Effect of Employment on Generativity in Married Mothers

Tracy Sierra Dern

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsrepository.llu.edu/etd

Part of the Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation
Dern, Tracy Sierra, "Effect of Employment on Generativity in Married Mothers" (2002). Loma Linda University Electronic Theses, Dissertations & Projects. 603.
https://scholarsrepository.llu.edu/etd/603
LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
Graduate School

Effect of Employment on Generativity in Married Mothers

By

Tracy Sierra Dern

A Doctoral Project submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctorate of Psychology

August 2002
Each person whose signature appears below certifies that this dissertation in his or her opinion is adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree Doctor of Psychology.

Gloria Cowan, Professor of Psychology

Louis Jenkins, Professor of Psychology

Janet Sonne, Professor of Psychology
TABLES

1. Demographics of Participants ................................................................. 32
2. Occupation Demographics ........................................................................ 32
3. Quality of Relationships ............................................................................ 34
4. Words Used to Describe Self ..................................................................... 43
5. Facets of Generativity Cited ..................................................................... 45
ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTORAL PROJECT

Effect of Employment on Generativity in Married Mothers

by

Tracy Sierra Dern

Doctor of Psychology, Graduate Program in Psychology
Loma Linda University, August 2002
Dr. Gloria Cowan, Chairperson

Generativity is Erikson’s seventh stage of psychosocial development in his life-cycle theory, but he postulates different ways of achieving generativity for males and females. Erikson proposed that a woman achieves a sense of generativity from raising a family. However, over the last twenty years social roles have changed and there is an increasing number of women developing careers. It is important to determine whether the role of employment has an effect on generativity in women. This study had ten women participants: five married with children, homemakers and five married with children, professionals. Using a semi-structured interview, the participants shared about their sense of generativity, their sources of generativity, and their view on choosing or not choosing a career. The results of this sample showed that employed women do have more sources of generativity, but that homemakers are able to find other sources of generativity besides their children.
Introduction

During the twentieth century the role of women in the United States has evolved from traditional women who could not vote or own land to more egalitarian roles. A woman could elevate to the position of becoming the Secretary of State. At the beginning of the century, women became involved in political movements with prohibition, slavery, and women’s suffrage. During World War II women entered the workforce in large numbers, and women have maintained the momentum that has brought about more acceptance of egalitarian roles for both genders. It is no longer uncommon to have a two-income family.

The literature narrates a continuing debate as to whether a woman is more fulfilled being employed outside of the home verses being a homemaker (Josselson, 1987, 1996). Some literature supports the theory that being employed outside the home provides an opportunity for women to have an identity, develop a sense of accomplishment, be independent, feel productive, and be creative (Cassidy & Warren, 1996; Whitbourne & VanManen, 1996). The opposing literature states that a woman can achieve most of these feelings without working outside of the home (Graglia, 1995). This literature suggest that a woman is given the opportunity to be creative, have an identity, develop a sense of productivity, and a sense of accomplishment by raising children.

The debate raises issues about generativity. Erickson defines generativity as the longest psychosocial developmental stage, lasting more than thirty years. This is the stage when one “…establishes a working commitment and perhaps begins a new family and devotes time and energy to furthering its healthy and productive life. During this
period, employment and family relationships confront one with the duties of caretaking and a widening range of obligations and responsibilities, interests, and celebrations" (Erikson, 1982, P. 111). For example, are homemakers missing a component for generativity? When both groups of women reach retirement age will they feel different in their satisfaction and purpose in life? Ideas of generativity theory come from the context of caring for family and from employment (Erikson, 1993). Erikson postulated that men would gain generativity thorough their career and family responsibility, and women would gain generativity predominately from raising a family. Given the context for generativity theory, a further question is proposed, does employment outside the home contribute to generativity in women? In this study generativity will be defined as a sense of accomplishment and productivity that will establish a sense of commitment and purpose that contributes to others.

Background of the Problem

In the beginning of the century, men went to work and women stayed home to raise a family and take care of the house. Although women did not have the right to vote they were constantly involved in social reform such as prohibition, abolition and improving insane asylums (Evans, 1989). Women used their interpersonal networks to implement change and support the community. During World War II, when there was a shortage of labor in the factories, women increased their participation in the work force. Although not all women stayed in the workforce when the war was over, 22.5 percent of married women remained employed outside the home in 1950 (Goldin, 1991). After the war, during the baby boom, there was an increase in the number of people becoming “middle class” (Evans, 1989). People moved out to the suburbs, and needed electric
washers and dryers, automatic dishwashers, and a station wagon. These luxuries opened the way for some women to join the workforce to supplement their husband’s income. However there were still some women who were not employed outside of the home; they kept a “perfect” house for their family, spending up to 50 hours a week cleaning the house (Chira, 1998; Evans, 1989; Schor, 1991). With the new increased standard of cleanliness there was more time and effort required.

During the 1960s Betty Friedan wrote the book The Feminine Mystique which named an underlying feeling in women of a great void. Friedan stated that women were going to college and learning how to be successful wives, but they were not using their intelligence for anything important (Friedan, 1962). Colleges were offering classes on home economics which involved “…discussion groups on home management and the family, to prepare women to the adjustment to domestic life” (p.23). Women were actively discouraged from science courses; they were trapped in domesticity (Friedan, 1962). This lack of employment and vital interest and purpose for a woman was causing a great pain for half of the human race and Friedan termed it the Feminine Mystique. In staggering numbers women were turning to their doctors for tranquilizers, and having affairs because they understood that their activities were an attempt to fill empty time (Friedan, 1962).

During the late 1960s and 1970s there was an increased interest in the woman’s movement. In 1960, the Food and Drug Administration approved the birth control pill. Now that effective birth control was available, women had the option of delaying motherhood in pursuit of education and a career (Evans, 1989). In 1963, The Equal Pay Act passed, which prohibited differential pay rates for men and women who did the same
job. In 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act made employment discrimination on the bases of race and sex illegal. In 1972, Title Nine of the education amendments passed, which prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex in education, and the Equal Rights Amendment was approved in congress, though not ratified by the states (Donelson, 1999, p.6). In the 1980s women made tremendous gains on the employment front. In 1981 Sandra Day O'Connor was the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court, Sally Ride became the first woman in space, and Geraldine Ferraro was a candidate for vice-president of the United States (Donelson, 1999, p.6).

During the 1990s, there have been numerous women’s studies programs developed, and we have had a female Attorney General and Secretary of State appointed. The percent of employed women with children under age 18 was 76% in 1995 (Donelson, 1999). Many factors may explain the increase in women being employed outside of the home. Some of the factors may be: the need to supplement a husband’s income, an increase need for independent financial security, the devalued status of the housewife, the increased opportunity for women to succeed in the workforce, and the increase of single parent homes (Bala, 1998; Graglia, 1995).

Now that there are more women employed outside the home than there are homemakers, it is important to view the effects of employment on women. What are the negative and positive factors in employment? How can the negative factors be minimized and the positive factors be capitalized upon? And for the present study, what effect does employment have on levels of generativity in women?
Review of the Literature

Theories of Women and Life Cycle Changes among Women

Women seem to approach a developmental milestone during their twenties and thirties. They are faced with many choices such as to have a career or not, to get married or stay single, and whether or not to have children. Choosing a career effects the amount of time that can be devoted to family. In some cases if a woman delays having children to obtain a degree, or to compete in the job market and establish her career, the possibility of reproduction may be limited. On the other hand, if a woman chooses to focus on a family and is employed part-time or leaves the workforce all together, will she be missing an integral part of experience that contributes to her psychosocial development? Does the accumulation of benefits from employment such as autonomy, efficacy, purpose, social support, and giving to the community provide a valuable opportunity for development of identity and generativity?

Some previous theory has indicated that women value interpersonal relationships and intimacy more than the autonomy and achievement that men value (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1979). This is what Erikson stated. He believed that a woman should hold off developing her identity until she had established intimacy with her husband, then her identity would be developed and defined through him (Erikson, 1993). Some theorists have concluded that women will develop a sense of identity integrated with intimacy (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1979). However will this development of identity through intimacy carry over to a sense of generativity? Will the intimacy be enough for a woman at thirty to develop an identity but then lead to a feeling of stagnation in her late 40s and 50s when she has less intimacy because her children are becoming independent or have
moved away? Is this identity through intimacy, not autonomy and achievement, which lead to the ‘feminine mystique’, that Friedan (1963) describes?

During the 1950s there was a cultural milieu that encouraged women to focus on being a wife and mother rather than being an employed woman. Colleges offered a major in home economics for women so they wouldn’t become too overeducated to do housework (Friedan, 1963, p. 158). Although it has become more acceptable for women to work or pursue a career, it is still usually in a traditional women’s job thought “good for women” (Donelson, 1999). The traditional women’s jobs allow women to utilize their womanly skills of nurturing and teaching and have flexible geographic mobility. Traditional women feel that their job is second to being a wife and mother, and they will give up their job to follow a husband more than the husband will give up his job to follow her (Donelson, 1999). Traditionally, a woman plans her life with her family in the primary role, and her career is secondary. How does this effect a woman’s generativity?

Theoretical Foundation

Development psychology focuses on the emergence of personality and life stages through the life cycle. There has been great debate and contradiction in the literature about when a personality is formed, and if it is possible for it to change. Freud believed that development of the personality was completed by age five, and that the unresolved conflicts were just manifested throughout the rest of an individual’s life (Minter & Samuels, 1998). Later theorists such as Piaget and Erikson focused on adolescence as a crucial time of personality formation. Erikson expanded the stages of development beyond the Oedipal and psychosexual stages into a life-long social process with various stages to be overcome and revisited throughout the lifetime. Erikson (1993) suggested
that personality may not be a concrete construct, and that it can change or be modified through different conflicts as a person grows older. He proposed a stage-structured model that was not age-linked specifically, but was progressive in a cumulative manner. Erikson suggested that there are eight stages of psychosocial development and that each stage has a specific trait or task that is mastered.

These conflicts or crisis to be resolved are during which Erikson termed psychosocial stages. He suggested that although they are not age dependent, the crisis seems to be related to the environment or context that most people enter around the same time. There is an implication that life experiences and psychosocial development have a connected relationship. Erikson (1982) developed and modified his theory based on a "contextual conceptualization of developmental matters" (Erikson, 1982, p.157). He believed strongly that the society had a great impact on the way that the crisis of each developmental stage was resolved.

Erikson (1993) theorized that during adolescence, people face the fifth stage, identity verses role confusion. The crisis a person must face is to determine who or what one wants to be as an adult. In the course of this stage the person evaluates her talents, values, and aspirations in the decision of a life-course to determine if she wishes to have a family and what type of career she wants to pursue. This decision includes occupation, what types of friends she identifies with, what type of interests she will develop, and how she wants to conduct oneself and be thought of by others. Successful resolution of the identity verses role confusion conflict allows progression to the next stage, intimacy verses isolation.
During their 20s and 30s, a person usually faces the sixth stage, intimacy vs. isolation. At this stage, people choose a life-course for themselves by integrating earlier life experiences and skills. The crisis to be resolved is to have connections with others. Usually a person gets married and starts a family. This stage is reported in the literature as being a primary task and goal for women (Constantinople, 1967; Horst, 1995; Josselson, 1996). However, more recent research is finding that although intimacy is important, it is not the only factor that makes up a woman’s identity, and that women’s identity is directly related to their levels of generativity and mid-life well being (Stewart & Ostrove, 1998).

During mid-life, age 35-60, Erickson proposed that people face the seventh stage of generativity verses stagnation. This stage involves a person’s view of herself and whether she feels that she has been productive, and her life has purpose by giving to the next generation. A person often starts to reflect about whether she has made the right choices with her life. If she feel that she is at the stagnation point, she may feel as if she only has a few good productive years left, and she might want to pursue a different life path. However, if she feels that she cannot change her life and feels that she is stagnating, she may develop anxiety or depression. It is during this developmental period that a woman often starts to reflect about whether she has made the right choices in life.

People at this stage may feel that they are generative, and they feel a great deal of satisfaction in their choices. People who are happy during mid-life tend to have higher levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, life satisfaction and ability to handle stress, with lower levels of anxiety and depression (Lachman, Lewkowicz, Marcus, & Peng, 1994; Minter & Samuels, 1998).
In sum, according to Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, one needs to feel a sense of autonomy, intimacy, achievement, care and satisfaction through challenges and commitment to others in order to pass through the stages of identity, intimacy and generativity (Erikson, 1993). If the crisis involved in one of these stages is unresolved then the person does not fully progress to the next developmental stage.

Erikson believed that identity is not just an individual phenomenon, but is rooted in society. He postulated that the norms of the culture would effect the way that a psychosocial stage was resolved, but that the strength or weakness of the stage would still be constant. In other words, he implied that the norms of the culture, such as women pursuing a career, would effect the way a developmental stage was resolved, not the developmental stage itself.

Based on Erikson's expansion of development, adult development has become a growing field of research. Theorists such as Erikson (1982, 1993), Sheehy (1976), and Levinson (1979) believe that the adult ages between 18-60 are prime developmental ages. However, several researchers (Gilligan, 1979; Peck, 1986) have debated the validity of Erikson's theories for women. Although Erikson's model was developed based on men as the norm, Constantinople (1969), Tesch and Whitbourne (1982), and Whitbourne, Jelsma, and Waterman (1982) have found limited or inconclusive results as to the inapplicability of Erikson's theories to women: They found either that the gender differences in areas such as industry and intimacy were not statistically significant, or that gender could not be the causative factor exclusively. In other words, contrary to Gilligan (1979) claims that the Erikson's model is not applicable to women because it is based on men these difference were not supported.
In the past there were significant sex differences that made the application of Erikson's model invalid for women. However, due to the sociocultural changes that are more accepting of women in education and the employment fields, the differences are decreasing as shown by Winefield and Harvey (1996), Vandewater, Ostrove, and Stewart (1997), and Stewart and Ostrove (1998). Therefore it seems that Erikson's theory of stage development is applicable to women. The changes and acceptance of women into the traditionally male-dominated areas, and the shift towards more acceptance of nontraditional gender roles, justifies the use of Erikson's life cycle theory in studying women.

Women may value different components, such as interpersonal relationships in their occupation, which make up the developmental stages. Therefore, Gilligan (1982) states that intimacy needs to be included into the definition of the stages. For example, both genders will gain identity from their occupation, but men may value the autonomy that the job offers, while women will value the relationships with their co-workers (Josselson, 1987, 1996). Gilligan (1982) and Josselson (1987) maintain that women still display their qualities of care, concern and relatedness in their occupation and see these traits as integral to their identity. Women maintain their intimacy in addition to their competency to master a career.

More recent research such as Winefield and Harvey (1996) and Stewart and Ostrove (1998) suggest that as the traditional sex roles are changing, the differences between the genders in the areas of Erikson's model are decreasing. These researchers indicate that the differences between the genders is not specifically due to a biological or anatomical difference, but due to the sociocultural ways that women are allowed to
exhibit their industry, identity and generativity (Stewart & Ostrove, 1998; Winefield & Harvey, 1996). As the norms for women are changing and women are more accepted in the workforce the differences in development may decrease. Moreover, they theorize that although women may value the relational aspects of situations more than men, they still gain industry, identity, and generativity from the same situations as men.

Stewart and Ostrove (1998) found that the women’s movement has had a great impact on women because it has allowed “…women’s access to education and occupational opportunities, women’s workforce participation, norms for egalitarian household arrangements, and support for girls’ more equal participation in math, science, and athletics” (Stewart & Ostrove, 1998, p. 1186). These opportunities are believed to be part of the explanation for the shifts in the traditional gender roles. Stewart and Ostrove (1993) found a progression in women away from the traditional gender roles from the years of 1947 to 1964. In a study comparing women from the Class of 1947 and Class of 1964 at Radcliffe College, they found that the later cohort of women had fewer children, were more likely to get divorced, had higher rates of higher education degrees, and were more likely to be professionals than the older cohort. A further comparison between women in the Class of 1964 at Radcliffe and the Class of 1975 showed a significant difference in the percent of women married, and that in the class of 1964, 13% of the women had children but women at the same age who had graduated in 1975 had no children. The Class of 1975 also had significantly higher rates of women continuing on to graduate school or pursuing careers.

Levinson (1986) proposed a life cycle based on Erikson and Jung, but gave more emphasis to specific ages for the sequential developmental tasks. Levinson (1986) stated
that early in life, men and women develop a dream of how they see themselves in mid-life. The dream serves the purpose of a goal to strive for that is reflective of identity and life meaning (Levinson, et al., 1978). The dream gives excitement and vitality to life. A dream for a woman may be as a young girl, she sees herself becoming a wife with two kids and being an active mother in the PTA, or she may see herself as a successful heart surgeon, or she may see herself doing both. During the woman’s 20s, she is forming an adult identity and testing her provisional choices. These choices are re-evaluated and solidified during the 30s, also termed the Transition stage (Levinson, et al., 1978). When a woman gets to her 40s, she is in the Midlife Transition and if she sees herself as a mother and working but feels she is not living up to the dream she had for herself, she may feel anxiety, guilt, and frustration (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee 1978).

To avoid these feelings of anxiety, guilt, and frustration from role strain and the dying of her life dream, Levinson, et al. (1978) proposed that women modify the “dreams” from a family focus to a more self-centered focus during middle age. Levinson et al.’s (1978) and Drebing, Gooden, Van De Kemp, and Maloney’s (1995) research seems to reflect a shift in women’s focus from family relations to personal desires, such as a career, during the “Midlife Transition.” Drebing et al. (1995) found that 60% of the women they surveyed had the dream to be married and achieve intimacy, 58% to establish a family, and 39% to have a career at a young age. Above all other goals for women, marriage was of primary importance (Roberts & Newton, 1987).

However, as these women got older their dreams focused less on relational elements and more on personal growth and fulfillment and a career. Stewart and
Vanderwater (1993; as cited in Stewart & Ostrove, 1998) found that 34% of the women that graduated in the Class of 1964 from Radcliffe would like to have changed their life pattern by focusing more on education or work opportunities before pursing family commitments. Stewart and Vanderwater (1993; as cited in Stewart & Ostrove, 1998) called this “traditional role regrets.” Additionally, they found that women who had the “traditional role regrets,” but did not make any life changes, scored significantly higher on levels of rumination and depression than women who implemented life changes (Stewart & Vanderwater, 1993; as cited in Stewart & Ostrove, 1998). Stewart and Ostrove (1998) have since replicated the study with a sample from the University of Michigan, and found similar results.

These research studies suggest that during this mid-life transition, women’s interests change because the family has grown up and now the women can pursue their personal interest without worrying about the need to establish relationships. Minter and Samuels (1998) stated there may be more of an awareness and acceptance to be true to oneself and compromise less in pursuit of one’s own interests. However the research has not answered whether a woman who did not develop a career and is focused on herself is at a lower level of Erikson’s psychosocial development because she focused on others instead of herself? Stewart and Ostrove (1998) interpret Erikson’s theory to suggest that “…a strong personal identity enhances the likelihood of development of ‘executive personality’ in middle age. This, in turn, may foster efforts to express generative impulses in the larger social world outside the family,” (p. 1186). Additionally they state that Erikson believed that generative desires are expressed in midlife behavioral commitments and pursuits (Stewart & Ostrove, 1998). These behavioral commitments
and pursuits, employment, may be integral to a higher level of generativity. In a sequential design study, Vandewater, Ostrove, and Stewart (1997) found that the combination of work and family roles in early adulthood was predicted by identity achievement. Furthermore, they found that identity achievement was predictive of high levels of midlife work, family role quality and generativity (Vandewater, et al., 1997). The good midlife role quality and a sense of generativity were direct predictors of later midlife well being (Vanderwater et al., 1997). Gilligan (1982) suggested that identity and intimacy are merged for women. If this is true then will adding employment to an already established family (intimacy) increase levels of generativity?

Horst (1995) states that “to be rated as ‘identity achieved,’ one must show evidence of having undergone a crisis followed by a commitment to a particular set of values” (Horst, 1995, p.277); however, if a woman’s identity did not include a career then could she still feel generative in the areas that she uses to make her identity? Will the woman who pursued a “dream” that allowed her to integrate a focus on family and career achieve a higher level of development? Specifically, is there a significant difference between women at different life stages because of situational factors like the establishment of a career?

This research is focusing specifically on the seventh stage of Erikson’s theory, Generativity verses Stagnation. Erikson (1993) states that “care” is the strength that emerges from this crisis. Generativity is described as the care or the capacity to provide and give something for the following generations. Erikson (1993) theorizes that a sense of generativity for women comes from raising children. Erikson primarily focuses on generativity in the context of parenthood, although he states that employment may
contribute to generativity for men. Eagle (1997) expands the aspects of generativity broadly to "... the various ways in which one contributes or attempts to contribute to future generations by leaving some kind of legacy that will, in however small a way, alter external reality in a beneficial and constructive direction," (Eagle, 1997, p. 343).

Stagnation, the opposite of generativity, is defined by Eagle (1997) as “feelings of emptiness, of meaninglessness, a low grade and chronic depressed demoralization...” (Eagle, 1997, p.344). The failure of a sense of generativity is not just the lack of generativity, but a feeling of stagnation and purposelessness. This feeling of stagnation appears to be what Betty Friedan (1963) describes as the ‘The Feminine Mystique,’ or being trapped in domesticity.

Betty Friedan in her ground breaking book The Feminine Mystique (1963) states that raising children is an important task but does not provide enough stimulation for women. She states that there is a pervasive lack of purpose in the housewife that is leading to a feeling of stagnation. Friedan explains that the role of “Occupation: housewife” was not enough especially since more and more women were obtaining college degrees.

Yet this was not the perception the media were portraying in the 1950s. The culture at the time suggested that the women who were wanting to become a physicist or pursue other nontraditional careers besides housewife were “…women who deserved pity…neurotic, unfeminine, unhappy women...” (Friedan, 1963, p. 16). The media such as the New York Times, Time Magazine and Redbook implied the problem was education; “…more and more women had education, which naturally made them unhappy in their role as housewives” (Fredan, 1963, p. 22).
Despite the messages of the media, Friedan suggests not that women were overeducated, because this is a problem found in women of all educational levels. The problem is that women are lacking their own identity. Women are in the house and are only known as someone’s wife or someone’s mother, not as their own person. For a woman to find her whole life dedicated to housework is to deny her mind (Friedan, 1963). Women were being adjusted to a state inferior to their full capabilities (Friedan, 1963). She states:

The material details of life, the daily burden of cooking and cleaning, of taking care of the physical needs of husband and children—these did indeed define a woman’s world a century ago when Americans were pioneers, and the American frontier lay in conquering the land. But the women who went west with the wagon trains also shared the pioneering purpose. Now the American frontiers are of the mind, and of the spirit. Love and children and home are good, but they are not the whole world, even if most of the words now written for women pretend they are. Why should women accept this picture of a half-life, instead of a share in the whole of human destiny? Why should women try to make housework ‘something more,’ instead of moving on the frontiers of their own time, as American women moved beside their husbands on the old frontiers? (p. 67)

Friedan even goes so far as to suggest that not only are women depriving themselves of their full potential, but also that this lack of purpose may be responsible for many somatic and psychiatric problems such as alcoholism, obesity, neurosis, extramarital affairs and abuse of tranquilizers. During the 1950s, so many women were complaining of severe fatigue that one doctor termed it “housewife’s fatigue.” This condition was brought on by more sleep than an adult needs, and housework not being demanding enough to exhaust their energy (Friedan, 1963). The explanation was “…the more your intelligence exceeds your job requirements, the greater your boredom” (Friedan, 1963, p. 251). But the paradox was that these women complained that they
were too busy to take on outside hobbies or interests. Friedan (1963) explains this busyness as "housewifery expands to fill the available time."

In addition to affairs, other marital problems were surfacing. Men were complaining to their therapists that their wives were smothering them and living the man's life as if it was their own (Friedan, 1963). That is, the wife was living her life vicariously through her husband and his career. She has no other way to get satisfaction than through her husband and children's lives, and they start to resent it and push her away. These women then turn to alcohol, eating, affairs and tranquilizers to help fill the void (Friedan, 1963).

Friedan (1963) describes the feminine mystique as a problem that housewives have in which they have "... needs which can not really be satisfied by home and family—the housewives' needs for something beyond themselves with which to identify, a sense of movement with others towards aims that give meaning and purpose to life, an unquestioned social aim to which each individual can devote his efforts" (Friedan, 1963, p. 225). She states "housewives who live according to the feminine mystique do not have a personal purpose stretching into the future" (Friedan, 1963, p. 313). The problem with no name is that women are not given the opportunity to use their intelligence to its full capacity, and are therefore depriving themselves of full human development.

**Life Experiences and Psychosocial Development**

Based on research by Caspi (1987) and Van Manen and Whitbourne (1997) there appears to be a dynamic relationship between life experience and psychosocial development. Van Manen and Whitbourne (1997) suggest "...investigators should instead begin to study personality development within the context of life"
experiences.” The social norms will effect life experiences and choices and can be seen in studies that examine cohort effects. Van Manen and Whitbourne (1997) did a sequential design study looking at two groups of cohorts. They examined men and women who were undergraduates in 1966-68 and 1977-80, and tested them again 11 years later. They tested the subjects on an Inventory of Psychosocial Development, and biographical data questionnaires. They found that in the first cohort (1966-68) women with higher levels of identity in their early thirties were more likely to be full-time homemakers in their forties, rather than pursue a career. They suggest that this indicates “…that sense of identity for women in this cohort would be expressed within the context of family” (Van Manen & Whitbourne, 1997, p.244).

For the second cohort (1977-80) they found that both sexes were more likely to pursue advanced education when they had resolved the industry/inferiority crisis. Additionally, they found that the women in the second cohort were exhibiting a tendency to have children at an older age. Therefore, the establishment of a family was not as high a priority to the younger cohort as it was in the older cohort. “Differences between cohorts in gender socialization patterns were also observed, with women of the older cohort expressing their sense of identity in the realm of family rather than an occupation” (Van Manen & Whitbourne, 1997, p. 245). Their results lend support to the theory that personality and life experience are reciprocal and follow the step progress that Erikson lays out for psychosocial development. They state that “personality dimensions derived from Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development both effect and are effected by life experiences in the domains of work and family” (Van Manen & Whitbourne, 1997, p.245).
In other words, these researchers suggest that studies examine how specific life experiences that people encounter affect their psychosocial development. This is a life span contextualist perspective. This perspective emphasizes what effects family and work roles have on personality change, and how personality affects the life course, termed “niche-picking” by Van Manen & Whitbourne (1997). Studying the context in which the developmental stage is experienced was very important to Erikson. He believed strongly that society had a great impact on how the developmental crisis was resolved. The crisis, such as intimacy versus isolation, had to be resolved within the social norms and constraints.

**Women in the Workforce**

In the beginning of the century, men went to work and women stayed home to raise a family and take care of the house. However, during World War II there was a shortage of labor in the factories, and women started to be employed outside the home. Although not all women stayed in the workforce when the war was over, 38% of mothers with children under 18 were employed in 1955, in 1995 the number has risen to 76% (Donelson, 1999). Many factors may explain the increase in women employed outside of the home. Some of the factors may be: the need to supplement a husband’s income, an increase need for independent financial security, the devalued status of the housewife, the increased opportunity for women to succeed in the workforce, and the increase of single parent homes (Bala, 1998; Graglia, 1995).

In the recent times, since married women have joined the workforce in such large numbers, there have been several studies to determine what the psychological outcomes are of working outside the home. Tollar and Stebbing (1979) and Bala (1998) found that
women tend to develop a more positive self-concept from working. Both studies suggested that this increased self-concept is because working allows women an opportunity to be assertive, creative and receive recognition. Additional benefits of employment seem to be “mental stimulation, use of skills, self-expression, and interpersonal relationships” (Donelson, 1999). Alderfer (1969) proposed that working provides women an opportunity to fulfill the needs for existence, relatedness, and growth. He believed that work allowed women to reach their full potential in using their cognitions and abilities, and to be recognized by others. Josselson (1987) found that women enjoy the opportunities to care successfully for others and to interact with colleagues and the public. Working outside the home may provide the challenges Erikson stated are required to resolve some of the crisis essential to progress in psychosocial development, such as industry verse inferiority and generativity vs. stagnation. For example, Whitbourne and Van Manen (1997) found that higher psychosocial development in the areas of industry and identity are related to greater educational and occupational achievements. Additionally, Barnett and Baruch (1985) found that women with multiple roles such as being a career woman, wife and mother have better psychological well-being such as less depression, higher sense of autonomy, self-confidence and personal locus of control. Employed women show a greater sense of control over their lives, an ability to meet their needs for both achievement and intimacy, and the flexibility between the job roles allows them to not focus on the negative aspects of each role. Employed women seem to show better mental and physical health.

Although the previously mentioned effects are all positive, there are some negative effects for women in working outside the home. For women, there seems to be
Josselson (1987) suggests that gender discrimination, wage inequalities, lack of parental
leaves, and the demands of balancing employment and family are all factors that can
contribute to role strain. Role strain is the feeling that one is not able to met all of the
demands placed on her (Donelson, 1999). When a woman feels that she is not meeting
the demands of being a mother such as staying home with a sick child or attending an
after school game because she is required to be at a meeting with her boss, she feels role
strain. However, it is not simply a matter of too little time and so much to do. It seems
that the quality of the roles determines if the woman enjoys the positive benefits of
employment (Nadien & Denmark, 1999). If a woman feels that she is not supported by
her husband, or does not enjoy being employed, she will be not benefit from the
salubrious effects of working.

Although there has been a shift in women working outside the home, the
proportion of men working in the home or helping out with the housework are not the
same as the proportion of women working outside the home (Cassidy & Warren, 1996;
Moen & Erickson, 1997). In other words, women are taking on more roles but men are
not, they are not compensating by doing more of the housework. This contributes to role
strain and can cause women to feel overloaded with responsibilities from work and home.

Women’s Personality and Occupational Choices

Although there is an increase in support for nontraditional gender roles in the
home, it is not ubiquitous. Cassidy and Warren (1996) found that full-time working
women are the most supportive of nontraditional gender roles; however, homemakers and
men married to homemakers still highly value the traditional gender roles. Cassidy and
Warren (1996) suggest that an individual’s gender role attitude is related to the lifestyle choices she seeks. Women that work outside of the home may define their interests differently and have varied experiences compared to homemakers. Gerson (1985) proposes that one’s drive and dedication to employment may reflect one’s orientation to domesticity. In other words, the more a woman is dedicated to her career the less she will value the traditional gender roles, and will have less preference for domesticity then a woman that is not dedicated to employment. This resistance to the traditional roles and expectations corresponds with Helson, Elliot, and Leigh (1990) who found that the personality variables of independence and self-acceptance were higher in employed mothers than non-employed mothers, and that the personality variables such as independence and intellectual efficiency at age 21 were good predictors of the number of roles a woman would devote herself to. Gerson (1985) stated that the ideological perspective that a woman holds about gender roles will guide and enhance her own life choices and situations. Her ideology will be reflected in her choices about employment and family. These studies all support the theory of Van Manen & Whitbourne (1997) that a woman’s experience and personality will help determine her niche. For example, a woman who is a homemaker and therefore dependent on her husband’s income will tend to value the more traditional gender roles. Her experience and personality will determine her niche.

Hence a woman’s personality plays a large part in determining her niche of whether she wants to be employed or be a full-time homemaker. The personality characteristics exhibited by homemakers are less desire for autonomy, education, power, authority and less self-esteem compared to employed mothers (Danziger 1983; Donelson,
Additionally homemakers have high levels of femininity, intimacy, and a desire for care taking (Chira, 1998; Donelson, 1999; Nadien & Denmark, 1999). Mothers who stay home feel that care, nurturance and rearing of children are among a mother’s most vital goals and rewards; therefore, they feel that employment would not be rewarding and is not a priority to them. Full-time homemakers report enjoying the freedom and flexibility of making their own schedules and derive joy from taking care of their loved ones (Donelson, 1999).

Whether a mother desires to be employed and has the opportunity for employment seems to be the best predictor of her mental health. Baruch and Barnett (1985) and Noor (1996) both found that women that are doing what they want and are satisfied with their roles have better physical health and longer life spans compared to women who wish to have different roles. Stafford (1984) found that women that desired to be employed but were not seemed to be the most unhappy. Now that non-traditional roles for women are becoming more acceptable, women have a choice to pursue the roles that will match their personality. However, the contribution that employment may play in generativity is still unclear. It has not been determined if mothers will feel that their role in the employment field contributed to their sense of generativity. Erikson (1993) states that because generativity “...is primarily the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation” (Erikson, 1993, p.267), it is usually accomplished through producing children. However, he notes that some people “…through misfortune or because of special and genuine gifts in other directions, do not apply this drive to their own offspring...generativity is meant to include such more popular synonyms as productivity and creativity, which however, cannot replace it” (Erickson, 1993, p. 267). Therefore, although mothers can derive
generativity from caring for their children, it is important to examine whether employment contributes to generativity in employed mothers, and how it contributes.

From a contextualist perspective, life experiences have an effect on personality, and vice versa (Van Manen & Krauss Whitbourne, 1997). For example the type of job one chooses, the stress of trauma, and family roles all have effects on a personality. Although one does not have great control over some events such as traumas, one does make choices in what career to pursue and whether or not to have a family. This is personality effecting life choices. These choices have been termed “niche-picking” because one helps to guide one’s own outcome based on his or her abilities and likes (Caspi, Bem, & Elder, 1989; Van Manen & Whitbourne, 1997).

For many women at the age of twenty and thirty, they make a decision to stay home and take on the role of homemaker. For other women at this age they decide to pursue a career and enter the workforce. Because there is often an option for women to choose different life paths, there is a need to determine if there is a difference between working outside of the home or being a homemaker. In order to progress positively through Erickson’s developmental stages, one needs to feel a sense of achievement and satisfaction through challenges and commitment. Is it possible to achieve this level of satisfaction if one is not employed? If a woman does not work will she still develop a sense of generativity, or will it be significantly less than a woman that works outside the home?

**Homemaking**

Homemaking is not a passive pursuit that one completes well by the fact that one does not go out of the home to work. Josselson (1987) pointed out that homemaking
involves complex factors that involve consistent production of effort and is poorly understood. In addition to general housekeeping, Josselson (1987) states that there is a constant energy need to invest in the relational aspects associated with being a housewife. Schor (1992) indicates the long list of services a homemaker is expected to do include “…food preparation, child rearing, laundry services, house cleaning, transportation of people, care of the sick and elderly, the acquisition of goods and services (shopping), gardening and lawn care, home and car maintenance and repair, and financial accounting…” (Schor, 1992, p. 85). Additionally, homemakers may fulfill the role Donelson (1999) labeled “career wife.” A career wife is a woman “…married to a man who needs a second person to contribute to his career, but the second person, a wife, is not paid for her work” (Donelson, 1999, p.473).

With the increase in modern convenience such as microwaves, automatic dishwashers and state of the art vacuum cleaners, the standards of house cleaning have become perfection (Schor, 1992). Added to this is the expectation of full meals, shuttling children to numerous extra-curricular activities and a well-decorated house. Homemakers report feeling their job is physically demanding but not mentally challenging (Donelson, 1999). Being under-valued, with increasing standards of home care and the ceaseless house chores, these women report feeling strained and depressed (Donelson, 1999). Many homemakers report not feeling competent at their jobs and have lower levels of self-esteem than employed women (Donelson, 1999). The feelings were termed housewife’s syndrome, which is describe as “…feeling anxious, worried, lonely, and worthless” (Donelson, 1999, p. 451).
However there are homemakers who are happy with their role. They seem to be more conservative, value traditional roles, get out of the house regularly to avoid feeling lonely or bored and feel valued by husband and family (Donelson, 1999). These homemakers enjoy the flexibility to make their own schedule and enjoy the nurturing aspect of homemaking (Donelson, 1999). Mothers who choose to be full-time homemakers feel a sense of value and pride in devoting their lives to providing full-time comfort, warmth, safety and moral training of their children (Chira, 1998). These women desire to have an uninterrupted relationship with their children, and feel that without working they can form the healthy bond more effectively. These women value giving their full time to “the care, nurturance and rearing of their children...” (Chira, 1998, p.184). Additionally, many women may value the idea that staying home is a status symbol. During the 1950s men strived for a family wage to support an at-home wife, and there was a sense of achieved privileged to have a full-time housewife (Schor, 1992).

Levels of generativity in women may not be effected by occupation. Schiedel and Marcia (1985) and Gilligan (1982) theorize that women value intimacy more than autonomy, and therefore are more oriented toward attachment. Because men value autonomy more (Gilligan, 1982), they may develop a higher sense of generativity from their work role, but women will develop more generativity from their family role. Josselson (1987) states that “women make life choices, which may include occupational goals, on the basis of what will bring them emotional gratification, again stressing relational terms. Contentment and happiness remain more important than ambition” (Josselson, 1987, p.191). This may mean that if identity directly effects generativity such as Stewart and Ostrove (1998) propose, then the values that make each individual
woman's identity may effect her level of generativity more than an external variable such as work. In other words, if a woman values the traditional gender role of being a homemaker as her identity, she may obtain the same level of generativity as a woman that sees her identity as a career woman with children. The level of generativity may be directly related to the identity concept. This means that generativity could be reached by different paths. This study will examine what contribution employment makes to generativity.

Research Hypothesis:

In the last 30 years there has been a gender role revolution. Women are now given more life choices. Women are now able to develop a work role identity. However, research is limited on the effect of employment in the psychosocial development of women past the identity stage. Due to the rapid transformation in the opportunities and social norms for women, it is important to examine what impact employment is having on women. Do the current theories about women apply still, or because of a changing society and the shift to more egalitarian roles are the theories outdated? With the massive social changes that are decreasing gender discrimination, it is expected that Erikson's theory of psychosocial development will be more applicable to women. The research hypothesis is that women will increase their sense of generativity from employment because it is an added avenue besides child-rearing to make a contribution to society. That is mothers that are employed will have more sources of generativity then mothers who are homemakers.
Method

Research Approach and Design

The purpose of this study was to investigate the levels of generativity in employed mothers and mothers who are homemakers. This study examined whether there are differences in levels of generativity between mothers that are employed and mothers who are homemakers. Traditionally, research is quantitative in nature using empirical methods with a logical, positivistic scientific method (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). In the research on generativity there is a history of mixed methodology (McAdams, & De St. Aubin, 1992; Stewart & Vandewater, 1993). Although scales on generativity have been developed (McAdams & De St. Aubin, 1992), the construct validity is still difficult to determine. Additionally, the scales developed do not address the focus of this research, employment in a mother's sense of generativity.

Because not all human variables can be initially quantified and understood, the use of qualitative methodology was determined appropriate. A nontraditional research method, the case study, will allow the identification of variables that may be amenable to quantification at a later stage. The use of case study method was predicted to assist in deriving theory from the data collected. By using a case study approach the researcher is to “ bracket” their own assumptions and preconceived expectations to observe what the data generates (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The essential thing is thorough conceptual explication of the variables; qualitative approaches contribute to conceptual development. The use of case study allows the participants to tell their own story in their own words, and a conceptual understanding of the variables may be gained from finding common themes. The previous research is unclear relative to how employment effects generativity.
in mothers; therefore, a case study approach allows the collection of data that may be used to generate future hypotheses.

In feminist research the qualitative approach is supported (Gilligan, 1993; Robson, 1993; Tollman & Szalacha, 1999). Using the qualitative approach allows the participant to give rich details of the subject matter, which would otherwise not be learned from the quantitative approach (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The qualitative approach allows the researcher to examine the participants in context, and to focus on specific variables such as ethnicity and cohort effect. According to Tollman and Szalacha (1999)

... feminist methods are subject centered and therefore necessarily qualitative, disruptive of the tradition of objective experimental and survey methods in the field (Fine & Gordon, 1989). Such methods are aimed at generating knowledge about women's lives previously not produced by psychologists, thus transforming the information as well as the practices that constitute psychological knowledge and its production (p. 9).

Due to the limited previous research in the role that employment contributes to generativity in mothers, a qualitative approach was determined to give the best contextual understanding of the variables.

The design utilized for this study was a multiple case study. Case studies are used for contextual understanding of a contemporary phenomena and supporting the applicability of a theory to a phenomena (Robson, 1993). Compared to a quantitative design with rigorous controls, case studies allow more variability in collecting data for a phenomena that is not clearly understood (Robson, 1993); therefore, a semi-structured interview was conducted to investigate the impact of employment on generativity in
mothers. A semi-structured interview provided the researcher more freedom in following up a statement by the participant, to gain the full context and implications of the statement, more than other designs such as a survey. The case study provided a method that allowed for exploration of material and factors that were not considered before the research was commenced.

A multiple case study was chosen over a single case study due to the ability for analytic generalization (Robson, 1993). Although multiple case studies do not give statistical generalization, Robson (1993) stated that multiple case studies can be considered mini, multiple experiments with similar results supporting evidence of replication that can support a theory. Therefore to determine if a factor is significant and relevant to a theory, a multiple case study design is more conclusive and compelling than a single case study design. To gain insight into the differences that employment makes in levels of generativity in mothers, a multiple case study using a semi-structured interview was chosen to allow for the flexibility needed to understand the participant's perspective in-depth.

Due to the lack of research on employment and generativity in employed mothers and homemakers, this study used a qualitative approach of multiple case studies. This approach and design was deemed most appropriate and consistent with the aims of this study, which was to better conceptualize the effect of employment on generativity in mothers and to stimulate further research.

Participants

To examine the impact that employment has on generativity, the participants for this study were fairly homogeneous to control for extraneous factors that may impact
generativity. The subjects were of the same current social-economic status. Because many families need both parents to work, the luxury to be a homemaker is not always available. Therefore, this study recruited mothers who were married to professional men, based on the assumption that they were working out of choice, not financial necessity.

The participants for this study were recruited by word of mouth and personal contact with the researcher. The sample consisted of 10 women-five married employed and five married homemakers. The inclusion criteria for the employed women were: college educated, married to a professional (upper-middle class SES), have children, employed 35 hours a week for the last five years and between the age of 30-60. The inclusion criteria for the homemakers was: college educated, married to a professional (upper-middle class SES), have children, and between the age of 30-60. The exclusionary criteria were women who had to work to support the family or have worked less than five years, or homemakers who volunteered more than 15 hours a week.

The following description of the participants was based on the demographic questionnaire (Appendix C). All ten of the women were upper-middle class, Caucasian woman between the age of 36-60. The average age was 48.5, and the median was 46. There was one woman in her 30s, four in their 40s, four in their 50s, and one was 60. Six of the women were Seventh-Day Adventist and four were of unknown religion. The women had been married an average 24.8 years; the range was 9-37, and the median was 26.5. All of the women had children. The range was one to five children with a mode of two children per family (5 families). The mean for Homemakers was 3.2 children and the mean for employed women was 2.2 children. All of the participants had worked at one time after college. The range for homemakers that working was for 6-12
years with a mean of 8.2. The range for employed women working was for 9-34 years with a mean of 23.4 years. Four of the participants were raised in the Midwest (2 HM, 2 EW), five of the participants in California (2 HM, 3 EW) and one in Canada (HM). Three of the participants were raised in lower middle class families (2 HM, 1 EW), four in middle class families (1 HM, 2 EW), and three in upper-middle class families (2 HM, 1 EW). As for the husband's occupation, five of the participants were married to physicians (4 HM, 1 EW), one dentist (1 HM), one businessman (1 EW), one psychologist (1 EW), one realtor (1 EW) and one civil engineer (1 EW). The education level for these women was varied. Two of the employed woman had acquired a doctorate, one of the homemakers had a master's degree, and as per the inclusion data the rest had obtained college degrees (4 HM, 3 EW). Five of the participants were nurses (4 HM, 1 EW), two were psychologists (2 EW), one was a teacher (EW), one was a medical technologist (HM), and one was an occupational therapist (1 EW). Tables 1 and 2 summarize the demographic data.
### Table 1

Demographics of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homemakers</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>SES Growing-up</th>
<th>Region Where Raised</th>
<th>Years Married</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Lower-Middle</td>
<td>Mid-West</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Upper-Middle</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Mid-West</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Relgion</th>
<th>SES Growing-up</th>
<th>Region Where Raised</th>
<th>Years Married</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Mid-West</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Upper-Middle</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Lower-Middle</td>
<td>Mid-West</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2

Occupational Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homemakers</th>
<th>Participant's Occupation</th>
<th>Husband's Occupation</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Years Worked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>BS</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>BS</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>BS</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Med Tech</td>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>BS</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Participant's Occupation</th>
<th>Husband's Occupation</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Years Worked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>BS</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td>Realtor</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Occupational Therapist</td>
<td>Civil Engineer</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The range that the women stated for the quality of their relationship to their child was 4-6, on a 6-point scale. The Homemakers stated an average of 5.6 and the employed
women stated a slightly lower average of 5.2. The range that the women stated for the quality of their relationship to their spouse was 4-6. The homemakers' average was 5, and the employed women's was a slightly lower average of 4.6. The range that the employed women stated for their relationship to their co-workers was 4-6, with an average of 5. Table 3 summarized the relationship quality data.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quality of Relationship to Husband</th>
<th>Quality of Relationship to Children</th>
<th>Quality of Relationship to Co-workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homemakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consent Procedures

Consent was obtained before each interview. When the interviewer arrived for the interview she handed the consent form (Appendix A) to the participant and asked her to read and sign it. The consent form explained that the purpose of the study was to help understand a woman's sense of generativity in mid-life. Participants were informed via the consent form that the interview would take no longer than 90 minutes, and a demographics questionnaire would be used.

The consent form indicated that consent was voluntary and the participant could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Also, the consent form indicated
the researcher's right to end the participant's participation if the need arose. Further, the consent form included a list of referral numbers in the event that any discomfort was experienced from the interview. Additionally, phone numbers for both the researcher and the professor sponsoring the research were provided in case the participant needed to contact the researcher or wanted a copy of the research abstract.

The consent form explained that the interview would be audiotaped to help ensure accuracy. It was explained that the audiotape would be transcribed within one week of the interview and the tape would be manually destroyed. The participants were told that all data would be coded with an identification number to ensure confidentiality and would be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office to maintain confidentiality. The consent forms were only signed with initials to maintain complete anonymity and ensure confidentiality.

The consent form indicated that the raw data may be shared with other researchers, but anonymity would be maintained by the lack of a name on the consent form. The consent form indicated that although no discomfort is expected some individuals may experience boredom, fatigue, agitation, worry or other negative emotions when discussing aspects of their personal thoughts and feelings about their career and family. The form also indicated that if the participant felt that they were distressed from the interview they could contact the researcher to discuss their feelings, or they could contact a therapist from the referral list provided with the consent form. However, it was stated that most people enjoy and benefit from discussing their accomplishments in work and family and would not need a referral.
Instrumentation and Procedure

The study used a semi-structured interview (Appendix B) and a brief sheet on demographics (Appendix C). This allowed some bases for comparison between the participants, but allowed flexibility to probe responses to obtain a complete understanding of the responses given. The semi-structured interview consisted of seven questions deemed to draw out the variables that would reflect generativity. The questions addressed areas of how each woman felt generative, how being a mother contributed to their sense of generativity, how work contributed to their sense of generativity, and what they would change in their life.

The disadvantages of this method, however, was that there was no corroborating evidence for the answers given; it was all self-report (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). There is a lack of standardization which may effect reliability (Robson, 1993). The advantages of using a semi-structured interview were the ability of both the interviewer and interviewee to clarify any misconceptions about questions and answers, and for the interviewer to modify her inquiry to follow-up interesting responses (Robson, 1993). Additionally, the interviewer had the opportunity to observe non-verbal cues that may have added to the data (Robson, 1993).

Women were recruited for the study by word of mouth. The researcher contacted some women that met the criteria for participation and asked to interview them. Upon completion of the interview, the participants were asked if they knew other women that might be interested in participating in the study. Those women were then contacted and screened to see if they fit the criteria. If they matched the criteria and the women were interested in participating, an interview was set-up.
The author conducted semi-structured interviews with ten women. The sessions lasted for approximately 45 minutes and were audiotaped. Once consent was obtained a brief self-report questionnaire of socio-demographic background was given at the beginning of each interview.

The interview began with each woman being asked to list five words that describe her. Then they were read the following definition of generativity:

"Generativity is when an adult individual is engaged in establishing and guiding the next generation. They nurture someone or something, and have a sense of being needed. Generativity is also the way a person can make a contribution to humanity and develop a legacy to the future. An individual makes a contribution to the next generation or society that will live past their own death. Generativity can be developed by doing things that are creative and productive and that have a beneficial relationship between the individual and either the next generation on an individual basis or society at large. Generativity includes nurturing, teaching, and promoting the next generation. This type of behavior can be accomplished in raising children, work and or hobbies.

Generativity is a psychological term that is used to describe a feeling or a sense of being that adults develop. This feeling entails a caring for and responsibility for the next generation, and feeling that you are making a difference in this life, and creating a legacy. This sense of generativity can be made through several activities. Having a child is a primary generative act. In addition, to caring for a family, people can be generative through their work, hobbies, politics, community events and volunteering."

Based on this definition they were asked questions about their lives and their feelings of generativity. The questions were: Based on this definition of generativity, do you feel that you are generative and if so how? Why did you choose to pursue a career? What role do you think employment plays in your sense of generativity? What role do you think being a mother plays in your sense of generativity? How do you visualize your life after your children are grown? If you could do it all over again would you do something differently?
The questions for the homemakers were the same as the employed women. However instead of asking “Why did you choose to pursue a career?” they were asked why did you choose not to pursue a career?” Instead of “What role do you thing a career plays in your sense of generativity?” they were asked “Do you think employment would effect your sense of generativity?”

For the purpose of the interview, the participant was given a card with the definition of generativity after they had answered question one. During the interview, the interviewer made note of impressions and non-verbal responses. After the completion of the interview, the data sheets and audiotape were coded with the identification number of the participant. These items were placed in a coded envelope and stored in a locked filing cabinet until the audiotape was transcribed within one week of the interview and then was manually erased. The transcriptions will be stored under lock and key in the researcher's office for three years.

Data Analysis

A qualitative approach was used to analyze the data. Once all the data were collected, the data determined the themes and the structural categories to be used for the interpretation of the data (Robson, 1993). The coding of the data into categories was based on the methodology by Tesch (1990, as cited in Robson, 1993). This method is to explore the data to discover regularities and characteristics of language (Tesch, 1990, as cited in Robson, 1993). This type of analysis allowed for the discovery of similarities and differences between the two groups of women who were interviewed.

The analysis included the ways that women bring up topics of generativity, the numbers of ways they feel generative and the areas in which they feel generative. The
questionnaire was designed to elicit the roles in which they perceived themselves, roles in the home and outside the home, and what roles they feel contributed to their generativity. Additionally, the analysis examined whether there were differences between employed women and full-time homemakers in their sense of generativity through their children and whether employed women mentioned more areas of generativity.

The following questions were used during the analysis of each interview. Do the five words that describe self indicate generativity? What generative roles, if any, did women state in response to the first question? Although they knew this was a study on generativity, there was no direct priming for generativity before this question was asked. The researcher was interested in whether there was some correlation of the words or roles women automatically define themselves by and generativity. Other questions to be explored during the analysis of the data were: Do employed women bring up areas of generativity during the interview that homemakers do not? Do homemakers bring up areas of generativity that employed women do not? How are women defining generativity in their lives? For example, they may consider their volunteer time as being just as generative as raising their children or starting a business.

Audio recordings of each interview were transcribed verbatim. For each phase of the analysis the primary coder and her advisor coded the analysis of the transcripts individually and then met to determine a consensus and reliability. The procedure for data analysis began with each coder (the author and Dr. Cowan) going through the data individually and identifying the generative phrases. They then went through these
phrases to reach consensus on which statements were generative and to develop themes from the data.

Once each coder identified all of the generative statements in the data, based on the generative statements, themes were developed to represent different sources of generativity. Five categories were developed, which the coders agreed upon. Once consensus was reached, the coders coded the statements made by the women into one of the five designated categories individually. Then the two coders met in order to reach a consensus and determine reliability for the coding of the data. At this time the coders determined an additional category was needed to differentiate intentional behavior with adults that is seen as generative, and behavior that is intentional but not seen as generative by the participants. The six themes generated were: 1) Role of Mother, 2) My Child as Legacy, 3) Other Children as Legacy, 4) Generativity through Adults, 5) Adults as One's Legacy, 6) Intentional Behavior in the Community.

The theme of Role of Mother includes statements that indicate nurturing and tasks of raising a child in the general sense, spending time with your child in the role of being a mother, being dependable and specifically there for them, being supportive and general teaching of a child as you are raising them.

The theme My Child as a Legacy included statements that went beyond the general tasks of raising a child. This category was to represent the statements that women made that they were going a step further than fulfilling the role of being a caretaker. They were trying to create a child who would make a contribution to the community at large. This involved statements that indicated a sense of generativity from the modeling, values, teaching, and inspiring that was part of their role of raising a child.
The theme Others' Children as Legacies included statements made by the women where they see their behavior as having an effect on other people's children, such as their child's friends or children they encounter at work or volunteering.

The fourth theme is Generativity through Adults by Nurturing. This category includes the sense of generativity and contribution women see from their interaction with people in a casual everyday way (ripple effect). Included in this category are statements about interactions with others in a non-designated role, that is the non-intentional effect of interacting with other parents, co-workers, and friends in a nurturing way gives these women a sense of generativity.

The fifth theme is Adults as One's Legacy. This theme is different from generativity through adults because the women stated specific roles or intentional acts that would help them feel generative, and they could see direct effects of their contribution on the future lives of the adults with whom they interacted. The last theme, six, is the Intentional Behavior in the Community. This theme includes statements that women made about volunteering for designated roles, but did not state specifically feeling generative about the contribution they were making. The coders then went through the data together to determine their reliability in coding into six categories. The coders identified and coded 65 statements of generativity and agreed on the coding for 62. The three statements were there was initial disagreement a consensus was reached. The co-rater reliability (Intraclass Correlation Coefficient) for coding was $r = .98$ before consensus was reached.
Results

Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the results are listed in the order of the themes with quotes used directly from the data to further conceptualization and to enhance the context and understanding of the components of generativity.

Five Words to Describe Self

In response to the first question of the interview, “Describe five words that describe you,” there were some noticeable differences between the homemakers and the employed women. First there was a difference in the way that the two groups responded. The employed women responded fairly quickly. Within one minute of the question being asked, they had completed the list. None of them asked for further instruction of whether the words were to be positive or negative, and none of them commented on the difficulty of the task.

The homemakers took longer than the employed women to answer. Some of the women took almost three minutes to give the interviewer a list and even then, three of the homemakers gave only four words to describe themselves. Two of the homemakers asked for further clarification as to whether the words should be negative or positive, three mentioned the difficulty of the task, and two felt a need to further explain what they meant by the terms they choose. None of this behavior was observed in the employed women.

As for the choice of words used to describe themselves there were four categories generated: 1) Generative/Nurturing Words, 2) Temperament/Personality Traits, 3) Roles, 4) Hobbles. The words used in the generative/nurturing category were terms that represented their task towards family or personality traits that were indicative of
nurturing behavior or the positions for which this behavior is necessary. The words in
the temperament/personality category were words they chose that described their general
attitude/temperament and character or personality traits. The words placed in the role
category were words that described a role that they fulfill. The fourth category, hobbies,
was used for hobbies as ways of describing themselves.

Table 4 summarizes the words participants used to describe themselves. In the
analysis of the words used there was little difference in the amount of nurturing words
that homemakers used to describe themselves compared to the employed women. The
homemakers used seven words to the employed women's six nurturing words. For the
second category, temperament/personality traits, employed women listed many more
words in this category. The employed women gave seventeen words that fit here, and the
homemaker listed nine. There was also a difference in the words used. The employed
women mentioned traits that were significant to pursuing a career outside of the home
such as ambitious, organized, and thorough. Only one homemaker stated that she was
organized and scheduled. Additionally, none of the homemakers described their
intelligence, and two employed women did. Further, three of the homemakers gave the
word stubborn or spunky as a word that described them, and none of the employed
women listed this trait.

Three homemakers stated their role at least once as a way to describe themselves.
Only one employed woman stated a role as a way to describe herself. One homemaker
and one employed woman used a hobby to describe themselves.
Table 4

Words used to Describe Self

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Generative/ Nurturing</th>
<th>Temperament/ Personality Traits</th>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Hobbies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homemakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once the women stated the words they used to describe themselves, they were asked questions to elicit their sense of generativity. Based on the analysis of the coded responses, the homemakers made 37 statements indicating generativity and the employed women made 30 statements indicating generativity. However, this statistic includes all of the initially counted statements, and there were duplications of the same area and/or acts of generativity that were counted. A more accurate reflection of the sense of generativity may be a breakdown of the different areas to eliminate repetitious statements of the different acts the women engage in to feel generative. Overall, homemakers cited five nonrepetitive statements that would fit in the category of Role of Mother, five statements that would fit in the category of My Child as a Legacy, three statements that would fit in Others' Children as a Legacy, two statements that would fit in Generativity through Adults, one statement that would fit in Adults as One's Legacy, and one statement that...
would fit in Intentional Behavior in the Community. The employed women cited four statements that would fit in the category of Role of mother, seven statements that would fit in the category of My Child as a Legacy, three statements that would fit in Others' Children as a Legacy, four statements that would fit in Generativity through Adults, two statements that would fit in Adults as One's Legacy, and one statements that would fit in Intentional Behavior in the Community.

Table 5 indicates the categories used by each woman. The average number of facets of generativity was higher for employed women compared to homemakers (EW=3.4, HM=2.8).

Table 5
Facets of Generativity Cited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Role of Mother</th>
<th>My Child As a Legacy</th>
<th>Others' Children as a Legacy</th>
<th>Generativity Through Adults</th>
<th>Adults as One's Legacy</th>
<th>Behavior in Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homemakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also interesting is the breakdown of which categories the homemakers or the employed women did not cite at all as a source of generativity. All of the homemakers cited their Role as Mother, however, two did not cite their Child As a Legacy, three did not cite Others' Children as a Legacy, four did not cite Generativity through Adults, four did not cite Adults as One's Legacy, and four made no statements indicating intentional
Behavior in the Community. The employed women also did not make statements that indicated that they participated or did not see these behaviors as generative: one did not make statements indicating the Role of Mother, one did not indicate statements about her Child as a Legacy, two did not cite Others' Children as a Legacy, two did not cite Generativity through Adults, four of the women made no statements about Adults as One's Legacy, and four did not state Intentional Behavior in the Community.

After being read the operational definition of generativity for this study, all of the women felt that they were generative, and could produce examples to support this conclusion. In response to the question do you feel generative and how, two of the employed women made statements about their employment first, then their children. Three of the employed women made statements about their children first, then they made reference to their employment. Of these three, two then cited their job as contributing to their sense of generativity. Of the homemakers, two make statements about other acts, then they cited their children. Three of the homemakers cited their children first then cited other acts as sources of generativity.

Role of Mother

Regardless of the group (HM vs. EW) the women all felt generative through their children and all but one made many references to the Role of Mother. The theme, Role of Mother, included statements that indicated nurturing and the tasks of raising a child in the general and specific sense, spending time with your child in the role of being a mother, being dependable and there for them, being supportive and teaching of a child as you are raising them.
The category, Role of Mother, was prevalent in both groups; however, there was a subtle difference in the statements that fit in this category between employed women and homemakers. The homemakers made more references to the tasks of day-to-day raising a child such as "getting ready for bed," and "helping with school work." Several of the homemakers made reference to the amount of time that was needed to be there for the children. Several mentioned "being there for them," and

"... need to be available to them and you need to know what they are like and be involved in their lives, not just from 6-9 p.m... I wouldn't be able to spend time that I do have now in that developing that," and "...not having those extra 8-9 hours a day to spend with my children..."

The employed women made statements that fit into the category Role of Mother, but there were no references to feeling they need unlimited time with their children to accomplish this task. The employed women made reference to more abstract constructs rather than the task oriented component of motherhood. For example one employed woman said I am most generative with my children and their friends, I like to encourage them... I am a psychological support for my children... I am there for them whenever they need me." Another employed women said as her child was going through the teen years, she felt her role as a mother was mainly to provide guidance and offering praise and encouraging her.

My Child as a Legacy

The theme My Child as a Legacy included statements that went beyond the general tasks of raising a child. This category represented the statements that women made that they were going a step further than fulfilling the role of being a caretaker. They were trying to create a child who was a contribution to the community at large. This involved statements that indicated a sense of generativity from the modeling, values,
teaching and inspiring that contributed to their role of raising a child. The statements made by both the homemakers and employed women indicated that this was a primary task for them and that they derived a large sense of generativity from raising a child they feel will be a good person. Eight of the women (3 HM, 5 EW) made references to effort put into their child specifically to help raise a good person who will make contributions to society. There was a difference in the number of statements of creating a child as a legacy (3 HM, 5 EW), and there seemed to be a qualitative difference in the statements that the homemakers or employed women made.

One employed woman stated

"...I think books and reading are very important and I did that well with my children. Other things were teaching them honesty, integrity, responsibility, dependability ... I think raising my children plays a large part of my generativity. And that is generativity because things I taught my children are then things they go out and touch many lives with and they show those kids how to be responsible etc to be well balanced individuals."

Another employed woman stated

"that I am involved in a future citizen. I am modeling for them and teaching them values, and hopefully along with teaching them values helping them learn how to make values for themselves. I think that is the most important part of being a mother, is teaching them how to problem solve."

The homemakers made similar statements such as one woman,

"...I am constantly always teaching, with children you are in a teaching position all the time ... I see myself as in a teaching position with my children. So I am helping them become the next generation, and I am helping them to make their life better than our life or my life growing-up. Putting things with in their reach."

However, the employed women seemed to use more specific terms of what they hope they will contribute to their children (values such as honesty and responsibility)
than the homemakers. The homemakers say they are contributing to creating a good person, but not exact terms of what it is they are hoping to see in their children. Additionally, the homemakers seemed to talk about this contribution in a way that requires more time than they could give if they had to work. The homemakers seemed to indicate that to produce this quality person you have to invest infinite time.

For example this homemaker stated,

"I had lots of fun in the summertime with the kids. Taking them out and playing ... just creative play ... you are a memory maker and creating a best friend and I think it is really important to raise good people and in order to do that you have to take time."

The employed women did not indicate that they felt they were not raising a productive contributing child because of a lack of time. In fact the employed women felt they were setting a good example to their children that a woman can work and still be a mom.

Others' Children as Legacies

The theme Others' Children as Legacies included statements made by the women where they see their behavior as having an effect on other people's children, such as their child's friends or children they encounter at work or volunteering. Five of the participants (2 HM, 3 EW) mentioned feeling a sense of generativity from interacting with other people's children. One of the employed women mentioned this because she is a teacher so her interaction is in the course of her career, but the other two employed women stated they feel this generativity from actively interacting with children on a voluntary bases. One employed woman talked about her children as her first source of
generativity, then her children's friends and other young people as a major source of
generativity.

"...right now I have two instruments I am loaning out to two young people
because they don't have instruments. And they were interested in trying to see if
they had an affinity for music and I feel that if I can inspire anybody to get into
music then I want to do that. These are instruments that are my Dad's and I don't
ever want to lose them, but I feel it is worth the risk because of the impact it could
have on their lives. And I practice with young people getting ready for a
performance or a competition."

Homemakers derive a sense of generativity in the category Others' Children as
Legacies. Most of the homemakers report feeling generative towards others through their
impact on their children's friends or through roles contributing to other children. For
example, one homemaker mentioned that she feels generative because she volunteers in
her children's kindergarten and first grade classrooms. She and her husband also are the
coordinators for her children's Sabbath School. She feels this is modeling and shows a
spiritual leadership that "...carries through to other children and other families." Another
homemaker talked about her membership in an organization called MOPS (Mothers of
Pre-Schoolers) and hopes this is a generative activity. She feels that her involvement in
this organization contributes to her generativity towards raising her own child, interacting
with other children, and interacting with other adults, thereby having a positive effect.

Generativity through Adults by Nurturing

The fourth theme, Generativity through Adults by Nurturing, includes the sense of
generativity and contribution women see from their interaction with people in a casual
everyday way (ripple effect). Included in this category are statements about interactions
with others in a non-designated role; that is, the non-intentional effect of interacting with
other parents, co-workers, and friends in a nurturing way gives these women a sense of
generativity. When each participant was asked if there were other ways they felt generative, all said yes and mentioned additional ways of feeling generative. All of the employed women cited their job as a source of generativity. What is interesting about this is that all of the women in the employed women category were in careers that are traditionally nurturing. Two of the women were psychologists, one teacher, one nurse, and one occupational therapist. The employed women cited the nurturing aspect of their job as a generative source either in the category of Others' Children as Legacies or Generativity through Adults by Nurturing.

Three employed women made statements indicating that they felt some generativity this way compared to two homemakers who made statements indicating that they felt generative through their contact with other adults. The employed women made statements about their contact with other adults in their work capacity. The nurse stated that she enjoyed "...creating a warm place for people to come to the office who are afraid or nervous and it is just very satisfying to know I am put someone's mind at easy if they are afraid." Both psychologists stated that their interaction on the job is a large source of generativity. The occupational therapist stated that her ability to help others through her work is rewarding. She says "...there are things that they (disabled people) can do if somebody help them, so I decided to become a therapist." She also had a Jazzercise club that was not in the capacity of a career. She stated that she did this and felt it was generative because "...it was to help women feel better about themselves and to socialize outside of the home and do things that I enjoyed with other people."
One homemaker specifically cited her interacting with other adults as a source of generativity. She mentioned her interaction with other adults in the capacity of friendships as being generative. None of the other homemakers mentioned their interactions with other adults as a sense of generativity.

Adults as One's Legacy

The fifth theme, Adults as One's Legacy, differs from Generativity through Adults because the women stated specific roles or intentional acts that would help them feel generative, and they could see direct effects of their contribution. Only one homemaker and one employed woman made statements that fit in this category. The homemaker talked about how over the years she has taken people in from the church that need a place to stay for one reason or another. She related two examples, one about a couple that is currently staying with her family and she stated that "if I think someone is hurting I want to help them."

The other example was of a young woman who was having serious problems. "...I just felt I could help her... I could impart something of value to her and something good that she could go on out into the world ... how many people we have had since we have been married, had someone living with us off and on, like right now ... this young couple ... I feel like I have three months to give them some things to build a family with such as being courteous or expressing feelings."

The other woman that cited Adults as One's Legacy, one of the psychologists, stated that she felt her job was generative, not just in the role of therapist, but also in her interaction with the younger psychologist that she mentors. She felt generative in "helping them establish goals and encourage them and give them belief in their abilities."
Intentional Behavior in the Community

Intentional Behavior in the Community included statements that women made about volunteering for designated roles, but did not state specifically feeling generative about the contribution they were making. One homemaker cited this type of behavior, and one employed woman. The employed woman referred to her role as a deaconess. One of the homemakers stated that she serves on two Boards of Directors, but she did not state whether she felt specifically generative from this behavior.
Discussion

The first question asked of all of the women in this study was to list five words they would use to describe themselves. In response to this question there were some noticed differences between the homemakers and the employed women. The employed women responded fairly quickly, within one minute of the question being asked they had completed the list. None of them asked for further instruction of whether the words were to be positive or negative, and none of them commented on the difficulty of the task. Conversely, the homemakers took much longer, were less sure of their responses, exhibited uncertainty and several did not answer the question completely.

It appeared that the employed women needed less time to define themselves and had less difficulty with the task. They did not feel that further explanation was needed. They simply stated the five words and then were ready for the next question. It may be that the employed women are used to a faster paced working environment, or used to taking directions and following them precisely. Another explanation may be that a woman has had to think more about defining herself and her characteristics to determine which career she felt most suited for. It is also possible that the homemakers are not accustomed to interactions that are confined to a finite answer. The employed women may be more accustomed to making lists than homemakers, to fulfill their multiple roles. The interactions that a homemaker encounters may allow for more explanation and elaboration than those encountered by an employed women so the homemakers are not familiar with the format of answering a question in five words. Or it may be that when being a homemaker is the sole role, women lose their sense of self and individuation.
In the analysis of the words used, it was noted that the homemakers used a similar number of generative/nurturing words that employed women used. However, employed women used almost double the amount of words that described their temperament/personality traits. There was also a difference in the words used. The employed women mentioned traits that were significant to pursuing a career outside of the home such as ambitious, organized, and thorough. Only one homemaker stated that she was organized and scheduled. Additionally, none of the homemakers described their intelligence, two employed women did.

The explanation for this may be that the life path that is chosen is reflected in the identity of the self. Homemakers define themselves around the role of mother, and employed women define themselves around characteristics that are valued around the role of mother and in the professional arena. It is further possible that traits needed to excel in a professional arena, such as being articulate and the ability to sell yourself, are more developed in employed women, therefore facilitating a difference in the answers between employed women and homemakers. In other words, the employed women may have had the practice and may more easily answer questions in an interview format. The employed women may have their self-schema more accessible than homemakers.

A further explanation may be Van Manen, Krauss & Whitbourne's (1997) theory of "niche- picking." This states that personality traits can effect the course one chooses for their life including the choice of a specific job. In other words, it is possible that the women that define themselves as more nurturing may find being a homemaker more rewarding than having a career, and vice versa. Those that define themselves with more self-oriented personality traits would choose to seek a career to utilize these traits.
Gilligan (1979) suggested that women value interpersonal relationships and intimacy more than the autonomy and achievement that men value. Erikson (1993) stated that a woman will establish intimacy with her husband and her identity would be developed and defined through him. However, with the increase in women going to graduate school and entering the workforce as professionals in careers other than in contingency occupations, in case they don't get married, women will be able to develop relationships at work. The women in this study chose nurturing jobs that still emphasized relationships and nurturing. Additionally, relationships and nurturing were facets that most of the employed women cited as the generative aspect of their job. Gilligan's (1979) theory that women centrally value the interpersonal relationships and intimacy more than the autonomy and achievement seemed to be supported for all but one employed woman in this study. It appears that all of the employed women could still satisfy an aspect of their desires for relationships and nurturing through the types of jobs these women chose.

As stated previously, employed women had a higher average for more sources of generativity than homemakers. It should be noted that a sample of ten women precludes statistical inference and these conclusions need further verification in a larger sample. This study shows two important findings. First, employed women have more sources of generativity but second, homemakers have additional sources of generativity beyond their parental roles. There are added opportunities in a chosen career that may contribute to a specific aspect of generativity, such as teaching; however, homemakers can find ways to achieve a sense of generativity in these areas also.
Regardless of the group they were in, all of the women found their children to be a primary source of generativity. This supports Gilligan’s (1979) theory that women seek and value relationships and intimacy more than autonomy, and that motherhood is one of the primary roles for women to develop their intimacy and relationships. Although all of the women cited their children as a primary source of generativity, there was a difference between the groups in their answers about their goals for their child’s development. All but one of the women mentioned a strong need or desire to produce a child that will make a difference for society, or will be a contributor to society in a productive way. The employed women, however, made more statements that gave clear objectives of what they hope to pass on to their child as a legacy that will contribute to society. For example they stated they hoped to instill honesty, responsibility, and caring for other people. The other group, homemakers, used descriptions of "wanting to raise a good person," but they did not list specific ideas of what this would look like. The homemakers made more references to their child being their legacy through their efforts of "being there" and "being an influence and teaching."

An explanation for the differences between the responses of these two groups may lie in the time component that homemakers mentioned frequently. Many of the homemakers stated that they did not pursue a career because they felt the time spent at a job would limit their feelings of generativity. The homemakers may have felt that they would only get generativity with their children and this required vast amounts of time. It appears from the statements that the homemakers made that they feel that without the unlimited time with their children, they could not be as nurturing and do a good job raising their children. Employed women appeared to feel that they could do a good job
raising their children into successful adult and feel a sense of generativity through their children despite the time constraints. One reason they may list more objectives for what they feel will develop a contributing member of society is that with the time constraints, they need to have specific goals they want to transmit to their children. They take their finite time to convey specific ideals to their children. Another explanation for the qualitative differences between the two groups of women, may again be that the tasks of being employed has impacted the way the employed women think and speak about all areas of their life. On the job, such as an occupational therapist and psychologist, they are required to set objectives for therapy and they work towards them. In other words, again, the employed women may have a practice effect and have a readiness to answer questions in an interview format with specific criteria for their goals. It is hard to determine whether there is an impact of employment on women that effect their answers, or if the difference is in the women at a personality level, and that is why they chose to pursue a career or not. It may be that these different approaches both give a sense of generativity but are conveyed differently based on the personalities or competencies that seek the niche of homemaker or employed women. It is possible that the homemakers do not give a list of objectives of how to raise a child they see as contributing to society because they get so caught up in the day-to-day minutia that they fail to think in long term ways to guide their children towards being a successful citizen. It may also be that the homemakers have the goals, but are unable to articulate them. It may be that these different approaches both give a sense of generativity but are conveyed differently based on the personalities that seek the niche of homemaker or employed women.
Another question to be explored by this research was whether employed women bring up areas of generativity during the interview that homemakers do not. The primary difference between the employed women and homemakers was that the employed women engaged in more generativity through nurturing adults. The workplace provided the employed women the opportunity to help other adults entering the workplace, or to provide a nurturing environment for other adults. However, the homemakers may still engage in these types of activities with other mothers, but are more focused or primed to answer about children. Overall, all of the women had more than one area of generativity. Not one homemaker had their children as the sole source of generativity. It seemed that the homemakers and the employed women were not limited to one source.

Conversely, this study examined whether homemakers bring up areas of generativity that employed women do not. Based on this sample, the answer appears to be no. Two categories, Intentional Behavior in the Community and Adults as One's Legacy, were cited only twice by this sample. It is unclear whether a sample of more homemakers and employed women would cite Adults as a Legacy and Intentional Behavior in the Community, or whether this is an aberration.

A primary aim of this qualitative research was to determine how women are defining generativity in their lives. For example, it was thought that maybe women consider their volunteer time as being just as generative as raising their children or starting a business. Based on the sample for this study, women feel that raising their children is a primary generative act as both the role of mother and their children being a legacy. Employed women and homemakers alike feel that one of their primary tasks and a legacy that they will leave is to raise a child that will be a good citizen and make a
contribution to society and nurture humankind. In addition to raising one's own child, this research showed there are other sources that women see as contributing to their generativity. Seven out of ten of the women (3 HM, 4 EW) cited that they feel that they have an impact and therefore a legacy from their interaction with other children, primarily their children's friends. Additionally, the women in this sample felt that they achieved a sense of generativity from their interaction with other adults either through a nurturing relationship or modeling. Also women can feel a sense of legacy through their contribution to the community as a volunteer in their church or other charity organizations.

This study shows that there is a special sense of generativity for women via their children. As Erikson (1993) suggested women do feel primarily generative through their children, but there are also other sources of generativity for women. Gilligan (1979) points out that women focus on relationships more than autonomy, and that seems to apply also to this study. All of the women talked about different sources of generativity, but almost all the other sources mentioned were related to a nurturing/relational component. It would be interesting to see if this holds true for women that work in non-traditional jobs. Future research may also want to examine whether it may be that women who have to work still feel a sense of generativity from their job, perhaps because they can establish relationships there also.

A problem of all the research studying psychological constructs is that it is difficult to develop quantifiable measures. It is difficult to know what level of each aspect of a construct gives each individual their own feeling of "normal." Again that is a
problem with generativity. It is difficult to quantify what different components of generativity add to the whole sense of generativity. All of the women felt that motherhood played a tremendous role in their sense of generativity. But the desire to fulfill other facets of generativity seems to vary greatly among women. During the current era, women have had more of an opportunity to pursue a career if they desire, and it seems more likely they will have more facets of generativity if they are employed. However, it seems that without employment, women can still generate the opportunities to fulfill similar facets as employed women have built into their employment.

It was not possible to determine from this study what motivates the women that engage in more generative activities to do so. It would be interesting to know if both groups of women, homemakers and employed women, who engage in more activities (activities with children's friends, volunteering at school) do so because they want more generative feelings, or they need more stimulation than they have. From the data collected for this study, it seemed that there was a bigger difference between the women within a group than between the groups about the different sources of generativity they received. Not all the women appeared to need many sources of generativity. It appeared that the homemakers do not regret not seeking employment.

This study showed that from the other ways that women feel generative besides children, the employed women have more of an opportunity to gain Generativity through Adults than homemakers. Most of the women in this study that were employed worked with adults. This work environment provides an access to adults that homemakers may not have as easy a time replicating. However, the homemakers may not feel this is a disadvantage. Again, there may be a "niche picking" effect that the women who are
homemakers do not feel that their adult interaction would provide generativity; therefore, work would not provide an added sense of generativity for them. Another explanation may be a personality trait or a belief system that the homemaker may only think of generativity in the context of children. For example, a women may believe that her greatest sense of generativity is through her child, and she feels that working would impede her time to develop her relationship with her child. She would then feel that working would limit her feeling of generativity and it would seem logical that if she had the opportunity, she would be a homemaker. This seems to be consistent with the statements the homemakers made. It should be noted that homemakers were specifically asked how they thought employment would change their generativity. They all indicated they thought it would have a negative impact because of less time and energy to spend with their children. What is unclear is whether this thought pattern was prevalent as a personality trait before she was married, or if this is a result of cognitive dissonance. Did these women feel that they had to have unlimited time with their children to produce a child that they felt would contribute to society or did they develop this thought pattern to justify their choices to be a homemaker? If they didn't already feel they wanted to be homemakers why would they stay home in the first place?

There are several possible answers to this. First, the age of the participants of this study placed them in the generation that were still among the first to choose to work if they wanted to. However, there was still stigma attached to women that worked and didn't properly take care of their children and husbands. There is still stigma attached to leaving children in daycare all day. Second, women were and still are discriminated against in the work place. It is possible that some of the stay-at-home moms didn't feel
like confronting the discrimination they would have to deal with, such as sexual harassment, negative comments about how a woman shouldn't take a man's job, or working hard only to be placed on the "mommy track." Many of the homemakers may have felt they couldn't work full-time and come home and do another shift of cooking, cleaning and caring, so they rationalize their choice to ease their cognitive dissonance. The women that choose to work may experience only some of these things, or all of them. Possibly due to personality variables, they may experience them less, choose a field that doesn't have as many negative drawbacks, have different coping styles, may views these obstacles in a more positive way and thrive on them, or they feel the rewards are worth the added stressors.

From a contextualist perspective, life experiences have an effect on personality, and vice versa (Van Manen, Krauss & Whitbourne, 1997). For example the type of job one chooses, the stress of trauma, and family roles all have effects on a personality. Although one does not have great control over some events such as traumas, one does make choices in what career to pursue and whether or not to have a family. This is personality effecting life choices. These choices have been termed "niche-picking" because one guides one's own outcome based on his or her abilities and likes (Caspi, Bern, & Elder, 1989; Van Manen & Whitbourne, 1997). This seems to be an explanation for why there is not a large difference between the groups of homemakers and employed women. The women who would be happy and feel generative and good about their family and pursuing a career will do so, and the women who would be more satisfied being a homemaker and feel that raising their child is their main purpose and sense of generativity would choose to be a homemaker if possible. In other words, when given the
choice to pursue a career or be a homemaker there seems to be a group of women that would see pursuing a career as limiting their sense of generativity by taking time away from their child and therefore would choose to stay home.

Methodological Problems

The indication found in this study that employment does give an aspect of generativity that a homemaker cannot generate in her maternal role can not be tested statistically. Additionally this study's conclusions are based on a very small sample which is a methodological problem for drawing firm conclusions.

Some limitations due to the use of the qualitative method is no external validity to the responses made by the participants, selective memory, recency effects, and privacy concerns may have had a negative impact on the data collected. A further limitation may also be a range in participants' verbal ability to articulate ideas and information.

Additionally, due to the homogeneous sample the ability to generalize the results is limited. All of the women were Caucasian, half of the participants were married to physicians, half had training as nurses (4 HM, 1 EW), and at least 60% of the participants were from a fairly conservative religious orientation (Seventh-Day Adventist). However, the goal of this research was not to be able to generalize to a large population, but to generate further interest in this research area.

Further, two of the employed women interviewed were psychologists. These women may have had an advantage of knowing the definition of generativity. However there was an operational definition given for this study, so that every woman was given the same terms and cues on which to base their answer. The advantage that the psychologists had was probably minimal. Neither appeared well-versed with this stage of
Erikson's stage of psycho-social development. Furthermore unless a psychologist concentrated in developmental psychology, they are not very familiar with later stages of Erikson's theory. However, it may be a safe assumption that because these women have acquired such a high degree of education and are in the clinical aspect of psychology, they are more articulate than average.

A specific methodological problem to women's research is the changing roles of women. In this study all of the employed women were nurturing careers. This may be a cohort effect that women in their forties and fifties had more opportunities to pursue a career, but their choices of careers were limited to traditional female jobs that entail large amounts of nurturing. Further research should explore whether different career choices such as jobs with less apparent relational nurturing would affect generativity. Future research should also investigate the impact of variables such as type of occupation, age of child, religion and the age range of women. For example, does a younger child cause mothers to focus more on day-to-day tasks then to reflect on more abstract concepts such as honesty and integrity towards producing a productive member of society? Or, does the age of mother and her children's age impact their view of how they are generative?

In conclusion, this was a qualitative study to examine the role of employment in a woman's sense of generativity. This study supports other research that suggests that a woman's child is her primary source of generativity. However, it appears that all women have other sources of generativity in addition to their child. As this study has shown, this can be accomplished through employment, but homemakers also can find many ways of adding to their sense of generativity besides their own children. One of the main differences between employed women and homemakers in generativity is that employed
women feel generative through other adults more than the homemakers do. It did appear that the homemakers had a more difficult time generating words to describe themselves and to articulate goals about themselves and their children. Future research should explore the consistency of the finding that homemakers have difficulty defining their sense of self compared to employed women, and if this would hold true in a larger sample. Additional research would be useful in determining the reliability and generalizability of this study in a larger sample where statistical inference methods can be used to determine if these findings are reliable.
References


Appendix A

Informed Consent

The purpose of this form is to explain the nature and extent of your participation in the study of Psychosocial Development in Women from the Department of Psychology at Loma Linda University, and to obtain written consent for your participation in this study. This research is being conducted by Tracy Dern, Doctoral Candidate, at Loma Linda University under the supervision of Gloria Cowan, Ph.d., adjunct professor at Loma Linda University and professor at Cal State University, San Bernardino.

The purpose of this research is to help understand women's sense of contribution and purpose in mid-life. Participants will fill out a general demographics questionnaire and taking part in a personal interview. The background questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to fill out, and the interview will take no more than 90 minutes. The interview will be about your thoughts and feelings about your accomplishments. This interview will be recorded by audiotape to help ensure accuracy. The audiotape will be transcribed, then manually erased within one week of the interview. All information obtained during the interview will be kept anonymous and will not be associated with your identity, thereby ensuring anonymity. The data collected will be maintained for three years in a locked filing cabinet in the office of the researcher, then shredded. Raw data may be shared with other researchers.

initials
Although there are no known risks associated with participation in this research, it is possible that some people may experience boredom, fatigue, agitation, worry or other negative emotions when discussing aspects of their personal thoughts and feelings about their career and family. If this occurs and you would like to discuss your concerns with the researcher or a professional therapist a list of local, low-cost counseling centers and clinics is attached to the consent form. However, many people enjoy and benefit from discussing their accomplishments in work and family.

Let me reassure you that your participation is voluntary and appreciated. You may stop participation at any time during the course of the study, and for any reason, without penalty. Additionally, the answers you offer will be completely confidential, and will only be used for the purposed of the study. Finally, the researcher reserves the right to end the participant’s participation if the need arises.

If you wish to contact an impartial third party not associated with this study regarding any questions or complains you may have about the study, you may contact the Office of Patient Relations, Loma Linda University Medical Center, Loma Linda, CA 92354, phone (909)558-4647 for information and assistance.

Again, let me express my appreciation for your time. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (909) 796-4959, or my supervisor, Gloria Cowan, Ph.D. at (909) 880-5575.

__________
initials
List of Clinics and Counseling Centers in the San Bernardino Area

Department of Psychology
Psychological Services
11130 Anderson St Rm 117
Loma Linda Ca 92354
(909) 558-8576

Loma Linda University
Department of Psychiatry
Outpatient Services
11374 Mountain View Ave
Loma Linda, CA 92354
(909) 558-6405

Loma Linda University
Marriage and Family Therapy Clinic
164 W. Hospitality Lane Suite 15
San Bernardino, CA 92408
(909) 558-4934

National Referral Center (24hr a day)
222 W. Ball Road
Anaheim, Ca 92805
(800) 550-0467
1. Give five words that describe you:

"Generativity is when an adult individual is engaged in establishing and guiding the next generation. They nurture someone or something, and have a sense of being needed. Generativity is also the way a person can make a contribution to humanity and develop a legacy to the future. An individual makes a contribution to the next generation or society that will live past their own death. Generativity can be developed by doing things that are creative and productive and that have a beneficial relationship between the individual and either the next generation on an individual basis or society at large. Generativity includes nurturing, teaching, and promoting the next generation. This type of behavior can be accomplished in raising children, work and or hobbies.

Generativity is a psychological term that is used to describe a feeling or a sense of being that adults develop. This feeling entails a caring for and responsibility for the next generation, and feeling that you are making a difference in this life, and creating a legacy. This sense of generativity can be made through several activities. Having a child is a primary generative act. In addition, to caring for a family, people can be generative through their work, hobbies, politics, community events and volunteering."

2. Based on this definition of generativity, do you feel that you are generative and if so how?
   --any other ways:

3. Why did you choose to pursue a career?

4. What role do you think employment plays in your sense of generativity?

5. What role do you think being a mother plays in your sense of generativity?

6. How do you visualize your life after your children are grown?

7. If you could do it all over again would you do something differently?
1.) Give five words that describe you:

"Generativity is when an adult individual is engaged in establishing and guiding the next generation. They nurture someone or something, and have a sense of being needed. Generativity is also the way a person can make a contribution to humanity and develop a legacy to the future. An individual makes a contribution to the next generation or society that will live past their own death. Generativity can be developed by doing things that are creative and productive and that have a beneficial relationship between the individual and either the next generation or society at large. Generativity includes nurturing, teaching, and promoting the next generation. This type of behavior can be accomplished in raising children, work and or hobbies.

Generativity is a psychological term that is used to describe a feeling or a sense of being that adults develop. This feeling entails a caring for and responsibility for the next generation, and feeling that you are making a difference in this life, and creating a legacy. This sense of generativity can be made through several activities. Having a child is a primary generative act. In addition, to caring for a family, people can be generative through their work, hobbies, politics, community events and volunteering."

2.) Based on this definition of generativity, do you feel that you are generative and if so how?
   --any other ways:

3.) Why did you choose not to pursue a career?

4.) What does being a mother give you?

5.) Do you think that employment would effect your sense of generativity?

6.) How do you visualize your life after your children are grown?

7.) If you could do it all over again would you do something differently?
Appendix C
Background Questionnaire

Age:

How long have you been married:

How long have you been employed:

How many hours a week do you work:

How many children and their ages:

How old were your children when you started being employed:

Where were you raised (Region):

Family of origin’s SES (middle class etc):

Current occupation (occupational prestige, generative career):

Husband’s occupation:

Highest level of education:

Perceived quality of relationship to children:
Poor (Rarely talk or connect) 1 2 3
Excellent (Doesn’t need improving) 4 5 6

Perceived quality of relationship to spouse:
Poor (Rarely talk or connect) 1 2 3
Excellent (Doesn’t need improving) 4 5 6

Perceived quality of relationship to co-workers:
Poor (Rarely talk or connect) 1 2 3
Excellent (Doesn’t need improving) 4 5 6

Any mental health problems, seeing therapist, taking psychotropic medication:

Any physical problems (chronic pain):
The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in a study being conducted on Psychosocial Development in Women from the Department of Psychology at Loma Linda University. The research is being conducted by Tracy Dern, a Doctoral Candidate in clinical psychology at Loma Linda. The purpose of this study is to help understand women’s sense of generativity in mid-life. As a participant you will be asked to fill out a general demographics sheet, and take part in a personal interview. The interview will be about your thoughts and feelings about your life, feelings of accomplishment and generativity. This interview will take approximately 90 minutes.

Let me reassure you that your participation is voluntary and appreciated. Additionally, the answers you offer will be completely confidential, and will only be used for the purposed of the study.

If you are willing to participate in this study please call me at (909) 796-4959 to arrange a time for the interview.

Thank You,

Tracy Dern
Doctoral Candidate
Loma Linda University