

**PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY WOMEN RE-ENTERING INTO
THE EDUCATION PROFESSION**

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SUMMARY

Key words: re-entering, women, education, labour force, career break, returning women, women returners.

This study investigated problems experienced by women re-entering into the education profession by focusing on:

- The nature and scope of re-entry by women into the education profession;
- the features and problems experienced by women on re-entering the education profession;
- the problems women educators experience on re-entering the education profession in the North West Province.

To achieve these goals, both an empirical survey and a survey of literature was conducted. The study of literature was undertaken consulting primary and secondary sources. After the problems experienced by women re-entering into the education profession were established and discussed, a questionnaire was drafted. From the review of literature, it appeared that the problems experienced by women (i.e. re-entry women) were problems within themselves, in the career and society, as well as problems in the work situation and on management level.

A systematic sample was used in which women educators of secondary schools in the North West Province were involved. The empirical investigation indicated that women educators have problems when they re-enter the education profession after a period of absence and that certain problems should be addressed. Problems of high priority are related to the category of problems within women. The categories of problems within the career and the society were indicated as problems of high priority.

A problem of low priority for women educators appears to be the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in the educator's home or nearby. Also, the age of re-entry women seems to be no problem for re-entry women educators.

Certain recommendations are made on the basis of the empirical investigation. The most important recommendations are the provision of childcare facilities such as after-school care, holiday playschemes, workplace nurseries and an increase in maternity benefits, and the introduction of paternity and childcare leave. The creation of promotion opportunities for women who aspire to educational management positions is also an important recommendation. All women, including re-entry women, should be treated fairly when applying for posts.

OPSOMMING

Trefwoorde: terugkeer, vrouens, opvoedkunde, werkmag, loopbaan onderbreking, hertoetredende vroue, vroue hertoetreders.

In hierdie studie is die probleme wat die onderwyseres ervaar met terugtrede tot die onderwysprofessie ondersoek deur te fokus op:

- Die aard en omvang van terugtrede tot die onderwysprofessie;
- die probleme wat die onderwyseres ervaar met terugtrede tot die onderwysprofessie;
- die probleme wat onderwyseresse ervaar met terugtrede tot die onderwysprofessie in die Noord-Wes Provinsie.

Om hierdie doelwitte te bereik is 'n literatuurstudie en empiriese studie uitgevoer. Die literatuurstudie is onderneem uit primêre en sekondêre bronne. Nadat die probleme wat terugkerende onderwyseresse ervaar, geïdentifiseer en bespreek is, is 'n vraelys opgestel. Vanuit die literatuur is probleme van onderwyseresse binne hulle beroepe en die gemeenskap asook probleme in die werksituasie en op bestuursvlak as belangrik geïdentifiseer.

Daar is van 'n sistematiese steekproef gebruik gemaak waarby onderwyseresse in die Noord-Wes Provinsie betrek is. Die empiriese ondersoek het getoon dat onderwyseresse probleme met terugtrede ervaar en dat daar probleme is wat aandag behoort te kry. Probleme van hoë belang hou onder meer verband met probleme van die onderwyseresse binne hulle beroepe en die gemeenskap. 'n Probleem van lae belang is die rol wat die vrou speel in die versorging van naby- of inwonende bejaarde, siek of gestremde bloedverwante familie. Dit wil voorkom asof die ouderdom van terugkerende vrouens nie 'n probleem is nie.

Op grond van die empiriese studie is aanbevelings gemaak. Die belangrikste aanbevelings is dat daar voorsien moet word in behoeftes ten opsigte van kindersorg soos nasorg sentrums, vankansie projekte, werkplek kleuterskole, 'n

verbetering van swangerskap voordele en die bekendstelling van vaderskap en kindersorg verlof. Die skep van bevorderingsgeleenthede vir vrouens in onderwysbestuur is ook 'n belangrike aanbeveling.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY	i
OPSOMMING	iii
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	xi
LIST OF APPENDICES	xii
CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION	
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT	1
1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH	4
1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH	5
1.4.1 LITERATURE REVIEW	5
1.4.2 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH	5
1.4.2.1 Questionnaire	5
1.4.2.2 Study Group	5
1.4.2.3 Data Analysis	6
1.5 CHAPTER OUTLINE	6
1.6 PROBLEMS WITH RESEARCH	6
CHAPTER 2: THE RE-ENTRY OF WOMEN INTO THE EDUCATION PROFESSION	
2.1 INTRODUCTION	7
2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF RE-ENTRY	8
2.2.1 RE-ENTRY	8
2.2.2 CAREER BREAK	8
2.2.3 WOMEN RETURNER	9

2.2.4 TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF RE-ENTRY	9
2.2.5 SYNTHESIS	12
2.3 CAREER DEVELOPMENT	13
2.3.1 CONCEPTUALISATION OF A CAREER	14
2.3.2 CRITIQUE OF EXISTING DEFINITIONS OF A CAREER	15
2.3.3 TOWARDS A THEORY OF WOMEN'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT	16
2.3.3.1 Greenhouse and Gallanan	16
2.3.3.2 Super	18
2.3.4 CRITIQUE OF MODELS OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT	19
2.3.5 CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN	20
2.3.5.1 Life span theories	21
2.3.5.2 Critique of existing theories	24
2.3.5.3. Life stages and re-entry women	25
2.3.6 SYNTHESIS	26
2.4 THE PROCESS OF RE-ENTRY	27
2.4.1 PHASE 1:THE DECISION TO EXIT	27
2.4.2 PHASE 2: THE CAREER BREAK	28
2.4.2.1 Length of the break	28
2.4.2.2 Timing of break	31
2.4.2.3 Education	32
2.4.2.4 Nature of break	33
2.4.3 PHASE 3: THE DECISION TO RE-ENTER	35
2.4.4 SYNTHESIS	39

2.5 SUMMARY	39
CHAPTER 3: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY RE-ENTRY WOMEN	
3.1 INTRODUCTION	41
3.2 CATEGORIES OF PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY RE-ENTRY WOMEN	42
3.3 IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEMS	43
3.3.1 PROBLEMS WITHIN PERSONS	43
3.3.1.1 Role conflict	43
3.3.1.2 Stress	46
3.3.1.3 Work satisfaction	48
3.3.1.4 Guilt	50
3.3.1.5 Low self-confidence	50
3.3.1.6 Synthesis	53
3.3.2 PROBLEMS IN THE WORK SITUATION	54
3.3.2.1 In-service training	54
3.3.2.1.1 Outdated knowledge and skills	55
3.3.2.1.2 Retraining programmes	55
3.3.2.2 Meaningfulness and the interesting nature and type of work	56
3.3.2.3 Interpersonal relationships within the organisation	56
3.3.2.4 Synthesis	57
3.3.3 PROBLEMS ON MANAGEMENT LEVEL	58
3.3.3.1 Employer attitudes	58
3.3.3.2 Legislation	59

3.3.3.3 Synthesis	63
3.3.4 PROBLEMS WITHIN THE CAREER	64
3.3.4.1 Remuneration	64
3.3.4.2 Promotion prospects	65
3.3.4.3 Synthesis	67
3.3.5 PROBLEMS WITHIN THE SOCIETY	68
3.3.5.1 Childcare arrangements	68
3.3.5.2 Society values	70
3.3.5.3 Synthesis	71
3.4 SUMMARY	72
CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH	
4.1 INTRODUCTION	73
4.2 THE AIM OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH	73
4.3 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT	73
4.3.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE AS RESEARCH TOOL	73
4.3.2 THE DESIGN OF A QUESTIONNAIRE	76
4.3.2.1 Pre-questionnaire construction interviews	76
4.3.2.2 Construction of the questionnaire items	76
4.3.2.3 The questionnaire format	77
4.3.2.4 Pilot study	77
4.3.2.5 Questionnaire distribution	78
4.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING	78
4.5 RESPONSE RATE	79

4.6 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	80
4.6.1 APPROVAL FROM THE NORTH WEST DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	80
4.6.2 FOLLOW-UP ON QUESTIONNAIRE	80
4.7 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES	80
4.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	81
4.8.1 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION	81
4.8.2 ANALYSIS OF MEAN SCORES	85
4.8.2.1 Problems within women	85
4.8.2.2 Problems within the work situation	89
4.8.2.3 Problems on management level	91
4.8.2.4 Problems within the career	93
4.8.2.5 Problems within the community	95
4.8.2.6 Problems with the highest priority ranking	97
4.8.2.7 Problems with the lowest priority ranking	98
4.8.2.8 Synthesis	99
4.8.3 KRUSKAL-WALLIS TEST	99
4.8.3.1 Problems within women	100
4.8.3.2 Problems within the work situation	108
4.8.3.3 Problems on management level	111
4.8.3.4 Problems within the career	115
4.8.3.5 Problems within the society	118
4.9 SUMMARY	122

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION	123
5.2 SUMMARY	123
5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH	124
5.3.1 FINDINGS ON RESEARCH AIM 1	124
5.3.2 FINDINGS ON RESEARCH AIM 2	125
5.3.3 FINDINGS ON RESEARCH AIM 3	126
5.3.3.1 Problems of high priority ranking	126
5.3.3.2 Problems of low priority ranking	126
5.3.3.3 A shift in the way women educators perceive problems regarding re-entry	127
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS	128
5.4.1 RECOMMENDATION 1	128
5.4.2 RECOMMENDATION 2	129
5.4.3 RECOMMENDATION 3	129
5.5 CONCLUSION	130
BIBLIOGRAPHY	131

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 2.1: Conceptualisation of the career development of women	13
Figure 2.2: The conceptualisation of the process of re-entry	27
Table 4.1: Response rate	79
Table 4.2: Biographical information with regard to the study population	82
Table 4.3: Data on the problems within women	86
Table 4.4: Data on the problems within the work situation	90
Table 4.5: Data on problems on management level	92
Table 4.6: Data on problems within the career	94
Table 4.7: Data on problems within the community	96
Table 4.8: Data on the problems with the highest priority ranking	97
Table 4.9: Data on the problems with the lowest priority ranking	98
Table 4.10: Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems within women	101
Table 4.11: Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems within the work situation	109
Table 4.12: Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems on management level	112
Table 4.13: Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems within the career	116
Table 4.14: Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems within society	119
Table 4.15: A shift in the way women educators perceive problems regarding re-entry	127

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of permission from the North West Province of Education	145
Appendix B: Letter to principals	146
Appendix C: Questionnaire on the problems experienced by women in the North West province after a period of absence	147

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The re-entry of women has been a topic of concern to educators and counsellors since the late 1960s (Padula, 1994:10). Furthermore, it has been noted that women's return or re-entry into the work force has been showing signs of becoming more complex as a result of the multiple problems that re-entry women encounter when they return to the work force after a period of absence. However, one of the major areas of neglect in research in South Africa has been in the area of women re-entering the education profession.

This study was undertaken to determine the problems experienced by women re-entering the work force and particularly the education profession.

In this chapter the problem statement and aims of the study are outlined and highlighted. The chapter also outlines the method of research which involves the literature study and the design of the empirical research regarding the problems experienced by re-entry women. In addition, problems regarding the research are identified.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The role of women in the twentieth century has experienced a radical transformation throughout most Western societies, including South Africa. Women labour participation has changed dramatically in recent years. A major cause of increased women labour participation has been due to re-entry of married women with dependent children into the work force (Lemmer, 1990:1). Throughout history, women have been both in the work force and have also been mothers. Various studies have examined trends in women's work and family roles (Greyvenstein, 1989; Lemmer, 1990; Moen, 1992; Padula, 1994). These

researchers found that the turbulence of the 19th century heralded an awakening to the plight of women and set the scene for elements of change. Moen (1992:3-4) reports that during the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution, women held work and family roles sequentially. When young girls got married, they permanently withdrew from the work force in order to tend to household and child-care obligations. In the first half of the twentieth century, women gradually began returning to employment after their children were grown up (Moen, 1992:4). Moen (1992:4) further maintains that in the mid-1950s, the proposed solution was for women to continue the practice of leaving the work force to bear and raise children but to re-enter it earlier, as soon as their children reached school going age. Since the 1950s, women have spent more time in employment. By 1990, over half (59.4%) of the married mothers of preschoolers and 51,3% of the mothers of infants were in the work force (Moen, 1992:4). Viewed against this background, it is obvious that the re-entry of women can be seen as a common career pattern of working women. This phenomenon is also found in the education profession where women re-enter the profession when their family obligations allow them to.

Re-entry into the education profession is a dynamic process in which the re-entry women experience various problems. Women who re-enter the profession report on conflicts and emotional distress about their roles and about self and interpersonal dissatisfaction (Padula, 1994:12). One of the dilemmas posed by women's re-entry is the reconciliation of the demands made by two apparently incompatible roles, viz. that of worker and that of homemaker (Lemmer, 1990:104). Research on employed women has shown that women's job satisfaction is affected by their family roles, in that employed women with children under the age of six are less satisfied with their jobs than women without young children (Holtzmann & Glass, 1999:367).

Another major problem encountered by women returning to the work force is the loss of self-confidence. Women who re-enter the work force face the challenges and fears of the unknown by walking into a situation that has become unfamiliar. According to Herkelmann, et al. (1993:139), re-entry women may question their own competence, but at the same time feel that they could be doing something more challenging. Herkelmann et al. (1993:139) find that women who re-enter the

work force might compare themselves to their peers who have been working while they themselves have been homebound, and maintain that re-entry women may be discouraged by their lack of knowledge and skills concerning the latest developments and technology in their field of work.

Discrimination by employers in the selection for employment is also a problem facing women re-entering the work place. Lemmer (1990:108) finds that many employers still hold negative and stereotyped beliefs about re-entry women. For example, employers are often convinced that married women with children are unreliable employees. Negative and stereotyped beliefs can also be linked to the lasting effects a gap in work force attachment can have on the remuneration of re-entry women. According to Jacobsen and Levin (1995:14), women who interrupt their careers and leave the work force for family responsibilities often return to find their remuneration lagging behind those of women at comparable stages in their careers who did not leave the work force. In addition to this, women re-entering the work force no longer have a recognized place among those in line for promotion. Equals and subordinates usually move into the place that they have vacated (Fogarty, 1971:431).

Research in South Africa has investigated job satisfaction, motivation, stress and induction problems for the beginning educator. From this research, beginning-educator problems for temporary staff (Van Wyk, 2000) and beginning teachers (Hillebrand, 1989; Steinberg, 1993; Du Toit, 1994; Murray, 1994; Xaba, 1996) were identified. Research regarding problems confronting the deputy principal (Potgieter, 1990), principal (Legotlo, 1994; Griffioen, 1999; Kirsten, 2000) and inspector (Smit, 1999) was completed. However, one of the major areas of neglect in research in South Africa has been in the area of women re-entering the education profession. Only one study, that of Lemmer (1990), was identified in South Africa that concentrates on the re-entry of women into the labour market and on the implications for educational provision. A fair amount of research from abroad, though, focuses on the re-entry of women into the work force and also specifically into the education profession. In the USA, for example, substantial research concerning the re-entry women into the work force has been done (Dyer et al., 1991; Fagan & Williams, 1991; Moen, 1992; Padula, 1994). Studies from

the USA also concentrate on women's return to school following the transition to marriage and motherhood (Bradburn, 1995; Fagan & Williams, 1991). In addition to women's school re-entry, counselling is available for women who are considering returning to higher education (Flynn et al., 1989; University of Washington, 1999). Research in Great Britain has investigated the re-entering of women into the education profession (Fogarty, 1971; Korving, 1991; Green, 1992; Maskel, 1997). Green (1992:24) finds that women who have been away for some time might be faced with enormous change when they re-enter the education profession, yet there is little support and advice available.

It is apparent that the re-entry of women into the education profession in South Africa needs to be researched. With ever-increasing numbers of women re-entering the education profession, the need for research regarding re-entering and problems experienced by these women, is obvious. The results of this research may contribute towards the alleviation of problems facing the women re-entering the education profession in South Africa. In addition, knowledge of problems experienced by re-entry women could prove to be of benefit to those principals interested in the increased productivity and efficiency of teachers.

1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aims of this research were:

- To conduct a literature review to analyze and discuss the nature and scope of re-entry by women into the education profession;
- to undertake a literature review to analyze and discuss the features and problems experienced by women re-entering the education profession;
- to determine empirically to what extent women educators experience problems on re-entering the education profession.

1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH

1.4.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Both primary and secondary sources have been reviewed. The purpose of the literature review was to determine the re-entry of women, as well as problems experienced by women re-entering the education profession.

In order to identify relevant sources a computer search on the ERIC database was launched by using the following keywords: *re-entering, women, education, labour force, career break, returning women, women returners.*

1.4.2 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

1.4.2.1 Questionnaire

Based on the information gathered from the literature review, a questionnaire has been developed to gather information from teachers in secondary schools about the problems experienced by women re-entering the education profession.

1.4.2.2 Study group

Out of the 12 districts in the North West Province, 4 districts (Klerksdorp, Mafikeng, Rustenburg, and Zeerust) were chosen to constitute the population. In the four districts there is a total of 169 schools. All women teachers ($n=110$) from these schools who re-entered the education profession after a period of absence formed the study population. The study population was stratified into four groups (less than a year of absence, 1-3 years of absence, 4-10 years of absence and more than 10 years of absence).

1.4.2.3 Data analysis

The Statistical Consultant Services of the Potchefstroom University has been consulted on suitable descriptive statistics.

1.5 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1: Orientation.

Chapter 2: The re-entry of women into the education profession.

Chapter 3: Problems experienced by women re-entering the education profession.

Chapter 4: Empirical research, interpretation and analysis of research data.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, findings and recommendations.

1.6 PROBLEMS WITH RESEARCH

The research regarding re-entry women has been problematic due to a lack of sources regarding the topic. Especially in South Africa, one of the major areas of neglect in research has been in the area of women re-entering the work force (i.e. the education profession). Thus, limited research concerning the re-entry of women into the work force in South Africa is available. However, a fair amount of research from abroad focuses on the re-entry of women. Therefore, research regarding the topic had to be requested from international resources.

CHAPTER 2

THE RE-ENTRY OF WOMEN INTO THE EDUCATION PROFESSION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Much is said about the social revolution in women's work attachments and it is forgotten that the rising work force participation rates measured at one point in time include rates for women with a variety of work patterns over time. For some, work attachment is full time, permanent and continuous. For others, attachment may be continuous but part-time or part of the year. For still other women, full-time or part-time work may be interspersed with periods of withdrawal from the work force while they are involved in non-market productive activities relating to home and family. This career path can be summed up in the following sequence: school-training-work-exit-return-retirement.

Furthermore, it has been noted that women's return or re-entry into the work force has been showing signs of becoming more complex as a result of the multiple problems that re-entry women encounter when they return to the work market after a period of absence. Understanding the research regarding re-entry women is an important step towards comprehending the reality of re-entry women. Who are they? What are their reasons for leaving and returning to the work force? By examining this phenomenon, answers to these and other questions can be suggested.

The purpose of this literature review is:

- To provide a definition of re-entry.
- To provide an overview regarding the career development of women and specifically the career development of women re-entering the work force or education profession.
- To provide information regarding women and the process of re-entry.

2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF RE-ENTRY

The re-entry of women has been a topic of concern to educators and counsellors since the late 1960s (Padula, 1994:10). However, researchers have not formulated any specific definition of the concept of re-entry of women into the work force and specifically into the education profession. For the purpose of this study, it is necessary to formulate a definition of women re-entering the work force and particularly the education profession. The usefulness of this kind of definition lies therein that it describes the difficulties surrounding the re-entry process. In addition, knowledge of problems experienced by re-entry women could prove to be of benefit to those school principals interested in the productivity and efficiency of teachers.

Alternative terms concerning *re-entry* of women found in the literature refer to *career break* and *women returner* (Wilson, 1997; Bird, 1999).

2.2.1 Re-entry

The Oxford English Dictionary (1999:1202) defines re-entry as the action or the process of re-entering something. According to the Chambers Dictionary (1983:1086), re-entry is the act or achievement of entering again or anew.

2.2.2 Career break

Various descriptions of what a career break constitutes exist. Roach (1993:66) describes a career break as the 'time-out-for-children' gap. Perry (1993:82) maintains that a career break is the patchy and ragged stage of a career, which includes time for the birth and rearing of children and the inevitable break in full-time work which this causes.

The career break of women may, therefore, be described as a period of absence from an established career in order to bear offspring followed by a return to work.

2.2.3 Women returner

The idea of return implies that someone has been somewhere, has gone away for either a short or a long time, and then comes back or returns. The Chambers Dictionary (1983:1106) defines return as the act of recurrence or reversion.

The term women returner is often read as implying that the return follows a going away to 'have a family' (Herkelmann et al., 1993:139). The idea that women leave employment or education to have a family and then return to employment or education, is rooted in a discourse based on a set of cultural norms and social and economic practices (Bird, 1999:203). In some cultures, women may be expected to continue in either productive work or education while bearing and raising children (Fave-Bonnet, 1997:37). In other cultures, women may be expected to give up either paid employment or studying while having children and the rest of their lives will be devoted to looking after those children. In certain cultures, women withdraw from work for some time after marriage and return at a later stage to full time or part-time employment (Santos, 1997:192). For example, most of the qualified women in France do not leave employment when they have children, nor do they move into part-time work, whereas in Spain qualified women are expected to leave employment when they have a family and then return to work, even on a part-time basis (Fave-Bonnet, 1997:37; Santos, 1997:192; Bird, 1999:203). This cultural diversity means that the term women returner might have different interpretations for people of different cultures.

Therefore, the term women returner in some cultures refers to:

- women who take a break from work and never return, or to
- women who take a break from work briefly or perhaps for some time and return at a later stage.

2.2.4 Towards a definition of re-entry

Researchers (Fagan & Williams, 1991; Padula, 1994) have studied a variety of characteristics regarding returning or re-entry women. Today's re-entry women can be described as a population that is diverse and heterogeneous, varying in

age, marital status, and socio-economic background and include low-income women, minority women and women living in rural areas (Fagan & Williams, 1991:42). The research of Fagan and Williams (1991) is corroborated by Padula's (1994) study of re-entry women. Padula (1994:11) maintains that some re-entry women are married with children in the home while others are single heads of households, displaced homemakers or empty nesters, and most are from the middle class.

In addition, Padula (1994:11) reports two general characteristics of re-entry women. Firstly, the life experiences of re-entry women are broader and more complex because of their multiple responsibilities at home, in society and at work. These women have to learn to balance a variety of roles in family and employment. Secondly, when involved in educational programmes, re-entry women have significantly higher grade point averages than traditional students. They have high educational aspirations and have higher educational goals than traditional students.

In four studies regarding categories of returning or re-entry women, the following were found: Appelbaum (1981:33) reports on two categories of returning or re-entry women:

- The first category, which emerged in the 1950s, is one in which married women withdrew entirely from the work force some time after marriage to engage full time in household and other unpaid work, returning at some later date to full-time or part-time employment. Considerable variation occurs in the timing of such withdrawals and of subsequent re-entry into the work force and hence there are substantial differences in the length of the period during which a woman is out of the work force.
- The second category, which emerged in the mid-sixties and has become increasingly important, is the one in which women withdrew from the work force only briefly, or perhaps not at all, following marriage and/or the birth of their children.

In another study in the USA three categories of re-entry women are identified (Fagan & Williams, 1991:41):

- Women who are potential recruits into the professions.
- Women who have completed their professional preparation and entry-level requirements and are returning to the workforce.
- Women seeking re-enrollment into a graduate programme to continue their professional education.

Similarly, the study of Herkelmann et al. (1993:139) considers three groups of women who return to school or to a career:

- Women who are divorced or widowed.
- Women facing the 'empty nest' syndrome.
- Women who have always intended to pursue a career but stayed home while their children were young.

Herkelmann et al. (1993:139) report that although there is a difference among the above three groups, what they have in common are the key problems associated with re-entry (cf. Chapter 3).

Geber (1999:194) distinguishes between several kinds of re-entry women:

- Women who return after all their children are born.
- Women who return between births but not after every childbirth.
- Women who return after every birth.

Despite this wide diversity of approaches adopted by researchers in describing the concept of re-entry, a common denominator has been family formation. Geber (1999:194) reports that women returners are a group who have in common that their careers have been interrupted as a result of having children or caring for handicapped or elderly relatives.

In several studies there has been an increasing interest in the phenomenon of the re-entry women who have returned to the work force after an interruption in

employment for the purpose of family formation (Lemmer, 1990). Lemmer (1990:12) describes re-entry as an interruption in employment due to family formation. Ward (quoted by Lemmer, 1990:3) states that women adopt an employment pattern often referred to as the interrupted or broken career pattern, whereby employment is commonly suspended for varying lengths of time roughly during the period of their ages 25-35 years or during the prime period of family formation.

Further interest in the description of re-entry of women into the work force has been stimulated by the research of Padula (1994). In education the term re-entry women has generally been used to describe women re-entering an educational institution after an absence ranging from a few years to as many as 35 years. Ranging in age from 25 years to 65 years and older, most re-entry women are between 25 and 54 years of age (Padula, 1994:10).

Family formation is also a reason for absence from the educational profession (Green, 1992; Maskel, 1997). Maskel (1997:24) reports that a re-entry woman has been away from the education profession for some time for maternity reasons. Green (1992:17) also maintains that women take a career break from the education profession for the purpose of family formation. Greyvenstein (2000a) maintains that the re-entry of women educators may be described as the process whereby women, who have had a break of usually a number of years, return to the teaching profession.

Thus, re-entry of women can be described as the process of return to an established career or job after a period of absence.

2.2.5 Synthesis

Certain conclusions can be drawn concerning the definition of re-entry by women into the work force and specifically into the education profession.

Firstly, the need for a definition of re-entry of women is apparent, as there is no published definition of re-entry of women. Earlier collections of research regarding

the re-entry of women have provided descriptions of re-entry women but no specific definition of re-entry of women into the work force and specifically into the education profession has been formulated.

Secondly, the descriptions of re-entry women report that this group of women can be described as a population that is diverse and heterogeneous. Some re-entry women are married with children in the home, others are divorced and some are empty nesters.

Finally, it can be concluded that certain women withdraw from paid employment for an extended period for the purpose of family formation. Others, however, pursue a more continuous pattern of work force participation, withdrawing only briefly or not at all when their children are young.

2.3 CAREER DEVELOPMENT

An important consequence of the increasing participation of women in work as described in Par.1.1. is the growing interest in the career development of women as studied by vocational psychologists (Pulkkinen et al., 1999:37). The career development of women has only been studied extensively since 1975 (Lemmer, 1990:43). Withdrawal from and re-entry into the work force can be linked to career development (Lemmer, 1990:47). Green (1992:17) states that women themselves regard their career breaks as part of their professional career development (cf. Figure 2.1). Leaving the work force, even for short periods of time, is likely to have negative effects on a woman's career, as well as on the career opportunities of women in general (Emmons et al., 1990:63).

Figure 2.1

Conceptualisation of the career development of women



However, before research regarding the description and explanation of career development in women is reviewed, it is necessary to take cognizance of the traditional definition of a career.

2.3.1 Conceptualisation of a career

Basic to theories of career development is a common understanding of what a career involves. There are various descriptions and definitions of a career in literature (Robbins, 1982; Cochran, 1994; Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994; OED, 1999; Sterret, 1999):

- The course of a person's life in working to produce ends.
- The pattern of work-related experiences that spans the course of a person's life.
- A sequence of positions occupied by a person during the course of a lifetime.
- It reflects the meaning of work in relation to the individual's life roles across the lifespan.
- A series of one's working experiences.
- An occupation undertaken for a significant period of a person's life, usually with opportunities for progress.

Despite these various approaches adopted by vocational psychologists in defining the concept of a career, a common denominator is the systematic nature thereof (Lemmer, 1990:44). Entry into the work force and the establishment of a career has been considered a task of early adulthood (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:96). Occupational success is assumed to follow a parabola of increasing rank and reward throughout early and middle adulthood reaching a plateau that is maintained to retirement (Lemmer, 1990:44). This view is particularly appropriate for careers within bureaucratic organisations (Evetts, 1987:16). For example, teaching is a career that is essentially bureaucratic, in which teachers experience a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered, predictable sequence (Wilson, 1997:30).

Thus, a career can be defined as an ordered progression of stages that proceed in an upwardly mobile, steady and predictable fashion with an increase in salary and responsibility (Fourie, 1997:7).

2.3.2 Critique of existing definitions of a career

Researchers have been critical regarding the applicability of these definitions of career for women (Lemmer, 1990; Ozga, 1993). Women's careers have been found to differ in substantial ways from men's careers (Sterret, 1999:249). For example, few women maintain the continuous, full-time characteristic of employed men (Lemmer, 1990:45).

Super (quoted by Sharf, 1992:192-193) proposes seven career patterns for women. In terms of the re-entry of women into the work force and specifically the education profession, two of Super's career patterns are appropriate to the understanding of women returners. Super's *interrupted career pattern* can be described as women's entry into work, then marriage and full-time homemaking, and later returning to a career, often after children can care for themselves. In the *unstable career pattern* of Super, women drop out of the work force, return to it, drop out and return, repeating the cycle over again.

It seems as if women tend to have intermittent employment with the pattern of interruptions related to changes in the extent of their responsibilities within the home (Pulkkinen et al., 1999:37). Thus, the idea that a working mother will have a dual role as homemaker as well as a career woman often causes more obstacles in her career pathway.

Therefore, a suitable definition of career must be formulated in order to accommodate interruptions in women's career paths as part of a normal career pattern. Ozga (1993:3) maintains that the concept of a career needs an alternative definition, which incorporates the effects of attitudes, role expectations and behaviours shaping the development of a woman's career. Lemmer (1990:55) proposes that a description of a career more suited to the feminine experience will focus upon the level of commitment made to a chosen path or life

work rather than the sequential and ordered stages or steps in a career. Therefore, continuity in working history is less central to a woman's definition of career than career commitment. The usefulness of this kind of definition of a woman's career lies therein that it is sufficiently broad to encompass a wide variety of work patterns, both intermittent and continuous.

2.3.3 Towards a theory of women's career development

In the light of the contemporary explosion of interest in women and work, the gaps in theories regarding career development of women is apparent (Sterret, 1999). One of the major research questions has been whether traditional career development models are truly applicable to women (Sullivan, 1999:460).

In the following section, two models of career development will be summarized and their limitations regarding women and career development indicated. The two models of career development share a number of common elements. Both the models propose that people progress through an orderly sequence of stages, each of which poses a set of tasks or challenges. Moreover, each stage is associated with an approximate age range, although variations in age are generally acknowledged. In addition, each model may focus on career issues, but it generally recognizes that a person's work or career cannot be divorced from other aspects of his or her life. There is also a considerable overlap in the content of the career stages.

2.3.3.1 *Greenhouse and Gallanan*

Greenhouse and Gallanan (1994:107) view the development of careers in terms of five stages. This view is based in part on the literature in career development and in part on Levinson's view of adult life development. The five stages of this model are discussed below.

Stage 1: Occupational choice: preparation for work

From a career perspective, the major tasks of this stage are to form and refine an occupational self-image, explore the qualities of alternative occupations, develop at least a tentative occupational choice and pursue the type of education or training required to implement the choice. The initial time frame for this stage is birth to the age of 25. However, since occupational choices can occur at other stages, the tasks associated with occupational choice can reappear throughout one's lifetime.

Stage 2: Organisational entry

The main task at this stage is to select a job and organisation in one's chosen career field. The organisational entry stage initially takes place between the ages of 18 and 25. One can enter a new organisation at any age; therefore, the age range can be quite variable.

Stage 3: The early career

Tasks of the early career are to become established in one's career and organisation, to learn organisational rules and norms, to fit into the chosen occupation and to increase competence. The early career can extend all the way up to age 40.

Stage 4: The mid-career

An individual's mid-career (age 40-55) is initiated by the midlife transition, which serves as a bridge between early and middle adulthood. A number of tasks characterizes the mid-career years, such as the reappraisal of early career and early adulthood and to remain productive in work.

Stage 5: The late Career

The major tasks of the late career are to remain productive in work, to maintain self-esteem and to prepare for active retirement. The late career extends roughly from the mid-fifties to retirement.

2.3.3.2 *Super*

An overview of Super's career development theory will be given (Sharf, 1992; Smart, 1998; Langley, 1999). A key aspect of Super's theory is that these stages are not entirely age-related. Individuals may recycle or go through these stages at many different times in life.

Stage 1: Exploration

The exploration stage ranges from about 14 to 24 years of age. This stage includes the efforts that individuals make to get a better idea of occupational information and to choose career alternatives. Near the end of the stage, individuals secure occupations and seek to implement their self-concepts at work.

Stage 2: Establishment

The establishment stage generally ranges from the age of 25 to about 44. In general, establishment refers to getting established in one's work by starting in a job that is likely to mean the start of working life.

Stage 3: Maintenance

During the maintenance stage of a person's career (45 to 65 years), the career developmental tasks of holding on, keeping up and innovating are applicable.

Stage 4: Disengagement

The stage of disengagement (65+ years) involves the career development tasks of deceleration, retirement planning and finally retirement.

2.3.4 Critique of models of career development

Women advance through career developmental stages similar to those of men of approximately the same age (Sullivan, 1999:460). However, women's career development is more complex and more closely tied to context. Factors such as socio-economic status, education, family-related factors, gender-role orientation and personality traits such as self-esteem (Pulkkinen et al., 1999:38) reflect the complex nature of women's career development. Because women typically place considerable emphasis on the non-career aspects of their lives, women's career development cannot be understood apart from consideration of their family relationships (Sterret, 1999:250). Greenhouse and Gallanan (1994:99) maintain that women pursue a balance between career and relationships.

Thus, theorists and researchers have questioned whether the traditional theories of career development apply to women. For example, Bardwick (quoted by Sharf, 1992:193-194) questions the applicability of Super's theory about women because of the discontinuous patterns that characterize many women's participation in the work force. Bardwick's stages emphasize the importance of marriage and family to women in their career decision making and planning. The observations of Bardwick are as follows:

- Firstly, where Super characterizes the establishment stage as a time to stabilize oneself in a career, consolidate one's gains, and prepare to advance in the profession, Bardwick suggests that many women between the ages of 30 and 40 who have been involved in a career are concerned with not wanting to delay having children any longer. She believes that many women are concerned about balancing their professional role and their femininity. For some women, professional success seems not to bring about independence at midlife, but rather increased dependence.

- Secondly, whereas Super describes the maintenance stage as a time to hold one's gains and update and innovate career skills, Bardwick believes that many women between the ages of 40 and 50 (late establishment and early maintenance stages) start to develop more autonomy and to become more independent. This is the time when those who have given up careers so that they could raise children may now return to a career. Finally, for those over 50, Bardwick sees this not as a time of maintenance, but as one when women can achieve career accomplishments.

It may be concluded that, although traditional career development theories have a contribution to make to the understanding of women's career development, the theories may be necessary but not sufficient to fully explain women's career development.

2.3.5 Career development of women across the life span

Lemmer (1990:58) maintains that the career development of women forms part of the wide field of adult development studied by developmental psychologists. Developmental psychology has given particular attention to the unfolding of a career during the different stages of the life span (Lemmer, 1990:58). For this reason the contribution that developmental psychology has made to the understanding of women and their careers in particular is considered in the ensuing section. Life span theory, as it applies to career development, concerns the growing and changing ways that an individual deals with career issues over the entire life span (Sharf, 1992:119). While such a body of literature is too comprehensive to review here, in the ensuing section only certain life stages will be discussed briefly from the standpoint of developmental psychology. The work of two leading theorists will be reviewed, followed by a brief critique of the relevance of these theories to women's career development. Finally, the stages of adulthood will be outlined with particular reference to re-entry women.

2.3.5.1 Life span theories

- *Erikson's model*

Erikson proposes that people progress through eight stages of psychosocial development (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:94). Each stage poses a crisis and, depending on the outcome of the stage, provides the setting for either growth or restricted development (Gerdes et al., 1990:72). Erikson's stages begin with infancy and terminate with old age. The last three stages of Erikson's model are most relevant to adulthood and careers. These three stages are described by Erikson as follows: intimacy versus isolation (20-25 years); generativity versus stagnation (25-65 years), and ego integrity versus despair (65 years plus).

Erikson sees the crisis of early adulthood as that of achieving intimacy. Once identity is formed by the end of adolescence, the individual needs to develop intimate relationships with others as opposed to being isolated (Lefrancois, 1993:46).

Erikson sees the crisis of midlife to be that of generativity, a voluntary commitment to guiding the next generation. The generativity versus stagnation stage is typified by an individual's desire to produce something that will outlive him or herself, usually through parenthood or occupational achievements (Guinee, 1998:618). Thus, there is a struggle between a sense of generativity, or leaving one's mark in some way, and the sense of stagnation. A healthy resolution, then, is one that results in the individual feeling that he or she is being productive in such a way that his or her life will leave an indelible mark.

In the final crisis of adulthood the individual has to face the inevitability of death (Lefrancois, 1993:47). The crucial task during this stage is to evaluate one's life and accomplishments and this is the sense of integrity. The opposite is the sense of despair and disgust, a feeling that one's entire life has been wasted (Guinee, 1998:619).

Re-entry women might be seen as exhibiting behaviour characteristic of Erikson's stages of development. Women returning to the work force might experience the generativity crisis in the sense that they want to do well and once they have developed more confidence in their work they may begin to wonder if their presence has made a difference. During the integrity versus despair crisis, re-entry women may look back and desire to feel that they have made the most of their careers. While they are contemplating regrets and past mistakes, they will hopefully leave the work force believing that they have successfully completed their career path.

- *Levinson's theory*

Levinson's theory suggests that adults move through alternating developmental and transition periods during the life cycle (Kanchier & Unruh, 1988:127). Each period presents tasks to be mastered and problems to be solved. Levinson proposes the following developmental and transition periods during the adult life cycle:

Early adulthood

- Early adulthood transition (age 17-22): people terminate the adolescent life structure and try to create a niche for themselves in an adult society (Turner & Helms, 1991:375).
- Entry into life structure for early adulthood (age 22-28): a stable period in which the young person enters into the adult world (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:96).
- Age 30 transition (age 28-30): a transitional period in which career and life-style choices are re-examined (Lefrancois, 1993:558).
- Culminating life structure for early adulthood (age 33-40): a period in which a person has the task to establish a niche in adult society in areas of life such as work and family (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:96).

Middle adulthood

- Midlife transition period (age 40-45): a transitional period that stimulates the reappraisal of one's life structure, and the main developmental task is to come to grips with successes and failures (Lefrancois, 1993:558).
- Entry into life structure for middle adulthood (age 45-50): a period in which a person must try to fashion a satisfactory life structure for the middle years (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:98).
- Age 50 transition (age 50-55): a transitional period characterized by questions and reappraisal of one's life structure (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:98)
- Culminating life structure for middle adulthood (age 55-60): a stable period in which a life structure is built for the remainder of middle adulthood (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:98).

Late adulthood

- Late adulthood transition (age 60-65): a period in which a person has to face the inevitability of death (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:99).

Levinson's theory may have implications for women returning to the work force. Appelbaum (1981:33) reports on two categories of returning or re-entry women. The first category is one in which married women withdraw entirely from the work force some time after marriage to engage full time in household and other unpaid work, returning at some later date to full-time or part-time employment. The second category is one in which women withdraw from the work force only briefly, or perhaps not at all, following marriage and/or the birth of their children. This might imply that there are substantial differences in the nature of the problems (cf. Chapter 3) experienced by returning women at the different life stages as considerable variation occurs in the timing of such withdrawals and of subsequent re-entry into the work force. For example, women who re-enter the work force during early adulthood are likely to be subjected to considerable role stress as the result of conflict between family and work. However, midlife women are often more likely to increase their career aspirations as they are freed from the conflict between family and work. The problems that women experience during midlife

are, therefore, more likely to be centered on choices about careers than on issues such as marriage or children. Thus, the women in these two groups will experience different problems and varying degrees of success when making the transition into paid employment after a period of absence.

2.3.5.2 Critique of existing theories

Researchers suggest that theories of development based on the male life such as those of Levinson and Erikson do not fit the experience of women (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:100).

Firstly, tasks central to life stages of people in general suggested by Levinson and Erikson's theories have been questioned as to their applicability to women's lives (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:99). In the case of Erikson, the task of identity formation is associated with late adolescence and early adulthood (Louw, 1994:507). However, for women, especially those with children, issues of personal identity often do become critical until child-rearing responsibilities diminish in midlife (Herkelmann et al., 1993:139). As children leave home, the prospect of an 'empty nest' holds mixed messages for women. Some may view it as a threat to their identity and reason for being (Kennedy, 1989:177). This suggests that identity formation occur later in women than in men. Levinson views the life task of the 20s as an entry into marriage and the world of work and the 30s as a period for establishing oneself in these areas (Louw, 1994:511). Towards 40, he proposes a reappraisal of one's life structure (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:98). In contrast, the tasks facing women often differ during these stages of life. Young adult women have tasks and dreams that are more likely to involve marriage and family goals (Bejian & Salomone, 1995:58), while young men concentrate on their careers (Lefrancois, 1993:557). Later, men in midlife may focus on relationships and de-emphasize their careers while women in midlife are freed to concentrate on education or the development of a career as their nurturing responsibilities lessen (Lemmer, 1990:62). Women may discover during midlife that they have put their occupational roles on the back burner for too long, and that it is time to re-enter the work market and give priority to occupational needs (Turner, 1995:557).

Secondly, chronological age as a marker of life stages suggested by Levinson and Erikson's theories has been questioned as to its applicability to women's lives. Male life stages are closely linked to chronological age and proceed in a linear fashion (Sterret, 1999:249). Discontinuity and changes as compared with their male counterparts characterize the career pattern of women (Pulkkinen et al., 1999:38). Women's lives are not so critically tied to chronological age and numerous combinations of career and marriage exist with unique patterns of timing and commitment (Lemmer, 1990:62). In particular, Pulkkinen et al. (1999:38) suggest that career development in women is strongly related to varying role patterns such as marital, parental, domestic and occupational roles. For example, children entering school or growing up seem to be important re-entry motives (Padula, 1994:11).

2.3.5.3 Life stages and re-entry women

The applicability of women as subjects for the life stage theories such as those of Erikson and Levinson has been pointed out in Par.2.4.5.2. Despite the view that women's lives are not so critically tied to chronological age, use is made of age markers to delimit life stages in the following discussion. This delimitation should be seen as a rough guideline as it recognizes that timing might differ among individual women.

- *Early adulthood (17- 40 years)*

While Levinson suggests that this is a time of establishing oneself in the world of work, for most women early adulthood is closely associated with marriage and childbearing (Lefrancois, 1993:557). For women who choose to defer marriage and childbearing until later so as to allow for career progress and success, the demands of this period are faced at a later stage during midlife (Lemmer, 1990:66). Young women who re-enter the work force during this stage do so for many reasons. For example, increased ability to contribute to the family, both financially and experientially, are found to be reasons for re-entry (Padula 1994:11). Lemmer (1990:66) states that women at this stage are more likely to consider re-entry into employment.

- *Midlife (40-60 years)*

Unlike the men in Levinson's study who began to invest more in family relationships and less in work, midlife women may discover that they have put their occupational roles in the background for too long (Turner, 1995:557). Thus, midlife is often the time when women decide to re-enter the work force as new occupational opportunities arise (Lemmer, 1990:66). Re-entry is often the result of motivations such as divorce or the death of a spouse (Herkelmann et al., 1993:139). On the other hand, the decreased involvement in children's lives as they enter school or grow up, is also a reason for re-entry by midlife women (Padula, 1994:11).

- *Late adulthood (60-death)*

During late adulthood, men and women reduce middle adulthood's heavy responsibilities and live in a changed relationship with society and themselves (Turner & Helms, 1991:530). Consolidation of attitudes towards one's own life and towards the reality of one's own death takes place during this phase of life (Newman & Newman, 1991:598).

2.3.6 Synthesis

From the discussion above, it may be concluded that the developmental theories based solely on men's lives do not automatically fit women's experience. The presence of psychological, practical and vocational events unique to the life cycle of women must be recognised when studying developmental changes, particularly changes which occur in women's career orientation. In particular, the ordered, upwardly mobile and steady career progression across the life course appears more typical of men than of women.

Moreover, re-entry into the work force is regarded as a dynamic process, which occurs over a widely defined period and shows great individual variation. The difficulties and challenges (cf. Chapter 3) experienced by re-entry women are dependent on their life stage and the successful completion of previous life tasks.

For example, a returning woman in early adulthood with young children will experience the process of re-entry differently from the midlife woman with adult children who feel free to return to work or education.

2.4 THE PROCESS OF RE-ENTRY

Having discussed the definition of re-entry of women, attention is given to the re-entry process (cf. Figure 2.2) itself. In this ensuing section, as in the rest of the investigation, re-entry is not regarded as a single event but as a dynamic process which occurs over a widely defined period and which shows great individual variation (Lemmer, 1990:95).

Figure 2.2

The conceptualization of the process of re-entry

RE-ENTRY		
<i>Phase 1</i>	<i>Phase 2</i>	<i>Phase 3</i>
Exit	Career break	Return
• Decision to exit	• Length • Timing • Nature	• Decision to return

2.4.1 Phase 1: The decision to exit

Re-entry is a dynamic process which begins with the decision to re-enter and is only completed after the re-entrant is satisfactorily established in her occupation (Lemmer, 1990:95). The decision to exit the work market is influenced by the woman's place in the family life cycle. Today's woman has multiple roles and responsibilities as a family member, parent, community member and worker (Fagan & Williams, 1991:42). Therefore, the decision to exit the work market is

usually initiated by decisions of marriage, family formation and geographic moves when a husband secures a new job (Lemmer, 1990; Herkelmann et al., 1993; Lombard, 1999; Maskel, 1997; Sterret, 1999).

Once a woman marries, she must decide whether to have children and/or pursue a career. Furthermore, as women approach parenthood, several related decisions have to be made. A woman has to decide whether she will take maternity leave or whether she will give up her work to have all the children she intends having and to care for them full-time.

Herkmann et al. (1993:133) maintains that the dilemma for women becomes 'shall I stay home and provide nurturance for my husband and children, or pursue a career and run the risk of neglecting or harming my family?' Most women usually decide to accept the primary responsibility for home and children.

2.4.2 Phase 2: The career break

A number of inter-related factors, such as the length, timing, and nature of the career break, as well as education, determine the effect of the break in work.

2.4.2.1 *Length of the break*

Great variety exists among individuals as to the length of the break in work. The length of the break in work can range from a minimum absence of six weeks to a number of years (Lemmer, 1990:96). Fagan and Williams (1991:42) maintain that the length in a woman's absence from work depends on her relationships and other life events such as marriage and family formation.

Before the 1960s, the decision to exit the work market was usually initiated by a decision such as marriage (Appelbaum, 1981:5, Lemmer, 1990:76). However, marriage is no longer considered a significant cause for women to quit the work market (Lemmer, 1990:76, Lombard, 1999). Lombard (1999) states that married women are working more weeks per year, more hours per week and are staying in the work force for a longer duration and have, therefore, shorter career breaks.

Women are choosing to take increasingly shorter career breaks after the birth of a child (Anon., 1991; Wilson, 1997; Dex et al., 1998; Barrow, 1999; Geber, 1999; Klerman & Leibowitz, 1999). Dex et al. (1998) report that the career break of women with children grows progressively shorter:

- In Great Britain there has been a substantial growth in the number of mothers returning to work after having a baby and most return within nine months of the birth (Anon., 1991:3).
- In the USA, women's work force participation rate has increased sharply over the last two decades, particularly for married women with young children (Lombard, 1999). From 1970 to 1996, the number of women in the work force rose from 43,3% to 59,3% and the participation rate of married women with preschool-aged children doubled, from 30,3% to 62,7% (Barrow, 1999). The rapid increase in participation of women with young children suggests that women's career breaks are shorter because they are spending less time out of the work force for child caring (Glass & Estes, 1996). In addition, new mothers in the USA must often choose between taking shorter leave (maternity leave) than they would have liked in order to return to their original job and taking longer leave and then returning to a different job at a lower wage (Klerman & Leibowitz, 1999:152). Given the decision between taking very short leave and quitting their jobs, women usually choose the former (Gardner, 1998).
- In South Africa, the majority of professional women take relatively short career breaks. Short career breaks are closely related to maternity leave as they help organisations to retain qualified and educated female employees in their service (Redelinghuys et al., 1999). Maternity leave is a basic employment benefit (Employment Equity Act, 55/1998). Geber (1999) reports in his study regarding re-entry of South African professional women that some organisations in South Africa offer women maternity leave of from six weeks to three months. Geber (1999:194) states that not one organisation, which employed women in his study, offered or negotiated an extended career break. The women in his study who felt that they could not

return to work after the maternity leave period simply resigned or became self-employed.

In Europe there has been an increasing trend for women teachers to take a shorter career break before resuming work (Wilson, 1997:11):

- In Norway, younger generations start their academic career earlier, and their careers are less interrupted. Women's childcare breaks in Norway now are shorter than those taken by earlier generations (Ofstedal, 1997:187).
- In England and Wales only a small minority of women teachers have taken career breaks longer than one year (Wilson, 1997:23).

The reason for shorter career breaks in the education profession might be attributed to several factors such as improved childcare arrangements, parental leave and enhanced maternity leave in certain countries:

- Widely available creches, nurseries and after-school care enable Hungarian teachers to take shorter career breaks (Széchy, 1997:98).
- In Denmark, child-care facilities became a universal right for the benefit of children as long ago as 1965. Publicly funded child-care in Denmark lessens the burden on parents (Newell, 1996).
- Informal support such as parental leave if there is a breakdown in usual childcare enables Norwegian women to take shorter career breaks. Since 1993, parents in Norway have been entitled to a total of one year's leave shared between both partners (Ofstedal, 1997:175). Norwegian mothers have to take a minimum of three weeks before and six weeks after delivery and the father is entitled to a minimum of four week's leave on full pay, which is lost if not taken. Most Norwegian fathers take two weeks when the mother comes out of hospital and another four weeks when she returns to work (Ofstedal, 1997:175).
- Klerman and Leibowitz (1999:145) maintain that job continuity among new mothers might be attributed to the provision of enhanced maternity leave as

found in the USA. The Family and Medical Leave Act (quoted by Gardner, 1998) guarantees new mothers up to 12 weeks of leave without pay and the right to reinstatement without penalty in the job held at the start of the leave.

The length of a career break is also related to the level of education and the kind of training a woman has undergone (Lemmer, 1990:97). Barrow (1999) reports that older women, women with more education and women whose adult female role models were working when they were teenagers are more likely to return to work. Although more education seems to increase the probability that a woman will return to work after having had children, this result has several possible interpretations. It may be that women who have more education return to work because they are more committed to the work force and thus more likely to go back to work. Alternatively, it may be that women with more education return to work because they are more likely to hold jobs from which they can take leave as opposed to having to quit (Felmlee, 1984:174). In addition, Lemmer (1990:97) maintains that highly qualified women tend to return to work more quickly after having had children than those women less qualified (Lemmer, 1990:97).

Viewed against this background it may be concluded that the career breaks of women with children are growing progressively shorter.

2.4.2.2 *Timing of break*

The time at which a career break occurs affects later career development. Lemmer (1990:98) maintains that if a break is taken early in the career it is likely that only modest career success would have already been achieved and vice versa. Women who take a career break after having achieved a position of seniority already can more easily regain this position on their return to work (Lemmer, 1990:98).

2.4.2.3 Education

Education is expected to have a positive effect on a career break and later career development. Bernasco (1994:76) states that women with a university education are 6.9 times more likely to enter employment than women who have only primary education. Having a high level of education also means that a better position is probably available in the work market after a career break (Felmlee, 1984:171). Bernasco (1994:151) reports that each level of education increases occupational prestige at work entry.

However, researchers (Evetts, 1987; Geber, 1999) have demonstrated that qualified women returners do not always return to a work which utilizes either their previous education and training or their potential:

- In Great Britain, the career break remains the single most important factor in depressing women teachers' promotion prospects (Ozga, 1993:76). One of the women returners in the study of Evetts (1987) did not recommend that women teachers should postpone having their families until they have achieved a high scale position. This is because women might have to return to a lower post regardless of their position before they left, particularly if they wished to return part-time (Evetts, 1987:27).
- Geber (1999) reports in his study regarding re-entry of South African professional women that some of the re-entry women in his study who returned to the organisations where they were originally employed, did so at a lower level, thus confirming the findings of Evetts (1987). Returning to a lower level of employment has also occurred where women returned to work in other organisations (Geber, 1999:197). In the study of Geber (1999), the women who fared best when returning to work were those who either took no break at all, those who used annual personal leave as maternity leave or those who took a short maternity leave period of three months or less.

2.4.2.4 Nature of break

Lemmer (1990:99) states that the nature of the break will affect future employment and women will be able to purposefully incorporate the break into their unfolding careers by remaining committed to their careers even during the absence from work. Thus, a career break might not always be seen as disadvantageous, as much depends on the way in which the break in service is managed to enable women to retain their foothold in the work force (Wilson, 1997:23). Women who remain committed to the development of their careers throughout a break will maintain contact with their field of interest by means of personal contacts, related volunteer-work, the reading of journals and the pursuit of additional education or training during the break (Lemmer, 1990:99).

Based on recent trends and projections, it seems clear that women over 25 years of age will continue to re-enter institutions of education and the work force in large numbers (Padula, 1994:10). Given that women returners had, by definition, left work at some stage, they would require training to return to work (Bird, 1999:205).

In certain countries a variety of training and educational programmes are targeted at women returners:

- In Great Britain, a variety of training programmes exist for women returners, whether they are potential employees, either full-time or part-time in need of re-training or potential students in need of return to study or access courses (Bird, 1999: 203). For example, programmes such as the New Opportunity for Women (NOW) and New Ways to Work programmes are aimed at the specific needs of people returning to the work force after a period of discharging domestic responsibilities (Miid, 1995; House of Commons, 1998). These re-entry programmes offer support, referrals, helpful information and assistance in locating scholarships and financial aid.

In the research of Bird (1999) it is demonstrated that the influence of training programmes in Great Britain has been positive. In Bird's study (1999:206-208), the aim of the survey was to locate samples of women

returning or seeking to return to selected professions such as the profession of scientist, engineer and solicitor. The survey regarding re-entry schemes for women scientists and engineers reports that most of the women who had been able to take part in re-training courses found them beneficial. Of the eleven respondents in the study concerning returning women scientists and engineers, seven had actually returned to work at a higher level. Some of the respondents in the survey regarding returning scientists and engineers wrote of their indebtedness to re-training programmes. One who had taken a break of fifteen years said that 'if no returner course had been available, I'm sure I would have found it almost impossible to find professional work again after my children had become independent'. The experience of training programmes for returning women solicitors has been extremely positive, with 30 valuing the opportunity to meet women in similar positions, 26 valuing the updating and 17 finding that it had improved their confidence. Of the sample of 56 women returners, 53 had taken some form of re-entry training. Of all taking re-entry courses, seven had returned at a higher level, 19 at the same level and 12 obtained posts at a lower level.

In addition, a number of policy initiatives directed at women returners exists in Great Britain. The main theme of the initiatives was that women returners constituted an unexploited resource, and better utilization of this resource would solve both imminent work shortages across the whole economy and prevent wastage of trained and qualified personnel at higher levels (Bird, 1999:205). For example, women in the teaching profession, wanting to re-enter the Pool of Inactive Teachers (PIT). As a way of solving the problem concerning the better utilization of returning women, professional bodies are encouraged to allow women to remain in contact with their employers while on a career break scheme and offer updating courses for women wishing to return (Brine, 2000:106). The Institute of Manpower Studies publicized such schemes in a number of reports, one of which was commissioned by the Equal Opportunities Commission (Bird, 1999:205). The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) is a government-funded office, which has a legal duty to monitor compliance with the Sex Discrimination Act by both

financial support for legal cases and by publishing good practice. It also monitors compliance with European Law. The role of the EOC in policy concerning women returners marks the entry of equal opportunities or social policy into work market policy (Brine, 2000:103).

- In the USA, few professional bodies offer specialized curricula for women re-entering the work force and continuing education providers have not targeted women returners as a market for course offerings (Fagan & Williams, 1991:42). However, workshops are available in the USA for women returning to higher education such as The Women's Center Re-entry Program (Flynn et al., 1989:337; University of Washington, 1999).
- In South Africa, retraining programmes for returning women do not appear to exist (Geber, 1999:198).

Viewed against this background, the need for programmes regarding women's re-entry and training is apparent. Training programmes are a key element in the return to work, particularly if downward occupational mobility is to be avoided and if employers are to make the most of available human resources (Rees, 1992:63).

2.4.3 Phase 3: The decision to re-enter

The decision to re-enter employment should not be regarded as a single event, but as a series of stages (Lemmer, 1990:100). A useful model for comprehending this decision is the following, as proposed by Brooks (quoted by Lemmer, 1990:100):

- Stage 1: Vague discontent: Many women begin the re-entry process feeling vaguely bored and depressed about their present life.
- Stage 2: Inner preparation: The potential re-entrant tentatively decides whether she wants to enter new roles outside the home. This issue can be resolved only by actual work experience.
- Stage 3: Intensive family involvement: The re-entry woman shares her new thinking with her family in order to gain support in the new venture.

A husband and children must be fully enlightened as to new ideas and become participants in the decision-making process.

- Stage 4: Assessment of abilities and interests: The re-entry woman must realistically appraise her talents and accomplishments, including those achieved during her years as full-time wife and mother.
- Stage 5: Generating alternatives: With a clearer idea of her abilities and interests, the re-entry woman generates and weighs options. Often women need to extend aspirations after a period as full-time wife and mother during which vocational development has been postponed or arrested.
- Stage 6: Narrowing alternatives and clarifying values: Having weighed alternatives, women must reduce options and evaluate alternatives so as to ascertain which alternative will allow the individual to pursue her preferred lifestyle.
- Stage 7: Implementation and goal setting: The re-entrant is ready to enter the work place with a clear goal. Some women will have only a broad sense of direction and will need to engage in trial experiences in the job market in order to formulate specific plans.

While this process seldom occurs in the same orderly progression among individual women, awareness of the issues involved in each stage is important.

Brook's model can be criticized, as vague discontent (Stage 1) is not the only reason that women have for re-entering the work force or education profession. A fair amount of researchers focused on reasons regarding women's return to the work force (Fagan & Williams, 1991; Herkelmann et al., 1993; Padula, 1994):

According to Padula (1994:11), re-entry women have reported vocational reasons as motive for work force re-entry such as:

- The desire to have a career.
- To become self-supporting.
- Extrinsic job satisfaction.
- Better employment.

- Changing jobs.
- The desire to work.

Other reasons reported for work force re-entry center on the family (Padula, 1994:11):

- Children entering school or growing up.
- Increased ability to contribute to the family, both financially and experientially.
- The need to re-examine marriage and family roles.

Fagan and Williams (1991:42) report that reasons for women's return are to:

- Be self-supporting.
- Achieve personal growth.
- Increase self-esteem.
- Increase chances of employment and career advancement.

Herkelmann et al. (1993: 133-134) states three reasons for women's return to the work force:

- Some women complain of social isolation and express feelings of jealousy for their husbands who are out in the world where exciting things are happening.
- Many say their husbands have outgrown them and that the experiences and opportunities men have encountered have provided new skills and points of view that their wives cannot share.
- Many homemakers resent the repetitiveness of their work in the home as well as the fact that their talents, education, abilities, interests, and motivations all appear irrelevant to what they do.

Barrow (1999) reports that women with a low family income are likely to return to work. Women with husbands who earn large incomes are less likely to be working at a given point in time than women with little or no additional income from a spouse (Felmlee, 1984:174). Additionally, women in high dual income households who have become accustomed to a certain standard of living may be less willing to

forego this standard upon the birth of their children and therefore return to work (Lombard, 1999). Viewed against this background, it is obvious that a common reason for women to return to work seems to be economic need.

Once the decision is taken to re-enter the work force, women must take steps to find a suitable place in the work force. Lemmer (1990:101) describes the steps a woman must take to return to the work force as '*re-entry paths*' such as:

informal contacts, part-time work and self-employment.

- *Informal contacts*

It is necessary to maintain contact with the world of work during a career break through an informal network of occupational or personal contacts such as former employers, colleagues or teachers (Lemmer, 1990:101).

- *Part-time work*

Maskel (1997:24) maintains that part-time work is a form of employment that allows women to pursue and maintain their dual roles as mother and wife and as paid employee. Often part-time work is the first step taken by re-entry women back into the work force, whereby women are able to test their confidence and skills after long absences from work (Lemmer, 1990:102).

The return to part-time work is often associated with downward mobility in certain professions such as accounting and nursing, as flexibility of employment is only found at lower levels of employment (Bird, 1999:209). Geber (1999:198) states that there is a clear move away from part-time work after re-entry by South African women as it is seen as unsatisfactory in terms of earnings, career advancement and status in organisations.

However, in some professions such as education, part-time work can have advantages. Maskel (1997:24) reports that the experience of part-time work for women educators can be positive if flexibility allows greater concentration in busy periods, retains experience and encourages loyalty and quality work (Maskel, 1997:24).

- *Self-employment*

An increasing number of women with dependent children are choosing self-employment as an appropriate means of re-entering the work force after a career break as it comprises an effective means of assuming the roles of mother and a career woman at the same time (Lemmer, 1990:103).

It can be concluded that individual variety exists regarding the reasons for the decision to re-enter the work force. The steps or '*re-entry paths*' that women returners take are transitional solutions for returning women caught between loyalty to home and family, and the desire for a career.

2.4.4 Synthesis

An analysis of the re-entry process reveals that the decision to exit the work market is usually initiated by decisions of marriage and family formation. Individual variety exists as regard the length, timing and nature of a career break. Literature suggests that women tend to take shorter career breaks than before. A career break might not always be seen as a disadvantage, as much depends on the way the break in service is managed to enable women to retain their foothold in the work force. A variety of training and educational programmes for re-entry women offer support, referrals, helpful information and assistance in the process of returning to the work force after an established period of absence. The decision to re-enter is complex and is attributed to various decisions.

2.5 SUMMARY

Researchers have demonstrated an increasing interest in the phenomenon of the re-entry woman who has returned to the work force after a period of absence. The women who are re-entering the work force are in the process of personal, situational and social transition. A woman returning to the work force is moving from a traditional no-career family orientation, which she has followed for a certain period of time, towards professional developmental career orientation.

There is also a growing awareness that re-entry women do not enter the work force on the same basis as men do. Women re-enter the work force during different stages of the life cycle. Considerable variation occurs in the timing of withdrawals from and return to the work force.

An important consequence of the re-entry of women into the work force is the provision of training programmes concerning the process of re-entry. Especially in South Africa, re-entry programmes and more innovative policies dealing with maternity leave, flexible working hours and half-time or part-time work at re-entry need to be developed by organisations in the South African work force.

A returning woman who has used 'time out' from an occupation effectively by maintaining contact with her profession through keeping abreast of current knowledge in her field, by developing additional skills, or by attending re-entry programmes has an advantage in re-entry over those who have failed to do so.

CHAPTER 3

PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY RE-ENTRY WOMEN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Once the decision has been taken to return to the work force, re-entry women face problems on their actual return. Successful re-entry depends on how returning women resolve these problems. The purpose of this chapter is to determine the generic problems experienced by women re-entering the work force and specifically into the education profession from a review of literature.

As stated in Chapter 2, there may be substantial differences in the nature of the problems experienced by returning women in the different life stages. Women also tend to plan their careers and work participation around the life cycles of their families and will, at times, place their careers on hold or will sometimes permanently leave the work force when their family responsibilities call for it. For example, women who re-enter the work force during early adulthood are likely to be subjected to considerable role stress as a result of conflict between family and work (Newman & Newman, 1991:544). In addition, Redelinguys et al. (1999) report that women will try to limit their work participation while their children are growing up, but once the children are older, they may resume their careers. This is mainly because smaller children have a greater need for emotional and physical care, placing more demands on the mother's time. When children are older, women would not only have more time to devote to a career, but older women also tend to manage time better and will, therefore, experience less role conflict. The problems that women experience during midlife are, therefore, more likely to be centered on choices about careers than issues such as marriage or children (Turner, 1995:557). The extent to which re-entry women and specifically re-entry women educators experience these problems at different life stages and around the life cycles of their families will be determined empirically in this research.

3.2 CATEGORIES OF THE PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY RE-ENTRY WOMEN

From a review of literature (Griffioen, 1999; Smit, 1999; Van der Westhuizen, 1999; Kirsten, 2000), it seems that the different categories of problems are generic and applicable to all re-entry women. The above researchers classify their categories according to prior research (Pottas, 1969; Venter, 1971). From the above literature it appears that the problems experienced by persons (i.e. re-entry women) can be categorised as follows:

- Problems within persons

The problems within persons (i.e. re-entry women) are generally perceived as deficiencies or inadequacies, which exist within persons (Greyvenstein, 2000b:33). Role conflict (Murray, 1994), stress (Steinberg, 1993), work satisfaction (Van der Westhuizen, 1999), guilt (Van Deventer, 1998) and loss of self-confidence (Fourie, 1997) can be seen as problems within persons.

- Problems in the work situation

The absence of opportunities for in-service training is a problem experienced by persons (i.e. re-entry women) in the work situation (Ferreira, 1991). The problem of in-service training refers to the necessity that exist for re-entry women to catch up on skills, knowledge and experience (Fagan & Williams, 1991), and to the lack of retraining programmes (Geber, 1999) in the work situation. The meaningfulness and interesting nature of work, as well as the interpersonal relationships in a work situation, can cause problems (Ferreira, 1991; Griffioen, 1999).

- Problems on management level

Conscious or sub-conscious discriminatory practices on the part of employers and the absence of legislation and policies (Van der Westhuizen & Du Toit, 1994) are problems experienced on management level. Many employers hold negative and

stereotyped beliefs about women for example, that married women in particular or women with children are less committed to their work and their organisations (Herkelman et al., 1993:133). Furthermore, a woman's career is seen as supplementary to her primary role in the family (Greyvenstein, 2000b:32).

- Problems within the career

Insufficient remuneration and the lack of prospects of promotion are problems experienced within the career (Griffioen, 1999). The interruption of work often decreases remuneration and retards the prospect of promotion.

- Problems within the society

The values of a society may be viewed as problematic if a person's (i.e. re-entry women) values differ from those of the society (Van der Westhuizen, 1999). The shortage of workplace nurseries and after-school and holiday play schemes are also a problem within the society (Redelinghuys et al., 1999).

3.3 IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEMS

3.3.1 PROBLEMS WITHIN PERSONS

3.3.1.1 Role conflict

Roles refer to the different positions that any individual has to fulfil in society or to society's socialized view concerning expectations about an individual's behaviour under specific circumstances (Van Deventer, 1998:103). In the case of the working woman, the following roles are seen as the most important: spouse, mother, employee (Redelinghuys et al., 1999). It should be noted that women might also have other roles. Typically, they are the providers of family health care needs and thus must often assume the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby (Facione, 1994:160).

Role conflict is a psychological state, often below the level of awareness, arising when two or more important values are perceived as incompatible, usually that of homemaker and worker (Tipping & Farmer, 1991:111).

O'Connell (1994:9) maintains that home work and the family affect every aspect of women's lives: their socialization and education, their sexuality, the way in which they are expected to behave as women, wives, mothers and in their careers. The above relationship between home work, family and career causes conflicting roles and expectations for career women (Greyvenstein, 2000b:32).

Re-entry women, whose primary responsibility is to raise children and manage their households, often experience role conflict (Padula, 1994:12). Redelinguys et al. (1999) maintains that women who enter the work force after a period of absence are not always able to devote the same attention to all their roles.

A factor that could possibly contribute to role conflict in women and specifically re-entry women is traditional values (Greyvenstein, 2000b:32). Women who are the products of traditional families are conditioned to accept traditional values and divisions of work based on gender (Redelinguys et al., 1999). Greyvenstein (2000b:32) reports that women and men view women's traditional and primary allegiance to be the family.

As a result of this stereotypical gender based view, employed women spend considerably more time on household tasks than their husbands (Van Dijk & Siegers, 1996). In addition, women bear almost the sole responsibility for the care and well-being of children. Emmons (1990:85) report that American working mothers with pre-school-age children are doing more childcare than their spouses, especially in areas of physical care, getting up during the night, staying home with sick children and driving children to day care and other activities. In the Netherlands, women spend almost twice as much time on housework and looking after the family as men, namely 17.7 hours per week as compared to 9.4 hours of their husbands (Vermeulen & Ruijs, 1997:153).

The time spent on homemaking and childcare adversely affects the career development of women and particularly women's advancement in the management hierarchies (Greyvenstein, 2000b:32). Consequently, women are forced to adopt various strategies for coping with home and work, such as limiting career aspirations and postponing attempts to gain promotion while children are young (Geber, 1999:198).

However, the perception that women appear to be engaged in a continuous tug-of-war between their work and their responsibilities to their families, is not necessarily correct. The findings of Redelinghuys et al. (1999) indicate that South African women do experience role conflict to a certain extent, but that it does not create a serious hindrance in their work and home life. Redelinghuys et al. (1999) make three assumptions regarding this apparent lack of role conflict experienced by South African women:

- Today's women do not think it strange or out of the ordinary to have careers, mainly because of the emancipation of women during the last half of the previous century. They are therefore prepared to, and are capable of juggling the demands of their different roles successfully. Working while continuing to fulfil traditional roles is an acceptable and normal way of life for women of the 1990s.
- Husbands support the women in this population, physically and psychologically, to such an extent that most role conflict is alleviated.
- Most importantly, women perceive gender discrimination (cf. Par. 3.3.3.1) in the work setting as a more serious area of concern than role conflict. This finding in itself indicates that women see themselves as equal to their male counterparts in their abilities and, therefore, want to be treated as equal to men.

Similarly, Murray (1994:iv) states that married women educators in South Africa have a positive attitude toward their dual role. The only areas where they experience role conflict are time-based and strain-based. In this research, the

extent to which women educators experience role conflict after a period of absence from the education profession will be determined empirically.

3.3.1.2 Stress

Miller (quoted by Van der Westhuizen, 1999:344) defines stress as:

... the physical, mental or emotional reaction resulting from an individual's response to environmental tensions, conflicts, pressures... It is much more than nervous anxiety and feelings of tension and tightness... A person's reaction to stress may be clearly visible to both the individual and to those with whom he or she spends time. The reaction may also be subtle, with the individual unaware of the effects of stress until an illness or disorder surfaces.

Van Zyl and Pietersen (1999) state that career women experience considerable stress and pressure because they have to be everything to everybody. Career women have to be the homemaker, the supportive wife and mother and at the same time, a good worker.

Steinberg (1993:15) reports four levels of stress experienced by individuals (i.e. women):

- *Individual stress*
Individual stress can be described as intrinsic stress which exists within the individual
- *Interpersonal stress*
Interpersonal stress refers to stress within the individual as a result of interaction with other persons
- *Environmental stress*
Environmental stress is the result of conditions outside the workplace, for example the family

- *Organisational stress*

Organisational stress refers to (management) stress as a result of conditions within the workplace, for example the demands of the work and relationships with colleagues.

All four levels of stress are too comprehensive for review within the scope of this study. Only the last two levels of stress (environmental and organisational) will be discussed briefly from the standpoint of women.

A potential environmental stressor is role conflict (Greenhouse & Gallanan, 1994:225). Stress can arise from the role conflict between family and work (Newell, 1996; Porteous, 1997:224). Consequently, it is likely that women who try to cope by meeting the demands of multiple roles (wife, mother, worker) are those most at risk in relation to stress-related illnesses (Dyer et al., 1991:37; Covin & Brush, 1994). One category of workers for whom the transmission of stress between work and home is particularly problematic is re-entry women, who are attempting to nurture a family and enter a career at the same time (Padula, 1994:12).

Ferreira (1991:27) reports that potential organisational stressors are:

- Change and renewal within the organisation
- Poor interpersonal relationships within the organisation
- The individual's role in the organisation
- The work structure of the organisation
- The work conditions within the organisation
- Time management of the individual within the organisation.

As mentioned above, change in an organisation is a potential organisational stressor (Steinberg, 1993:27). Theron (1996:38) maintains that schools comply with all the universal characteristics of an organisation and can therefore be viewed as an organisation. Teachers and especially women teachers can be

included in the group of South Africans suffering from high levels of (organisational) stress (Van der Linde, Van der Westhuizen & Wissing, 1999:192). South African education is changing fundamentally because of political changes in the country and teachers have to adapt to the new reality (Van Zyl & Pietersen, 1999:74). According to Steinberg (1993:40), women educators report experiencing more stress than their male colleagues. The adjustments associated with changes in the basic occupational structure of teaching, together with women educators' normal duties and busy work schedules, result in continuous stress experience (Van der Linde et al., 1999:192).

3.3.1.3 Work satisfaction

Work satisfaction can be described as a pleasant or positive emotional condition as a result of an individual's evaluation of work experience (Van der Westhuizen & Du Toit, 1994:145). Griffioen (1999:9) states that the above emotional condition is the result of a combination of psychological, physiology and environmental conditions relating to the work of an individual. The individual differences among persons will affect the factors that influence work satisfaction and differ from person to person (Van der Westhuizen & Du Toit, 1994:145).

In several studies (Murray, 1994; Griffioen, 1999; Smit, 1999; Van der Westhuizen, 1999), it seems that work satisfaction of women can be associated with the satisfaction of specific needs:

- *The need to be appreciated*

Griffioen (1999:48) reports that the need to be appreciated is one of the most important factors that influences work satisfaction. Appreciation may be described as deliberate encouragement or as recognition of what a person has achieved or as the praise that a person is granted (Hillebrand, 1989:51).

The need to be appreciated influences the work satisfaction of women and in particular women educators (Van Deventer, 1998:90). Van der Westhuizen (1999:212) maintains that a lack of appreciation can be identified as a source

of dissatisfaction and that this problem has to be considered in the education profession.

- *The need to achieve*

The need to achieve influences work satisfaction in women (Van Deventer, 1998:90). Every person (i.e. woman) has the need to achieve, as well as the need for self-actualization (Smit, 1999:29). Self-actualization is Maslow's term for self-fulfillment or the realization of personal potential (Woolfolk, 1998:382).

However, women with a strong need for achievement are sometimes viewed as having masculine traits as they have to adopt typically masculine behaviour to succeed in a traditionally male world of work (Greyvenstein, 2000b:31). The above viewpoint results in women with a strong need for achievement experiencing an inherent fear of success (Greyvenstein, 1989:98). Therefore, the fear of achievement is actually fear of the negative views of the society regarding women and work (Fourie, 1997:90).

- *The need to be an authority figure*

Every person (i.e. woman) has the need to be an authority figure and if this need is satisfied, work satisfaction will be experienced (Van der Westhuizen, 1999:212).

Women aspiring to management positions in education may be seen as individuals satisfying the need to be an authority figure. However, Greyvenstein (2000b:32) reports that the time spent on homemaking and childcare adversely affects the career development of women and particularly women's advancements in the educational management hierarchies (cf. Par. 3.3.4.2).

Several researchers (Korving, 1991:112; Covin & Brush, 1994; Holtzman & Glass, 1999) report that work-family role conflict disproportionately affects women's work satisfaction. Erasmus (1997:36) maintains that the double pressures on women in

the home and at work influence their work performance and the degree of work satisfaction they experience. Work satisfaction, in turn, has been found to significantly affect work performance, absenteeism, turnover and psychological distress (Holtzman & Glass, 1999).

However, Murray (1994:55) suggests that the negative or positive experience of role conflict depends on an individual's competence to perform in certain situations. Thus, the more competent an individual, the lesser the conflict experienced and the more the work satisfaction.

The work satisfaction that women experience when re-entering into the education profession will be discussed in Chapter 4.

3.3.1.4. Guilt

Van Deventer (1998:111) describes guilt as a painful, personal emotion that leads to a feeling of self-denial and to psychological and physical problems.

In addition to practical childcare problems such as the availability and affordability of childcare, working women often shoulder anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children (Newell, 1996).

Herkelman et al. (1993:134) report that especially re-entry women feel guilty leaving children, particularly young ones, in daycare centres or in another person's home when they return to work.

3.3.1.5 Low self-confidence

Self-confidence can be described as the level of self-satisfaction experienced by an individual (Fourie, 1997:51). Van Deventer (1998:75) reports that working women often experience low self-confidence as a barrier in their career development. Women are perceived by the wider society in a number of stereotyped ways and this may be put forward as a reason for low self-confidence (Van Deventer, 1998:75). A society with stereotyped gender views strengthens

the attitude that women do not have the necessary abilities to succeed in a career (Greyvenstein, 2000b:32). Therefore, low self-confidence is often the product of a system where women have no opportunities to develop self-confidence (Van Deventer, 1998:75). The above mentioned is especially evident in the education profession, as stated by Greyvenstein (quoted by Van der Westhuizen, 1999:567):

Low self-confidence is reinforced by structures within organisational systems which prevent women from developing self-confidence in public sphere activities through a lack of opportunity. It has been stated that there is an unwillingness on the part of male managers in schools to provide even short term opportunities for experience for women to gain confidence. Low self-confidence is therefore a product of a system which curtails self-confidence building experiences.

However, the perception that women appear to have low levels of self-confidence is not necessarily correct. The findings of Van Deventer and Van der Westhuizen (2000:240) indicate that South African women do not experience low self-confidence as a promotion barrier. They do not regard themselves as passive, dependent and inadequate in their professional environment, and they do not experience lack of self-confidence as professional educators or have a low self-esteem.

Lemmer (1990:107) states that re-entry women undergo a loss of self-confidence during their career break. Lack of self confidence is probably one of the factors in many re-entry women's willingness to accept demotion on return to work and the tendency to opt for typically female work and choice of part-time as opposed to full-time work (Rees, 1992:75).

Two studies regarding self-confidence and re-entry women have been reviewed. In the study of Herkelman et al. (1993:139), it is reported that the following problems concerning re-entry and self-confidence occur:

- Re-entry women might question their competence and at the same time feel they could be doing more challenging, meaningful work.

- Returning women may compare themselves unfavourably with their peers who have been working while they have been homebound.
- If a re-entry woman was trained professionally before she dropped out to raise a family, she may be discouraged by how far behind she is and how much catching up there is to do.

In another study by Padula (1994:11), three problems regarding re-entry and self-confidence are described:

- Re-entry women have problems in self-concept and self-perception and have been reported to have significantly lower academic and leadership self-concepts than re-entry men.
- Returning women are often starting over after having previously experienced success and have proved their value as members of adult society.
- Although re-entry women have developed many skills relevant to continued schooling and work through such experience as homemaking, parenting and volunteering, re-entry women often underrate their actual abilities.

Against the background of the above two studies concerning re-entry women, it may be suggested that re-entry women experience an absence of professional identity. After having been heavily preoccupied with the role of wife/mother during a career break, re-entry women no longer identify with the professional role which their education and training have prepared them for (Lemmer, 1990:107). The absence of a professional identity may imply that returning women must learn again to identify with the profession to which they aspire.

3.3.1.6 Synthesis

Viewed against the above background, it may be concluded that problems within persons (i.e. re-entry women) are:

- Women have to cope with conflict between the traditional role of wife and mother and a career role
- Women may have other roles such as the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby
- Society views women's traditional and primary allegiance to be the family role
- Women spend more time on household tasks than their spouses
- Women assume greater responsibility for the care and well-being of children than their spouses
- Homemaking and the presence of children may cause women to defer the serious pursuit of a career while their children are young
- Women experience stress as a result of the demands of family life and career
- Women experience stress as a result of change in the work situation
- Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to be appreciated is not being satisfied
- Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to achieve is not being satisfied
- Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to be an authority figure is not being satisfied
- Work-family role conflict might disproportionately affect mothers' work satisfaction
- Women often shoulder anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children
- Women often experience low self-confidence as a barrier in their career development
- Low self-confidence is reinforced by society and organisations which provide no opportunities for women to develop self-confidence

- Women undergo a loss of self-confidence during a career break as they might question their competence, compare themselves unfavourably with their peers and be discouraged by how far behind they are
- Women returning to the work force after a career break no longer identify with the professional role for which their education and training have prepared them.

The above problems formed the basis of Section B of the questionnaire in the empirical research (cf. 4.3.2.2).

3.3.2 PROBLEMS IN THE WORK SITUATION

3.3.2.1 In-service training

Fourie (1997:14) maintains that in-service training is the effort that an organisation makes to equip a worker for his/her task. In-service training, as part of personnel development, is directed at the attainment of short term, effective results (Potgieter, 1993:11-12).

Steinberg (1993:52) reports that in-service training sometimes creates expectations that are too high. For example, women educators may attend courses outside their field of interest, only to grow in a certain area of their careers. Another problem may be that management teams in organisations are usually responsible for creating opportunities for in-service training (Ferreira, 1991:65). However, it seems as if some organisations do not effectively satisfy this need for in-service training courses (cf. 3.3.2.1.2), especially for women.

Women returning to work or careers after an interruption in employment are faced with the necessity to catch up on skills, knowledge and experience (Fagan & Williams, 1991:42). It may be concluded that the longer the career break, the greater the likelihood that knowledge will become outdated and skills will deteriorate, thus adversely affecting women's opportunities at re-entry.

The aspects of in-service training concerning re-entry women will be discussed briefly in the following section.

3.3.2.1.1 *Outdated knowledge and skills*

Leaving the work force, even for short periods of time, or cutting back on career involvement to meet growing family demands, is likely to have negative effects on a woman's career, as well as on the career opportunities available to women in general (Emmons et al., 1990:63). Moreover, dropping out of the work force removes women from a dynamic work situation with improved technology and practices. Therefore, women who attempt to re-enter professional practice following a period of absence may find that the knowledge and technology explosion has left their qualifications and past experience outdated and inadequate for functioning in today's work situation (Herkelman et al., 1993:139). They are faced with problems of not knowing what their knowledge gap is and of lacking a system of support to structure their relearning efforts (Fagan & Williams, 1991:42).

3.3.2.1.2 *Retraining programmes*

The need for a system of support and professional retraining programmes regarding women's re-entry and training is apparent (Bird, 1999:211). Many organisations in the UK and the USA have designed retraining programmes for returning women (Fagan & Williams, 1991; House of Commons, 1998). In addition, some organisations in the UK and the USA are beginning to make re-entry easier for women by being less rigid in their demands and more aware of the need for employees to balance work and family demands (Geber, 1999:198). The retraining programmes in the above mentioned countries are aimed at the specific needs of returning women, such as professional updating courses. As shown in Chapter 2, women who have been able to take part in retraining courses have found them beneficial.

However, in South Africa, retraining programmes for women do not appear to exist. Geber (1999:198) reports in his study regarding the re-entry of South African women that

- Only 21, 56 per cent of the women in his study received training within their organisations;
- Many women in the study felt the need for further training and have consequently provided it for themselves and often at their own expense; and
- Retraining programmes need to be developed by organisations in South Africa.

3.3.2.2 Meaningfulness and the interesting nature and type of work

Work contributes to the experience of work satisfaction as it satisfies overall needs as well as the need for self-actualization (Griffioen, 1999:76). Monotony and routine can be demotivating. Routine work leads to frustration, boredom, lack of motivation and to dissatisfaction in the work situation (Van der Westhuizen, 1999:213). However, the successful completion of difficult problems and aims contribute to work satisfaction (Griffioen, 1999:77).

The extent to which the meaningfulness and interesting nature of the work influence re-entry women will be determined empirically in this research and will be reported on in Chapter 4.

3.3.2.3. Interpersonal relationships within an organisation

The interpersonal relationships within the work situation include the workers' relationship with superiors, equals and subordinates (Ferreira, 1991:27).

The quality of management by superiors affects behaviour, attitudes and effort of workers (Van der Westhuizen, 1999:204). In this respect, hints and positive replies of superiors are important as these influence work satisfaction (Griffioen, 1999:65).

In some work situations few opportunities for interaction with colleagues exist and this may lead to feelings of isolation among workers (Ferreira, 1991:27). The workers may experience their problems as unique due to the lack of a work situation where common problems can be discussed. In addition, career women, and specifically women educators, experience burnout due to little support from colleagues (Van der Linde et al., 1999:192).

Problems concerning re-entry women and the interpersonal problems they experience will be determined empirically in this research and discussed in Chapter 4.

3.3.2.4. Synthesis

Viewed against this background, it may be concluded that problems in the work situation for persons (i.e. re-entry women) are:

- In-service training courses are sometimes attended by women only to grow in certain areas of their careers and not because they are interested in these courses
- Management teams in organisations are responsible for creating opportunities for in-service training and this is not always effectively done
- Improved knowledge and technology cause returning women's qualifications and past experience to be outdated and inadequate for functioning in today's work situation
- Many women have the need for a system of support and professional retaining programmes after a career break
- Many women have to provide retraining for themselves and often at their own expense
- Routine work leads to frustration and to dissatisfaction in the work situation
- A lack of hints and positive replies from superiors can influence work satisfaction negatively
- Few opportunities for interaction with colleagues may lead to feelings of isolation among workers.

The above problems formed the basis of Section C of the questionnaire in the empirical research (cf. 4.3.2.2).

3.3.3 PROBLEMS ON MANAGEMENT LEVEL

3.3.3.1 Employer attitudes

Stereotyping and misconceptions about female employees result in undervaluing women. One of the major myths is that married women in particular or women with children are less committed to their work and their organisations (Herkelman et al., 1993:133). Furthermore, women's income is seen as supplementary to the male breadwinner's income, therefore the career is seen as supplementary to women's primary role in the family (Greyvenstein, 2000b:32).

Researchers (Lemmer, 1990; Van Zyl & Pietersen, 1999) maintain that forms of discrimination most often experienced by women, and specifically re-entry women, are lower work rewards and differential treatment concerning promotion (cf. Par. 3.3.4). Differential treatment concerning promotion often occurs during the hiring process when selection by employers take place according to stereotyped gender role criteria (Greyvenstein, 2000b:32). One of the women educators in the study of Rudduck in the USA (1994:16) states:

When I began to apply for promoted posts, ... I was asked by the chair of governors of the school, 'You're a single parent (I was by then separated) and you have two children. You already have a busy work. If you had this work would you have time to spend with your family as well?' And I was asked in subsequent deputy head interviews and in private interviews during the day leading up to the formal interview, a series of improper questions about my personal life as a woman and a single parent: for example, I've been asked whether I intended to marry again.

Prejudices as mentioned above make it difficult for women to gain promotions or new appointments when in competition with men (Szèchy, 1997:103).

It may be stated that employers also subject re-entry women to discrimination. Lemmer (1990:108) reports that many employers hold negative and stereotyped beliefs about re-entry women. According Gerdes et al. (1990:424), the age of re-entry women seems to play a significant role in discrimination by employers. Women who re-enter during their forties or fifties, regardless of qualifications, face age discrimination. Lemmer (1990:108) maintains that not only are they closer to retirement, but their long absence from an occupation counts against them.

3.3.3.2 Legislation

Greyvenstein (2000b:32) reports that international research records a marked increase in concern regarding gender equity in employment, which has resulted in various actions for the advancement of the status of women in many countries. In some countries, policies founded on government equity laws have been formulated to improve equity for all women (Nyman, 1997:6). Furthermore, affirmative action has been instituted in various countries to ensure the implementation of equity laws and policies (Greyvenstein, 2000b:32).

Lemmer (1990:109) maintains that the legislation referred to above creates the general climate, which will either encourage or discourage re-entry women. The presence of anti-discriminatory legislation, such as in Great Britain, will ensure a more worthwhile return for the woman considering re-entry (Bird, 1999:205). For example, work policies in Great Britain encourage professional bodies to allow women to remain in contact with their employers while on a career break scheme and offer updating courses for women wishing to return (Brine, 2000:106).

In South Africa, recent new laws and policies exist to protect and/or advance groups, such as women who have been disadvantaged or unfairly discriminated against in the past. The establishment of the Human Rights Commission and the Commission on Gender Equality indicate a government commitment to eliminate gender discrimination (Nyman, 1997:6). However, there seems to be no law or policy specifically formulated to protect or advance women returning to the work force after a period of absence.

Nevertheless, there are many areas where South African work laws and policies play a role in improving the working conditions of women. The extent to which legislation in South Africa can improve the working conditions of women will now be explored. For the purpose of this chapter, the overall legislation that protects women against unfair discrimination, such as the South African Constitution (1996), the Employment Equity Act (55/1998) and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (75/1998) will be discussed.

- The South African Constitution (1996)

The instrument which forms the cornerstone of non-negotiable principles of human rights and non-discrimination is the South African Constitution (1996) and, more specifically, the second chapter of the Bill of Rights.

In terms of section 9 (2-3) of the South African Constitution (1996), every person has the right to equality:

- *Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. These rights and freedoms of equality and equity should be achieved through laws and other measures to protect and/or advance disadvantaged groups*
- *The Government may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.*

These two clauses of the South African Constitution (1996) state that it is the Government's obligation to make laws and take other measures to protect and/or advance groups, such as women, who were disadvantaged or unfairly discriminated in the past. However, in a study of Greyvenstein (2000b), it is reported that there is evidence of controversy regarding the above issue. Greyvenstein (2000b:32) maintains that laws and policies have only been symbolic efforts without enforcement. The most compelling evidence of the lack of equity in

the work force seems to be the differential incidence of promotion and remuneration by gender (cf. Par. 3.3.4).

- The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998

In terms of section 2 (a-b) of the Employment Equity Act (55/1998), equity has to be implemented in the workplace as follows:

- *Promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through elimination of unfair discrimination*
- *Implement affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment of the designated groups in order to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels.*

Designated groups, according to the Employment Equity Act (55/1998), are specific groups of people. For the purpose of this chapter, it is assumed to include women.

The first clause of the Employment Equity Act (55/1998) holds meaning for women, in that task distribution, responsibilities, remuneration and promotion, to name but a few, must be actively advanced or assisted. All women, especially re-entry women, should be treated fairly when applying for posts and after they have been appointed. The promotion of equal employment is, in essence, an attempt to rectify the discriminatory measures directed at women in the past, such as unfair employment practices.

However, the report of the Presidential Commission (Report of the Presidential Commission, 1996:142) states that even where women are in the same work as men, or in works formally accorded similar value, discrimination in pay occurs, with women workers paid less than their male counterparts (cf. Par. 3.3.4.1).

The second clause deals with the demand that women should have access to all sectors and levels of employment on an equal basis with men. This requires not only legislation on equal pay and treatment but also on caring support structures.

This may suggest the establishment of affirmative action measures such as the representation of women in management posts.

However, in the report of the Gender Equity Task Team, it is clearly stated that management (cf. Par. 3.3.4.2), and in particular educational management in South Africa, has traditionally been and remains male dominated (Wolpe et al., 1997:290).

- Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997

In terms of section 25 (1-2[a]) of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (75/1997), maternity leave is a basic employment benefit:

- *An employee is entitled to at least four consecutive months' maternity leave*
- *An employee may commence maternity leave at any time from four weeks before expected date of birth unless otherwise agreed.*

However, there seems to be disagreement between workers, the Government and employers over the question of adequate maternity benefits (Nyman, 1997:9). In this regard, the study of Geber (1999) suggests flexible, more innovative organisational policies dealing with maternity leave. Therefore, it may be suggested that the following issues regarding maternity leave must be raised: an increase in the maximum period of maternity leave to four months and provision for greater flexibility in the taking of maternity leave by organisations. For example, an increase in maternity benefits and the introduction of paternity and childcare leave will assist many women to combine work and family responsibilities (Nyman, 1997:16).

As a result of the above issues of disagreement concerning maternity leave, South African women often prefer to take a career break (Geber, 1999). Career breaks are closely related to maternity leave (cf. Par. 2.4.2.1) as they provide women with the opportunity to have a break in their careers which is longer than the time usually allocated for maternity leave as stipulated by labour laws (Redelinghuys et al., 1999). Career breaks due to child-bearing, however, adversely affect the

career development of women and particularly women's advancement in the management hierarchies (Greyvenstein, 2000b:32). For example, Geber (1999) reports that the women in his study who returned to the organisations where they were originally employed did so at a lower level. The women who fared best when returning to work were those who either took no break at all, those who used annual personal leave as maternity leave or those who took a short maternity leave period of three months or less.

It is evident from the above review of legislation in South Africa that a start has been made to address gender equity, but it has not always been as successful as intended. The extent to which legislation and work policies in South Africa consider the particular needs and aspirations of re-entry women will be determined empirically and discussed in Chapter 4.

The importance of legislation for re-entry women is evident. Lemmer (1990:109) reports that the absence of anti-discriminatory legislation and policies regarding returning women will depress the process of re-entry by women.

3.3.3.3 Synthesis

Viewed against this background, it may be concluded that problems on management level for persons (i.e. re-entry women) are:

- Many employers still entertain negative and stereotyped beliefs about women, for example that women are less committed to their work or that women's careers are secondary to men's careers
- Forms of discrimination most often experienced by women are lower work rewards and differential treatment concerning promotion
- The age of the women returning to the work force after a period of absence seems to play a significant role in discrimination by employers
- Legislation and work policies fail to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through equal remuneration and promotion opportunities for women

- A lack of flexible, more innovative organisational policies dealing with maternity, such as an increase in the maximum period of maternity leave of four months and provision for greater flexibility in the taking of maternity leave
- Career breaks due to child-bearing and a lack of adequate maternity leave adversely affect the career development of women with regard to post levels
- The absence of legislation and work policies that consider the particular needs of women returning to the work force are a problem.

The above problems formed the basis of Section D of the questionnaire in the empirical research (cf. 4.3.2.2).

3.3.4 PROBLEMS WITHIN THE CAREER

3.3.4.1 Remuneration

Griffioen (1999:96) maintains that finances satisfy psychological and security needs. For example, O'Connell (1994:72) reports that women's self-perception is improved by the knowledge that they are contributing financially and visibly to the household. However, finances may become a demotivating factor if salaries do not keep pace with personal and physical needs. This is particularly evident in the education profession. Griffioen (1999:96) states that finances, or a lack of finances, is an important reason for teachers who leave the education profession.

In South Africa, policies founded on government equity laws have been formulated to improve equity for all individuals (Nyman, 1997:6). The issue of equal pay for equal value has been addressed legally in South Africa since 1991 (Report of the Presidential Commission, 1996:152). Therefore, salary scales of all individuals are determined by the current economic climate, the available financial resources in the society and the relative importance that society contributes to a specific career (Steyn, 1990:149). However, evidence submitted to the Presidential Commission indicates that the impact of these acts has been anything but effective in dealing with gender discrimination in pay (Report of the Presidential Commission, 1996:152).

Women who interrupt their careers and leave the work force for family responsibilities often return to find that their remuneration lags behind those of women at comparable stages in their careers who did not leave the work force (Glass & Estes, 1996; Jacobsen & Levin, 1995:14). For example, in the United States, mothers at age 30 earn on average only 70% of men's pay, while non-mothers earn 90%. In Britain, mothers at age 33 earn only 64% of men's pay, while non-mothers are earning 84% of their male counterparts' earning (Waldfoegel, 1998).

In two studies (Jacobsen & Levin, 1995; Waldfoegel, 1998) the following reasons as to why American and British re-entry women might have lower remuneration were found:

- Women who leave the work force and later re-enter do not build up seniority, which in itself, often leads to higher remuneration
- Women who return to the work force are less likely to receive on-the-job-training to increase their productivity and thereby raise their remuneration
- When women are not in the work force, their work skills may depreciate
- Employers may view gaps in history as a signal that women who leave may do so again. Some employers would therefore hire them for less important, lower paying work to limit the impact of a future decision to leave
- Alternatively, structural 'family barriers' such as the lack of family leave might impede the progress of mothers in the work market.

The effect of withdrawal and re-entry on the remuneration of South African women will be determined empirically and discussed in Chapter 4.

3.3.4.2 Promotion prospects

Promotion indicates an increase in responsibility and this is usually accompanied by an increase in status as well as a higher post level (Steyn, 1990:19). Steinberg (1993:53) reports that the lack of promotion opportunities for women and especially women educators, is a problem.

Women who achieve promotion to managerial positions in a country such as South Africa are still a minority, especially in the area of educational management. Recent data (Greyvenstein, 2000b:31) concerning the Education Department of the Gauteng Province in South Africa indicate that women currently hold 17% of principalships of secondary schools. Although not statistically comparable or indicative of all the regions of South Africa, it may be assumed that there are gross gender inequities in education management positions.

A reason for the lack of promotion opportunities may be that few women apply for promotion posts in the education profession, irrespective of their marital status, qualifications or their competence (Fourie, 1997:86). The relationship between applications for men and women for different post levels in the education profession are:

Post level 2: 2,8 : 1

Post level 3: 8,4 : 1

Post level 4: 22,3 : 1

Post level 5: 20,5 : 1

Post level 6: 13,8 : 1

Reasons which explain women's reluctance to apply for promotion posts, are, according to Van der Westhuizen and Hillebrand (1990:274), the following:

- A lack of mobility because women are usually obliged to stay in the area in which their husbands work
- A lack of self-confidence among women educators

It must be noted that women are as interested in promotion as men are. They do not believe that they are not entitled to promotion (Van Deventer & Van der Westhuizen, 2000:240). However, women are more aware of discrimination in the work situation and this leads to low expectations concerning the successful application for promotion posts (Van Deventer, 1998:94).

Women's re-entry into the work force after a period of absence has been a crucial point in their working careers. Researchers (Newman & Newman, 1991, Széchy, 1997) maintain that a career break has a detrimental effect on promotion prospects for women. A possible explanation is that employers might discriminate against returning women with family responsibilities (Széchy, 1997:103). Another explanation may be that some of these returning women have lost occupational status partly from taking a long break and partly from returning to a part-time work (Dex et al., 1998).

The extent to which opportunities for promotion are available to South African women who re-enter the education profession will be determined empirically and will be discussed in Chapter 4.

3.3.4.3 Synthesis

Viewed against this background, it may be concluded that problems within the career for persons (i.e. re-entry women) are:

- Gender discrimination occurs in remuneration despite legislation and work policies
- Withdrawal and re-entry to the work force can have a negative effect on remuneration, as returning women do not build up seniority or receive on-the-job-training, which in itself, often leads to higher remuneration
- Women who achieve promotion to managerial positions in a country such as South Africa are still a minority, especially in the area of educational management
- A reason for the lack of promotion opportunities may be that few women apply for promotion posts
- A career break has a detrimental affect on promotion prospects for women returning to the work force after a period of absence and in particular for women with children.

The above problems formed the basis of Section E of the questionnaire in the empirical research (cf. 4.3.2.2).

3.3.5 PROBLEMS WITHIN THE SOCIETY

3.3.5.1 Childcare arrangements

The inadequate provision of childcare facilities is a problem which can impede women in the work force, let alone those with promotional aspirations (Wilson, 1997:213). Especially for women with children, the decision to return to the work force raises the issue of childcare. Greyvenstein (2000b:32) states that the need to find suitable childcare has been marked as a problem facing re-entry women. Before a woman with children can re-enter employment, she must make adequate arrangements for the care and supervision of her children (Lemmer, 1990:106).

Good childcare facilities are essential to allow parents to combine family and workplace responsibilities. These are nonexistent in some countries and in chronically short supply in most countries (O'Connell, 1994:113).

There is a problem of both availability and affordability of childcare in the UK. (Newell, 1996; House of Commons, 1998). A particular feature of the UK is the high number of women working part-time, which is a function both of the uneven domestic load and the absence of state provided childcare facilities (Rees, 1992:78). State provision of preschool childcare in the UK lags substantially behind European provision, as nurseries are still rare. Although there is an increasing number of government subsidized after-school and holiday play schemes, demand still far exceeds supply (Wilson, 1997:11). Employers' strategies for childcare in the UK have tended to focus on workplace nurseries, but they are not necessarily the most appropriate solution. In the first instance, they only address the needs of parents with pre-school children. They do not help women with older children after school, during school holidays and at half term or on occasions when children of any age are ill (Rees, 1992:78). Therefore, most parents rely on a patchwork of voluntary and private provision, supported by family and friends.

Similar problems regarding childcare arrangements are experienced in the Netherlands (Wilson, 1997:153):

- A demand exists for childcare provision even though the number of childcare facilities has increased from 20 000 to more than 74 000.
- Subsidized childcare is available for only five per cent of children under the age of four. Under this age, children of working parents attend part-time playgroups, full-time or part-time day care centres or the children are looked after by childminders or relatives. From the age of four, children are taken care of at primary school. Most schools finish at three o'clock, but provision of after-school childcare between then and six o'clock is limited. Waiting lists are enormous in the larger cities and such facilities are non-existent in the smaller towns and villages.
- Many women find it difficult to arrange care for sick children.
- The high cost of childcare in the Netherlands is also a serious obstacle.

In the study of Redelinguys et al. (1999) concerning South African working mothers, 91% of the respondents indicated lack of day care for children as a shortcoming. An overseas idea that has not yet had much following in South Africa is the idea of workplace nurseries (Katz, 1992:17). The provision of childcare facilities such as after-school and holiday play schemes is limited (Redelinguys et al., 1999).

In the USA, there is also a shortage of qualified affordable childcare (Glass & Estes, 1996). In particular, more attention needs to be paid to childcare needs of low income employed parents (Turner, 1994). Hofferth (1999) states that a great demand exists for preschool childcare provision in the USA:

- In 1982, 6% of infants, 12% of toddlers and 27% of older preschool children with an employed mother were enrolled in a centre-based programme as their primary arrangement
- From 1983 to 1993 the above numbers rose to 19%, 24% and 39% respectively.

The high use of childcare for infants in the USA reflects the fact that half of the mothers are back at work 6 months after the child's birth (cf. Par. 2.4.2.1).

Newell (1996) reports that similar problems regarding the availability of preschool childcare are experienced in Denmark, as a total of 48% of children under three years of age are in publicly-funded childcare facilities. This is the highest percentage in Europe. This percentage increases to 84% for the three- to six-year old group (Newell, 1996).

Viewed against this background, it is apparent that there is a substantial amount of variability across nations regarding the degree and kind of responsibility for children that will be assumed by governments. Of all the industrialized nations, the USA and South Africa accept the least public responsibility for young children (Lubeck, 1995).

One solution concerning childcare arrangements and re-entry women is for husbands to share in homemaking and childcare (Herkelman et al., 1993:134). Holtzman and Glass (1999:371) report in their study that employed mothers are better able to accommodate work and family responsibilities when their husbands or partners participate in child-rearing tasks. According to Holtzman and Glass (1999:371), employed mothers who are satisfied with their childcare arrangements and whose spouses share family care experience significantly better mental health. Thus, a change in the attitudes of men about work and family responsibilities may open pathways into return to work for women (House of Commons, 1998).

3.3.5.2 Society values

If the society's values (whether religious, economic, cultural, political or social) differ from those of women (including teachers), these society factors will have a demotivating effect on women (Van der Westhuizen, 1999:213).

Greyvenstein (2000b:31) reports that career women are subjected to traditional patriarchal stereotyped views of gender roles held by the society. For example,

family and home responsibilities are a major stereotypical gender based problem (Rudduck, 1994:16). The society views women's primary allegiance to be the family and this causes conflicting roles and guilt for working women (Van Deventer, 1998:107). Furthermore, the typical career woman (including the teacher) often lacks social support in the form of emotional support from family members, and does not have access to information and advice on problems experienced (Van Zyl & Pietersen, 1999:77). The above factors may contribute to the high levels of stress experienced by career women (cf. Par. 3.3.1.2).

The problems concerning society values that re-entry women experience after a period of absence will be determined empirically and discussed in Chapter 4.

3.3.5.3 Synthesis

Viewed against this background, it may be concluded that problems within the career for persons (i.e. re-entry women) are:

- A shortage of workplace nurseries exists
- The provision of childcare facilities, such as after-school and holiday playschemes is limited
- The high cost of childcare is a serious obstacle
- The provision of state provided childcare is limited
- Many women find it difficult to arrange care for sick children
- Career women are subjected to traditional patriarchal stereotyped views of gender roles held by the society, for example, that family and home are women's primary responsibility
- Career women often lack support in the form of emotional support from family members.

The above problems formed the basis of Section F of the questionnaire in the empirical research (cf. 4.3.2.2).

3.4 SUMMARY

Re-entry women are in a state of flux and transition as certain obstacles make it increasingly difficult for women to return to the work force. Internally, they are often plagued by a negative self-image, guilt, stress and concern over balancing the roles of homemaker and worker. Externally, they must battle with problems such as discrimination in the workplace regarding remuneration, promotion and legislation. The absence of family leave to care for young children, inadequate provision of childcare facilities for preschool children and differing levels of maternity/paternity leave are also problems which can impede women in the workplace.

In future, significant reliance will be placed on women returning to the work force that will require a work force with more skills than ever before. In order to take up this challenge, both the government and organisations will need to open the door for re-entry women.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter completed the literature investigation on re-entry women. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the design of the empirical research regarding the problems experienced by re-entry women. In addition, the empirical data concerning women returning to the education profession will be analysed and interpreted.

4.2 THE AIM OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The empirical investigation aims to gather data on the problems experienced by re-entry women.

4.3 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

For the purpose of this research a closed (structured) postal questionnaire was selected as the research tool. The rationale for the use of the questionnaire will now be presented.

4.3.1 The questionnaire as research tool

A survey questionnaire is one of the tools used in the collection of research data and is ultimately dependent on the purpose of the study (Gall, et al., 1996:289). A questionnaire is a written document containing statements or questions that are used to obtain subject perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, values, perspectives and other traits (Neuman, 2000:331; McMillan, 2000:155).

The postal questionnaire is seen as the best possible way to obtain information regarding educational research as data can be collected easier and from more

respondents (Neuman, 2000:235; Kirsten, 2000:94). Van der Westhuizen (1995:61) reports that postal questionnaires are divided into two groups namely open (unstructured) questionnaires and closed (structured) questionnaires. For the purpose of this study a closed or structured postal questionnaire was mainly used.

The following are some of the advantages of the closed (structured) postal questionnaire (Best & Kahn, 1993:230; Van der Westhuizen, 1995:61; Neuman, 2000:261):

- It can be distributed to respondents with financial and time cost effectiveness.
- The availability of a number of respondents in one place provides a high proportion of usable responses.
- The questionnaire, as research instrument, is more reliable than the interview.
- Objective opinions are obtained as a result of lack of personal contact.
- Anonymity of respondents is assured since respondents are not required to divulge their identities and addresses.
- It is easier and quicker for respondents to answer.
- The answers of different respondents are easier to compare.
- Answers are easier to code and analyze statistically.
- The response choices can clarify question meaning for respondents.
- Respondents are more likely to answer questions about sensitive topics.
- There are fewer irrelevant or confused answers to questions.
- Less articulate or less literate respondents are not at a disadvantage.
- Replication is easier.

Despite its usefulness, the closed (structured) postal questionnaire has the following limitations (Best & Kahn, 1993:230; Van der Westhuizen, 1995:61; Neuman, 2000:261):

- The validity and reliability of a questionnaire is difficult to determine.

- A low response rate is the biggest common limitation of the questionnaire. This may affect the validity of the results.
- Little can be done to rectify a misinterpreted question.
- The length of the questionnaire may lead to careless or inaccurate responses and may result in low return rates.
- A questionnaire may suggest ideas that the respondent would not otherwise have had.
- Respondents with no opinion or no knowledge can answer anyway.
- Respondents may be frustrated because their desired answer is not a choice.
- It is confusing if too many response choices are offered.
- Distinctions between respondent answers may be blurred.
- Clerical mistakes or marking the wrong response is possible.
- It forces respondents to give simplistic responses to complex issues.
- It forces people to make choices they would not make in the real world.

The use of questionnaires in this research is based on the following assumptions (Xaba, 1999:165; Kok, 2000:215):

- that the respondents can read and understand the questions;
- that respondents are possibly willing to answer the questions;
- that the respondents are in the position to supply information to answer the questions.

The suitability of the closed (structured) postal questionnaire is based on the fact that the respondents are women educators returning to the education profession after a period of absence. These returning women will be profoundly interested in the final outcome of the research and its implications for the improvement of their situation as re-entry women. In addition, knowledge of problems experienced by re-entry women could prove to be of benefit to those principals interested in the increased productivity and efficiency of teachers.

4.3.2 The design of a questionnaire

4.3.2.1 Pre-questionnaire construction interviews

Interviews have been conducted with women (n=5) who have entered into the education profession after a period of absence. The aim of the interviews was to have respondents identify at least three major problems experienced at re-entry. The information obtained regarding problems experienced at re-entry was used to add to the literature findings in the construction of the questionnaires.

4.3.2.2 Construction of the questionnaire items

The questionnaire items in this study were carefully constructed in view of the literature study and the pre-questionnaire construction interviews. The aim of the empirical study was also taken into consideration.

Section A (question A1-A6; cf. Appendix C) comprises items relating to the general or biographical data. Biographical questions have an 'ice breaker' purpose at the beginning of the questionnaire (Kok, 2000:218). The data relating to biographical details would help the researcher gain an understanding of differences in responses on certain items.

Section B (question B1-B17; cf. Appendix C) consists of questions relating to problems within women (cf. Par. 3.3.1.6).

Section C (question C18-C25; cf. Appendix C) constitutes items relating to problems within the work situation (cf. Par. 3.3.2.4).

Section D (question D26-D32; cf. Appendix C) comprises questions relating to problems on management level (cf. Par. 3.3.3.3).

Section E (question E33-E37; cf. Appendix C) consists of items relating to problems within the career (cf. Par. 3.3.4.3).

Section F (question F38-F44; cf. Appendix C) constitutes questions relating to problems within the society (cf. Par. 3.3.5.3).

Section B - F requires respondents to rank items on a four-point scale, e.g.
1 = No problem 2 = Moderate problem 3 = Problem 4 = Extreme problem

4.3.2.3 The questionnaire format

The following rules of questionnaire format have been developed from experience and research in the educational field and should be considered carefully (Borg, 1989:431; Leedy, 1997:193):

- The questionnaire should be made attractive.
- Questions should be laid out or organized in such a way that the questionnaire is as easy to read and respond to as possible.
- Questionnaire items and pages should be numbered.
- Brief, clear and bold-type printed instructions should be included.
- A few non-threatening items should be started with.
- Questionnaires should not be too long and should include enough information so that items are interesting to the respondents.

4.3.2.4 Pilot study

Borg, et al. (1993:112) assert that it is desirable to carry out a pilot study of the questionnaire in order to determine the reliability and validity of the questionnaire before using it in the research. The results of the pilot study should be used to determine whether some questions seem ambiguous to respondents, whether provision should be made for certain responses that are not included in the questionnaire and other points that could lead to improving the instrument.

The questionnaire was piloted to a sample of women educators (n=5) who re-entered the education profession after a period of absence. A different group of women educators (n=5) was used in the pilot study. The women who participated

in the pilot study were not the same five women who participated in the pre-questionnaire construction interviews. The pilot group was drawn from a population that would not be part of the final study sample. The pilot study group was requested to comment on the questionnaire with regard to its length, any unclear or ambiguous questions and to make comments and suggestions.

The pilot study responses were analysed. The analysis revealed satisfaction with the questionnaire. A few adjustments were made and the questionnaire was finalised.

4.3.2.5 Questionnaire distribution

The final questionnaire was then distributed to the sample population. A covering letter was enclosed (cf. Appendix C). The covering letter was aimed at orientating the respondents to the questionnaire as well as assuring them confidentiality and anonymity (Best & Kahn, 1993:241).

Contact persons were enlisted to distribute the questionnaires to certain schools. School principals were requested to be contact persons. Nevertheless, questionnaires and self-addressed envelopes had to be posted to certain schools in order to contact women educators who were difficult to reach due to financial and time effectiveness factors.

Consequently it took four to five weeks for the distribution, completion, collection and return of the questionnaires.

4.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The target population for the research was identified as re-entry women educators in the North West Province.

The North West Province consists of 12 districts. Due to financial and time effectiveness factors, it was not possible to use all 12 districts in the North West Province. A *systematic sample* was drawn from the 12 districts that would be

representative of the target population. From the 12 districts in the North West Province, 4 districts (Klerksdorp, Mafikeng, Rustenburg, and Zeerust) constituted the population. A list of all the secondary schools in the 12 districts was obtained from the North West Education Department. In the four districts there is a total of 169 secondary schools. A *systematic sample* of 42 secondary schools was drawn from the 169 secondary schools that would be representative of the target population. Every fourth school was systematically drawn from the sample of 42 secondary schools. All women teachers ($n \approx 110$) from these schools who re-entered the education profession after a period of absence formed the study population. The study population was stratified in four groups (less than a year of absence, 1-3 years of absence, 4-10 years of absence and more than 10 years of absence).

4.5 RESPONSE RATE

Questionnaires were distributed to the sample population in North West schools. Table 4.1 shows the return rate.

Table 4.1: Response rate

QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED	QUESTIONNAIRES RECEIVED	PERCENTAGE
110	78	70.9

From Table 4.1 it can be seen that the response rate exceeds 70% and is, therefore, an acceptable response rate (Xaba, 1999:173) from which generalisations can be made for the study population.

4.6 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

4.6.1 Approval from the North West Department of Education

The North West Department of Education was requested to give permission for the questionnaire to be administered to the target population in the province. The questionnaire was submitted to the North West Department of Education and permission to administer it to school principals and returning women educators was subsequently given (cf. Appendix A). The questionnaire was then distributed to the target population. The distribution was done personally and through contact persons in schools.

4.6.2 Follow-up on questionnaires

There was a need for telephonic follow-ups on the postal questionnaires that were not returned in time.

4.7 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The data were processed using the SAS computer programme (SAS Institute, 1996).

Descriptive statistics were calculated with the FREQ procedure and the MEANS procedure of SAS (SAS Institute, 1996) to determine the frequencies and means listed in section 4.8.

The SAS computer programmes which are used to determine the frequencies, do not provide for the missing frequencies. The missing frequencies are, therefore, not taken into consideration with regard to determination of percentages.

There may be substantial differences in the nature of the problems experienced by returning women educators in the different life stages (cf. Par. 3.1). The Kruskal-Wallis test was performed to determine whether the different age groups differed significantly on the same variable. To determine where the difference lies (i.e.

which pairs of group are significantly different) a post hoc procedure was performed. Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics were performed to examine all pairwise group comparisons to determine which pairs of groups are significantly different.

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.8.1 Biographical information

The aim of section A (questions 1-6) was to determine the profile of re-entry women in the North West Province with regard to age, age at exit, age at re-entry, length of career break, position before career break and position after career break. Table 4.2 outlines the data on the biographical information. The percentages are determined according to the actual number of respondents.

Table 4.2: Biographical information with regard to the study population

			Frequencies	Percentages
A1	AGE	22-29 years	24	31.1
		30-39 years	26	33.8
		40-49 years	21	27.3
		50 and older	6	7.8
			77	100
A2	AGE AT EXIT	22-29 years	35	46.0
		30-39 years	24	31.6
		40-49 years	17	22.4
		50 and older	-	-
			76	100
A3	AGE AT RE-ENTRY	22-29 years	28	37.3
		30-39 years	26	34.7
		40-49 years	18	24.0
		50 and older	3	4.0
			75	100
A4	LENGTH OF BREAK	Less than a	35	45.4
		1-3 years	25	32.5
		4-10 years	15	19.5
		More than 10	2	2.6
			77	100
A5	POSITION BEFORE	Post level 1	55	71.4
		Post level 2	16	20.8
		Post level 3	4	5.2
		Post level 4	2	2.6
			77	100
A6	POSITION AFTER	Post level 1	63	81.8
		Post level 2	11	14.3
		Post level 3	2	2.6
		Post level 4	1	1.3
			77	100

Question A1: Age of re-entry women

Table 4.2 shows that most respondents (64.9%) fall within the combined age category of 22-39 years. Respondents in the 40-49 years age category accounts for 27.3%, and 7.8% of respondents are in the 50+ age category.

In education, the term re-entry women has generally been used to describe women re-entering an educational institution after an absence ranging from a few years to as many as 35 years. Literature findings suggest that ranging in age from 25 years to 65 years and older, most re-entry women are between 25 and 54 years of age (cf. Par. 2.2.4). The data in Table 4.2 associated with the age of re-entry women confirm the literature assertions about the description of re-entry women as the respondents vary in age from 22 years to 50 years and older. Thus, the ages of the respondents in the empirical study correlate with the age category of 25-54 years suggested in the literature study.

Question A2: Age at exit

The majority of respondents (77.6%) have exited the education profession within the combined age groups of 22-39 years. None of the respondents have exited the education profession within the 50+ age category. This may indicate that in terms of age most women exit the education profession within the combined age group of 22-39 years.

Question A3: Age at re-entry

Table 4.2 indicates that 72% of the respondents re-entered the education profession within the combined age groups of 22-39 years. Only 4.0% of the respondents re-entered the profession within the 50+ age category. This may indicate that in terms of age most women re-enter the education profession within the age groups of 22-39 years.

Question A4: Length of career break

It is noteworthy that in the case of the length of career break, there is a higher number (45.4%) of respondents in the less than a year category. Only 2.6% of the respondents had a career break of more than 10 years. The above data are supportive of the literature findings about the increasing trend for women educators to take shorter career breaks. Literature findings maintain that women are working more weeks per year, more hours per week and are staying in the work force for a longer duration and have, therefore, shorter career breaks (cf. Par. 2.4.2.1).

Question A5: Position before career break

The highest number of respondents (71.4%) has occupied positions before a career break on post level 1. Of the respondents 20.8% occupied positions on post level 2 before a career break. Respondents in the combined categories of positions before a career break on post level 3 and 4 account for 7.8%.

Question B6: Position after career break

Table 4.2 shows that 81.1% of the respondents resumed their positions after a career break on post level 1. 14.3% of the respondents resumed their positions after a career break on post level 2. Only 3.9% of the respondents have occupied positions in the combined post levels 3 and 4 after a career break. The above data confirm the literature assertions that a career break has a detrimental affect on promotion prospects for women (cf. Par. 3.3.4.2).

Profile of study population

It may be concluded that the typical re-entry women educator of a secondary school in the North West Province range in age from 22-39 years. It appears that most of these women educators exit and return to the education profession between the ages of 22-39 years of age. These returning women educators are taking career breaks of less than a year and have, therefore, relatively short career breaks. Furthermore, it seems as if their career breaks have a detrimental affect on promotion prospects for them.

4.8.2 Analysis of mean scores

Respondents were required to rank items of all five categories of problems on a four-point scale, e.g. 1 and 2 (no problem to a moderate problem) and 3 and 4 (problem to extreme problem).

In conjunction with the Statistical Consultant Services of the Potchefstroom University, suitable cut off points were identified. The mean scores are given out of four because of the four-point scale that has been used. The cut off point for problems of high priority was 3.0, and 2.0 for problems of low priority.

4.8.2.1 Problems within women

The aim of Section B (questions 1-17) was to determine the problems within re-entry women educators. Table 4.3 illustrates the rank order of the prioritisation of problems within women after re-entering into the education profession.

Table 4.3: Data on the problems within women

RANK ORDER	ITEM	ITEM DESCRIPTION	MEAN SCORE
1	B6	Homemaking and the presence of children may cause women to defer the serious pursuit of a career while their children are young	3.2
1	B13	Women often shoulder anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children	3.2
3	B7	Women experience stress as a result of the demands of family life and career	3.0
4	B10	Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to achieve is not being satisfied	2.9
5	B12	Work-family role conflict might disproportionately affect mothers' work satisfaction	2.8
6	B8	Women experience stress as a result of change in the work situation	2.7
6	B9	Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to be appreciated is not being satisfied	2.7
6	B16	Women undergo a loss of self-confidence during a career break as they might question their own competence, compare themselves unfavourably with their peers and be discouraged by how far behind they are	2.7
9	B1	Women have to cope with conflict between the traditional role of wife and mother and the career role	2.6
9	B4	Women spend more time on household tasks than their spouses	2.6
9	B11	Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to be an authority figure is not being satisfied	2.6
12	B3	Society views women's traditional and primary allegiance to be the family role	2.4
12	B5	Women assume greater responsibility for the care and well-being of children than their spouses	2.4
12	B17	Women returning to the work force after a career break no longer identify with the professional role for which their education and training prepared them	2.4
15	B14	Women often experience low self-confidence as a barrier in their career development	2.3
15	B15	Low self-confidence is reinforced by society and organisations which provide no opportunities for women to develop self-confidence	2.3
17	B2	Women may have other roles such as the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby	1.9

Question B6: Homemaking and the presence of children may cause women to defer the serious pursuit of a career while children are young (mean = 3.2)

The negative influence of homemaking and the presence of children on the career development of returning women are ranked first (cf. Table 4.3). This is in line with literature finding as today's woman has multiple roles and responsibilities as a family member, parent, community member and worker. Therefore, the decision to exit the work market is usually initiated by decisions of marriage, family formation and geographic moves when a husband secures a new job. Most women usually decide to accept the primary responsibility for home and children (cf. Par. 2.4.1).

Consequently, women are forced to adopt various strategies for coping with home and work, such as limiting career aspirations and postponing attempts to gain promotion while their children are young (cf. Par. 3.3.1.1).

Question B13: Women often shoulder anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from children (mean = 3.2)

Table 4.3 shows that returning women educators ranked anxiety and guilt as a problem. This confirms literature assertions as it is reported that re-entry women feel guilty about leaving children in daycare centres or in another person's home when they return to work. Consequently, these feelings of anxiety and guilt may lead to a feeling of self-denial and to psychological and physical problems (cf. Par. 3.3.1.4).

Question B7: Women experience stress as a result of the demands of family life and career (mean = 3.0)

Experiencing considerable stress as a result of the demands of family life and career is ranked third (cf. Table 4.3). This confirms literature findings about career women and their experience of stress. It is likely that women who try to cope by meeting the demands of multiple roles (wife, mother, worker) are those most at risk in relation to experiencing stress. One category of workers for whom the

transmission of stress between work and home is particularly problematic is re-entry women, who are attempting to nurture a family and enter a career at the same time (cf. Par. 3.3.1.2).

An interesting observation relates to the ranking of the above problems. It appears that all the items (B13, B7, B12) ranked as problems for re-entry women educators are related to role conflict. However, literature findings suggest that South African women do experience role conflict to a certain extent, but that it does not create a serious hindrance in their work and home life (cf. Par. 3.3.1.1). The high ranking of items (B13, B7, B12) related to role conflict may be due to the fact that most of the respondents (64.9%) fall within the combined age category of 22-39 years (Table 4.2). The age category of 22-39 years is associated with the prime period of family formation (cf. Par. 2.2.4). Hence, women who re-enter the work force during the age category of 22-39 years are likely to be subject to more considerable role stress as a result of conflict between family and work. In contrast, the problems that women experience during midlife (40-60 years) are more likely to be centered on choices about careers than issues such as marriage or children (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3). The extent to which re-entry women educators experience role conflict at different life stages will be determined empirically in this research (cf. Table 4.11).

Question B2: Women may have other roles such as the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby (mean = 1.9)

It should be noted that women might have other roles than those of spouse, mother and employee. However, respondents rank the role of provider of family health care for relatives as no problem (cf. Table 4.3). This is not in line with literature assertion. The reason for this apparent lack of role conflict may be due to the fact that husbands support their wives, physically and psychologically, to such an extent that most role conflict is alleviated. Another reason may be that working while continuing to fulfil traditional roles is an acceptable and normal way of life for women of the 1990s (cf. Par. 3.3.1.1).

Items associated with work satisfaction (B12, B9 and B11) and self-confidence (B14, B15 and B17) are generally ranked as moderate problems (cf. Table 4.3). This is not in line with literature findings in which work satisfaction and self-confidence are reported as problems experienced by career women. Work satisfaction associated with the satisfaction of specific needs is ranked fourth, sixth and ninth by returning women educators. A reason for the moderate ranking of work satisfaction associated with role conflict may be due to the individual's competence to perform in certain situations. Thus, the more competent an individual, the less the conflict that will be experienced and the more work satisfaction (cf. Par. 3.3.1.3). Self-confidence (B14, B15 and B17) is generally ranked as a moderate problem (cf. Table 4.3). Loss of self-confidence during a career break seems to be a moderate problem. This may be attributed to the fact that women no longer experience psychological expectations, such as a lack of self-confidence to assume leadership roles (cf. Par. 3.3.1.5).

4.8.2.2 Problems within the work situation

The aim of Section C (questions 18-25) was to determine the problems within the work situation experienced by re-entry women educators. Table 4.4 indicates the rank order of the prioritisation of problems within the work situation.

Table 4.4: Data on the problems within the work situation

RANK ORDER	ITEM	QUESTION	MEAN SCORE
1	C24	A lack of hints and positive replies from superiors can influence work satisfaction negatively	2.8
2	C23	Routine work leads to frustration and to dissatisfaction in the work situation	2.7
3	C18	In-service training courses are sometimes attended by women only to grow in a certain areas of their careers and not because they are interested in the courses	2.5
3	C19	Management teams in organisations are responsible for creating opportunities for in-service training and this is not always effectively done	2.5
3	C20	Improved knowledge and technology cause returning women's qualifications and past experience to be outdated and inadequate for functioning in today's work situation	2.5
3	C21	Many women have the need for a system of support and professional retraining programmes after a career break	2.5
7	C22	Many women have to provide retraining for themselves and often at their own expense	2.3
7	C25	Few opportunities for interaction with colleagues may lead to feelings of isolation among workers	2.3

A lack of hints and positive replies from superiors can influence work satisfaction negatively. Table 4.4 indicates that returning women ranked the above problem (C24) first. The moderate ranking of the problem confirms literature assertion, as women educators no longer experience low self-confidence (cf. Par. 3.3.1.5). They are highly motivated and do not have a low self-esteem and therefore, it may be suggested that a lack of hints and positive replies from superiors can no longer influence their work satisfaction negatively.

A somewhat disturbing observation relates to the low ranking of in-service training concerning re-entry women. It appears that outdated knowledge and skills (C20) and the need for retraining programmes (C21) were ranked as moderate problems. These, however, contrast with literature findings (cf. Par. 2.2.2.4) which depict that a system of support and professional retraining for re-entry women is apparent and extremely beneficial. On the other hand, it must be indicated that in the case of the length of career break, there is a higher number (45.4%) of

respondents in the less than a year category. Further, it may be suggested that the shorter the career break, the smaller the likelihood that knowledge will become outdated and skills will deteriorate (3.3.2.1). Shorter career breaks may, therefore, be seen as a reason for the lower ranking of C20 and C21 than initially expected.

4.8.2.3 Problems on management level

The aim of Section D (questions 26-32) was to determine the problems on management level experienced by re-entry women educators. Table 4.5 shows a rank order of prioritisation of the problems on management level.

Table 4.5: Data on problems on management level

RANK ORDER	ITEM	QUESTION	MEAN SCORE
1	D26	Many employers still entertain negative and stereotyped beliefs about women, for example that women are less committed to their work or that women's careers are secondary to men's careers	2.4
1	D27	Forms of discrimination most often experienced by women are lower work rewards and differential treatment concerning promotion	2.4
1	D31	Career breaks due to child-bearing and a lack of adequate maternity leave adversely affect the career development of women with regard to post levels	2.4
1	D32	The absence of legislation and work policies that consider the particular needs of women returning to the work force are a problem.	2.4
5	D30	There is a lack of flexible, more innovative organisational policies dealing with maternity, such as an increase in the maximum period of maternity leave of four months and provision for greater flexibility in the taking of maternity leave	2.3
6	D29	Legislation and work policies fail to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through equal remuneration and promotion opportunities for women	2.1
7	D28	The age of the women returning to the work force after a period of absence seems to play a significant role in discrimination by employers	1.8

Question D28: The age of the women returning to the work force after a period of absence seems to play a significant role in discrimination by employers (1.8)

Table 4.5 indicates that most of the items (D26, D27, D31, D32, D30, D29) are ranked as moderate problems by the respondents. However, the age of the women returning to the work force after a period of absence is ranked as a no problem by the respondents.

It is interesting that the age of re-entry women seems to be no problem for the respondents. It appears that the above problem (D28) was ranked the lowest. This is much against the literature finding where discrimination with regard to age is seen as a significant problem. It can be reported that literature suggests that women who re-enter during their forties or fifties, regardless of qualifications, face

age discrimination (cf. Par. 3.3.3.1). The low ranking of age as a problem may be due to the fact that the majority of respondents (72%) re-entered the education profession within the combined age groups of 22-39 years (Table 4.2). Consequently, the women educators in this age group (22-39 years) face less age discrimination as they re-entered before their forties or fifties.

4.8.2.4 Problems within the career

The aim of Section E (questions 33-37) was to determine the problems within the career experienced by re-entry women educators. Table 4.6 illustrates a rank order of prioritisation of the problems within the career.

Table 4.6: Data on problems within the career

RANK ORDER	ITEM	QUESTION	MEAN SCORE
1	E35	Women who achieve promotion to managerial positions in a country such as South Africa are still a minority, especially in the area of educational management	3.0
2	E34	Withdrawal and re-entry to the work force can have a negative effect on remuneration, as returning women do not build up seniority or receive on-the-job-training, which in itself, often leads to higher remuneration	2.7
3	E37	A career break has a detrimental affect on promotion prospects for women returning to the work force after a period of absence and in particular for women with children.	2.6
4	E36	A reason for the lack of promotion opportunities may be that few women apply for promotion posts	2.3
5	E33	Gender discrimination occurs in remuneration despite legislation and work policies	2.1

Question E35: Women who achieve promotion to managerial positions in a country such as South Africa are still a minority, especially in the area of educational management (3.0)

Table 4.6 indicates that re-entry women experience problems regarding promotion as the item related to promotion (E35) was ranked first. This is in line with literature findings. The fact that women who achieve promotion to educational managerial positions in South Africa are still in the minority may be due to lack of promotion opportunities for women. Another reason for the low percentage of women in managerial positions may be that few women apply for promotion posts as they are aware of discrimination in the work situation (cf. Par. 3.3.4.2).

Re-entry and the negative effect it has on remuneration (E34) was ranked second and as a moderate problem. However, it is worth noting that gender discrimination seems to play a small role with regard to remuneration (E32). Gender discrimination and its negative influence on remuneration was ranked as a moderate problem (D27 and E33) in Table 4.5 and Table 4.6. It appears that the negative effect that a career break has on remuneration is attributed to aspects such as a lack of seniority and on-the-job-training, which in itself, often leads to higher remuneration (cf. E34).

4.8.2.5 Problems within the community

The aim of Section F (questions 38–44) was to determine the problems within the community experienced by re-entry women educators. Table 4.7 indicates a rank order of prioritisation of the problems within the community by women returning to the education profession.

Table 4.7: Data on problems within the community

RANK ORDER	ITEM	QUESTION	MEAN SCORE
1	F42	Many women find it difficult to arrange care for sick children	3.0
2	F43	Career women are subjected to traditional patriarchal stereotyped views of gender roles held by the society, for example, that family and home are women's primary responsibility	2.7
3	F40	The high cost of childcare is a serious obstacle	2.6
3	F41	The provision of state provided childcare is limited	2.6
5	F38	A shortage of workplace nurseries exists	2.5
6	F39	The provision of childcare facilities, such as after-school and holiday playschemes is limited	2.4
7	F44	Career women often lack support in the form of emotional support from family members	2.3

Question F42: Many women find it difficult to arrange care for sick children (3.0)

Table 4.7 indicates that many women find it difficult to arrange care for sick children (F42). This problem was ranked first. This is in line with literature assertions. Difficulty to arrange care for sick children may be due to the fact the needs associated with schooling is satisfied but no childcare provision is available outside the school environment (cf. Par. 3.3.5.1). Consequently, this may impede re-entry because before a woman with children can re-enter employment, she must make adequate provision for the care and supervision of her children.

Subjection to traditional patriarchal stereotyped views of gender roles by society is ranked second. This confirms literature finding that if the society's values (whether religious, economic, cultural, political or social) differ from those of women, these society factors will have a demotivating effect on women. Society's view is that family and home are women's primary responsibility and this causes conflicting roles and guilt for working women (cf. Par. 3.3.5.2).

4.8.2.6 Problems with the highest priority ranking

The aim of the ensuing section is to determine the problems with the highest priority ranking. Table 4.8 indicates problems with the highest priority ranking.

Table 4.8: Data on the problems with the highest priority ranking

RANK ORDER	ITEM	QUESTION	MEAN SCORE
1	B6	Homemaking and the presence of children may cause women to defer the serious pursuit of a career while their children are young	3.2
1	B13	Women often shoulder anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children	3.2
3	B7	Women experience stress as a result of the demands of family life and career	3.0
3	E35	Women who achieve promotion to managerial positions in a country such as South Africa are still a minority, especially in the area of educational management	3.0
3	F42	Many women find it difficult to arrange care for sick children	3.0

Re-entry into the education profession is a dynamic process in which re-entry women experience various problems. It is important to identify the problems with the highest priority ranking as knowledge of these major problems may contribute towards the alleviation of problems facing women re-entering the education profession in South Africa. In addition, knowledge of problems experienced by re-entry women could prove to be of benefit to those principals interested in the increased productivity and efficiency of teachers. Table 4.8 shows the problems with the highest priority ranking. All these problems have a mean score of 3.0 (75%) and higher and are, therefore, ranked as problems of high priority. It appears that the majority of problems (B6, B13 and B7) is related to the category of problems within women. The category of problems within the career is indicated as a problem (E35). Therefore, gender inequities with regard to educational management positions may be marked as a problem facing re-entry women educators. The inadequate provision of childcare facilities and in particular the difficulty that women have to arrange care for sick children (F42) seem to be problems which can impede women educators. The above problem is categorised as a problem within the society.

Viewed against this background, it may be concluded that the most important problems for re-entry women educators are:

- Problems within themselves (3.0 – 3.2);
- problems within their career (3.0);
- problems within the society (3.0).

4.8.2.7 Problems with the lowest priority ranking

The aim of the ensuing section is to determine the problems with the lowest priority ranking. Table 4.9 indicates problems with the lowest priority ranking.

Table 4.9: Data on the problems with the lowest priority ranking

RANK ORDER	ITEM	QUESTION	MEAN SCORE
1	D28	The age of women returning to the work force after a period of absence seems to play a significant role in discrimination by employers	1.8
2	B2	Women may have other roles such as the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby	1.9

With ever-increasing numbers of women re-entering the education profession, the need for research regarding re-entering and problems experienced by these women is obvious (cf. Par. 1.1.). It is important to identify the problems with the lowest priority ranking as knowledge of even these minor problems may contribute towards the improvement of problems facing women re-entering the education field. Table 4.9 shows the problems with the lowest priority ranking. All these problems have a mean score of less than 2.0 (50%) and are therefore ranked as problems of low priority. A problem of low priority for women educators appears to be the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby (B2). Furthermore, the age of re-entry women seems to be no problem for re-entry women educators (D28).

Viewed against this background, it may be concluded that the problems of low priority for re-entry women educators are:

- Problems within themselves (1.9);
- problems on management level (1.8).

4.8.2.8 Synthesis

It appears that the most important problems for re-entry women educators are on three different levels, i.e. problems within themselves (3.0 – 3.2), problems within their career (3.0) and problems within the society (3.0). The problems of low priority for re-entry women educators seems to be problems within themselves (1.9) and problems on management level (1.8).

4.8.3 The Kruskal-Wallis Test

There may be substantial differences in the nature of the problems experienced by returning women educators in the different life stages (cf. Par. 3.1).

A non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test was performed to determine whether the median of the different age groups differed statistically significantly on the same variable. The p-value smaller than 0.05 indicates a statistically significant difference and therefore, a difference between the groups.

The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics (Miller, 1980:165-168) were performed to examine all pairwise group comparisons to determine which pairs of groups are statistically significantly different. Where there was a statistically significant difference (p) between pairs of groups the effect size (d) was calculated to determine the practical significance of these differences. In this study, the interpretation of effect size was done on the basis of the following guidelines (Steyn, 1999:3, 5):

- $d = 0.2$: small effect, which means that if this effect was obtained in new research, the study should be repeated on order to ensure that there is an

effect. In other state of affairs, such a result will be considered as of no significance;

- $d = 0.5$: medium effect, which is perceptible and may be of practical significance. A better planned study may present more significant results;
- $d = 0.8$: large effect and the results are of practical importance.

4.8.3.1 Problems within women

In the following section, it will be determined whether the median of the different age groups differs statistically and practically significant on the same variable with regard to problems within women. To determine where the difference lies (i.e. which pair of groups are significantly different) Kruskal rank statistics and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) were calculated (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10 Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems within women

Item	Variable and source	Age Group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
B1	Women have to cope with conflict between the traditional role of wife and mother and the career role	1: 22-29	28	3.5	0.8	4.0	0.0001	1 – 2	1.08
		2: 30-39	26	2.5	0.9	3.0		1 – 3	2.18
		3: 40-49	18	1.5	0.9	1.0		2 – 3	1.10
		4: 50 +	3	2.3	1.2	3.0			
B2	Women may have other roles such as the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby	1: 22-29	28	2.0	1.0	2.0	0.0933		
		2: 30-39	26	2.0	0.9	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	1.4	0.6	1.0			
		4: 50 +	3	2.7	1.5	3.0			
B3	Society views women's traditional and primary allegiance to be the family role	1: 22-29	28	2.9	1.0	3.0	0.0012	1 – 3	1.08
		2: 30-39	24	2.4	1.0	3.0			
		3: 40-49	18	1.9	0.7	2.0			
		4: 50 +	3	1.3	0.6	1.0			
B4	Women spend more time on household tasks than their spouses	1: 22-29	28	2.8	1.0	3.0	0.1082		
		2: 30-39	26	2.7	1.1	3.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.1	0.9	2.0			
		4: 50 +	3	2.3	1.5	2.0			
B5	Women assume greater responsibility for the care and well-being of children than their spouses	1: 22-29	28	2.5	0.9	3.0	0.0519		
		2: 30-39	26	2.7	1.0	3.0			
		3: 40-49	18	1.8	1.1	1.5			
		4: 50 +	3	2.3	1.2	3.0			
B6	Homemaking and the presence of children may cause women to defer the serious pursuit of a career while their children are young	1: 22-29	28	3.6	0.6	4.0	0.0001	4 – 3	1.89
		2: 30-39	25	3.1	0.8	3.0		1 – 2	0.87
		3: 40-49	18	2.8	0.6	3.0		1 – 3	1.34
		4: 50 +	3	4.0	0.0	4.0			

Table 4.10 (continued)

Item	Variable and source	Age Group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
B7	Women experience stress as a result of the demands of family life and career	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	3.6 3.2 1.8 4.0	0.6 0.8 0.7 0.0	4.0 3.0 2.0 4.0	0.0001	4 - 3 1 - 3 2 - 3	3.16 2.53 1.98
B8	Women experience stress as a result of change in the work situation	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	3.0 2.7 2.6 3.7	0.7 0.8 0.6 0.6	3.0 2.0 3.0 4.0	0.0640		
B9	Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to be appreciated is not being satisfied	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	2.7 2.9 2.2 3.6	0.6 0.7 0.8 0.6	3.0 3.0 2.0 4.0	0.0017	4 - 3 2 - 3	2.11 1.02
B10	Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to achieve is not being satisfied	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	3.0 3.1 2.7 3.3	0.6 0.7 0.8 0.6	3.0 3.0 3.0 3.0	0.1426		
B11	Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to be an authority figure is not being satisfied	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	2.6 2.7 2.6 2.7	0.8 1.0 1.0 0.6	3.0 3.0 3.0 3.0	0.9766		
B12	Work-family role conflict might disproportionately affect mothers' work satisfaction	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 25 18 3	3.5 2.8 1.7 3.0	0.7 0.6 0.7 1.0	4.0 3.0 2.0 3.0	0.0001	1 - 2 1 - 3 2 - 3	0.98 2.63 1.65

Table 4.10 (continued)

Item	Variable and source	Age Group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
B13	Women often shoulder anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children	1: 22-29	28	3.9	0.3	4.0	0.0001	4 – 3	2.90
		2: 30-39	26	3.3	0.6	3.0		1 – 2	0.98
		3: 40-49	18	2.1	0.9	2.0		1 – 3	2.79
		4: 50 +	3	4.0	0.0	4.0		2 – 3	1.81
B14	Women often experience low self-confidence as a barrier in their career development	1: 22-29	28	2.4	0.7	2.0	0.3164		
		2: 30-39	26	2.2	0.7	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.1	1.0	2.0			
		4: 50 +	3	3.0	1.0	3.0			
B15	Low self-confidence is reinforced by society and organisations which provide no opportunities for women to develop self-confidence	1: 22-29	28	2.4	0.6	2.0	0.0510		
		2: 30-39	24	2.2	0.7	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.1	1.0	2.0			
		4: 50 +	3	3.3	0.6	3.0			
B16	Women undergo a loss of self-confidence during a career break as they might question their own competence, compare themselves unfavourably with their peers and be discouraged by how far behind they are	1: 22-29	28	2.8	0.8	3.0	0.0308	4 – 2	3.33
		2: 30-39	26	2.4	1.1	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.6	1.0	3.0			
		4: 50 +	3	4.0	0.0	4.0			
B17	Women returning to the work force after a career break no longer identify with the professional role for which their education and training prepared them	1: 22-29	28	2.5	0.9	3.0	0.2069		
		2: 30-39	26	2.1	1.1	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.6	1.1	3.0			
		4: 50 +	3	3.0	1.0	3.0			

Homework and the family affect every aspect of women's lives: their socialization and education, their sexuality, the way in which they are expected to behave as women, wives, mothers and in their careers (cf. Par. 3.3.1.1). The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed statistically significant differences regarding problems associated with homework, family and career (B1, B3, B6, B7, B12 & B13).

An interesting observation relates to the overlap in the content of problems associated with homework, family and career (B1, B3, B6, B7, B12 & B13). The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics revealed that women educators in the age group 22-29 years repeatedly differed statistically significantly from the other age groups on the same variable. The effect sizes indicate that these differences are also of practical significance (Cohen, 1977:20).

Results revealed that women educators in the age categories 22-29 and 30-39 years have to cope with significantly more role conflict (B1) and stress (B7) than women educators from the 40-49 years age category. This is in line with literature findings as early adulthood (17-40 years) is closely associated with the primary responsibilities of raising children and managing households (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3). Women educators in the age category 22-29 years have to cope with significantly more role conflict than women educators in the age category 30-39 years. Reasons for this are not available in literature assertions but these results may be due to the fact that the age category, 22-29 years, is more likely considered to place significantly more emphasis on the non-career aspects of their lives.

The above findings are corroborated by the findings regarding role conflict that might disproportionately affect mothers' work satisfaction (B12). The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size *d* (Cohen, 1977:20) reveal that women educators in the age category 22-29 years have to cope with statistical and practical significantly more role conflict that might disproportionately affect their work satisfaction than women educators from the 30-39 and 40-49 age categories. Reasons for the above finding are not available in literature. A reason for this may be that the age category, 22-29 years, is more likely to be associated with the double pressures of home and work (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3) and

thus experience low levels of work satisfaction as a result of conflicting roles. Women educators in the age category 30-39 years have to cope with significantly more role conflict that might disproportionately affect their work satisfaction than women educators in the age category 40-49 years. This is in line with literature assertions as the age category 40-49 years is considered to give priority to occupational needs (cf. Par. 2.3.5.2).

A fascinating but somewhat disturbing observation relates to the experience of stress as a result of the demands of family life and career. Women educators in the age category 50 years and older experience significantly more stress as a result of the demands of family life and career than women in the 40-49 years age category. The validity regarding this response is somewhat questionable as women of 50 years and older are not likely considered to have the multiple responsibilities associated with homework and family which will cause stress. A reason for the above occurrence may be that only 3 respondents (3.85%) in this age category responded in the study, causing high median scores.

Women in the 22-29 year age category have to cope significantly more with the problem of stereotype views (B3) than women in the 40-49 year age category. This is in line with literature findings as society views women's primary allegiance to be the family and not a career (cf. Par. 3.3.5.2). Thus, it may be more likely for women educators in the age group 22-29 years to have to cope with stereotyped views as this age category is more likely to have tasks associated with marriage and children.

Consequently, it may be suggested that women educators in the 22-29 years age category will try to limit their work participation while their children are growing up, but once the children are older, they may resume their careers (cf. Par. 3.3.3.1). The above suggestion is confirmed by the statistical and practical significant results (B6). Women educators in the age category 22-29 years limit their career aspirations and postpone promotion to a significantly greater extent than women in the 30-39 and 40-49 years age categories. A reason for this may be that women in the 22-29 years age category are more likely to have younger children than women in the other two age categories, and will therefore limit their

career aspirations and postpone attempts to gain promotion while their children are young. Women educators in the age category 50 years and older limit their career aspirations and postpone promotion to a significantly greater extent than women in the 40-49 years age category. The validity regarding this response is somewhat questionable as women of 50 years and older are not likely to have young children which will force them to limit their career aspirations and postpone attempts to gain promotion while their children are young. A reason for this occurrence may be that only 3 respondents (3.85%) in this age category responded in the study, causing high median scores.

Re-entry women experience anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children (cf. Par. 3.3.1.4). Women educators in the age categories 30-39 and 40-49 years experience statistically and practically significantly less anxiety and guilt than women in the 22-29 years age category (B13). As already mentioned, women in the 22-29 years age category are more likely to have younger children than women in the other two age categories. Furthermore, it is reported in literature findings that re-entry women feel guilty about leaving children, particularly young ones, in daycare centers or in another person's home when they return to work.

In addition, women educators in the age category 30-39 years experience significantly more anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children than women educators in the 40-49 years age category. This confirms literature assertions that the problems that women experience during midlife (40-60 years) are more likely to be centered on choices about careers than issues such as marriage or children (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3).

Women educators in the age category 50 years and older experience significantly more anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children than women in the 40-49 years age category. The validity regarding this response is somewhat questionable as women of 50 years and older are not likely to have young children which will cause feelings of guilt and anxiety. A reason for this occurrence may be that only 3 respondents (3.85%) in this age category responded in the study, causing high median scores.

The need to be appreciated influences the work satisfaction of women and in particular women educators (cf. Par. 3.3.1.3). The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed statistically significant differences regarding the work satisfaction of women educators (B9). The effect size indicates that this difference is also of practical significance (Cohen, 1977:20). These results reveal that women educators in the age category 30-39 years experience statistically and practically significantly less work satisfaction if their need to be appreciated is not satisfied than women educators in the 40-49 years age category. Reasons for this are not available in literature assertions.

Women educators in the age category 50 years and older experience significantly less work satisfaction if their need to be appreciated is not satisfied than women educators in the 40-49 years age category. As already mentioned, reasons regarding low levels of work satisfaction and the age category of re-entry women are not available in literature assertions.

However, a reason for their experiencing less work satisfaction may be associated with their stage of psychosocial development. Erikson proposes that people progress through eight stages of psychosocial development. Women of both the above age categories are part of the developmental stage: generativity versus stagnation. Re-entry women of the age 30-39 years might be seen as exhibiting behaviour characteristic of the above stage of development. Women returning to the education profession might experience the generativity crisis in the sense that they want to do well and once they develop more confidence in their work they may begin to wonder if their presence has made a difference. Thus, they want to be appreciated in order to experience work satisfaction.

Re-entry women undergo a loss of self-confidence during a career break (cf. Par. 3.3.1.5). The Kruskal-Wallis test indicated a statistically significant difference regarding the loss of self-confidence (B16) as re-entry women might question their competence and compare themselves unfavourably with their peers. The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics revealed that women educators in the age category 30-39 years experience a significantly greater loss of self-confidence than women in the 50 years and older age category. The effect size indicates that this

difference is also of practical significance (Cohen, 1977:20). Reasons for this is not available in literature assertions. However, this may be due to the fact that after being heavily preoccupied with the role of wife/mother during a career break, re-entry women in the age category 30-39 years no longer identify with the professional world. Consequently, this may cause them to question their competence and compare themselves unfavourably with their peers who have been working while they have been homebound.

Synthesis

The Kruskal-Wallis test and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) indicated that women educators in the age group 22-29 years differed statistically and practically significant from the other age groups on almost all the variables (B1, B3, B6, B7, B12, B13). Literature findings associate early adulthood with marriage and childbearing (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3). Therefore, the considerable overlap in the content of the Kruskal-Wallis test and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) may be due to the reason that almost all the items in Table 4.10 refer to the multiple responsibilities of re-entry women regarding marriage, family and a career.

4.8.3.2 Problems within the work situation

In the following section, it will be determined whether the median of the different age groups differs statistically and is practically significant on the same variable with regard to problems within the work situation. To determine where the difference lies (i.e. which pair of groups is significantly different) Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) were calculated (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11 Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems within the work situation

Item	Variable and source	Age group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
C18	In-service training courses are sometimes attended by women only to grow in a certain areas of their careers and not because they are interested in the courses	1: 22-29	28	2.5	0.8	3.0	0.0543		
		2: 30-39	26	2.5	0.9	3.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.2	0.8	2.0			
		4: 50 +	3	3.7	0.6	4.0			
C19	Management teams in organisations are responsible for creating opportunities for in-service training and this is not always effectively done	1: 22-29	28	2.5	0.8	2.0	0.7324		
		2: 30-39	26	2.5	0.8	3.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.5	0.7	3.0			
		4: 50 +	3	3.0	1.0	3.0			
C20	Improved knowledge and technology cause returning women's qualifications and past experience to be outdated and inadequate for functioning in today's work situation	1: 22-29	28	2.8	0.5	3.0	0.0008	4 - 3 4 - 2	1.98 2.31
		2: 30-39	25	2.1	0.9	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.4	1.0	3.0			
		4: 50 +	3	4.0	0.0	4.0			
C21	Many women have the need for a system of support and professional retraining programmes after a career break	1: 22-29	28	2.7	0.9	3.0	0.0559		
		2: 30-39	26	2.1	0.9	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.6	0.9	3.0			
		4: 50 +	3	3.0	1.0	3.0			
C22	Many women have to provide retraining for themselves and often at their own expense	1: 22-29	28	2.6	0.9	2.0	0.1910		
		2: 30-39	26	2.3	1.0	2.0			
		3: 40-49	17	2.0	0.8	2.0			
		4: 50 +	3	2.0	1.0	2.0			
C23	Routine work leads to frustration and to dissatisfaction in the work situation	1: 22-29	28	2.8	0.9	3.0	0.9159		
		2: 30-39	26	2.7	1.0	3.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.7	0.8	3.0			
		4: 50 +	3	3.0	1.0	3.0			

Table 4.11 (continued)

Item	Variable and source	Age Group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
C24	A lack of hints and positive replies from superiors can influence work satisfaction negatively	1: 22-29	28	2.9	0.8	3.0	0.9777		
		2: 30-39	26	2.8	1.0	3.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.8	1.0	3.0			
		4: 50 +	3	2.7	1.5	3.0			
C25	Few opportunities for interaction with colleagues may lead to feelings of isolation among workers	1: 22-29	28	2.5	0.6	2.0	0.3652		
		2: 30-39	26	2.3	1.0	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.0	1.0	2.0			
		4: 50 +	3	2.3	1.2	3.0			

The Kruskal-Wallis test indicated a statistically significant difference regarding the influence of improved knowledge and technology on returning women educators (C20). The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics revealed that women educators in the age category 50 years and older experience to a statistically significantly greater extent their qualifications and past experience to be outdated than women educators from the 30-39 and 40-49 years age category. The effect size indicates that this difference is also of large practical significance (Cohen, 1977:20). Reasons for this is not available in literature assertions. However, it may be suggested that leaving the education profession removed these women from a dynamic work situation with improved technology and practices. Thus, women who are attempting to re-enter professional practice may find that the knowledge and technology explosion has left their qualifications and past experience outdated and inadequate for functioning in today's work situation (cf. Par. 3.3.2.1.1).

Synthesis

The Kruskal-Wallis test and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) indicated that women educators in the age group 50 years and older differed statistically significantly from the other age groups on the same variable (C20). No collection of literature seems to be available for the above results. However, leaving the education profession removed these women from an active work situation with improved technology and practices. They are faced with problems of not knowing what their knowledge gap is and of lacking a system of support to structure their relearning efforts.

4.8.3.3 Problems on management level

In the following section, it will be determined whether the median of the different age groups differs statistically and is practically significant on the same variable with regard to problems on management level. To determine where the difference lies (i.e. which pair of groups is significantly different) Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) were calculated (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12: Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems on management level

Item	Variable and source	Age Group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard Deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
D26	Many employers still entertain negative and stereotyped beliefs about women, for example that women are less committed to their work or that women's careers are secondary to men's careers	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	2.5 2.4 2.4 1.3	0.8 1.0 1.1 0.6	3.0 2.5 2.5 1.0	0.2809		
D27	Forms of discrimination most often experienced by women are lower work rewards and differential treatment concerning promotion	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	2.5 2.4 2.1 2.3	0.7 1.1 0.8 0.6	2.5 2.0 2.0 2.0	0.5458		
D28	The age of the women returning to the work force after a period of absence seems to play a significant role in discrimination by employers	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	1.5 2.0 2.0 2.0	0.8 1.1 0.8 1.7	1.0 2.0 2.0 1.0	0.1524		
D29	Legislation and work policies fail to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through equal remuneration and promotion opportunities for women	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	2.3 2.0 2.1 2.3	0.8 0.8 0.8 0.6	2.0 2.0 2.0 2.0	0.3895		
D30	There is a lack of flexible, more innovative organisational policies dealing with maternity, such as an increase in the maximum period of maternity leave of four months and provision for greater flexibility in the taking of maternity leave	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	2.9 2.4 1.7 1.3	0.8 0.9 0.8 0.6	3.0 2.0 1.0 1.0	0.0001	1-3 1-4	1.41 1.80

Table 4.12 (continued)

Item	Variable and source	Age Group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
D31	Career breaks due to child-bearing and a lack of adequate maternity leave adversely affect the career development of women with regard to post levels	1: 22-29	28	3.1	0.7	3.0	0.0001	1 – 2 1 – 3	1.14 1.80
		2: 30-39	26	2.2	1.0	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	1.7	0.8	1.5			
		4: 50 +	3	2.3	0.6	2.0			
D32	The absence of legislation and work policies that consider the particular needs of women returning to the work force are a problem.	1: 22-29	28	2.7	0.7	2.5	0.0671		
		2: 30-39	25	2.0	1.0	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.4	0.8	2.0			
		4: 50 +	2	3.0	1.4	3.0			

The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed statistically significant differences regarding problems associated with maternity (D30 & D31).

The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics revealed that women educators in the age category 22-29 years experience to a significantly greater extent the lack of organisational policies dealing with maternity (D30) as a problem than women educators from the 40-49 and 50 years and older age categories. The effect sizes indicate that these differences are also of practical significance (Cohen, 1977:20). This confirms literature assertions as the age category, 22-29 years, is part of a life stage which is closely associated with the prime period of family formation (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3). The problems that women experience during midlife (40-60 years) are more likely to be centered on choices about careers than on issues such as marriage or children (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3).

Viewed against the above background, it may be suggested that re-entry women in the age category 22-29 years experience the negative influence of maternity and career breaks on their career development (D30) as a statistically and practically significant larger problem than women in the other age categories. The above suggestion is confirmed by the Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics test and Cohen's effect size *d* (Cohen, 1977:20). These results indicate that women educators in the 22-29 years age category experience the negative influence of career breaks due to maternity issues on their career development (D30), as a statistically and practically significantly larger problem than women in the 30-39 and 40-49 age categories.

Synthesis

The Kruskal-Wallis test and Cohen's effect size *d* (Cohen, 1977:20) indicated that women educators in the age group 22-29 years differed significantly from the other age groups on the variables, D30 and D31. Literature findings associate early adulthood with marriage and childbearing (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3). Therefore, the considerable overlap in the content of the Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size *d* (Cohen, 1977:20) may be due to the reason that almost all the items in Table 4.12 refer to aspects of maternity.

4.8.3.4 Problems within the career

In the following section, it will be determined whether the median of the different age groups differs statistically and is practically significant on the same variable with regard to problems within the career. To determine where the difference lies (i.e. which pair of groups is significantly different) Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) were calculated (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13: Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems within the career

Item	Variable and source	Age group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard Deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
E33	Gender discrimination occurs in remuneration despite legislation and work policies	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	2.3 2.0 1.9 1.3	0.8 1.0 0.9 0.6	2.0 2.0 2.0 1.0	0.3296		
E34	Withdrawal and re-entry to the work force can have a negative effect on remuneration, as returning women do not build up seniority or receive on-the-job-training, which in itself, often leads to higher remuneration	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	3.0 2.1 2.7 3.3	0.7 1.0 0.8 1.2	3.0 2.0 3.0 4.0	0.0019	1 - 2	1.03
E35	Women who achieve promotion to managerial positions in a country such as South Africa are still a minority, especially in the area of educational management	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	3.3 2.8 2.8 2.0	0.5 1.0 1.0 0.0	3.0 3.0 3.0 2.0	0.0245		
E36	A reason for the lack of promotion opportunities may be that few women apply for promotion posts	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	27 26 18 3	2.3 2.3 2.3 2.3	0.7 1.0 0.7 1.2	2.0 2.5 2.0 3.0	0.9834		
E37	A career break has a detrimental effect on promotion prospects for women returning to the work force after a period of absence, in particular for women with children.	1: 22-29 2: 30-39 3: 40-49 4: 50 +	28 26 18 3	3.0 2.3 2.4 3.7	0.6 1.0 1.0 0.6	3.0 2.0 2.0 4.0	0.0053	1 - 2	0.80

The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed statistically significant differences regarding problems associated with remuneration and promotion (E34 & E37).

The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics revealed that women educators in the age category 22-29 years experience to a significantly greater extent problems associated with items such as remuneration and promotion than women from the 30-39 years age category. The effect sizes indicate that these differences are also of practical significance (Cohen, 1977:20). No collections of research regarding the experience of substantial differences in remuneration by these two age groups are available. However, a reason for the above results regarding promotion may be attributed to discrimination by employers against working mothers with family responsibilities (cf. Par. 3.3.4.2). As mentioned, the age category 22-29 years is more likely to be associated with multiple responsibilities at home, in society and at work. Employers may view gaps in history as a signal that women who leave may do so again. Some employers would, therefore, hire them for less important, lower paying works to limit the impact of a future decision to leave (cf. Par. 3.3.4.1).

Synthesis

The Kruskal-Wallis test and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) indicated that women educators in the age group 22-29 years differed statistically significantly from the other age groups on the variables, E34 and E37. No literature findings seem to be available regarding the experience of significant differences in remuneration by 22-29 and 30-39 year old women educators. However, a reason for the substantial differences in the experience of promotion prospects by these two age categories may be attributed to discrimination by employers against working mothers with their multiple family responsibilities.

4.8.3.5 Problems within the society

In the following section, it will be determined whether the median of the different age groups differs statistically and is practically significant on the same variable with regards to problems within the society. To determine where the difference lies (i.e. which pair of groups is significantly different) Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) were calculated (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14: Kruskal-Wallis test regarding problems within society

Item	Variable and source	Age group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard Deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
F38	A shortage of workplace nurseries exists	1: 22-29	28	3.0	0.7	3.0	0.0001	4 - 3	2.87
		2: 30-39	26	2.7	1.1	3.0		1 - 3	1.80
		3: 40-49	18	1.3	1.0	1.0		2 - 3	1.51
		4: 50 +	3	4.0	0.0	4.0			
F39	The provision of childcare facilities such as after-school and holiday playschemes is limited	1: 22-29	28	3.1	0.6	3.0	0.0001	1 - 3	2.57
		2: 30-39	26	2.6	0.8	3.0		2 - 3	1.93
		3: 40-49	18	2.6	0.7	1.0			
		4: 50 +	2	2.5	0.7	4.0			
F40	The high cost of childcare is a serious obstacle	1: 22-29	28	3.1	0.9	3.0	0.0001	4 - 3	2.56
		2: 30-39	25	2.8	1.0	3.0		1 - 3	1.96
		3: 40-49	18	1.3	0.8	1.0		2 - 3	1.62
		4: 50 +	3	3.7	0.6	2.5			
F41	The provision of state provided childcare is limited	1: 22-29	28	3.0	1.0	3.0	0.0001	4 - 3	2.98
		2: 30-39	26	2.9	0.9	3.0		1 - 3	1.88
		3: 40-49	18	1.4	0.8	1.0		2 - 3	1.70
		4: 50 +	3	4.0	0.0	4.0			
F42	Many women find it difficult to arrange care for sick children	1: 22-29	28	3.6	0.6	4.0	0.0001	4 - 3	2.66
		2: 30-39	26	2.9	1.0	3.0		1 - 3	2.21
		3: 40-49	18	1.7	1.1	1.0		2 - 3	1.43
		4: 50 +	3	4.0	0.0	4.0			

Table 4.14 (continued)

Item	Variable and source	Age Group	Number of respondents	Mean squares	Standard deviation	Median	p-value	Rank order Statistics	Effect size (d)
F43	Career women are subjected to traditional patriarchal stereotyped views of gender roles held by the society, for example, that family and home are women's primary responsibility	1: 22-29	28	2.9	0.7	3.0	0.3180		
		2: 30-39	26	2.7	0.9	3.0			
		3: 40-49	18	2.4	1.0	3.0			
		4: 50 +	3	2.7	1.5	3.0			
F44	Career women often lack support in the form of emotional support from family members	1: 22-29	28	2.6	0.8	3.0	0.0053	4 - 3 1 - 3	1.72 0.96
		2: 30-39	26	2.3	1.0	2.0			
		3: 40-49	18	1.8	0.7	2.0			
		4: 50 +	3	3.30	1.2	4.0			

The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a statistically significant difference regarding all the items (F38-F42) associated with the multiple responsibilities of family and a career. The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics revealed that women educators in the age category 40-49 years have to cope significantly less with the problems (F38-F42) of family and a career. The effect sizes indicate that these differences are also of practical significance (Cohen, 1977:20). This is in line with literature findings. The age categories of 22-29 years and 30-39 years are more likely associated with the responsibilities of family and a career than women in the 40-49 years age category (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3). The problems that women experience during midlife (40-60 years) are more likely to be centered on choices about careers than issues such as marriage or children (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3).

A disturbing observation relates to experiencing of problems (F38-F42) associated with the multiple responsibilities of family and a career. The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size *d* (Cohen, 1977:20) revealed that women educators in the age category 50 years and older experience statistically and practically significantly more problems associated with the demands of family life and career than women in the 40-49 years age category. The validity regarding this response is somewhat questionable as women of 50 years and older are not likely considered to have the multiple responsibilities associated with homework and family. A reason for the above occurrence may be that only 3 respondents (3.85%) in this age category responded in the study, causing high median scores.

The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a statistically significant difference regarding the lack of emotional support from family members (F44). The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size *d* revealed that women educators in the age category 40-49 years have to cope statistically and practically significantly less with the problem of the lack of emotional support than women educators from the 50 years and older age category. No collection of literature seems to be available for the above results. However, women in the age category 50 years and older, are in the final life stage of adulthood (cf. Par. 2.3.5.1). Therefore, they might have been confronted with the inevitable death of family members and consequently, lack a support network of family.

The Kruskal-Wallis test also revealed a statistically significant difference regarding the lack of emotional support from family members (F44). The Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) revealed that women educators in the age category 40-49 years have to cope statistically and practically significantly less with the problem of the lack of emotional support than women educators from the 22-29 age category. There is no literature available regarding the above results. However, a reason for this may be that women in 22-29 years age category have more responsibilities associated with a career and family (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3) than women from the age category 40-49 and, therefore, need more emotional support.

Synthesis

The Kruskal-Wallis test and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) indicated that women educators in the age group 22-29 years differed statistically and practically significantly from the other age groups on almost all the variables (F38-F42). Literature findings associate early adulthood with marriage and childbearing (cf. Par. 2.3.5.3). Therefore, the considerable overlap in the content of the Kruskal-Wallis rank statistics and Cohen's effect size d (Cohen, 1977:20) may be due to the reason that almost all the items in Table 4.14 refer to the multiple responsibilities of re-entry women regarding marriage, family and a career.

4.9 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the research design and the empirical data analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

The questionnaire was decided on as research instrument for its advantages and was distributed to certain returning women educators in the North West Province. The next chapter will present the summary, findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter a summary of the research regarding re-entry women is presented. Consequently, findings regarding the research aims espoused in chapter 1, the literature study on the re-entry of women into the education profession (chapter 2) and the problems experienced by women re-entering the education profession, will be focused on. Finally, recommendations based on the research findings will be presented.

5.2 SUMMARY

The first chapter outlined the rationale of this study. The study focused on the re-entry of women into the work force and particularly into the education profession. In this chapter the reader was guided to the contents of the research project. The study problem was stated, aims were defined and the research methodology was briefly outlined.

The second chapter focused on a definition of re-entry. This chapter also provided an overview regarding the career development of women and specifically the career development of women re-entering the work force or education profession. Moreover, information regarding women and the process of re-entry was presented.

In chapter 3, the generic problems experienced by women re-entering the work force and specifically the education profession, were investigated. The problems experienced by women (i.e. re-entry women) were categorised as follows: problems within persons, problems in the work situation, problems on management level, problems within the career and problems within the society.

Chapter 4 presented the research design and the data analysis and interpretation respectively. This chapter also detailed the research design and administration as well as the method of research.

The next section deals with findings in accordance with the stated research aims.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

5.3.1 Findings on research aim 1

Research aim 1 was to conduct a literature review to analyze and discuss the nature and scope of re-entry by women into the education profession. From a literature review the following findings were made:

- Earlier collections of research regarding the re-entry of women have provided descriptions of re-entry women but no specific definition of re-entry of women into the work force and specifically into the education profession has been formulated (cf. Par. 2.2.4.). Descriptions of re-entry women report that this group of women can be described as a population that is diverse and heterogeneous. Some re-entry women are married with children in the home, others are divorced and some are empty nesters.
- Withdrawal from and re-entry to the work force can be linked to career development (cf. Par. 2.3.). Leaving the work force, even for short periods of time, is likely to have negative effects on a woman's career, as well as on the career opportunities of women in general.
- Moreover, re-entry into the work force is regarded as a dynamic process, which occurs over a widely defined period and shows great individual variation (cf. Par. 2.4.). There is a growing awareness that re-entry women do not enter the work force on the same basis as men do. Women re-enter the work force during different stages of the life cycle. Considerable variation occurs in the timing of withdrawals from and return to the work force. An analysis of the re-entry process reveals that the decision to exit

the work market is usually initiated by decisions of marriage and family formation (cf. Par. 2.4.1.). Individual variety exists as regard the length, timing and nature of a career break (cf. Par. 2.4.2.). The literature suggests that women tend to take shorter career breaks than before. The decision to re-enter is complex and is attributed to various decisions (cf. Par. 2.4.3.).

5.3.2 Findings on research aim 2

Research aim 2 was to conduct a literature review to analyze and discuss the features and problems experienced by women re-entering the education profession. From a literature review the following findings were made:

- Role conflict, stress, work satisfaction, guilt and loss of self-confidence can be seen as problems within women (cf. Par. 3.3.1.).
- The absence of opportunities for in-service training (cf. Par. 3.3.2.1.) is a problem experienced by women (i.e. re-entry women) in the work situation. The problem of in-service training refers to the necessity that exists for re-entry women to catch up on skills, knowledge and experience and to the lack of retraining programmes in the work situation. The meaningfulness and interesting nature of the work (cf. Par. 3.3.2.2.) as well as the interpersonal relationships in a work situation (cf. Par. 3.3.2.3.) can cause problems.
- Conscious or sub-conscious discriminatory practices on the part of employers (cf. Par. 3.3.3.1.) and the lack of enforcement of legislation and policies are problems experienced on management level (cf. Par. 3.3.3.2.).
- Insufficient remuneration and the lack of prospects for promotion are problems experienced within the career. The interruption of work often decreases remuneration and retards the prospect of promotion (cf. Par. 3.3.4.).
- The values of a society may be viewed as problematic if women's (i.e. re-entry women) values differ from those of the society (cf. Par. 3.3.5.2.). The shortage of workplace nurseries and after-school and holiday play schemes are also a problem within the society (cf. Par. 3.3.5.1.).

5.3.3 Findings on research aim 3

Research aim 3 was to determine empirically to what extent women educators experience problems in re-entering the education profession. The following findings were made:

5.3.3.1 Problems of high priority ranking

It appeared that the most important problems for re-entry women educators are on three different levels:

Problems within themselves

- The negative influence of homemaking and the presence of children on career development of returning women are a problem of high priority (cf. B6; Table 4.3).
- Feelings of anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children (cf. B13; Table 4.3) are a problem of high priority for re-entry women.
- Experiencing considerable stress as a result of the demands of family life and career is a problem of high priority (cf. B7; Table 4.3).

Problems within their career

- Gender inequities with regard to educational management positions may be marked as a problem facing re-entry women educators (cf. E35; Table 4.6).

Problems within the society

- The inadequate provision of childcare facilities and in particular the difficulty that women have to arrange care for sick children (cf. F42; Table 4.7) seem to be problems which can impede women educators.

5.3.3.2 Problems of low priority ranking

Problems of low priority for re-entry women educators are on two different levels:

Problems within themselves

- A problem of low priority for women educators appears to be the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby (cf. B2; Table 4.3).

Problems on management level

- The age of re-entry women seems to be no problem for re-entry women educators (D28; Table 4.5).

5.3.3.3 A shift in the way women educators perceive problems regarding re-entry

In the literature study it has been found that re-entry is a dynamic process in which the re-entry women experience various problems. However, the findings of the empirical study indicate that there appear to be a shift in the way women educators perceive certain problems regarding re-entry. Table 4.15 indicates a shift in the way women educators perceive problems regarding re-entry.

Table 4.15: A shift in the way women educators perceive problems regarding re-entry

ITEM	Variable and source	Mean squares
C20	Improved knowledge and technology cause returning women's qualifications and past experience to be outdated and inadequate for functioning in today's work situation	2.5
C21	Many women have the need for a system of support and professional retraining programmes after a career break	2.5
B2	Women might have other roles such as the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby	1.9
D28	The age of the women returning to the work force after a period of absence seems to play a significant role in discrimination by employers	1.8

- *Outdated knowledge and skills (C20) and the need for retraining programmes (C21):* It appears that outdated knowledge and skills (C20) and the need for retraining programmes (C21) are not experienced as problems. This indicate a change in the perception of women regarding retraining programmes as literature findings depict that a system of support and professional retraining for re-entry women is apparent and extremely beneficial.
- *Women might have other roles such as the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in home or nearby (B2):* Women educators do not experience the role of provider of family health care for relatives as a problem. It seems as if husbands support their wives, physically and psychologically, to such an extent that most role conflict is alleviated. Furthermore, working women perceive their multiple roles as an acceptable and normal way of life for women of the 1990s.
- *The age of the women returning to the work force after a period of absence (D28):* It is interesting that age seems to be no problem for re-entry women. This is much against the literature finding where discrimination with regard to age is seen as a significant problem. It can be reported that literature suggests that women who re-enter during their forties or fifties, regardless of qualifications, face age discrimination.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Recommendation 1

Good childcare facilities are essential to allow re-entry women to combine family and workplace responsibilities. In South Africa, work place nurseries and after school day care for children are considered a shortcoming. The provision of childcare facilities such as after-school and holiday playschemes is an important necessity.

Motivation

Homemaking and the presence of children may cause women to defer the serious pursuit of a career while their children are young. This problem may be alleviated through adequate childcare facilities.

5.4.2 Recommendation 2

An increase in maternity benefits and the introduction of paternity and childcare leave should be seriously considered.

Motivation

Women educators ranked stress as a result of the demands of family life and career as a problem of high priority. An increase in maternity benefits and the introduction of paternity and childcare leave will assist women to combine work and family responsibility.

5.4.3 Recommendation 3

Promotion opportunities for women who aspire to educational management positions should be created. All women, especially re-entry women, should be treated fairly when applying for posts.

Motivation

Educational management in South Africa has traditionally been and still remains male dominated. Women educators ranked the low representation of women in managerial positions, especially in the area of educational management, as a problem of high priority.

5.5 CONCLUSION

Women educators returning to the education profession experience to a statistical and practical significant extent problems regarding their multiple responsibilities as homemaker and career women. Especially, re-entry women in the age category 22-29 years seem to have statistically and practically significantly more problems than re-entry women in other age categories. The age category, 22-29 years, is closely associated with the primary responsibilities of raising children and managing households. Consequently, having a career during this prime period of family formation may lead to problems such as the lack of adequate childcare facilities. In addition, women in the age category 22-29 years have feelings of anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children.

Re-entry women experience a problem regarding promotion opportunities. Re-entry women educators ranked the low representation of women in managerial positions, especially in the area of educational management, as a problem of high priority.

However, it appears that re-entry women seem to have fewer problems than initially expected.

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PERMISSION FOR THE SPREADING OF SURVEY INSTRUMENT

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 18 July 2000 requesting permission to conduct the above research. Permission is hereby granted to conduct the survey subject to the following conditions: -

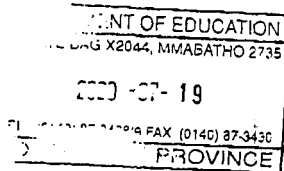
1. That you liaise directly with the district concerned and the directors involved.
2. That you provide the findings and the total research project to this department upon completion.

I wish you well in your endeavours.

Yours sincerely

Dr Anis Mahomed Karodia
 Dr Anis Mahomed Karodia
 Deputy Director General

Cc: MEC Tolo
 Mr D Bosman



Appendix B

PO Box 1838
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2059
21 July 2000

DEAR PRINCIPAL

HELP WITH SPREADING OF SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Hereby I request your help with the spreading of a survey instrument to specific women educators in your school. The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine the problems experienced by women returning to the education profession after a period of absence. The study with the theme: 'Problems experienced by women re-entering the education profession', is part of my M.Ed study in the Graduate School for Education at the Potchefstroom University.

Knowledge of problems experienced by re-entry women could prove to be of benefit to those principals interested in the increased productivity and efficiency of teachers.

I will appreciate it if you will give each of the re-entry women educators in your school the envelope with the questionnaire and if you could briefly explain to them what it is about.

Permission to conduct the research has been obtained from the North West Department of Education (enclosed letter).

Your help will be greatly appreciated. I will contact you with results that may interest you. Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours
M. Beyers

Appendix C

DEAR MADAM

The attached survey instrument concerned with re-entry women is part of my study carried out in the Graduate School of Education at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. The study is concerned specifically with the problems women experience when they return to the education profession after a period of absence.

The results of the study will help to develop a re-entry program to support women returning to the education profession.

I need your responses because your experience will contribute significantly toward solving some of the problems women experience when they return to the education profession after a period of absence.

I will appreciate it if you will complete the questionnaire prior to 22 August 2000 and return the envelope to your principal.

Your responses will be held in strict confidence. You will thus remain **anonymous**.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours
M. Beyers

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(1-3)

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY WOMEN RETURNING TO THE EDUCATION PROFESSION AFTER A PERIOD OF ABSENCE IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions by drawing a cross (X) in the appropriate block

A1. Age (in years)

22-29	30-39	40-49	50 and older	(4)
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A2. Age at exit

22-29	30-39	40-49	50 and older	(5)
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A3. Age at re-entry

22-29	30-39	40-49	50 and older	(6)
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A4. Length of career break

Less than a year	1-3 years	4-10 years	More than 10 years	(7)
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A5. Position before career
break

Post level 1	Post level 2	Post level 3	Post level 4	(8)
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A6. Position after career
break

Post level 1	Post level 2	Post level 3	Post level 4	(9)
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SECTION B: PROBLEMS WITHIN WOMEN

The following statements seek to determine problems within women returning to the education profession. Please indicate your experience of these problems by putting a cross in the appropriate column.

Key for columns: 1. No problem 2. Moderate problem 3. Problem 4. Extreme problem

1.	Women have to cope with conflict between the traditional role of wife and mother and the career role	1	2	3	4	(10)
2.	Women may have other roles such as the role of family caregiver for elderly, sick or disabled relatives who live either in their home or nearby	1	2	3	4	(11)
3.	Society views women's traditional and primary allegiance to be the family role	1	2	3	4	(12)
4.	Women spend more time on household tasks than their spouses	1	2	3	4	(13)
5.	Women assume greater responsibility for the care and well-being of children than their spouses	1	2	3	4	(14)
6.	Homemaking and the presence of children may cause women to defer the serious pursuit of a career while their children are young	1	2	3	4	(15)
7.	Women experience stress as a result of the demands of family life and career	1	2	3	4	(16)
8.	Women experience stress as a result of change in the work situation	1	2	3	4	(17)
9.	Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to be appreciated is not being satisfied	1	2	3	4	(18)
10.	Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to achieve is not being satisfied	1	2	3	4	(19)
11.	Women experience a lack of work satisfaction if their need to be an authority figure is not being satisfied	1	2	3	4	(20)
12.	Work-family role conflict might disproportionately affect mothers' work satisfaction	1	2	3	4	(21)
13.	Women often shoulder anxiety and guilt as a result of spending time away from their children	1	2	3	4	(22)
14.	Women often experience low self-confidence as a barrier in their career development	1	2	3	4	(23)
15.	Low self-confidence is reinforced by society and organisations which provide no opportunities for women to develop self-confidence	1	2	3	4	(24)
16.	Women undergo a loss of self-confidence during a career break as they might question their own competence, compare themselves unfavourably with their peers and be discouraged by how far behind they are	1	2	3	4	(25)
17.	Women returning to the work force after a career break no longer identify with the professional role for which their education and training prepared them	1	2	3	4	(26)

SECTION C: PROBLEMS WITHIN THE WORK SITUATION

The following statements seek to determine problems within the work situation which occur when women return to the education profession. Please indicate your experience of these problems by putting a cross in the appropriate column.

Key for columns: 1. No problem 2. Moderate problem 3. Problem 4. Extreme problem

18.	In-service training courses are sometimes attended by women only to grow in a certain areas of their careers and not because they are interested in the courses	1	2	3	4	(27)
19.	Management teams in organisations are responsible for creating opportunities for in-service training and this is not always effectively done	1	2	3	4	(28)
20.	Improved knowledge and technology cause returning women's qualifications and past experience to be outdated and inadequate for functioning in today's work situation	1	2	3	4	(29)
21.	Many women have the need for a system of support and professional retraining programmes after a career break	1	2	3	4	(30)
22.	Many women have to provide retraining for themselves and often at their own expense	1	2	3	4	(31)
23.	Routine work leads to frustration and to dissatisfaction in the work situation	1	2	3	4	(32)
24.	A lack of hints and positive replies from superiors can influence work satisfaction negatively	1	2	3	4	(33)
25.	Few opportunities for interaction with colleagues may lead to feelings of isolation among workers	1	2	3	4	(34)

SECTION D: PROBLEMS ON MANAGEMENT LEVEL

The following statements seek to determine problems on management level experienced by women returning to the education profession. Please indicate your experience of these problems by putting a cross in the appropriate column.

Key for columns: 1. No problem 2. Moderate problem 3. Problem 4. Extreme problem

26.	Many employers still entertain negative and stereotyped beliefs about women, for example that women are less committed to their work or that women's careers are secondary to men's careers	1	2	3	4	(35)
27.	Forms of discrimination most often experienced by women are lower work rewards and differential treatment concerning promotion	1	2	3	4	(36)
28.	The age of women returning to the work force after a period of absence seems to play a significant role in discrimination by employers	1	2	3	4	(37)
29.	Legislation and work policies fail to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through equal remuneration and promotion opportunities for women	1	2	3	4	(38)
30.	There is a lack of flexible, more innovative organisational policies dealing with maternity, such as an increase in the maximum period of maternity leave of four months and provision for greater flexibility in the taking of maternity leave	1	2	3	4	(39)
31.	Career breaks due to child-bearing and a lack of adequate maternity leave adversely affect the career development of women with regard to post levels	1	2	3	4	(40)
32.	The absence of legislation and work policies that consider the particular needs of women returning to the work force are a problem.	1	2	3	4	(41)

SECTION E: PROBLEMS WITHIN THE CAREER

The following statements seek to determine problems within the career experienced by women returning to the education profession. Please indicate your experience of these problems by putting a cross in the appropriate column.

Key for columns: 1. No problem 2. Moderate problem 3. Problem 4. Extreme problem

33.	Gender discrimination occurs in remuneration despite legislation and work policies	1	2	3	4	(42)
34.	Withdrawal and re-entry to the work force can have a negative effect on remuneration, as returning women do not build up seniority or receive on-the-job-training, which in itself, often leads to higher remuneration	1	2	3	4	(43)
35.	Women who achieve promotion to managerial positions in a country such as South Africa are still a minority, especially in the area of educational management	1	2	3	4	(44)
36.	A reason for the lack of promotion opportunities may be that few women apply for promotion posts	1	2	3	4	(45)
37.	A career break has a detrimental affect on promotion prospects for women returning to the work force after a period of absence and in particular for women with children.	1	2	3	4	(46)

SECTION F: PROBLEMS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

The following statements seek to determine problems within the community experienced by women returning to the education profession. Please indicate your experience of these problems by putting a cross in the appropriate column.

Key for columns: 1. No problem 2. Moderate problem 3. Problem 4. Extreme problem

38.	A shortage of workplace nurseries exists	1	2	3	4	(47)
39.	The provision of childcare facilities, such as after-school and holiday playschemes is limited	1	2	3	4	(48)
40.	The high cost of childcare is a serious obstacle	1	2	3	4	(49)
41.	The provision of state provided childcare is limited	1	2	3	4	(50)
42.	Many women find it difficult to arrange care for sick children	1	2	3	4	(51)
43.	Career women are subjected to traditional patriarchal stereotyped views of gender roles held by the society, for example, that family and home are women's primary responsibility	1	2	3	4	(52)
44.	Career women often lack support in the form of emotional support from family members	1	2	3	4	(53)