study. Also, the means for the PBI father ‘care’ and ‘overprotection’ scales were higher than the ones obtained by Parker et al. (1979) suggesting that women in this sample recollected fathers higher on overprotection and care than in Parker et al.’s study.

When looking at the LFAIS feminism scale the mean was much lower than that obtained by Burn et al. (2000) suggesting that in comparison to Burn et al.’s study participants in this study reported generally lower scores on feminism. The descriptives for the ECR could not be compared to other norms as no means and standard deviations were given by the authors of these scales. Interpretation of the scores for the ASRS scales showed that women in this study had lower than expected masculine scores and higher than expected feminine scores (Antill et al., 1981).

Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations for the IPM total index and subscales.
Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations and Score Ranges for the IPM and its Components.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Score range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Index of Parenthood Motivation (IPM) (Gerson, 1983)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total IPM (without II)</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>-9.85-5.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component I</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component III</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component IV</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component V</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component VI</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-0.57-0.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Different Ns were due to missing values. This study used the Total IPM without component II due to large number of missing values for component II. Component I=Eagerness to have children, Component III= appeal stages of various stages of childbearing, Component IV= motivation in relation to potential difficulties of childbearing and pregnancy, Component V=role conflicts and role issues posed by motherhood, and Component VI=value of children.

Table 4 shows that the overall mean score of IPM without component II was similar to Gerson’s (1983) mean of 0.07. When looking at the unstandardised means for each of the IPM Components the results showed that the unstandardised mean score for component I was somewhat higher than Gerson’s (1983) mean of 5.38. The unstandardised mean scores for the rest of the IPM subscales showed similar means to the ones obtained by Gerson (1983). Therefore, participants rated the value of children very similar to Gerson’s study.

5.3.2 Frequencies of IPM subscales.

IPM-Component I consists of ratings of the question “how eagerly do you anticipate having children” on a scale from 1 “not at all” to 9 “more than anything”. The results showed that 27% said that they anticipated having children “very much”,
20% “more than anything” and 11% “extremely much”. Therefore, 58% of the participants were enthusiastic about anticipating having children.

IPM-Component III asks the respondents to rate six aspects of parenthood on a scale from 1 “extremely unappealing” to 7 “extremely appealing”. Of the participants (36%) found having an infant, a preschool-age child, a school age child or a grown up child “extremely appealing” whereas only 20% found pregnancy “very appealing” and 24% found childbirth “very appealing”. Therefore, in the current sample pregnancy and childbirth were reported as being less appealing than the stage of having a child.

IPM-Component IV asks participants how they evaluate difficulties of pregnancy and childbearing. To the question “assuming there were no complications how many children would you like to have?” 44% said two children and 26% three. Most participants (72%) said that even if the doctor advised them that childbirth would be risky to their health they would still be inclined to risk having at least one child. This indicates that women express willingness to have at least one child despite potential risks to their health, therefore, suggesting that there seems to be a commitment to having children.

The current sample showed that when responding to IMP Component IV, 44% said that they would not be inclined to take the risk if there was considerable risk that their child would not be normal, but would go ahead if pregnancy accidentally occurred. To the question “assuming that you already have the number of children you indicated and pregnancy occurred would you consider an abortion?” the majority of the participants (75%) said ‘no’.

IPM-Component V deals with 10 statements about the role conflicts and role issues posed by motherhood. In this sample 64% of the participants disagreed “very much” with the statement that if a woman fails to have a child she violates her true nature. Also, more than half of the participants (56%) disagreed “very much” with the statement that a woman who doesn’t have children has to be prepared to face suspicion or criticism. Furthermore, 37% agreed “very much” with the statement that motherhood severely limits a woman’s opportunities for achievement and self-expression showing that many women worry as to how motherhood might limit their choices.

IPM-Component VI is an index of the perceived benefits and costs of having children. The benefit scale is derived from Kirchner’s (1973) factor analytic study of
the value of children in a college-aged sample and the cost scale is derived from Hoffman’s (1973) work with undergraduates. Respondents were asked to identify three items, from a list of 16 reasons for having children, which best fit what they saw as the main advantages of having children. The three most frequently chosen reasons for having children were:

1. To give life meaning (30%)
2. Because being a parent is something you feel you can do well (29%)
3. To participate in the miracle of birth (21%).

These results show the women of this sample seemed to be more concerned about the self when considering having children and indicated that if children gave their lives meaning, then this was a reason for having them.

Participants were also asked to identify three items, from a list of 23 problems, which best fitted what they saw as the main problems with having children. The three most frequently chosen problems were:

1. It leaves you too little time for yourself (24%)
2. It makes it difficult to pursue a career (21%)
3. It is expensive to raise them (21%)

Therefore, most of the participants thought that time constraints were some of the biggest problems in having children, followed by difficulties in pursuing careers and expenses in raising children. These results are in line with the literature which suggests that today the most significant reason for women which mediates against them wanting to have children is the thought of losing their freedom to pursue career prospects.

**5.3.3 Correlations & reliability of the scales.**

Correlations between all the scales were computed in order to establish the relationships between all the measures as shown in Table 5. The reliability of all the scales was examined as seen in Table 5. No significant relationships were found between demographic variables and the IPM and therefore are not included in tables.
Table 5
Intercorrelations between IPM, PBI, ECR-R, LFAIS, ASRS, AFS and Scale Reliabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IPM (without subscale II)</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>-.25*</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. PBI mother ‘care’</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PBI mother ‘overprotection’</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PBI father ‘care’</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>-.32**</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.24*</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. PBI father ‘overprotection’</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. ECR-R Anxiety Scale</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. ECR-R Avoidance Scale</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. LFAIS- Feminism</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. ASRS- Feminine Identity</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. ASRS- Masculine Identity</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. AFS</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, IPM= Index of Parenthood Motivation, PBI= Parental Bonding Instrument (combined parents scales & separate mother/father scales); ECR-R= Experiences in Close Relationships-R scale; LFAIS-Feminism= Liberal Feminist & Attitude Ideology Scale; ASRS Feminine and ASRS Masculine Identity= Australian Sex Role Scale, AFS= Australian Fertility Awareness Scale. Scale reliabilities are in brackets.
Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. Cohen (1988) suggested that when interpreting the strength of a correlation the following guidelines can be taken into account: a) \( r = .10 \) to .29 (small), b) \( r = .30 \) to .49 (medium), and c) \( r = .50 \) to 1.0 (large)

Cronbach’s alphas for all the scales were calculated as seen in Table 5. All alphas were acceptable ranging from .71 to .94. Almost all alphas were of very good levels. The feminism scale had the lowest reliability (\( a = .71 \)), but still within limits of acceptability. Also, it is important to take into account that Cronbach’s alpha values are sensitive to shorter scales such as with ten or fewer items (the feminism scale had ten items).

When examining the reliabilities of the scales certain items with low item-total correlations (less than .3) were removed to improve Cronbach’s alphas (Pallant, 2001). For example, item six was removed from the AFS scale and items nine and 11 were removed from the ECR-R scale. Also, item 30 was removed from the ASRS.

Table 5 shows that with regard to the dependent variable, IPM, results were partially as expected. The IPM showed significant and moderate strength correlations with the PBI father scales (recollections of caring and overprotective fathers). Participants who reported higher care, particularly from their fathers in the first 16 years of their life, reported significantly higher levels of motherhood motivation (\( r = 0.28, p < .01 \)), whereas participants who reported having experienced more overprotective fathers reported significantly lower levels of motherhood motivation (\( r = -0.25, p < .05 \)). There were no significant relationships between motherhood motivation and the PBI mother scales (recollections of caring and overprotective mothers).

Recollections of overprotective fathers were significantly positively associated with the ECR anxious and avoidant attachment style scales (\( r =0.28, p <.01, r = 0.25, p < .01 \)) indicating that participants who recalled fathers higher on overprotection showed higher levels of insecure attachments. Recollections of caring fathers showed a significant negative and of moderate strength association with the avoidance scale (\( r = -0.24, p < .05 \), suggesting that women who recalled fathers higher on care showed significantly lower levels of an avoidant insecure attachment style.

Recollections of overprotective mothers were significantly negatively
associated with the ECR-anxious attachment style scale suggesting that women who recalled mothers high on overprotection showed lower levels of an anxious attachment style ($r = -0.22$, $p < .05$).

There was a significant positive strong association between the ECR-anxious attachment style scale and the ECR-avoidant attachment style scale ($r = .65$, $p < .01$) suggesting that the higher one’s anxious attachment style score the higher their avoidant attachment style scores suggesting that there might be less of a distinction between these two attachment style scales suggesting they are not totally independent.

Table 6 shows correlations between the IPM components and the psychological variables.

Table 6

*Intercorrelations between IPM Components and PBI, ECR-R, LFAIS, ASRS, AFS.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PBI</td>
<td>Mother, care</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother, overprotection</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father, care</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father, overprotection</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECR-R</td>
<td>Anxious attachment</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoidant attachment</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFAIS</td>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td>-.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASRS</td>
<td>Feminine identity</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Masculine identity</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFS</td>
<td>Fertility awareness</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* *p < .05, **p < .01. PBI = Parenting Bonding Instrument, ECR = Experiences in Close Relationships-R questionnaire, AFS = Australian Fertility Scale, LFAIS = Liberal and Feminism Attitude & Ideology Scale, ASRS = Australian Sex Role Scale.

As shown in Table 6 the ECR avoidant attachment style scale was significantly
related to the IPM Component IV suggesting that participants with higher scores on avoidant attachment style showed higher levels of motherhood motivation (evaluation of potential childbearing difficulties) \( (r = 0.26, p < .01) \).

Also, the masculine scale was negatively correlated with the IPM Component VI suggesting that women who reported higher levels of motherhood motivation (more positive values of children) showed lower levels of masculinity \( (r = -0.23, p < .05) \).

The feminism scale correlated significantly and negatively with IPM Component V \( (r = -0.21, p < .01) \), suggesting that participants with higher scores on feminism showed lower levels of motherhood motivation (evaluation of role conflicts and role issues posed by motherhood). The fertility awareness scale showed a significant and of moderate strength association with IPM Component IV \( (r = 0.38, p < .01) \) suggesting that participants with higher levels of fertility awareness showed higher levels of motherhood motivation.

5.3.4 Multiple regressions

A standard multiple regression was performed to test the contribution of psychological variables (perceptions of early parenting, attachment style, sex role identity, feminist sympathies and fertility awareness) to the prediction of motivation to motherhood. The demographics were not included as no significant correlations were found between demographics and any of the other variables.

This multiple regression examined the contribution of the psychological variables to the total index of the IPM. Also, standard multiple regressions were performed with each of the IPM Components. With the use of a \( p < .001 \) criterion for Mahalanobis distance (Tabachnick and Fiddel, 2001), two outliers among the cases were identified, but due to the number of cases it was decided not to delete them as they did not make a significant difference to the data.

As mentioned earlier there was a large number of missing values for the IPM Component II. After checking the raw data of the questionnaires it was evident that some participants did not understand how to answer IPM Component II, while others omitted answering this question. This finding was a replication of a similar finding in Dodson’s (1990) study. She omitted IPM Component II, as her participants did not correctly respond to it either. Replacement with the means also did not improve the quality of the data and therefore IPM Component II was eliminated from data analysis.
Table 7 shows the unstandardised ($B$), standardised ($\beta$) coefficients, $F$ values, $R^2$ and $R^2$ change figures for the regression between the psychological variables and the IPM total index without Component II.

**Table 7**

*Standard Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Motivation to Motherhood (IPM).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PBI</td>
<td>Mother, care</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother, overprotection</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father, care</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father, overprotection</td>
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<td>-.26*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECR-R</td>
<td>Anxious attachment</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoidant attachment</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFS</td>
<td>Fertility awareness</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFAIS</td>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASRS</td>
<td>Feminine identity</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Masculine identity</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* $N = 95$. *p < .05, **p < .01. Adjusted $R^2$ = 15. PBI = Parenting Bonding Instrument, ECR = Experiences in Close Relationships-R questionnaire, AFS = Australian Fertility Scale, LFAIS = Liberal and Feminism Attitude & Ideology Scale, ASRS = Australian Sex Role Scale.

As shown in Table 7 the regression proved significant [$F(10, 78) = 2.58$, $p < .01$], with all variables accounting for 25% of the variance in motivation to motherhood scores. To find out how well each of the variables contributed to the equation the Standardised Coefficients ($\beta$) were explored and there were only two variables that made a significant contribution to motherhood motivation: a) The **PBI overprotection father scale ($\beta = -.26$, $p < .05$)** was a significant negative predictor of
motherhood motivation suggesting that participants’ recollections of fathers higher on control and overprotection predicted significantly lower levels of motherhood motivation; and b) The ASRS feminine scale ($\beta = .25, p \leq .05$) was a significant positive predictor suggesting that participants’ higher scores on the feminine scale significantly predicted higher levels of motherhood motivation.

Additional standard multiple regression analyses were performed to examine the contribution of the psychological variables to each one of the IPM Components. These analyses were exploratory and not linked to any specific hypotheses. The results showed that when the contribution of the psychological variables to the IPM Component IV (motivation in relation to potential difficulties of pregnancy and childbearing) was explored the regression proved significant [$F (10, 96) = 4.52, p < .001$], with all variables accounting for 32% of the variance in motivation to motherhood scores.

To find out how well each of the variables contributed to the equation the Standardised Coefficients ($\beta$) were explored and there were only two variables that made a significant contribution to motherhood motivation. First, the ECR Avoidant attachment scale ($\beta = .42, p < .001$) was a significant positive predictor of motherhood motivation (IPM Component IV) suggesting that participants with higher avoidance scores showed higher motherhood motivation when asked questions about facing potential difficulties in pregnancy/childbearing.

The IPM component IV is about motivation to have a child despite facing potential difficulties such as potential financial hardship due to having children or risking one’s health and aborting pregnancy if it was thought that the child would not be normal. It is possible that this question might be affected by social desirability and that is why the result is perhaps not in the desired direction.

Second, the ASRS feminine scale ($\beta = .39, p < .001$) was a significant positive predictor suggesting that participants’ higher scores on the feminine scale significantly predicted higher levels of motherhood motivation (IPM Component IV), which is in line with the literature. Finally, when examining all the other regressions between the psychological variables and the remaining of the IPM Components, no significance was found.
5.4 Discussion

This section starts with a discussion of the descriptive findings of the IPM Components, followed by a discussion of the main findings and a conclusion.

5.4.1 Descriptives

The present results showed that more than half of the participants (58%) reported that they anticipated ‘very much’ having children and 36% indicated that it was ‘extremely appealing’ to consider having a child. However, only 20-24% found pregnancy and childbirth appealing. Forty four percent of the participants said that they would like to have two children and 26% said they would like to have three.

These results showed that generally these women were eager to have children but found the stages of pregnancy and childbirth less appealing than the thought of having children and a family. Perhaps women are more concerned about the effects of pregnancy on themselves (eg., their body image might be affected, their career might stop for a while, they might be sick and become more seriously sick, experience severe pain and discomfort etc), whereas when one actually has a child he or she brings many positives to one’s life.

Most of the participants (72%) reported that even if the doctor advised them that childbirth would be risky to their health they would still be inclined to risk having at least one child. In response to the question “assuming that you already have the number of children you indicated and pregnancy occurred would you consider an abortion?”, 75% said ‘no’. However, these results need to be interpreted with caution as it is speculated that women might have given social desirable answers due to perhaps guilt or other negative feelings if associated with stating that they would abort their child if an unwanted pregnancy occurred.

More than half of the women (64%) reported that they disagreed ‘very much’ with the statement that “if a woman fails to have a child she violates her true nature”. This indicated that motherhood does not seem to be defined by most women as necessary for a woman’s identity. Also, most of the women (56%) disagreed ‘very much’ with the statement that “women who don’t have children have to be prepared to face suspicion and/or criticism, while 37% agreed ‘very much’ with the statement ‘that motherhood severely limits women’s opportunities for achievement and
These statements showed that most of the women believe that remaining childless does not negate their womanhood and is not likely to bring rejection and ostracism from others. Also, partially in line with past findings the current results showed that women believed motherhood limits one’s opportunities.

Finally, when looking at the reasons for wanting to have children it was found that the three most frequently chosen reasons for having children were: a) To give life meaning, b) Because being a parent is something you feel you can do well, and c) To participate in the miracle of birth. These results, in line with Gerson’s (1980) study, suggested that women want to participate in the miracle of birth and feel that having children gives life meaning, while also believing that they can fulfil the parenting role successfully.

All these above reasons relate to how children might affect one’s self and are also in line with Caron and Wynn’s (1992) study which highlighted the importance of self in the intent to parent. They suggested that in their study most people’s reasons for wanting to have children seemed to concern one’s self (e.g., personal fulfilment as in: “I would benefit from it”, “to give me something to do”) and how parenting would impact upon the self.

For Langdrige et al. (2005) the reason that best discriminates whether people want to have a child or not is the belief that children will bring fulfilment. The reasons they found to be important in prediction of intentions to have a child were the central role of becoming a family, having a child that is biologically related to the couple, and a strong emphasis on values concerned with primary group ties and affection (e.g., to make a family, to give and receive love). All these reasons indicate again a concern about one’s self rather than altruistic reasons such as contributing to society and giving a child privileges one didn’t have.

Most of the participants in the present study thought that: a) Time constrain was one of the biggest problems in having children, followed by b) Difficulty in pursuing a career, and c) Expenses in raising children. These results are in line with the aforementioned literature suggesting that the most significant reason that causes women to delay or even reject motherhood today is the fear of losing their freedom and their time to pursue other interests such as a career.

The result regarding expenses in raising children was not in agreement with
Grewal and Urschel’s (2001) study, as discussed in the literature, which showed that perceived values of children for Canadian women have shifted from economic to emotional reasons. The present sample showed that nowadays women still worry about the expenses regarding raising a child. Perhaps women of this investigation were more concerned about having the necessary resources to raise a family.

Also, the present finding regarding time constraints and the difficulty in pursuing a career was in agreement with Langridge et al.’s (2005) study which showed that participants thought having a child would be a constraint on their career and their freedom to do the things they enjoy.

## 5.4.2 Correlations

When examining relationships between the measure of motherhood motivation (IPM) and the rest of the psychological variables the results showed the following:

First, when looking at recollections of childhood experiences, only recollections of fathers (PBI, Father scales) showed significant relationships to the IPM. For example, it was found that women who reported higher levels of motivation to motherhood reported recalling fathers higher on care and lower on overprotection/control. No significant relationships were found between recollections of mothers’ parenting behaviour and one’s motivation to motherhood.

This was in contrast to the traditional view, as mentioned in the literature review that suggests that a woman’s relationship to her mother has a more significant impact upon her later life development than does her relationship with her father. The results were in line with Slosar’s (2003) and Hanin’s (1987) studies which showed that subjects’ identification with their mothers was not significantly related to their motivation to motherhood.

As Gerson (1984) suggested it could be argued that women who recalled having grown up with overprotective fathers have developed a desire to become autonomous and independent and have developed less traditional roles such as the rejection of motherhood and the pursuit of more independent lives. That could be the result of reacting against controlling fathers.

On the other hand, women who experienced caring fathers showed higher levels of motherhood motivation. Caring fathers may instil in these women schemas of positive male role models and therefore positively influence these women’s
motivation to find a partner and to raise a family.

Second, the IPM component IV (potential difficulties with pregnancy and childbearing) was significantly related to the AFS, which measured fertility awareness, suggesting that participants with higher levels of fertility awareness showed higher levels of motherhood motivation in relation to potential difficulties with pregnancy and childbearing. Also, 66% of the current sample were women without children and therefore might have been more willing to answer favourably to having children despite suggested future potential difficulties with childbearing.

Third, the IPM component V (evaluation of role conflicts and role issues posed by motherhood) was significantly negatively associated to the LFAIS feminism scale, suggesting that participants with higher scores on feminism showed higher levels of believing in role conflicts posed by motherhood. This result was in agreement with early past findings (e.g., Lott, 1973; Goodbody, 1977) that suggested a negative association between feminism and motherhood motivation. This result suggests that women who value having many choices in life might feel motherhood limits their opportunities in life.

Fourth, the IPM component VI (values of children) was significantly negatively associated with the masculine scale suggesting that women who reported higher levels of motherhood motivation (more positive values of children) showed lower levels of masculinity. This finding suggests that for some women motherhood is still associated with a less masculine sex role identity. This result was in contrast to Caron and Wynn’s (1992) and Gerson’s (1980) research which suggested that there is a present trend towards more equitable sex role socialization.

Finally, when looking at the attachment scales there was a significant, positive, strong association between the anxious and avoidance scales suggesting that the higher one’s anxiety the higher their avoidance. This suggested that there might be less of a distinction between different types of insecure attachment styles. Individuals who display an insecure attachment style might show a mix of insecure attachment styles such as anxious and avoidant attachment styles. Both styles are insecure attachment styles that may have developed due to negative childhood relationships with these individuals’ parents.

Women with higher insecure attachment styles (avoidant and anxious) showed recollections of fathers higher on overprotection. However, women who showed
significantly lower levels of an avoidant insecure attachment style recalled fathers higher on care and warmth. These results were in agreement with Carnelley et al. (1994) who suggested that recollections of overprotective parents is a significant contributor to insecure attachment styles.

5.4.3 Confirmation/Rebuttal of Hypotheses

The first hypothesis was that demographic variables such as age, income, religion and education would significantly contribute to motherhood motivation. In particular, that higher age, income and education would negatively contribute to motherhood motivation.

The present findings did not find any significant relationships between these demographic variables and motherhood motivation, which is in contrast to past studies (eg. Gerson, 1983, 1986; Pearce, 2002; Dodson, 1990; Housekencht, 1987; Marini, 1984; Chara & Chara, 2003) that have found a positive association between religion and motherhood motivation. Additionally, other past research (eg., Callan, 1982; Houseknecht, 1987; Kemkes-Grottenthaler, 2003; Wu & MacNeill, 2002; Jacobson & Heaton, 2001; Pearce, 2002; Gerson, 1986; Lang, 1992) has shown strong associations between motherhood motivation, occupation, marital status, religion and age.

The discrepancy in results when it comes to demographic variables between the present investigation and past studies could be partly due to the present study having used an Australian sample, which was largely middle class, white and educated. A more diverse population could have produced different results. Also, past research was conducted with USA samples and these might differ from Australian samples when it comes to variables such as religion, occupation and income. Comparing studies on motherhood motivation needs to be made with caution as studies on motherhood motivation have utilised different samples and measures.

The second hypothesis was that an anxious (preoccupied/ambivalent) attachment style would contribute significantly to higher levels of motherhood motivation, whereas an avoidant (dismissive/fearful) attachment style would contribute to lower levels of motivation to have children.

In examining the regression analyses it was found that an anxious attachment style did not significantly contribute to higher levels of motherhood motivation (IPM total index and components) as predicted. However, this finding was in agreement
with both studies by Rholes et al.’s (1995, 1997) which did not find that ambivalence was positively related to the strength of the desire to have children. The hypothesis was based on theory suggesting that ambivalent/anxious individuals seek closeness and would be more likely to invest in caring for others and therefore be motivated to have children. However, this study did not support this.

On the other hand, an avoidant attachment style was found to contribute significantly to higher levels of motherhood motivation, only when exploring contributions of psychological variables to the fourth Component of the IPM (which is about the evaluations of pregnancy and childrearing such as financial hardship, risk to health, willingness to abort if the pregnancy was unwanted).

This finding was not in the expected direction and was not in agreement with Rholes et al.’s (1997) study, which showed that more avoidant persons reported less interest in having children. Avoidant individuals avoid closeness and might be less inclined to invest in having children. Perhaps this result was due to social desirability affecting how these participants might have answered questions such as whether they would abort if the pregnancy was unwanted or whether they would prefer not to have children if they entailed financial hardship. These questions are hypothetical questions and therefore respondents might feel inclined to answer more positively as answering favourably to aborting an unwanted child is not socially desirable and not likely to make respondents feel good about themselves. Also, in addition to avoidant individuals it is possible that others might be affected by social desirability concerns but this will have to be tested in a further study.

Apart from the present and another three past studies there has been little research as to how attachment style might contribute to motherhood motivation. Also, the results seem to be mixed, so consequently, there is a need for more research on attachment style and its contribution to motherhood motivation. It may be that attachment style does not make a significant contribution to a woman’s desire to have children, and could be overshadowed by other factors that might be more significant predictors such as her childhood experiences with her parents, being in a stable relationship, and having the available supports and flexibility to raise a child.

The third hypothesis was that participants who recollected their mothers and fathers to be high on care would show higher levels of motherhood motivation whereas participants who recollected their mothers and fathers to be high on
overprotection would show lower levels of motherhood motivation.

The results showed that women’s recollections of overprotective/controlling fathers significantly predicted lower levels of motherhood motivation (when exploring the contribution of psychological variables to the IPM total index). It was suggested that women who recalled fathers high on overprotection and control showed lower levels of overall motherhood motivation. Perhaps women who recall having been raised with controlling fathers might adopt more independent aspirations in life out of some form of rebelliousness to an overprotective paternal parenting style.

The present study supports the notion that fathers’ parenting may play a more significant role in later adjustment than has been previously considered. The experiences of overprotective parenting, particularly from the parent of the opposite sex, can have a strong and direct impact on later adjustment (Strahan, 1995). Perhaps an over controlling parenting style results in the individual lacking confidence in their abilities due to a lack of exposure to challenging situations that could test one’s ability for mastery. However, this is a speculation and needs to be examined in further research.

The present results regarding women’s recollections of their fathers were in agreement with Gerson’s (1986) study that found that the only variable of unique significance with regard to perceptions of past parental behaviour was women’s memories of their fathers’ loving behaviour. Gerson suggested that perhaps women’s recollections of over controlling fathers may influence them to view motherhood as a role that will trap them in a traditional environment with fewer choices and less control over their life choices.

Recollections of mothers’ caring parenting style was not found to significantly predict higher levels of one’s motivation to motherhood. This finding was not in agreement with past research (e.g. Freud 1993; Benedek, 1959; Lott, 1973; Gerson, 1990), which has highlighted the importance of mother-daughter relationship and its impact on a woman’s motivation to have children.

It could be argued that the significance of the impact of parenting in one’s later life decisions is highly important, especially from the opposite sex parent. It might be interesting to examine in future research women’s current adult relationships with their parents rather than recollections of their parents’ parenting style as recollections might not be as reliable as examining one’s present relationships with their parents.
The fourth hypothesis was that a higher feminine sex role identity would significantly contribute to higher levels of motherhood motivation. This hypothesis was supported suggesting that the current study’s participants’ higher levels of a feminine sex role identity contributed to higher levels of motherhood motivation [IPM total index, IPM Component IV (evaluation of difficulties relating to pregnancy and childbearing)]. The present results were in agreement with Gerson’s (1980) and Hanin’s (1987) studies which found that a feminine sex-role identity was significantly associated with motherhood motivation.

The fifth hypothesis was that feminism would not significantly predict lower levels of motherhood motivation. This hypothesis was supported and is congruent with past findings such as Gerson’s (1986; 1991) who found that feminism did not make a positive contribution to motivation for parenthood. One could speculate that nowadays motherhood might not be associated anymore with inferior status for women. This however, used to be the case for liberated women in the 1970s who associated motherhood with inferior status (Gerson, 1980).

Gerson’s study in 1986 used older subjects than her earlier study in 1984 that had found that women who identified with the feminist movement were less interested in having children. Gerson (1986) argued that older women could be more able to integrate their career ambitions with a wish to have children. In the current study 69% of participants were between 25-34 years old and such a sample is older than samples of college and undergraduate students that many of the earlier studies used and that have found a negative association between motherhood and feminism.

Also, it can be argued that the early studies (eg., Houseknecht, 1978; Gerson 1980; Lott 1973; Goodbody, 1977) that found that feminism was negatively related to motherhood motivation were conducted in the 1970s and 1980s where the definition of feminism was quite different to the way it is defined today. For individuals who grew up in the 1970s, motherhood was viewed as a role in its own right and as a necessary role for a woman’s identity.

Women who supported feminist sympathies in the 1970s were likely to be women who were against supporting the sole role of being a mother and were more likely to want to have more choices in their lives. In the 1970s they were not so able to consider the possibility of combining these two roles (Gerson, 1980). Gerson argued that this might be due to motherhood being associated with inferior status for liberated
women or that these women were too aware of the difficulties in balancing career pursuits and motherhood responsibilities.

Many of the women in this sample, although agreeing with the objectives of the feminist movement, did not like to define themselves as feminists suggesting that for some women there is some negative association with being called feminists. Of the 126 participants 35% said that they “agreed with all of the objectives of the feminist movement, but did not consider themselves feminists”.

The final hypothesis was that women with higher levels of fertility education would show higher levels of motivation to have children. This hypothesis was not supported and was not in agreement with a previous study by Slosar (2003), which showed that misconceptions about fertility contributed to women’s delay of childbearing. There is a need for more studies on fertility awareness and its impact upon one’s motivation to have children, but nevertheless the present study showed that one’s awareness of fertility issues does not seem to play a significant role in motivation to childbearing. Also, the present measure of fertility awareness was constructed by the researcher and future studies examining the validity of this scale are necessary.

5.4.4 Conclusion

In summary, the present study showed that more than half of the participants anticipated having children and almost half reported that they would like to have two children. In general women seem to be eager to have children, but not because they believe motherhood is necessary for a female identity, but rather because of other personal reasons. The women seemed to think that having children is a woman’s choice and there is no contemporary fear of being criticised by the community if one decides to remain childless.

For this sample, reasons for wanting children seemed to concern one’s self such as “to give life meaning”, “because parenting is something I can do well” and “to participate in the miracle of birth”. Problems associated with having children were also concerned with the impact upon one’s self and such concerns were time constraints, difficulties in pursuing a career, and expenses associated with raising children.

When exploring the hypotheses the results showed that the first hypothesis was
not supported as there were no significant relationships between demographics and motherhood motivation. The second hypothesis was also not supported as an anxious attachment style was not found to significantly contribute to motherhood motivation and an avoidant attachment style was not found to contribute to lower levels of motivation to have children. Attachment and its relationship to motherhood motivation has not been sufficiently researched enough and it can be concluded that attachment style may not be a significant contributor to one’s motivation to childbearing and that further research is necessary to resolve this issue.

The third hypothesis was partially supported as it was found that women’s recollections of overprotective/controlling fathers significantly predicted lower levels of motherhood motivation and recollections of mothers’ caring parenting style was not found to significantly predict higher levels of one’s motivation to motherhood.

The fourth and fifth hypotheses were supported as a feminine sex role identity was found to be a significant positive contributing factor to motherhood motivation suggesting that the current sample viewed motherhood as part of a feminine sex role identity. Also, support for feminist values was not found to significantly contribute to lower levels of motherhood motivation suggesting that the role of motherhood was not viewed by this sample as a threat to one’s choices.

Finally, the sixth hypothesis that fertility awareness would contribute to higher levels of motherhood motivation was not supported suggesting that there is no evidence indicating that one’s fertility awareness would contribute to higher levels of motherhood motivation.

Overall, the quantitative data showed associations of weak to moderate strength suggesting that there might be other factors, not currently explored, that might be significant and strong contributors to motherhood motivation. Also, past studies that have explored similar variables to the present study have not yielded strong results either.

Motherhood motivation might need to be redefined and be included as a component of a more global measure (as shown in Chapter 6), such as a woman’s life goals, motivation for mastery and satisfaction in her life (Cannold, 2005). Nowadays women might view motherhood as one aspect of having a happy, fulfilled life whereas in the 1970s motherhood was viewed as a necessary aspect of a woman’s life.

Today many women seem to value happiness and life fulfillment based on
self-growth rather than based solely on the motherhood role (Cannold, 2005). This is in line with the current study which showed motherhood is a personal and emotional decision associated with its impact upon one’s life. Therefore, motivation to motherhood is a subjective decision based on one’s life aspirations and desires.

Finally, one can speculate that perhaps women do not spend much time thinking what will motivate them to have a child, but perhaps their decision is based on unconscious factors, personal and emotional reasons at the time, as well as external factors (e.g., having a committed partner who also wants children, financial stability).

The following section is an integration of both studies and concludes with a future model of factors that could be explored when examining motherhood motivation.
Chapter 6: Integration of the two studies

This chapter integrates results from both studies. Most of the participants in both studies were in their late 20s-early 30s were married or in de-facto relationships and reported being satisfied with their partners. In the qualitative study most of the participants had one or more children, while in the quantitative study 36% had no children and 52% had one child. When looking at demographics (e.g., education, age, religion) the quantitative study did not produce any significant results indicating how demographic variables might have influenced one’s motivation to have children. However, the qualitative study showed that more educated women experienced more conflict about childbearing.

Regarding age, results may have varied if there were more participants from different age groups as it would be expected that age would impact differently on a woman’s motivation to have children. Most of the participants in the current investigation were in their late 20s early 30s. Based on past research there seems to be a positive association between age and motivation to have children suggesting that older women who are towards the end of their reproductive years score higher on motivation to motherhood.

When looking at participants’ childhood experiences the qualitative part of the research showed that women who grew up in big loving families and had positive relationships with their mothers expressed being enthusiastic about having their own children in order to offer to their children the positive experiences they had. Having grown up with an absent father had a negative impact on women’s motivation to childbearing possibly out of fear of exposing their children to similar negative environments.

The quantitative part of the research was not in agreement with the interviews and showed that participants who recalled mothers high on care did not show higher motivation to motherhood. However, the quantitative data indicated that recollections of overprotective and controlling fathers contributed to lower levels of motherhood motivation, which was in agreement with the finding of the interviews that suggested that negative experiences with one’s father impact negatively upon a woman’s desire
to have children. Therefore, both studies supported the notion that adverse experiences with one’s father impact negatively women’s later life decisions regarding childbearing.

This finding might have been due to the fact that half of the participants who answered the online questionnaires had postgraduate qualifications, were working full-time and most of them had no children. Perhaps these women are more influenced by recollections of their fathers due to wanting to identify more with a more autonomous and independent male role model rather than a more traditional and less independent female role model.

When exploring participants’ fertility awareness most interviewees seemed to be aware that for a woman it’s best to have children by the age of 35. Some of the interviewees reported having health concerns and worries as to how their body would cope with pregnancy after 35. The quantitative data did not find a significant link between fertility awareness and motherhood motivation.

When looking at feminist influences, interviewees were asked questions regarding their beliefs about equality between the sexes and the online questionnaires used the LFAIS questionnaire that focused on participants’ views about whether there is or should be equality between the sexes. Both studies showed that most participants believe there is more equality between women and men, and that holding feminist views was not related to whether a woman will decide to have children or not.

Perhaps nowadays women feel more empowered, are more involved in the workforce, have more choices and don’t view the role of motherhood as a threat to how society will view them in comparison to men. Having more choices and knowing that they can maintain their careers while being mothers might help women view motherhood more positively. It could be argued that it is more the external factors (e.g., time constraints, lack of freedom, impact upon their career, lack of supports) that might divert a woman from wanting to raise children.

The current investigation explored how sex role identity issues might impact on women’s motivation to have children. For the qualitative study sex role identity issues were explored by asking interviewees whether they believed women are the primary caregivers and men the primary breadwinners and no relationship was found between interviewees’ motivation to childbearing and these sex role identity issues.

However, interpreting these results needs to be made with caution as these
questions might not have been as valid a tool of measuring sex role identity issues as
the quantitative part of the study used the ASRS questionnaire that included a wider
range of questions that could have more thoroughly investigated the issue.

The ASRS focused on asking participants to rate adjectives in terms of their
desirability for Australian men and women, the degree to which they are expected in
Australian men and women, and their self-applicability. The online questionnaires
showed that women with a more feminine sex role identity displayed a higher
motivation to have children and women with a less feminine sex role identity valued
having children less positively.

Finally, costs and benefits of having children were explored in both studies.
Interviewees reported that the most common advantage of having children was a
desire to have them due to loving children and seeing them achieve their milestones,
while the most common disadvantage of having children was the belief that children
are hard work and would affect a woman’s freedom, spontaneity, and time
commitments.

This result was in line with the quantitative data that showed that the three most
frequently chosen reasons for having children concerned one’s self (e.g., to give life
meaning, to participate in the miracle of birth) and most of the participants thought that
time constraints were the biggest problems in having children, followed by difficulties
in pursuing a career, expenses in raising children and lack of freedom.

Both studies were in line with the literature which suggested that for
contemporary women the most significant reason in preventing them from wanting to
have children is losing their freedom to pursue other interests and/or a career. It is
argued that most women would like to have children if they feel they have available
supports and motherhood won’t prevent them from having other choices such as a
career.

Also, the quantitative data showed that more than half of the participants
anticipated having children and almost half reported that they would like to have two.
In general women seem to be eager to have children and this investigation supported
the belief that having children is a woman’s choice and nowadays there is not so much
fear as there used to be in the 1960s and 1970s that women will be criticised by society
if they decide to remain childless.

Finally, based on this current investigation the researcher proposes that the
following model of motherhood motivation, as shown below in Figure 2, could be explored with Path Analysis, taking into account the following factors that might better predict a woman’s desire to have children:

1. Family of origin experiences
2. Sex role identity
3. Individual factors (eg., personal value of children, personality factors)
4. Situational factors (eg., number of children, partner influences)
5. Values (eg. valuing career/education more than having a family)
6. Social/cultural influences
7. Family and community supports (vs isolation, lack of support)
8. Unconscious factors

Also, it is suggested that motherhood needs to be examined as a part of a larger investigation that measures life goals. For example, women who show that motherhood is one of their primary life goals could be screened for interviews and further be interviewed regarding what motivates them to have children. Such a process might give a better picture and greater depth of understanding of the various factors that might motivate a woman to have children.

The following section presents some of this investigation’s limitations, suggestions for future research, implications for counselling practice and final comments.
Figure 2. *New Model of Motherhood Motivation*
Chapter 7: Limitations

The present study had several limitations that need to be considered before generalising the results to the wider population. The quantitative part of the study included self-report measures, which may be considered as subjective measures, and may confound the results due to social desirability, low levels of self-knowledge, and/or the individual’s level of motivation to give accurate responses. However, almost all the measures used had high published and currently examined reliabilities.

Although the associations between the variables in the second study were generally in the expected directions, the relationships and contribution to motherhood motivation were relatively small. There might be other factors as suggested in Figure 2 that may account for a large proportion of the variability in motivation to motherhood.

Overall the participants of this investigation were generally well educated and middle class women, therefore not representing the general population. Examining women with various cultural, educational and socio-economic backgrounds might generate different results. For example, different levels of motherhood motivation might exist for women who are not educated and have fewer choices. Therefore, care should be taken before assuming that the findings apply to the broader population of women.

Also, in the qualitative study there were 45 participants with no children, 66 who had one child, and 15 with two or more children. It might have been more valuable to have looked at two groups of participants-those who already have children and those who do not. By combining the participants the chances of finding significant predictors to motherhood motivation from the variables was probably reduced.

Some bias may be present due to the nature of recruiting participants for this investigation through the researcher’s network of family and friends. This limited the type of individuals who participated in this study. A bigger sample size might have increased the power and robustness of the analyses.

Finally, one significant limitation of all studies on motherhood motivation is the use of different methodology, measures and samples that makes comparison of these
studies difficult. Also, the Australian Fertility Scale was constructed by the researcher and therefore there is a need for future validity studies for this scale. Its stability in future studies with other samples needs to be assessed.
Chapter 8: Suggestions for Future Research

Future research could benefit by extending and replicating the current findings. The continuous study of what motivates women to childbearing is very important as it has major life consequences and creates significant stress for couples who feel responsible at times but unable to reach a decision. A good idea would be to evaluate whether the provision of educative seminars or groups could help certain couples with their decision to have children or not (Potts, 1980). Being in a group situation with other individuals experiencing the same uncertainties could help the decision making process (Potts), and thereby assist people struggling with the question of parenthood.

At present there has been a growing movement by fertility experts to start advertising campaign warning about delaying having babies and talking about the ‘fertility myth’ (McLean, 2004). There needs to be further public campaigns on fertility awareness following the example of the USA and the Netherlands both of whom have public campaigns about the effects of age on fertility (McLean). Such campaigns are needed in this country, perhaps campaigns such as the “Quit” anti-smoking campaign (McLean).

Future research would look also into men’s fertility awareness and motivation to fatherhood. Men need also to be responsible and aware about women’s fertility and interviewing men alongside women would be a valuable step. Men need to be aware that if they too postpone having children with their partner there is the possibility that once they are ready to have children they might have left it too late for the woman.

Future investigations would benefit from the use of longitudinal designs that could examine how a woman’s environment and life experiences might affect her motivation to have children. For example, research could explore over a period of years factors that might impact upon a woman’s decision to have children. Such factors could be a woman’s financial situation, career opportunities, relationship status, her experience of having a first child (eg., whether first child positively impacted upon her relationship, ability to manage financially and life in general) and whether societal and economical changes positively influenced her desire to have children.
While the logistics of longitudinal research would be demanding, only such research would allow causal inferences regarding variables. This could help us to better understand the contributing factors to childbearing. Although the present study has shed some light into important contributing factors to motherhood motivation, nevertheless the results could be more powerful and further research into this area is necessary.

Motherhood is demanding and difficult and this must be recognised by our society’s policy makers and by both men and women. Future research needs to also focus on the positive experience of motherhood and its meaning in the lives of women rather than its usefulness or its psychopathology (Gerson et al., 1984). Motherhood needs to be valued more in our society and a combination of research that focuses on the enjoyable aspects of parenthood and policies that help couples to have children would help achieve that.

According to Gray, Qu and Weston (2008) Australians need to hear the message that having children is an enjoyable part of life, but for the message to be effective it needs to reflect reality through the use of policies that support couples in raising a family. Gray, Qu and Weston argued that low fertility rates are not due to lack of wanting children, but due to Australians’ belief that nowadays it is difficult to be able to create and maintain a family, in which children are going to be nurtured and supported both emotionally and financially.

Most of the studies on motherhood motivation have included Western, White and middle class participants. It would be valuable to continue research on motherhood motivation with participants from non-Western countries and with wider socioeconomic, cultural and religious backgrounds.

It is important to devise an Australian version of motherhood motivation as social influences must be affecting differently individuals living in different countries. For example, living in more Westernised and less traditional countries is likely to result in women pursuing more autonomous and independent life styles.

It would be valuable to use larger qualitative and quantitative samples with both men and women and it would be worthwhile exploring in the future, as suggested before, whether “Life goals” can be included when examining motherhood motivation. For example, in a study by Roberts, O'Donnell and Robins (2004) major life goals were defined as a person’s aspirations to shape his/her life such as being
married, having children, attaining an affluent lifestyle and having a successful career.

The desire to have children falls under the domain of relationship life goals and it is suggested that exploring life goals and their relation to childbearing might be a valuable next step for future research. It is envisaged that motherhood motivation should not be measured on its own, but rather as a component of a larger investigation.

### 8.1 Implications for Counselling Practice

The results of the present study may assist in the development of professional practice. Professionals need to understand the complexity of motherhood motivation and the ambivalence that some women might feel. Becoming a mother is not as straightforward today as it used to be in the 1970s when women had fewer choices available to them. Women who enter counselling when they are confused about whether to have children or not need to be treated with an open mind and respect while being supported to come to a decision that’s best for them (Gerson, 1980).

Professionals need to view wishes of motherhood or no motherhood as both being acceptable in our society. Motherhood depends on a woman’s financial circumstances, whether she is in a relationship with a partner who also wishes to have children, and on how important it is for her to focus on career aspirations that might impact upon her ability to devote her time to having a family. Also, factors such as whether her job offers maternity leave and the security of going back to her work after maternity leave can affect a woman’s decision to have a child. Professionals such as counselling psychologists need to be aware of all these issues when seeing women who feel ambivalent about starting a family.

Understanding motivation to motherhood has important implications for family life educators and therapists (Caron & Wynn, 1992). Therapists need to help women initiate discussions about becoming parents and what it means to be a mother. It is important that there are educational programs on fertility awareness so that if women are childless it is due to informed decisions rather than due to unexpected infertility. Caron and Wynn stated that motherhood is related to one’s sense of self and if women find themselves being infertile their identity and self-concept can be affected. Therefore, it is vital that professionals in the counselling field help women discuss views on motherhood with an open mind.

Also, Caron and Wynn (1992) argued the number of visits to fertility services
has dramatically increased and many infertile couples seek therapy while seeking alternative methods of reproduction that can be emotionally and financially very draining. They argued that family therapists need to be prepared to deal with problems of infertility and need to provide information about treatment and educate couples about the psychological consequences of infertility.

Helping individuals become more conscious of what motivates them to have children might assist in more couples having children (Gibbs & Gorman, 2002). The decision of whether to have a child will always be one of the most important decisions anyone makes and the challenge is for professionals to help individuals make informed decisions rather than allowing time and biology to make it for them.

Finally, it is vital that professionals highlight the enriching and positive aspects of becoming a parent rather than focusing only on the difficulties regarding having and raising children. Forming a family is valuable, life enhancing and develops one’s, identity and self-growth in a way that no other life aspiration can.
Chapter 9: Final Comments

In summary, this thesis indicated that the factors examined contributed to a significant degree to some variation in motherhood motivation, but cannot fully explain what motivates women to have children. This investigation suggests that it is difficult measuring motherhood motivation and it may be that the most important motive is the most deeply repressed (Hoffman & Hoffman, 1973). It might even be so obvious that the respondent does not think to name it (Hoffman & Hoffman). Motherhood motivation, as human motivation, is a phenomenon that will always be difficult to measure (King, 1995).

This study suggests that there is a need to redefine motherhood motivation. Cannold (2005) suggested humans find satisfaction and meaning in balanced lives that are dedicated to the pursuit of both pleasure and mastery. Parenting is one way to enjoy the pleasure of human relationships and she argued that a measure of how women value life satisfaction and having meaningful lives is necessary.

It is very important to be aware of what motivates women to have children because there are enormous socio-economic consequences on a social level and emotional consequences on an individual level. Some women can regret not having children and feel unfulfilled if they have not had children. Our legislators need to make it possible for parents to raise their children without having to sacrifice their commitment to equality, their relationships with one another, their careers and financial security.

The treatment of infertility continues to develop and there are scientists nowadays who hope that one day they might find a way to determine each woman’s reproductive age (Gibbs & Gorman, 2002). For example, there is a hope that a woman could take a test at 23 to predict how fertile she will be at 40 so that she might then be more planful about her childbearing. Another research initiative involves discovering the molecular process that makes eggs age and then intervening to slow down the process and so prolong the childbearing period (Gibbs & Gorman).

Recently there have also been some other new directions in fertility treatment (McLean, 2004). For example, the Queensland Fertility Group (QFC) in Australia is
working on a new technique that targets a woman’s eggs with the aim of “freshening up” old eggs in women aged 37 and older (McLean). The procedure is called ‘mitochondrial transfer and injection’. The QFC clinic was the first one to use this procedure in late 2003 and Taiwan is the only country that uses this procedure as part of its fertility treatment (McLean).

However, having children is not the only fulfilment for most women, as we live in transitional times and we are a transitional generation (Cannold, 2005). Many women feel pressured to excel in all aspects of womanhood (Haussegger, 2005), however, despite the tremendous pressure for women to “have it all”, it is often a myth that this is feasible (Haussegger).

In conclusion, as Australia’s fertility rate is below replacement, there needs to be government initiatives and policy changes to support women and their partners in having children. This investigation highlighted that women are eager to have children, and most of them would like to have two children but it is rather their concern about the indirect impact of children upon their lives and freedom that might prevent them from having them. Nowadays most women are not fearful of being ostracised by society if they decide to remain childless and they seem to be well aware of the potential health risks of childlessness due to delaying motherhood.

There are also other factors impacting on women’s decisions to have a family such as being in a stable committed relationship and having had positive childhood experiences. The current investigation also highlighted the importance of fathers’ parenting in a woman’s life adding to the belief that sustaining intact families can help raise healthy future generations. Our society needs to support couples in having families by providing family friendly work environments, maternal and paternity leave, and community programs that support couples with child raising, their relationships and the every day pressures of today’s ‘fast paced materialistic’ society that urges couples to combine both employment and parenthood in a quest to sustain an enriched lifestyle.

Initiatives aimed at creating a societal belief that motherhood can be an enriching experience maintained by community and government supports will potentially result in a higher number of couples embracing parenthood in a timely manner. Motherhood motivation is a multifaceted concept, and this study has pointed to its complexity and to some of the ways that might be adopted to help our community
understand, collaborate and encourage women to embrace motherhood while being able to participate in, and contribute to, significant other roles.
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New Jersey: Jason Aronson.


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

**Early attachment.**

Attachment refers to the tie between the infant and the primary caregiver, which develops gradually during the early months and years of the infant’s life (Klaus, Kennell, & Klaus, 1995). Attachment evolves slowly, and refers to the lasting and intimate relationship that develops gradually between a baby and its primary caregiver. The objects of the child’s attachment are its caregivers who hopefully respond consistently, predictably and appropriately to the infant’s needs. This early attachment process continues throughout life, so that adult attachment can be defined as the tendency of an individual to make an effort to maintain proximity and contact with one or more individuals whom the individual views as providing safety and security (Sperling & Berman, 1994).

John Bowlby, a British psychoanalyst, developed attachment theory from the 1950s onwards. He defined attachment as the emotional bond characterised by the instinctual effort of the infant to maintain closeness to a specific attachment figure, for example the mother, for the satisfaction of his primary needs such as hunger, thirst and affection (Bowlby, 1973). Bowlby maintained that the infant contributes actively to the attachment relationship with the primary caregiver, by exhibiting instinctive attachment behaviors such as crying, smiling and grasping in order to maintain proximity with the attachment figure, with the aim of feeling secure and safe. As the caregiver responds to the child’s needs, survival is enhanced (Bowlby, 1973).

John Bowlby’s interest in attachment was initiated by his war-time work with mother-child separations. These observations of infant behaviour led him to attempt to explain how infants become emotionally attached to their primary caregiver (usually the mother), and why they become distressed when separated from her. He suggested that the infant has the need to attach from birth, and a child is primarily attached to one main primary figure, usually the mother. According to Bowlby, fathers and siblings are generally secondary attachment figures. He maintained that by ten months of age most infants can be attached to multiple figures, but at times of distress they seek comfort from their primary attachment figure (Feeney & Noller, 1996).

According to Bowlby (1969) the infant changes his behaviour with the attachment figure over the course of infancy, and although underlying needs remain
the same, the way these needs are expressed changes, depending upon developed attachment styles. Bowlby maintained that childhood experiences with the caregiver are of paramount importance for personality development, and form the basis for the development of internal mental working models (mental representations) of self and others (Bowlby, 1969). Different experiences lead to differences in attachment styles, with the most basic categories being secure and insecure attachment styles.

*Securely* attached children have a positive self-image due to their experience with a caring, supportive and encouraging primary caregiver, who has enabled them to develop a sense of self-worth and trust in self and others. Such children develop a degree of autonomy and are able to explore the environment with confidence. These children are likely to develop mental representations of secure relationships, and generally such positive behaviours, thoughts and feelings persist in future relationships and situations (Bowlby, 1969).

Bowlby maintained (1973) that appropriate self-reliance is a product of a supportive family, which respects the child’s rights, sense of responsibility and ability to deal with the world, and such experience forms a secure base for the child. A healthy self-reliant person is happy to provide others who are close to her with support when needed, and is prepared to accept help from people close to her when she needs support. Accessibility and support of attachment figures is the basis of the development of a secure and self-reliant personality.

On the other hand, children with insensitive or inconsistent caregivers are likely to develop schemata of insecure relationships, and these children tend to develop personalities with lower resilience and more vulnerability to insecurities (Bowlby, 1969). Problems with adverse patterns of care giving are reflected in the different *insecure* attachment styles. Ainsworth was the first to give a definition of three different types of insecure attachment styles: Anxious-avoidant, anxious-resistant, and disorganized attachment styles.

Mary Ainsworth and her colleagues collaborated and expanded upon Bowlby’s theory. Through investigations in Uganda and U.S.A, they were able to identify different attachment styles based on systematic observations in a laboratory setting, using a procedure that was called the “strange situation” (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978).

The “strange situation” was designed to create mild to increasing stress in the
infant, so that changes in the infant’s behaviour could be observed. In a 20-minute session, the mother and a one-year-old child were introduced into a playroom with a stranger (the experimenter). Then the mother was asked to leave the child with the ‘stranger’ and return in three minutes. After the reunion with the child, both mother and 'stranger' left the room, and the child remained alone. After three minutes the mother and the child were reunited. This was videotaped, focusing on the child’s behaviour during the separations and reunions (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Holmes, 1993).

On the basis of this experiment, Ainsworth and her colleagues (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Feeney & Noller, 1996) identified four main infant-mother attachment styles. Children identified as having a secure attachment style were sociable and engaged in high levels of exploration. According to Ainsworth, when securely attached infants cried on separation, it was because of the mother’s absence, and when the mother returned, the child actively sought contact with her, was easily soothed and crying was reduced. Children identified as having an anxious/avoidant style responded with defensiveness and avoided close contact. These infants were usually not distressed during separations, and any distress was found to be due to being alone rather than to the mother’s absence, since they were found to react the same way to both the stranger and the mother. Upon reunion they failed to greet the mother, failed to cling, avoided the parent, and focused on toys when distressed. Children identified as having an anxious/resistant style were infants who before separation sought proximity to the mother while distressed, but were not easily comforted, and after the mother returned, were angry with her and resistant to her. Insecurely attached-disorganised children responded with ambivalence and displayed anxious behaviours such as clinging and rejection. Ainsworth and her colleagues found that this style reflected the greatest insecurity and at reunion these infants showed confusion and gave contradictory responses such as gazing away, staring, and crying after they had calmed down (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Feeney & Noller, 1996).

In summary, securely attached infants feel safe and secure in their mother’s presence, whereas insecurely attached infants feel confused, ambivalent, or hostile. Until the 1980s, little research was conducted into adult attachment, with most of the research being focused on childhood attachments. However, more recently the following researchers extended Ainsworth’s childhood research and began to address the issue of adult attachment styles.
APPENDIX B
Demographic Questionnaire for Interviewees

Please complete the following by circling the appropriate number. If more than one response applies to you under a specific question please choose both.

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<tr>
<th>1. AGE IN YEARS</th>
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<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
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<tr>
<th>2. WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT MARITAL STATUS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Separated/Divorced</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify_______________)</td>
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<th>3. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU IN YOUR PRESENT ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP?</th>
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<td>Not at all satisfied</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
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<th>4. PLEASE SHOW THE FAMILY BACKGROUND SITUATION THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR FAMILY SITUATION</th>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived with my mother more than with my father</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived with my father more than with my mother</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised by relatives</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Raised by non-relatives</td>
<td>5</td>
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### 5. WHAT IS YOUR RELIGION?

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<td>Protestant</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
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### 6. EDUCATION

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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tafe/ College</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please Specify)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working full-time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working part-time</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working casually</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying full-time</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying part-time</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House duties</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please Specify)</td>
<td>7</td>
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</table>

### 8. WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL GROSS INCOME?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0-$9,999</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000-$19,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000-$29,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>$30,000-$39,999</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000-$49,000</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$59,000</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Range</td>
<td>Value</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
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<tr>
<td>$60,000- $69,000</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000+</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. CULTURAL BACKGROUND

What is the cultural background to which you feel you most strongly belong to (e.g. Aboriginal, Greek-Australian, Chinese)?

What is your mother’s cultural background?

What is your father’s cultural background?

11. DO YOU HAVE ANY CHILDREN?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes (Specify no: __________)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step-children if any (Specify no: __________)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol

Hello, I am Filia Papadimitriou…..thank you for coming….the interview will take approximately one hour….Please let me know if you need a break throughout the interview…Before we start, have you read and signed the informed consent form? The aim of this research is to understand what motivates women to have children. Some women may gain more self-awareness by discussing their experiences with an objective person. This interview allows me to hear your views about what motivates you to have children. In other words I want to hear your story. I want to tape record what you say, so I don’t miss any important information you give me. So, if you agree I will turn the tape recorder on and then we can start the interview. The interview will be identified by a code number, rather than your name. However, my supervisor may listen to it for quality control purposes. Once the research has been completed the recordings on the digital tape recorder will be erased. Do you have any questions to ask me before we begin?

QUESTIONS

1) Motivation to have children
   ▪ Do you intend to have children some time in the future?
     I. If yes, what factors will influence your decision to begin having children?
     II. If not, what factors influence your decision to not have children?
   ▪ What are some of your reasons for wanting or not wanting to have children some time in the future?

2) Costs/ benefits
   ▪ What do you see as the advantages of having children? What do you see as the disadvantages of having children?

3) Career/ Education
   ▪ What is your career? How do you think your career has affected your motivation to become a mother?
   ▪ What is your education? How do you think your commitment to study has affected your motivation to become a mother?

4) Family- of- origin issues/ Attachment
   ▪ Tell me about your childhood. How do you view it?
   ▪ Do you think there is anything in your past that has affected your motivation to become a mother?
   ▪ What was your relationship with your mother like when you were growing up? And now?
   ▪ What was your relationship with your father like when you were growing up? And now?
   ▪ How are you alike/ different from your mother?
   ▪ How are you alike/ different from your father?
   ▪ How has your mother affected your motivation to becoming a mother?
• How has your father affected your motivation to becoming a mother?

5) Feminism
• How do you feel women are treated in comparison to men in our society? Do you feel there is equality? How does your view on equality between sexes influence your motivation to have children?

6) Sex Role Identity
• Would you describe yourself as supporting the ‘traditionally feminine’ view, which suggests that the male is the primary breadwinner and the woman the primary caregiver. How does this view affect your motivation to become a parent?

7) Fertility Education
• What’s your view on a woman’s fertility? By what age do you think women should have children?
• How does your view on this matter affect your decision relating to timing of childbearing?
• How did you learn about reproduction and the details of fertility/infertility?

Note: Some questions have been taken from Slosar (2003)
APPENDIX D

Letter for interviewees

Date

Ms……

Dear Ms……

Re: Research on Motivation to Motherhood

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study. This letter is to confirm details of our meeting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>__________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>_________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time:</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If there is an emergency and you need to reschedule the meeting please contact me on 9214 8025 or 0417 103 313 or email me on fpapadimitriou@swin.edu.au.

The research study is conducted as part of a Doctorate in Psychology at Swinburne University. The main aim of the study is to explore how childhood experiences, attachment style, fertility misconceptions, feministic attitudes and sex role identity contribute to parenthood motivation.

While research is not a substitute for counselling or therapy, some people gain some clarity and more awareness from having another person listen to their experiences. After the interview I will send you: a) a summary of your interview; and b) a summary of the research results after all interviews and analyses have been completed. Any information you provide will not be linked to your name. Consent forms will be stored separately to your recorded interviews.

I will meet with you approximately for an hour. In the meantime, if you have any queries, please feel free to call me (9214 8025 or 0417 103 313) or either my supervisor at Dr Roger Cook on 9214 8358.

I look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely,

Filia Papadimitriou
INFORMATION FOR THE INTERVIEWEES

I am conducting a research to understand women’s motivation to motherhood. As a participant you will be asked to participate in an interview.

This study aims to extend our understanding of what motivates women to have children. It will explore how childhood experiences, attachment style, fertility misconceptions, feminist attitudes and sex role identity contribute to motherhood motivation. Such an understanding may help us become more aware of fertility trends, and factors motivating women to become parents. Also, this study aims to help us understand what changes need to be made in our society in order to support women in having children.

The interview will approximately take an hour. Since I would like to get an accurate picture of your opinion, and I won’t be taking notes verbatim, I would like to tape the interview so that I can listen to it afterwards and therefore transcribe later. While the recorded interview may also be used by my supervisor, it will be identified by a code number, rather than your name. The recording will be destroyed once the research is completed.

Your interview with those from other participants will be used to complete a research thesis for a Doctorate degree in Psychology at Swinburne University. All of the information that you provide will be confidential in that it will not be linked to your name. While quotes from the interviews will be used in the thesis (and possibly subsequent publications such as professionals journals), quotes will be typically attributed to participants by demographics such as age and gender.

This project has been approved by Swinburne University Human Research Ethics Committee, and all research is conducted in accordance with the Code of Ethics of the Australian Psychological Society.

If any of the issues raised in this project causes you any concern or distress, you can contact the following: Swinburne Psychology Centre on 9214 8653 or Lifeline on 131 114.

Any questions regarding this project can be directed to the Senior Investigator, Dr Roger Cook, of the Department of Psychology /Faculty of Life & Social Sciences on 9214 8358.

In the event that you have any complaint about the way you have been treated during the study, or a query that the researcher has not been able to satisfy, you may contact:

The Chair  
Human Research Ethics Committee  
Swinburne University of Technology  
PO Box 218  
HAWTHORN, VIC 3122  
Phone: (03) 9214 5223
Any complaint made will be treated in confidence, investigated fully and the participant informed of the outcome.

You are free to withdraw from this study and to discontinue participation at any time up to the analysis of data, without giving a reason. If you agree to participate please sign the accompanying consent forms.

If you wish to know the findings of this study, a summary of the findings will be available by 2007, and you can contact Filia Papadimitriou on 9214 8025.

Any questions regarding this project can be directed to Filia Papadimitriou on 9214 8025 or to my supervisor, Dr Roger Cook on 9214 8358.

Thanking you again for your participation.

Filia Papadimitriou
CONSENT FORM

I _____________________ have read (or, as appropriate, have had read to me) and understood the information above. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I give permission for my interview to be recorded.

I agree to participate in the interview realising that I may withdraw at any time.

I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or provided to other researchers on the condition that anonymity is preserved and that I cannot be identified. I understand that the research data gathered from this project will be reported as part of a doctoral thesis.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT (please print)

-------------------------------------------------------

SIGNATURE

-------------------------------------------------------

Date: -----------
APPENDIX E

ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE
“PROJECT TITLE: MOTHERHOOD MOTIVATION”
Principal Investigators:
Dr Roger Cook (Research Project Supervisor)
Filia Papadimitriou (Doctor of Counselling Psychology student)

Dear Participant,

My name is Filia Papadimitriou and I am conducting research as a part of a Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology at Swinburne University under the supervision of Dr Roger Cook. I am pleased to invite you to participate in my study on “Motivation to Motherhood”. To explore this I am looking for women between the ages of 24-44 years who have been in a relationship for at least 6 months and who may or may not have children.

It will take you approximately 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire. This study aims to extend understanding of what motivates women to have or not have children. The fertility rate in most countries including Australia has been falling since 1961 and since the mid 1970s has been below population replacement rate. Motherhood motivation is a very interesting and valuable research topic as having and raising children is essential for the survival of human species. This project aims to help us understand fertility trends and various factors (e.g., education, career, childhood experiences) that may affect a woman’s motivation to have children. It also aims to raise awareness on fertility education and social changes (e.g., better child care facilities, better maternity leave benefits) that are necessary to help women be motivated to have children and to consequently result in an increase in fertility rates.

Please read the questionnaire carefully and respond without thinking too much as your first choice is often the best. The questionnaire consists of statements and questions requiring you to select the appropriate answer. There are no right or wrong answers. You should try to answer as honestly as possible.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and your completion of the questionnaire will be taken to imply informed consent. If you choose to participate, any information obtained will be completely confidential and your anonymity will be assured. Information collected from the questionnaire will be presented as group data so no individual features can be identified. Results of this study may appear in psychological publications, but will only be reported as group data.

Participating in this research should not cause any discomfort. However, if
completion of the questionnaire raises issues for you that you may want to discuss with a counsellor, there is low cost counselling available at Swinburne Psychology Clinic on 9214 8653 or you may wish to utilise telephone counselling services such as Lifeline on 13 11 14. If you live outside Australia, please visit http://www.lifeline.web.za/help.htm to find on how you can contact a telephone crisis help line in your country.

Any questions regarding this project can be directed to Filia Papadimitriou (Student Investigator) on +61 3 9214 8025 or/and at FPapadimitriou@swin.edu.au or Dr Roger Cook (Supervisor, Principal Investigator) on +61 3 9214 8653 or/and at RCook@swin.edu.au.

If you have any concerns about the way you have been treated during this study, or if you have any questions that my supervisor has been unable to satisfy please contact:

The Chair
Human Research Ethics Committee
Swinburne University of Technology
PO Box 218
HAWTHORN, VIC 3122
Phone: +61 3 9214 5223

Please retain this information sheet for your records. If you are interested and feel you can help me, please complete this online survey by clicking on the link below. Your participation is very important and is greatly appreciated. Thanking you in advance for your time and assistance!

Warm regards,

Filia Papadimitriou
DPsych Student

CLICK HERE TO START
### Demographic Information

Please complete the following by circling the appropriate number. If more than one response applies to you under a specific question please choose both.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. AGE IN YEARS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-29 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT MARITAL STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married/De-facto 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated/Divorced 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify_______________) 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU IN YOUR PRESENT ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all satisfied 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>4. PLEASE SHOW THE FAMILY BACKGROUND SITUATION THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR FAMILY SITUATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grew up living with both parents 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived with my mother more than with my father 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived with my father more than with my mother 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised by relatives 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised by non-relatives 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. WHAT IS YOUR RELIGION?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify______)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>6. EDUCATION</th>
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<td>Less than high school</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tafe/ College</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please Specify ____________)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. EMPLOYMENT STATUS</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working full-time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working part-time</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working casually</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying full-time</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying part-time</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House duties</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please Specify ____________)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL GROSS INCOME?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0-$9,999</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000- $19,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000- $29,999</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000- $39,999</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000- $49,000</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000- $59,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary Range</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000- $69,000</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000+</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9. CULTURAL BACKGROUND

What is the cultural background to which you feel you most strongly belong to (e.g, Aboriginal, Greek-Australian, Chinese)?

What is your mother’s cultural background?

What is your father’s cultural background?

### 10. DO YOU LIVE IN AUSTRALIA?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, were you born in Australia?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you weren’t born in Australia, how many years have you been in Australia?

(Please specify :_____) and what is your country of origin? (Please specify:_______)

If you don’t live in Australia in what country do you live (Please specify:_______)

and how long have you lived in that country? (Please specify:_______)

### 11. DO YOU HAVE ANY CHILDREN?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes (Specify no:_________)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step-children if any (Specify no:_________) | 3 |
This questionnaire lists various attitudes and behaviours of parents. As you remember your MOTHER (OR PERSON WHO MOST FILLED THAT ROLE) in your first 16 years, would you please circle the appropriate number next to each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very like</th>
<th>Moderately like</th>
<th>Moderately unlike</th>
<th>Very unlike</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Spoke to me with a warm and friendly voice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did not help me as much as I needed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Let me do those things I liked doing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Seemed emotionally cold to me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Appeared to understand my problems and worries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Was affectionate to me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Liked me to make my own decisions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Did not want me to grow up</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Tried to control everything I did</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Invaded my privacy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Enjoyed talking things over with me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Frequently smiled at me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Tended to baby me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Did not seem to understand what I needed or wanted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Let me decide things for myself</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Made me feel I wasn’t wanted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Could make me feel better when I was upset</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Did not talk with me very much</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Tried to make me dependent on her</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Felt I could not look after myself unless she was around</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Gave me much as much freedom I wanted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Let me go out as often as I wanted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Was overprotective of me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Did not praise me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Let me dress in any way I pleased</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PBI
This questionnaire lists various attitudes and behaviours of parents. As you remember your **FATHER (OR PERSON WHO MOST FILLED THAT ROLE)** in your first 16 years, would you please circle the appropriate number next to each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very like</th>
<th>Moderately like</th>
<th>Moderately unlike</th>
<th>Very unlike</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Spoke to me with a warm and friendly voice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did not help me as much as I needed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Let me do those things I liked doing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Seemed emotionally cold to me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Appeared to understand my problems and worries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Was affectionate to me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Liked me to make my own decisions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Did not want me to grow up</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Tried to control everything I did</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Invaded my privacy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Enjoyed talking things over with me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Frequently smiled at me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Tended to baby me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Did not seem to understand what I needed or wanted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Let me decide things for myself</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Made me feel I wasn’t wanted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Could make me feel better when I was upset</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Did not talk with me very much</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Tried to make me dependent on him</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Felt I could not look after myself unless he was around.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Tried to make me dependent on him</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Let me go out as often as I wanted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Was overprotective of me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Did not praise me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Let me dress in any way I pleased</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Personal Description Questionnaire”

This task asks you to describe yourself. Below is a list of personality characteristics. Please use these characteristics to describe yourself. Indicate on a scale from 1 to 7 how true of you these various characteristics are. Please do not leave any characteristics unmarked.

**Example:** Happy

Mark (1) If it is NEVER or ALMOST NEVER TRUE that you are happy
(2) If it is USUALLY NOT TRUE that you are happy.
(3) If it is SOMETIMES BUT INFREQUENTLY TRUE that you are happy.
(4) If it is OCCASIONALLY TRUE that you are happy.
(5) If it is OFTEN TRUE that you are happy.
(6) If it is USUALLY TRUE that you are happy.
(7) If it is ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE that you are happy.

Thus if you feel it is SOMETIMES BUT INFREQUENTLY TRUE that you are happy, you should write a (3) next to happy (3).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never or</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Always or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>almost</td>
<td>not true</td>
<td>but</td>
<td>truly</td>
<td>true</td>
<td>or almost</td>
<td>almost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>never true</td>
<td>infrequently</td>
<td>truly</td>
<td>true</td>
<td>true</td>
<td>true</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>20.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Tense</td>
<td>22.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Needs approval</td>
<td>25.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Show off</td>
<td>27.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>30.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>32.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Self-sufficient</td>
<td>34.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Trait</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Athletic</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dreamy</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Humane</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Inefficient</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Big-headed</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Swears</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Fussy</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Complicated</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Crude</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lively</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Gracious</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Hurried</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Soft-hearted</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Rebellious</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mechanical ability</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LFAIS

Please circle the number that most closely indicates your feeling about each statement from **Strongly Disagree** (1) to **Strongly Agree** (6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Women should be considered as seriously as men for becoming Prime Minister of the country.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Although women can be good leaders, men make better leaders.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A woman should have the same job opportunities as a man.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Men should respect women more than they currently do.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Many women in the work force are taking jobs away from men who need the jobs more.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Doctors need to take women’s health concerns more seriously.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Women have been treated unfairly on the basis of their gender throughout most of human history.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Women are already given equal opportunities with men in all important sectors of their lives.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Women in this country are treated as second class citizens.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Women can best overcome discrimination by doing the best that they can at their jobs, not by wasting time with political activity.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please answer the following question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>Not at All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To what extend to you consider yourself a feminist?</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please circle one the following statements that most applies to you.

I consider myself:

1. A committed feminist currently active in the Women’s Movement
2. A committed feminist
3. Feminist
4. I agree with all of the objectives of the feminist movement, but do not consider myself a feminist
5. I agree with most of the objectives of the feminist movement, but do not consider myself a feminist
6. I agree with some of the objectives of the feminist movement, but tend to be somewhat traditional
7. I do not consider myself a feminist at all. I am quite traditional
8. I do not consider myself a feminist at all and I believe that feminists are harmful to family life and undermine relations between men and women.
**AFS Questionnaire**

Please answer the following statements while using a scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Women over 40 years old have a 50% chance of getting pregnant.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Most men have greater than 25% abnormal sperm.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Women who have many sexual partners have their fertility reduced.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Between 20–30 years old age women’s fertility does not alter.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A woman’s fertility starts to dive at the age of 27 years old.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Men’s sperm count remains fairly constant until about 60 years old when it starts to drop.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. IVF (In-vitro-fertilisation) improves egg quality.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. IVF can be helpful for men with a low sperm count and who want to be fathers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Men can have antibodies in their blood, which attack their own sperm.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>IVF has a good record of producing pregnancies in women as old as 45 years old.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Smoking reduces men’s sperm count.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Smoking reduces women’s fertility.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Women can easily get pregnant in their late 30s.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>There is a risk of not being able to get pregnant after having an abortion.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>It’s a myth to think that women can delay having babies until their late 30s.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>The process of making a woman’s eggs begins before her birth.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>A 35-year-old woman has only 15% chance per cycle of getting pregnant.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>The miscarriage rate for a 40-year-old woman is close to 50% chance.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>IVF offers a less than 10% chance of resulting in a baby for a 40-year-old woman.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IPM

1. How eagerly do you anticipate having children?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Hardly at all</th>
<th>Just a little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Fairly much</td>
<td>Quite a bit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>Extremely much</td>
<td>More than anything</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Please rank the following adult activities (1= highest, 10= lowest) in terms of:
   A. Their value to society
   B. Their requiring individual creativity
   C. Your personal interest in pursuing them

   Specifically, start with the A ranking and look at the list below, decide which is the most important activity in value to society and give a value of 1, then decide which is the next most important activity in value to society and give a value of 2 and so on. Go on until you reach 10, then move onto B and C rankings. Complete these in the same way.

   Remember, the first, highest ranked activity is given “1” and the lowest ranked activity is given a “10”. Use every number from 1 through 10 within Column A, Column B, and Column C; that is use a different number for each activity in each column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A ranking value to society</th>
<th>B ranking requires creativity</th>
<th>C ranking personal interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Art, music, or writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Child raising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Community service (i.e., church, school, scouts)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Foreign travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Health services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Political activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. When you think about having children, how appealing is each of the following aspects of parenthood? (Circle the number that corresponds to your answer).

1. Extremely unappealing
2. Very unappealing
3. Somewhat unappealing
4. Indifferent
5. Somewhat appealing
6. Very appealing
7. Extremely appealing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Pregnancy
2. Childbirth
3. Having an infant
4. Having a pre-school child
5. Having a school age child
6. Having a grown child |

4. Assuming no complications occur, how many children would you like to have? (If “none” write “0”) _____________________________

5. Assuming that your doctor advises you that childbirth is risky to your health would you (Answer both parts a and b). Please circle correct answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Be inclined to risk having at least one child?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Probably attempt to adopt one or more children?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Assuming that having children would entail financial hardship, which of the following would most accurately describe your decision about having a child? (Choose only one). Please tick box.

| 1. Try to conceive a child |
| 2. Postpone |
| 3. Not have a child |
7. If there were a considerable risk that your child would not be normal, would you be inclined to take the risk? (Please tick only one box)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No, but would go ahead if pregnancy accidentally occurred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>No, would abort if pregnancy accidentally occurred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Assuming that you already have the number of children indicated in Question 4, and pregnancy occurred, would you consider an abortion? Please tick box.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Please state your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the number that represents your answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree very much</th>
<th>Disagree a little</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree a little</th>
<th>Agree very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A woman is biologically conditioned to have a child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>If a woman fails to have a child, she violates her true nature.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>A woman who doesn’t have children has to be prepared to face suspicion and/or criticism.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>When a woman becomes pregnant she is no longer in control of her own body.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>A woman who adopts her children loses out on an important mode of self-fulfilment that she would get from</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the experiences of pregnancy and childbirth.

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>A woman who adopts her children loses the special bond with them that she would get from bearing them herself.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>A woman who adopts her children loses the opportunity to transmit her genetic heritage to her children.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Motherhood severely limits a woman’s opportunities for achievement and self-expression.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>A woman should not have children if her mate is not prepared to share fully in the chores associated with raising them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>A woman who does not expect to marry should still plan to have children and raise them herself.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Here are some reasons for wanting a child. For each item, please indicate how important that particular reason is in your own thinking.

A REASON FOR HAVING CHILDREN IS:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Doesn’t apply</th>
<th>Not at all important to me</th>
<th>Not too important to me</th>
<th>Moderately important to me</th>
<th>Very important to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To feel really useful and needed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To give life meaning.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To experience the honesty and freshness of children.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Because you can give someone your values and ideals.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>To be like other couples you will know.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Children add interest and spice to family life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A child brings a husband and wife closer.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>To participate in the miracle of birth.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>To have someone to stand by you when you are old.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>It’s part of being a grown woman.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>So that there will be one more person to help your family economically.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Because you might raise someone who could help change the world for the better.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Because being a parent is something you feel you can do well.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>To re-experience the world of childhood.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>To have someone to be proud of.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>To raise a child as you would like to have been brought up.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please go back now and put a check (x) to the left of the 3 items that best fit what you see as the main advantage of having children.
11. If you were to decide not to have children, or not to have more than a certain number, what would be the reasons? The following list includes some of the concerns people report about having children. For each item, please indicate how important that particular reason is in your own thinking and circle the number of the answer you choose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A PROBLEM WITH HAVING CHILDREN IS:</th>
<th>Doesn’t apply</th>
<th>Not at all important to me</th>
<th>Not too important to me</th>
<th>Moderately important to me</th>
<th>Very important to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It makes it difficult to pursue a career.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It involves too many boring routines.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. There are too many responsibilities involved.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The problem of overpopulation.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The lack of freedom to do as you please.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. People have them for selfish reasons.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. They might turn out badly through no fault of your own.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. They might turn out badly because you didn’t do a good job.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. It is expensive to raise them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. You are not as free to end a bad marriage.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. It interferes with the husband-wife relationship.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Pregnancy and childbirth are unpleasant.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The world is a mess so why bring someone into it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Children are not particularly fun to be with.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The loss of privacy.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. You are not as free to travel.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. You are not as free to leave the house.
18. It is a lot of work.
19. It involves unpleasant work.
20. You no longer feel young.
21. It’s just doing what everyone expects.
22. It is physically tiring.
23. It leaves you too little time for yourself.

**Please go back now and put a check (X) to the left of the 3 items that best fit what you see as the main problems with having children.**