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## CHAPTER 6

## CAREER OUTLOOK FOR WOMEN IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

At a time when he was struggling with the idea of whether to become a Catholic, John Henry Newman wrote in a letter to a friend, 'There is nothing on this earth so ugly as the Catholic Church, and nothing so beautiful.' . . . It is not easy to describe the beauty of the Catholic Church to those who do not see it, but those who love that Church, experience it frequently. I have seen many ugly things in the Church, but I constantly see the beauty as well, and it speaks to me of God. (Bishop Geoffrey Robinson, 1996)

This chapter presents the voices of women in Catholic education, focussing on their efforts to make meaning of their careers in an organisation steeped in the religious tradition of the Catholic Church. Their words represent the personal and interpersonal discourses that frame an understanding of career outlook for women in Catholic education. Their commentary provides a reflection on the organisational strategies that shape the career choices and chances for women. This personal and interpersonal discourse illustrates how women are agentic and demonstrates how they are skilled and intense strategizers who constantly expand the boundaries set within the organisational career context even as they enact the purpose of the organisation. Simultaneously with this agency, the commentary of different women also demonstrates how women are defined and constructed but never wholly constrained by the organisational structures. Women, in fact, are always finding ways of making Catholic education their own by influencing organisational change and by living within and beyond the constraints of patriarchy.

Organisational cultures tend to promote a unitary subjectivity of women, which is deficient in relation to the male norm. Women, however, do not uncritically accept the

male patterns and male developed hierarchies still common in the organisational arrangements of Catholic education and its parent organisation, the Catholic Church. Women contest and negotiate existing practices; they accommodate and resist the organisational career context in an effort to create meaning in their careers.

### Reflections on the Making of a Meaningful Career

The invitation to women in the case study to reflect on career outlook for women in Catholic education began with each individual reflecting on her own experience. A process of thinking at an organisational level followed this. The process was exploratory and had an uncertain ending but, in the end, revealed the paradox that women live with as they ameliorate contesting priorities in their lives. They work within emerging and existing organisational forms framed by discourses that are yet to present a perspective on a truly inclusive organisation. Paradox best describes the fact that women seek to achieve recognition, standing and just remuneration for the work they do whilst teaching continues to be devalued as a feminised occupation.

In Catholic education, women seek the elusive goals of personal autonomy and freedom within a Church institution which continues to constrain women through a regulated view of their sexuality and which promotes a gender script which boxes women into a narrow gender identity. The Church continues denying women the right and freedom to participate in the leadership of the Catholic Church but invites them to participate in the 'ministry' of education. Women's identities are marked by multiple subjectivity, yet the Church continues to see women through a narrow lens. As educators, women must deal with the ambiguities inherent in teaching as paid work and teaching as a vocation. Teaching is still 'a good job for a woman' but the very notion of teaching as work is confused because of the lingering maternal ethos attached to teaching.

The impact of the market frames education as an 'industry' and contributes to a contradictory reality as organisations and careers take on new meanings in a chaotic environment (Baker, 2000). Overriding this structural framing, however, the human dimension of organisations brings gender relations into the foreground. This dimension is significant because agency resides in people, not in abstractions such as 'organisation' (J. Acker, 1995). According to J. Acker, "Organisations are continually constituted through practices and processes that occur through the actions of organisational participants" (1995, p.137). Many organisational practices and processes are grounded in fundamental social arrangements and understandings. They are supported by powerful interests, and persist over time and the coming and going of particular people. But they become non-existent when no one carries them out, when people stop organising. Organisations, as dynamic and transformable entities, can promote the knowledge that women and men are supported in bridging the personal and professional aspects of their lives, reducing the gap between public and private spheres.

As a substantial part of the human dimension of Catholic education, women are recognised in this research as active participants in the Catholic education organisation and not simply passive and biddable employees who have no part in shaping the organisation. This is not to say that every woman employee as a member of the organisation enters it as if it has a clean slate upon which she can create change. As participants, however, women are seen as active in seeking new ways to make the organisation less difficult for women. The responses from the women in this case study indicate the ways that gender dynamics within the organisational practices and processes provoke particular agency in women. Their responses also indicate how institutional practices associated with the Catholic Church often mean individual efforts to 'fit in' are ineffectual.

In constructing their versions of career outlook, the women paid attention to macro-perspectives including the organisational structures of Catholic education and the Church and, the social conditions of women's lives. They also considered their own attitudes to career and other job-related issues that may affect career progress. Within the collective vision of career outlook, women locate themselves within particular variations of career orientation, ranging from disinterested to ambitious. Women identified the role of other women as colleagues, mentors and role models as a strong contributory factor to positive career outlook.

### Women's Subjectivities

In his 1996 address to the international relief agency of the Catholic Church known as Caritas, Bishop Geoffrey Robinson, Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney, shared his identification with the words of John Henry Newman, a renowned nineteenth century Anglican theologian who converted to Catholicism. I too felt that Newman's statement on the contradictory reality of the Catholic Church was insightful in alluding to the paradox that exists for many women who seek the possibility of a meaningful career within an organisational context that is strongly shaped by the religious ideology of the Catholic Church. The concept of paradox, which literally means 'beyond belief,' combines elements of linguistic meaning and social structure to specifically focus on the possibility of impossibility (Hearn, 1998).

Paradox is a useful concept in explaining how women, as participants in Catholic education, can be powerful in their communal and agentic response to the religious dimension of the organisation, whilst living with patriarchy as expressed in Church structures and practices. In living this paradoxical existence, women need to reject the unhealthy gender scripts enshrined within Church teaching, drawing instead, on the authoritative perspective born of women's experiences. As a way forward, women must

find the discursive gaps within organisational arrangements, in order to exploit these gaps for their own ends.

The post-modern thinker, Derrida, adopts a deconstructive method to expound a theory that rationality and rationalisation are processes that obscure the contradictions, that lie at the heart of human existence. He suggests that organisations camouflage a discursive 'gap', in order to close down certain possibilities and render the untameable tame (cited in Cooper & Burrell, 1988, p.100). In this light, organisations are viewed not as structures but as processes, the active product of which is the privileging of unity, identity and immediacy over the differential properties of absence and separation.

Women's subjectivities are made possible within the process of organisation.

Women, however, bring particular subjectivities to the organisation that express particular values and perspectives which may contrast with the unitary subjectivity perpetuated within the organisational career context. These subjectivities may or may not be congruent with the formality of the particular organisational discourses. They may or may not include subjectivity associated with the notion of a 'career woman.' There is an informal backdrop within the organisation that women claim and against which they adopt a range of subjectivities and make sense of their careers in Catholic education. The intersections of structural processes with women's lives in context can be found in concrete, everyday experiences, in gendered, racialised, class-influenced practices that constitute the material of women's lives (Acker, 1996). By adopting particular subject positions, women can disrupt the gendered logic of the organisation. The forms of subjectivity open to women will variously privilege rationality, science, common sense, superstition, religious belief, intuition and emotionality.

It is possible through the process of exploiting the discursive gaps in education organisations, for women to create a space within which the teaching career can be

framed as a discourse of possibility (Biklen, 1995). Within such spaces, the conventions and regulations associated with the ideologically sanctioned model of behaviour that the organisational career context assumes is both accommodated and resisted by women.

Although, in principle, the individual is open to all forms of subjectivity, in reality individual access to subjectivity is governed by historically specific factors and the forms of power at work in the particular society. Gender relations, which are relations of power and powerlessness between different subject positions, will determine the range of forms of subjectivity immediately open to any individual on the basis of gender, race, class age and cultural background. Where other positions exist but are exclusive to a particular class, race or gender, those who are excluded must contest such exclusion in order to transform existing power relations. The assumption by the individual of a particular form of subjectivity is at the expense of the qualities, structures of feeling and thought offered in competing forms of subjectivity and denied by the one that the individual assumes. For example, in taking on forms of subjectivity which Catholicism constitutes, a woman must ultimately subject rationality to belief and endorse (or appear to endorse) a discourse which is fundamentally patriarchal and of a supernatural order.

The process of assuming Catholic forms of subjectivity involves subjection to a range of repeated rites, rituals and practices that constitute and channel the mind, body and emotions of the individual in a particular direction. Within Catholicism there are subject positions which validate and even celebrate particular modes of femininity, for instance, an approach to traditional family life governed by norms of 'selflessness' which imply compliance to and fulfilment of the wishes and needs of husbands and children, wishes and needs which Catholicism also defines. These subject positions and the forms of subjectivity which they structure imply particular types of individual

satisfaction, pleasure and self-fulfilment and deny the validity of others. In the case of female sexuality, for example, sex is defined as naturally heterosexual and procreative and femininity is implicitly masochistic. Catholicism is typical of patriarchal discourses in its insistence on the singularity of meaning, including the meaning of gender. In Catholicism the ultimate guarantee of the truth of the discourse is God, the transcendent subject who 'is'. The individual gains a stable unitary position by identifying with the word of God as read by the institution of the Church and by becoming subject to the meanings and laws of the Church which define both femininity and women's role (Joy, 1995).

Women living in a pluralist society such as Australia, in which the patriarchal version of Catholicism is one discourse among many, are exposed to many other definitions of femininity, women's social role, pleasure and fulfilment. Acknowledging these often contradictory subject positions, this research provides an opportunity for women as individuals and as a collective within Catholic education, to comment on their place within the organisation and to express their views of the impact of the organisation on career outlook.

In her study of the gender dynamics of organisations, Reiger (1987) argues that the culture of the modernist organisation assumes that the private and public spheres remain separate. Whilst efforts have been made to disrupt the unitary organisational culture through notions such as family-friendly work environments, the norms affecting membership of the organisation, relationships, working styles and working hours affect the extent to which women can participate in or feel compatible with the organisational career context. The way an organisation attempts to address such issues contributes to career outlook for women in that organisation. Career outlook is associated with the degree to which women can develop 'career resilience' within the organisational



context. Career resilience is achieved through organisational strategies that allow women to map and understand themselves, their career context and their strengths and weaknesses in relation to such a context (Limerick, Cunnington & Crowther, 1998). The notion of career outlook starts from a view that a teacher's career does not begin at the school gates and, therefore, organisations must take account of the lifestream of individual women in the development of a positive career outlook.

Workplace experiences depict the 'doings of gender' in relation to establishing career outlook. Workplace conditions influence the degree of choice a person has versus the degree she is determined by the organisational context. Burgess-Limerick (1995) argues that traditionally in organisations, you either assert 'constrained agency' (your agency is limited by the environment) or 'unmitigated agency' (your agency is absolute, and unaffected by the environment). In a study of women in small business, Burgess-Limerick found that women did not accept either position but asserted both their agency and the importance of context to create responsive agency (cited in Limerick et al., 1998, p.26). Given that there is always pressure on the individual to conform with what J. Acker (1990) refers to as the gendered logic of the organisation, it is not a simple process for women to exercise rational agency in taking up complex roles that are defined within the particular historical moment and organisational situation. For many women who seek a career within the Catholic education organisation, the need to deal with the interactive variables of religion, family life, personal aspirations and organisational context circumscribe their sense of efficacy, autonomy and rational agency within the organisation.

In my research however, women are viewed as having the capacity to be creative social actors who devise strategies within the constraints of the organisational career context and their personal circumstances. It is also recognised that some men and

women in the organisation have considerable investment in maintaining existing gender relationships including the gendered hierarchy of the Catholic Church and Catholic education. Acknowledging that there are real processes at work within the organisation, individuals can be the agents of change (Weedon, 1987), and that change can continue to “serve hegemonic interests” or can “challenge existing power relations” (p.25). For women to experience successful and satisfying careers, they must find ways of mediating structures and modifying their incompletely hegemonic character.

In the process of making meaning of a career, women seek to recognise themselves in the versions of femininity that the organisational culture paints. They may enthusiastically embrace the image/s of woman presented, or reject what such an image demands as limiting or demeaning. The organisational career context needs to provide women with a confident sense of their place in the organisation with an accepted position that women will have different career aspirations and needs at different phases of their lives. The organisation must also acknowledge that women do have desires and ambitions for a successful career although the exact nature of the career may be different for individual women.

#### Aspirations for a Successful Career

The thirty-two women participants in the focus groups, without exception, wanted their work within the organisation to be recognised as a ‘professional career’ which involved multiple factors including workplace and job conditions. These factors included, firstly, the expectations associated with acceptable status of the teaching career in the wider community based on the communication of the complex nature of the teacher’s role. Secondly, professional involvement in decision-making was seen as essential in issues likely to have an impact on how women experience their careers. Such issues include influencing the processes of teaching and learning, appropriate

remuneration, professional networking and a range of choices and possibilities for short and long-term changes that includes career breaks without penalty to career chances. The notion of what it means to be recognised as a professional educator brought comparisons with other occupations with a view that teachers are not given recognition as professionals for a variety of reasons. For example, working with children should not be considered as limiting the professionalism of the teacher when compared with the status accorded to a paediatrician for example. The status of teachers as professionals requires careful consideration according to Apple (1996). Women's majority presence and their perceived malleability, according to Apple (1996), makes teaching vulnerable to a version of professionalisation that is determined by those who would wish to regulate teachers and to reduce their sphere of influence and expertise. The impact of professionalisation has led to proliferating demands, including endless accountability measures. For women in the case study, however, the notion of 'professional' was seen as an important element associated with career status.

The focus group participants also identified with the notion of having a successful teaching career. 'Success' was variously defined as 'feeling a sense of achievement' and 'achieving recognition and rewards'. Szircom (1991) found successful women judge success on "courage, energy, direction, risk taking, integrity and honesty, achievement, integration, wholeness, presence, breadth, pioneering, being able to hold their ground, speaking one's truth and having a spiritual dimension" (p.9). However, the notion of 'being successful' in career terms has not been given attention in Catholic education.

The quality of the teaching career as experienced by the participants in the research was a point of contention. The contention related to the different roles women play in an effort to improve the career environment. Some women are actively seeking a better

career environment especially through union involvement whilst others 'do nothing'. There were mixed views concerning how women are complicit in exercising limited efforts to gain improvements in salaries and career structures. The industrial relations process of enterprise bargaining was seen as the best means of achieving such progress but the industrial process is also seen as a masculine enterprise. There was a feeling that women who take on union roles may be disadvantaged in seeking administrative positions in Catholic education although no specific examples could be demonstrated. Being a union representative placed a woman in the feminist or less feminine categories.

I'm concerned that my profile in the union makes me less attractive for other positions in Catholic education because I speak my mind and make demands and I don't take any crap. I'm not really a nice little girl. (FG2)

The practical career was given a variety of descriptors by different women including 'undervalued, unexceptional, personally demanding and unrewarding' on the one hand, and 'challenging, stimulating, personally satisfying' on the other hand. In discussing perceived constraints and possibilities associated with career progression, the research participants invariably chose to delineate the extent to which they saw this as being issues of personal choice and individual responsibility, or the responsibility of the organisation. This also led to an exploration of the actions that could be taken by women to improve their career environment. Several ideas emerged which included the re-imagining of career structures not necessarily based on a hierarchical structure but on teams and shared leadership models. Questions were raised about the particular assignment of responsibilities, functions and roles in the current career structures, which were considered to be taken-for granted by both women and men. The

consensus, however, on the establishment of different career structures, which did not emphasise hierarchy as the model, was that it was unlikely to be considered.

There are contradictory messages attached to the present career structure. Even with the introduction of careers in classrooms, a career is still more likely to be considered as promotion out of the classroom. The gendered assumptions that underpin notions of what a career path should look like and what constitutes career commitment needs to be deconstructed within the given organisational context.

Career pathways should not be seen as movements between positions in abstract organisational charts, but must be seen as literally fleshed out by real, embodied, gendered persons possessing varying amounts of authority, influence, skills and expertise relative to one another . . . [However], the masculinities and femininities inscribed in careers are historically mutable and are indeed undergoing a period of significant change. (Halford, Savage & Witz, 1996, p.110)

Although the approach to the teaching career in the case study diocese is based on an understanding that all within the organisation contribute through their ministry to the mission of the Catholic Church, the existing career structures promote an understanding of career which accords with a traditional male career path of a vertical linear progression. It is also clear that the hierarchical and all-male clerical structures of the Catholic Church do not provide a gender-sensitive model for organisation. There is a view that such structures encourage some in Catholic education to believe men make better leaders. Women are accepted in leadership because they bring particular feminine qualities to management roles not because they have natural leadership. The Director of Catholic Education in the case study diocese expresses a commitment to equal employment opportunity. He supports the view that having women in positions of responsibility is important as they bring their 'feminine' qualities to the leadership of the organisation. This view demonstrates the androcentric assumptions associated with

a dualistic understanding of gendered attributes of masculinity and femininity. The understanding of career commitment is very much tied to the ability of an individual to do the job as it emerges and generally, senior administration jobs require very long hours of work. Such issues represent neither a commitment to women's career aspirations, personal and professional needs, nor to an understanding of the organisation's role in creating a career context that is inclusive of men and women from diverse backgrounds. Women like men are seen as a resource for the organisation.

Women within the organisation expressed views on the role that women take in terms of developing an organisational response to career.

We are not demanding enough as women about being accommodated in our career pathways. We should have a lot more to say. We should jump up and down . . . this has been brought home to me recently where we [the Catholic Education Commission] didn't employ somebody because she couldn't work the hours we had stipulated and she was the best person for the job. We weren't prepared to be flexible enough to accommodate that person. We could have with a bit of extra effort and we didn't and we settled for a guy who clearly didn't have the level of expertise required but he could work the hours. (IT4)

In elaborating this perspective, the interviewee explained that women need to understand and use their power, they need to act collectively if they are to negotiate from a position of strength. Having a committee such as the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workforce Committee was seen as an essential structure in the organisation for collective action but having women in positions of authority is also essential. Women, however, face many obstacles in accessing such positions.

#### Career Decisions and Expectations

The reflections of the focus group participants on their career decisions shows that, like the British teachers in Acker's research (1999), they did plan their careers but plans

were provisional. For some women luck or circumstances played a role in career decisions as illustrated by the following excerpts from the career stories:

1. I moved here when my husband was transferred in his job. I started teaching Adult Education classes in the evening (I had two small children) and was offered a part-time teaching position here (from a school contact) which in between two more babies eventually became full-time. (FG1)
2. I came to this diocese because I was in a huge city school working as a day-care officer. I hated it and always wanted to live outback. So I rang the CEO, had an interview and all in the space of one week was here teaching. Being in a Catholic school doesn't concern me but I would like to get out of it soon, the attitudes are stifling. I actually studied at a Catholic University because it was the first position I was offered. Religion is not important in my life but I'm not an atheist just disinterested in the institutional form of religion. (FG4)
3. I was working in the Bottle shop at a local hotel and a teacher who works here (the school) came through and told me they were looking for a science teacher, so I phoned and got the job. (FG1)

For some women, there was a clear decision to seek employment in Catholic education with a concomitant understanding of the religious dimension of the teacher's work. Other women were seeking employment in their chosen profession and having joined Catholic education, not necessarily as a preference, accommodated to varying degrees the mission and purpose of Catholic education. In each of the focus groups, however, regardless of their circumstances in joining Catholic education, there was a sense that, in general, the individual workplaces were very congenial places for the women. Within each setting, women confirmed that opportunities existed for contribution, recognition and reward that appeared to suit the pre-dispositions and capacities of many of the women involved such as working co-operatively and within a collegial framework. Beyond the individual workplace, however, issues of professional

status and standing, support from Catholic education for teacher career development and connectedness amongst teachers across the diocese were issues of concern.

Women's personal circumstances were often ignored in career terms by the organisation and work intensification continued unabated leading to a sense of being overwhelmed at times for some women.

The majority of the married participants in the focus groups had experienced a discontinuous career pattern, taking leave for family reasons. Career experiences, however, indicated that some choices within the organisational career structure were possible. Several participants had taken on roles beyond the classroom including, administration, learning support, diocesan curriculum committees, Positions of Added Responsibility and other specialist teacher roles such as music and language. A total of nine participants had successfully applied for the classification of Advanced Skills Teacher.

Choices to move out of Catholic education were also made. Fourteen women indicated that at some stage they had thought of leaving teaching to try another career. Three women had left to take on a small business, real estate work and university tutoring but all three had returned to teaching. One woman commented that she had left teaching to open a clothing boutique, but in retrospect she felt she "would have been better off taking long service leave and returning after a period of R & R" (FG1) because she really loved teaching but just got tired and bored. Travel and study leave also figured in the lives of half the participants. One woman was currently on twelve months leave-without-pay but was doing some relief teaching as a break from the wear and tear of full time teaching.

Whilst career structures are now well established in Catholic education, according to one interviewee, there is a lingering suspicion of women in the Catholic Church



which means the notion of career woman does not resonate well with the preferred vocation and service orientation of the organisation:

I do think career is a bad word . . . No, I don't think it is a bad word but I think it's seen as a 'non-Catholic' word. Women (Catholic women) especially are not to be into career. And I think that goes right, right, back. I found it very interesting just thinking about the different words – vocation, ministry, career. Until quite recently I believe women were expected to be in teaching because they believed they were called. They had a vocation and I think that word vocation is a very submissive word. Catholics are meant to give without asking for anything in return. And I guess the whole idea of volunteer, the idea of vocation, the idea of religious life, the idea that Catholics are meant to give, give and not receive, all impacts on this word (career) . . . the whole idea of vocation versus career is an important one. (IT7)

The sense of vocation for teachers in Catholic education is aligned with the notion of a call to service, to serve as God's fellow workers. Certainly the meaning of 'work' in Catholic teaching is broader than just 'employment for remuneration' in that it refers to a contribution to the good of individuals, societies and creation. The vocation model of teaching was more prominent in pre-1980 days. The wide plurality of beliefs and perspectives that is now evident in teachers in Catholic schools brings a different understanding to the work of the teacher. My experience in the organisation would suggest, however, that teachers have not dismissed the ideals of vocation but insist that the concept be explored in appropriate ways and that career satisfaction is considered. It would be naïve however, to suggest that all teachers understand the sense of vocation. In some instances it is simply not understood or appreciated. This was exemplified by the views of young women new to the teaching career who participated in the case study research. Used to the ideal of equality of the sexes as a given rather than an issue to be debated and fought for, their expectation of career advancement as a priority was indisputable:

I'm going to teach in a few different schools and then I'll apply for an 'admin' job in a few years time. I want to eventually get a principal's job and I think if I put myself forward and take on different responsibilities at school like running the sports carnival and I also get a profile in the diocese by joining the maths task force, that will really help. (FG2)

In the process of reflecting on their careers, it became apparent that many issues relevant to women and their careers remain marginalised within the organisation's career structures and approaches. The dichotomy of work and family is still a factor in limiting career outlook for women.

#### Women as Colleagues, Mentors and Role Models

As a highly feminised organisation, women in Catholic education rely heavily on other women for support in their careers and especially for the creation of a workplace environment in which women feel comfortable. In their efforts to make meaning of their careers, the women in the case study focussed on their relationships with other women as an important element in the construction of career outlook. An important factor contributing to how women view career outlook was the recognition of the relational factor women experienced within their schools and the wider Catholic education organisation. Whilst many of the participants lamented that the teaching career remains unattractive to men, they identified many advantages in working with women. Friendships were important but this had the added dimension of a friend who could be a work colleague which allowed for "sharing ideas and resources and off-loading angst after dealing with difficult situations at home and at work" (FG4). Women felt more comfortable doing these things with other women. Having men on staff was an advantage especially in regard to 'staffroom banter' but the relationships with males were seen as qualitatively different from those with women. The visibility and accessibility of women in leadership positions was considered essential as this gave

women a sense of the authority that women could bear and other women might aspire towards. Gender segmented occupational roles are not conducive to a sense of an inclusive organisation.

### Generation Differences

The participants in the focus groups varied considerably in age. This provided for a broad range of views on the teaching career and resulted in strong encouragement from older women to younger women to pursue their careers with gusto. The younger women were forthright in their views that they would have access to a career that provided more responsibility, status, remuneration and influence within education. Their sense of themselves and their confidence was not seen as naive or misplaced. The majority of the younger women in the focus groups had been educated in Catholic schools, taught by lay women and men. They had been exposed to the National Policy on the Education of Girls in Australia which promoted an understanding in young women that they were eligible to move into the full range of options in the paid work force.

Younger women were enthralled with some of the stories told by older women and, in some cases, amazed at the changes that have occurred. An example of this was the discussion of the existence of a marriage ban or pregnancy ban on women in teaching that was the norm in government systems in the early to middle part of the twentieth century. Young women felt that women and men simply would not tolerate such impositions on women at a public policy level today. Older women looked back on a Church which provided “pomp and ceremony” as well as “the list of do’s and don’ts but mostly don’ts” associated with “the Church’s fascination with “sin” (FG3). Younger women held a range of views of the Church but clearly differentiated between the local Church and the wider institutional Church which involved the clerical structures and the ‘rule-makers’.

Generation differences between women employed in Catholic schools also revealed the socialisation patterns of different women. This was most evident in a comment provided in the focus group discussions by a woman recently appointed to a Deputy Principal's position. She lamented the view of an older woman teacher who suggested that it was better to let the men take on the administration roles because such jobs impact on family life too much if a woman was appointed. The Deputy Principal saw this as a lack of awareness by the older woman that at least in some families today, the responsibilities for parenting and household duties are more equitably shared. The view of the older woman supports the association of administration with hard masculinity. The positioning of administration as a masculine enterprise occurs within the discourses of educational restructuring and is associated with an emphasis on efficiency, accountability and outcomes which privilege hard management and entrepreneurial discourses (Blackmore, 1999). Such focus group views also indicate the persistence of the narrow gender stereotypes for women's roles as wives and mothers as espoused in Catholic Church teaching.

#### Women Religious as past teachers, mentors and colleagues

There were two women religious (nuns) who participated in this case study. This number is indicative of the few women religious who still work in Catholic education. Nuns taught many of the older women in the case study. Women religious have been a major influence in Catholic education in Australia including, in recent times, the promotion of a gender inclusive and gender-sensitive response by the Church to women in Catholic education. Their lives have been an example of service and professionalism, independence and institutional constraint. Canadian academic Elizabeth Smyth (1999) provides an overview of the origin of religious life for women:

The history of women as professional religious within the Roman Catholic Church can be viewed as a series of role transformations, institutionalisation's and struggles as women carved out a meaningful way to heed a call from God. In the early Christian Church, women played many public roles, most significantly, in the office of deaconesses (sacramental assistants to bishops) or as members of widows (women over sixty, who had been married, and lived good lives and gave themselves over to prayer and the care of the sick). Yet as Christianity changed from a movement to an institution, women church workers found their status diminished. By the end of the fifth century, the offices of deaconesses and widows were in decline, eroded by the growing church patriarchy. What emerged in their place was the Christian adaptation of the Roman tradition of vowed virginity, which was a means for women to create a life engaged in charity, sharing community with other women and being independent of the influence of fathers, husbands or male guardians. Yet, like Christianity itself, vowed virginity became institutionalised, due in large part, to the male clergy's successful quest to formalize and regulate the lives of women. (p.4)

Being a woman religious may once have been a somewhat mysterious lifestyle when considered from the point of view of lay women. Living in cloistered abodes, women religious were seen as separate and distant from lay women in Catholic education. In the present moment, women religious are more likely to be housed in the suburbs and involved in a career in similar fashion to a lay woman. The expectation now is that women religious apply for positions in schools and must 'take their chances'. Their position, however, relative to other women in Catholic education, remains different.

One of the interviewees was in religious life and she spoke of her frustration when faced with leaving her school and her role as a principal, but not of her own volition. She believed she was treated differently to the way a lay woman would have been treated in the same situation. This view resulted from her belief that the Director wanted to remove her from her principal's position because there was a view that she was not

performing competently enough. A formative performance review held two years prior, however, indicated she was very competent. She was offered the option of 'leaving quietly' without the normal process of principal appraisal. Her congregation had the responsibility of finding her another position. She chose to resist this move and to insist on due process even though she felt the process itself was flawed. She did not accept the manner of collecting data for her role evaluation because it did not account for her own articulation of her experience of the principal's role in particularly difficult circumstances. In the final outcome, the principal refused to sign the appraisal document and in this way remained in control of her 'sense of personal integrity'. This would not have happened to a lay woman who would have been given no alternative to the performance review except resignation. Neither would a lay woman have had the support of the religious order to pursue alternative career moves. The woman religious in question was sponsored by her congregation to study overseas. Her experience of the male hierarchy in Catholic education was described as "painfully patronising and dishonest" (IT8).

Women religious have been very influential in establishing Catholic schools and until recently held many of the principal's positions. Many of the case study participants could relate a story about their days as students in convent schools. These stories proved to be a mixture of ardent praise and bitter criticism of the women religious by whom the different women were taught. Whilst there was some questioning of the choice of lifestyle of women religious, there was an acceptance that marriage and motherhood are not the only way women can find fulfillment. What emerged more strongly from the participants, was the sense of contradiction they felt when they experienced from particular women religious a push for achievement in educational and

other ambitions and the ‘stifling sense of humility and sexual timidity’ that was a part of such ambitions.

Many women expressed disappointment that women religious were no longer prominent in Catholic education as they had provided a role model of women who could be independent, supportive of other women and able to pursue goals in life beyond the materialism of secular life. As an addendum to this discussion, a young woman who participated in a pilot study on women and careers that I conducted prior to this case study found that through the process of reflection involved in the research study, she was encouraged to consider religious life. She is now a member of a congregation.

#### Constructing Career Outlook for Women

Career outlook relates to the possibility of women experiencing the meaning of their careers as successful and rewarding. There is an expectation that career outlook will be positive when the organisation understands what people look for to provide satisfaction in their careers. The intentional role of the organisation in considering and cultivating the relationship between the individual’s aspirations, goals and needs and the organisational enterprise creates career outlook. In addition, the cultures permeating organisational life influence the way women feel integrated or alienated from the organisation. For women in this case study, structures related to both the Catholic Church and the Catholic education organisation contribute to career outlook.

The following list of issues associated with career outlook, was taken from the responses provided by the women to the reflection process designed as part of the focus group activity:

- there aren’t many opportunities to change your role except to try a new grade and that’s not easy when certain teachers consider themselves ‘the grade seven teacher or the grade one teacher in the school’

- there aren't enough Positions of Added Responsibility for a career path to be a reality
- people stay in their roles for longer than they planned because there is nowhere to go
- not knowing where women can go in Catholic education - how to develop your career and how to advance is a barrier
- there's not enough specialisation in teaching positions to create career opportunities in classroom teaching
- senior positions in coastal towns seem to be held for years by certain individuals and women in isolated centres (and possibly men but they never hang around anyway) are not given any priority for these preferred positions.

These issues reflected perceived limitations associated with career structures and processes in the case study diocese, which focus on the limited size of the diocese and a lack of knowledge of how to best position oneself for career purposes. Gender was not mentioned as a specific issue, however, it can be clearly recognised as a variable in the following comments:

- there is no recognition [by the organisation] of the total commitments of teachers especially women who are running families, teaching, doing other things for the school and the Church, expected to study to keep up and be accredited and considered eligible for other jobs in Cath Ed and want to have a life as well
- with so few males in teaching in our system, they seem to take the top spots too easily
- there is a seeming (sic) trend to employ men in positions of responsibility despite the numbers of good women in the field
- women have to do it harder than men do. You have to work harder to get a proven track record and men find it easier to get away with things
- there is no assistance given in the requirement to upgrade such as being given time out to study (paid study leave). Women with family commitments find it difficult to fit everything in so how are they ever going to make first base for other management positions if they can't meet the criteria



- leaving a career to have a family is a barrier in a personal and organisational sense. There's nothing to keep you connected to your career when you're out of the workforce. It's accepted [by the organisation and] by many women and men as women's choice- you either have kids or you have a career
- I know some women who have done the required study for Senior jobs and still haven't got anywhere after several interviews for administration positions. They don't know what the problem is but feel disheartened. They never get any feedback.

The following comments illustrate views associated with the status of teaching and with the culture of the organisation:

- there is an overabundance of males in the hierarchy of the organisation and the influence of priests in employment options doesn't always help women
- we have a system based on hierarchy not on collegiality and in this set up women often don't put career as a priority
- teaching isn't appreciated as a career and nobody encourages kids in schools to be teachers anymore
- in Cath Ed like the department, a career is more to do with getting a job in administration.

As a counterpoint to these barriers in the organisation, the following comments indicate the opportunities that women see the organisation supporting:

- women can obviously get to be principals and work at the CEO [Catholic Education Office]
- teachers are not just employees in the Catholic system, they are 'the face of the Catholic Church'
- you feel your work is of value
- as a principal, I feel I have been given the opportunity to learn about leadership through the support I got in doing my Master's in Catholic Schooling from the office [Catholic Education Office]

- I like the idea of working in a system that allows you to be spiritual in your work and still be treated as a professional with regard to what you are paid and the conditions you work under
- we are not disadvantaged professionally because we work for Catholic education but I think there is still a problem when teachers out west compare their benefits to State school teachers
- you don't feel like you are working for a huge system in this diocese; it's quite small and even intimate.

In analysing the views concerning the impact of the organisation on career outlook, a number of themes emerged from the focus group interactions and the interviews which were seen as significant in the way the organisation facilitates or hinders women's careers. The themes include:

1. The structure of careers and issues associated with women accessing and desiring designated career positions as an integrated aspect of the lifestream;
2. Support for women in pursuing their career through established workplace policies and practices;
3. The impact of the religious identity of the organisation on women's career orientation; and
4. The organisational response to professional development.

In discussing issues associated with these themes, the women identified both opportunities and barriers that contribute to career outlook. The case study analysis also captures a sense of the compromises, contradictions and pressures that being a woman in Catholic education gives rise to and the extent to which the women saw these issues as being questions of personal choice or responsibility, or the responsibility of the organisation.

These themes are fleshed out in the following section and refer to the established career structures, the processes that assist people to achieve career mobility and career

resilience such as through formal career development support, and to geographic, religious and other features of the organisation. Anxieties expressed about the predominance of women in teaching indicated a need for women to develop greater credibility as ‘professional educators’ through validation of their lives and careers as an organisational priority.

### Careers and Lives in Context

All of the women in this case study are, or have recently been, located within the career context of a religious organisation with its emphasis on career structures of classroom teaching and administrative positions underpinned by a discursive framework of ministry. Other discursive frameworks also underpin women’s lives such as discourses of mothering or parenting and partnering although in a Catholic organisation, this would only be acceptable within sacramental marriage. Family responsibilities and the impact having children has had on these women’s career orientations and on the ways in which childcare and work are combined were vital points of discussion. Family responsibilities did not always mean that the chance to take on extra career responsibility or new positions was postponed or refused. However, with the exception of two early-career teachers who described themselves as ‘single-minded’ in their career ambition (one with plans to pursue a senior position in the Catholic education organisation, another proposing to pursue a career in another occupation), the participants indicated the provisional nature of their career orientations. The complexities of maintaining any career role outside the home with a family presents a picture of a juggling act requiring enormous stamina and time-management skills. One late-career woman expressed her respect for the ways women juggle their lives:

I’m glad to see younger teachers can have both family and career. However I make the note these women are often obviously very tired. I see an enormous increase in

the workload over the years and respect women mightily for balancing career and family. (FG4)

The gendered discourses of parenting and partnering require large investments of time. There was a tension in the women's minds concerning the way the organisation responds to family-work relationships and these affect the women's relationships with the Catholic education organisation. When combined with other discourses, such as career, some women find the contradictions inherent in the different discourses, to be unworkable. Parenting, as the responsibility of both men and women is relatively ignored within Catholic education, which is consonant with the Catholic Church view of revering motherhood and not mentioning fatherhood. The experiences shared by women in the focus groups indicated how invisible parenting has been in the past in the paid work environment. Women have had to be inventive in dealing with these responsibilities. One older woman told of her experience of having to express milk for her baby in the staff toilet. Another told the story of a friend who had been asked by a desperate parish priest to come in and take a class as a relief teacher. When she told him she couldn't get a baby-sitter he asked her to bring the baby to the presbytery where the priest's housekeeper took on the role of baby-sitter. The telling of such stories indicated the difficulties that women have faced in combining paid and unpaid working lives but also the changes that have occurred, with some women questioning whether change actually meant progress:

Today women can at least talk about family issues openly at school like when your child is sick and you can take leave to care for them. This was not always the case. You kept your family quiet at school. But family life is more complicated today too. We need as much help as we can get. (FG2)

From the interviews and focus group discussions, it was evident that at different times in their lives, women with family responsibilities found the juggling act so

difficult that paid work was demoted in the order of priorities. The different subject positions adopted by the women within the discursive frameworks of mothering/parenting, partnering/marriage and career woman at times collide. There was a need for reconciling the different demands made on the women by their positions in discourses that compete for their full participation. The tensions that a woman might feel as she moves between the different discursive positions included guilt:

Guilt is a constant. I feel guilty that I'm not being a good enough mother, guilty that I'm not doing my job well enough. (FG3)

Another tension was the juggling act in maintaining happy and healthy relationships with partners, giving enough attention to children, managing the home and giving the right amount of leverage to one's career. For some women there was a sense that from the organisation's point of view, you just had to 'learn to manage your time better'.

You really have to be totally organised and if I didn't have my mother living in town to help when things go ballistic, I don't know how I'd manage being a principal. You need more than twenty-four hours in a day. (FG1)

Within the different discourses of mothering/parenting, marriage/partnering and career, lie sources of power, which subjectify women. Davies makes the point that if a woman removes the site of the problem from herself to those social structures that she is submerged within, she can understand the power relations within the structures that have placed her under pressure (1994, p.34). Looking at the social structures of career, the malestream approach to career still prevalent in the organisational career context sees commitment to career as long hours on the job. Lack of on-site childcare was raised as a source of pressure and the majority of women felt that this issue would never seriously be considered in the case study diocese. The lack of notice given on occasions for changes in meetings or accessing professional development opportunities was a source of frustration and annoyance in the minds of some women who found it difficult

to rearrange child-minding. The responsibilities of motherhood are seen as more important than gaining 'brownie-points' for attending meetings that might be used as an indicator of career commitment.

The importance of family life and family responsibilities was paramount for many women and for many women the responsibilities of parenting and caring for other relatives is not a choice whilst career is a choice. There was a strong feeling that the organisation needs to take account of the desire women have (and men too) to live a balanced life. Many administrative roles in Catholic education are seen as requiring enormous amounts of time and energy and this is exacerbated by the demands on principals to participate in parish organisations as well. In some cases where there is no parish priest, the principal is often seen as the person responsible for keeping the Church alive in the parish. Some of the women however, demonstrated ways of disrupting the discourses to allow them to accomplish a better representation of balance in career and family life. There were examples of particular schools allowing women time out of class to attend special occasions at their child's school and a view that having children at school after hours in an emergency was not considered a problem. In one staffroom in which I held a focus group, the box of toys and books in the corner was there for the children of staff members to use. Family leave to care for a sick child was an important outcome of a recent enterprise bargaining agreement. A woman principal made a determined decision to schedule meetings when they would cause her family life the least disruption. She also chose to delegate administrative tasks to others that may have been considered undelegable by other principals such as trusting other senior personnel to interview for new staffing positions and to make a recommendation to her.

One research participant who was involved in a school review at large girls' school raised an interesting conundrum:

I was really surprised when after a year of review with important issues like flexibility of hours, job sharing and childcare rating very highly, suddenly, towards the end of the review, childcare just dropped off the agenda – and this on a staff of mostly women, strong feminists and many unionists. I think women have a lot to answer for in not bringing about those sorts of changes in the workplace that will make life easier for women with children. (IT4)

Whilst the reasons for the lack of action on childcare appeared to be part of an elimination process on the basis of limited resources, the response raises the important question of what is meant in the organisation by the term gender equity. Is it about making things easier for women to access a career or is it about fundamental understandings about the encouragement of appropriate and parallel masculinities and femininities? If the latter is the case, the organisation must look at how career is defined and actualised in terms of women and men and consider the consequences of the actions that it takes. Parenting, for example, may be seen as the responsibility of men and women in an ideal world rather than simply of women. This is not to say that establishing childcare facilities is to be discouraged but it does require a particular stance on who would use the childcare facilities. Men may just as readily as women take responsibility for having their children in their place of employment if it had facilities. The research indicates that the independent woman and the family are discursively set against each other. The tension between the desire for equality and the recognition of difference is difficult to resolve.

Women who stay in the classroom, follow a husband's career or leave for family reasons may be considered by other women on a standard career trajectory as less

ambitious, less committed and even less professional, according to the participants in this research. Perceptions of the administrative role versus the classroom role deflate women's contribution to the profession. Women who stay in the classroom are not rewarded for their ongoing commitment to students and the teaching role. There are many reasons that contribute to women being labelled as underachievers in career terms. Classroom commitment often considered less serious than commitment to 'advancement' up the career ladder. Women who aspire to administrative roles, however, may be labelled 'ambitious', a description which may damn women in the eyes of their colleagues. Choice therefore in terms of career is a gendered concept. The socialisation process many women experienced as members of Catholic families and students at Catholic schools also contributes to the paradox of working in an organisation that needs their skills and talents as teachers and administrators but remains subject to the patriarchal values and structures of the Catholic Church.

The limits to career progress, as defined in a vertical structure, to which a woman might proceed within the Catholic education organisation, is also related to the patriarchal religious context. With the Catholic Church forming the foundation of the school organisation, women's career opportunities and their position within the organisation is significantly disadvantaged compared to their counterparts in a non-religious context (Day, 1999). Women in secular organisations may face disadvantage but they do not have to deal with the effects of a clerically determined image for women.

Given the general perception that men and women are treated on the basis of merit not gender within the Catholic education organisation, the predominance of men in the hierarchy of the Catholic Education organisation is not so much a problem for women, as it is symptomatic of a much greater issue. The issue is the patriarchal values



underlying traditional Catholic thinking about men and women and about religious leadership. In the Catholic Church, power and authority is associated with the masculine.

### Workplace Conditions

An organisation invests a great deal of resources into recruiting competent and qualified people to work in the organisation. Through the establishment of policies and practices that support individuals within the workplace, it is possible to maintain their professional services and allegiance to the organisation. Because of the over-riding strength of the religious purpose of Catholic education, it is desirable that this cultural identity is maintained and strengthened through the longevity of those employed within the ministry of Catholic education. Whilst the sense of mission and vocation may be strong in the individual, other issues pertinent to the workplace can encourage or discourage long-term allegiance through the pursuit of career goals in the organisation. The case study diocese has established a range of policies and practices to create a workplace environment that is conducive to pursuing career goals. These include salary and remuneration conditions which are comparable to other education organisations, provision for leave for a range of reasons and lengths of time, consideration of gender equity issues such as equal employment opportunity and family-friendly practices such as job-sharing. These were issues that women in the case study diocese recognised as important incentives to women and to men in the pursuit of their careers.

Women are staying in their careers for longer than ever before. Some women in the case study had been in their careers for thirty years. Younger women expressed a view that they intended working until they retired at 'a ripe old age'. The need for opportunities to experience change and professional growth throughout the length of the career was seen as essential. In addition, there was an expectation that individuals could

achieve balance in their lives that would be supported through the policies and practices of the organisation. The mobility of the Australian population was raised as a social constraint that should be given greater consideration by the organisation. To date, there is no transfer system operating between dioceses. A teacher, who moves to another diocese either as a personal and planned decision, or as a result of a transfer or change of workplace for a partner, must resign from one diocese and apply for employment in another diocese. Years of experience in one particular diocese therefore, may not assist a teacher in being placed as a teacher in another diocese particularly if resources are an issue. It's cheaper to employ graduates!

The lack of a compulsory transfer system, however, is not necessarily seen as a barrier in that the threat of compulsory transfer is not an attractive option. Within the case study diocese there is a voluntary transfer system that attempts to provide some priority to those teachers who wish to stay in the diocese but would like to move to a different Catholic school. Voluntary transfers are actioned before any new teacher is employed.

Maintaining career currency remains problematic for some women in Catholic education because of mobility which in other organisations may be seen as the vehicle for a career. Women are more likely than men to move as a result of a partner's transfer. In the Catholic education sector, this can mean a loss of career currency due to an inability to find full-time employment in another diocese. The difficulties for women who face this situation were stated emphatically by a research participant who is married to a career soldier in the Australian Army. She pointed out the length of time out of the workforce she had been forced to endure as her husband transferred from one posting to another leaving her with the loss of income and benefits and dislocated from the career mobility process. Neither the army nor the previous diocese offered any

assistance to her as she attempted to carve out her own career. In fact she commented that it was understood by army wives that for men who were career soldiers, “If the army thought a man needed a wife, they’d have issued him with one” (FG2).

The mobility that some women face with husbands in the armed forces and other similar careers was seen as an area that was essentially, a personal choice issue. Whilst the issue of transfers between diocese has not been addressed, changes have been made in recognition of the social justice values of the Catholic education organisation. Until recently, if a teacher was able to obtain a new position in another diocese, there was no portability of conditions such as long service leave and sick leave benefits. This situation has recently been reviewed with new agreements between diocese throughout Australia bringing portability.

Issues such as portability of long service leave are also an incentive to teachers to maintain career currency by continuing to study and to stay within the system. Because the Catholic Church authorities want to employ teachers who are willing to study in theologically sound academic fields, and, because they expend considerable resources in religious formation as professional development, it is desirable that workplace conditions encourage teachers to stay in Catholic schools. Maternity leave is another workplace condition that has enabled women to take a career break without losing continuity of service.

Career outlook is associated with the management of change as a result of work patterns and practices in society (Lewis & Lewis, 1996). Emergent new values for the workplace in secular society are designed not to discriminate against those with caring or other non-work responsibilities. Support for family care and modification of work structures has a part to play in bringing about a gender-sensitive career context in the case study organisation. This is considered good for the individual and good for the

organisation in respect to individual productivity, however this may be defined. There was recognition by the participants that these issues are being addressed but in a narrow way. Work and family focus should not be limited to the issue of care of children. The organisation needs to take a broad approach to gender equity to include the impact of work on individual stress and on intimate relationships and personal well being. Family breakdown, divorce and the issue of 'teacher burnout' were given serious attention during the focus group discussions.

The process of identifying problems, and establishing policies and practices to ameliorate them, is an established pattern in the case study organisation but how issues get on the agenda is not clear to those within its ranks. The question of whether the organisation reacts to social and political change or is more pro-active given its moral and ethical base for action is of interest to this research. Whilst it is accepted that traditional assumptions about the separation of work life and personal life are no longer viable, there remains to be created, a coherent set of new values and beliefs to take their place (Kanter, 1989). From the participants' perspectives, there is a lack of trust associated with the hierarchical structure of the organisation which limits support for a process of participation in the total organisational reality. Many issues appear to be left to the unions to raise in the improvement of workplace conditions. Employees in all positions are both capable and motivated to develop solutions that can result in mutual benefits to individuals, families and the organisation.

#### The Religious Identity of the Organisation

The close relationship between the Catholic Church and its schools has meant that many of the issues facing the Church impinge on Catholic schools and the people who inhabit them. Structural and theological re-orientations have influenced the nature of teachers' work in Catholic schools. Catholic school authorities have been required to re-

articulate their purpose and to re-evaluate their role in an attempt to reconcile the various demands now placed on Catholic schools and their staff. Against this Church background, the historical and contemporary place of women in the Catholic Church remains problematic. Because sexism is still regarded as a significant and even endemic problem within Christianity by many Christian women, the position of women in the Catholic Church is of significance in analysing the career outlook for women in Catholic education. The interactive effects of the religious dimension of the Catholic education organisation and Catholic Church discourse on women is pertinent to the history of the Australian Catholic Church. The participation of women in the Catholic Church is currently a prominent issue facing the Church in Australia (Macdonald et al, 1999).

Working within a religious organisation presents women with the subjectivity associated with the 'good Christian woman' discourse. A strong perception presented by women in this case study was the sense that women are sometimes at odds with the prevailing style and value system. This related to both to the Catholic education organisation and the Catholic Church. Women are not free to be women in the broadest sense within these organisations because of the narrowly prescribed views assigned to masculinity and femininity. The perception was expressed as a need by women in principal roles to work harder than men to get credibility but having to maintain their femininity within the role:

Women are not always preferred as principals by parents or teachers in schools. I feel that as a principal I'm put under more pressure and more scrutinised than some of my male principal friends are. You can't be too strong or you're labelled as strident and you have to be really good at the hospitality side of things. (FG2)

Related to this issue of organisational values, is the self-imposed restraint or withdrawal of some women who choose not to enter into the organisational goals

because the demands are too compromising or the style of the organisation does not suit the way these women want to work. The need to balance lifestyle including time for fun and relaxation and pursuing a broad range of interests against the need for the sense of achievement and added stresses of senior administration positions was strongly expressed. Personal freedom was also an issue that could de-rail the upward mobility of some women. One woman made it clear that senior administration was never going to be her goal because she felt it meant scrutiny and surveillance by priests and Catholic education office personnel. The need for adherence to the religious practise was seen as being a requirement for these positions:

I'm sure more notice is taken if a principal doesn't show up to mass on Sunday than a classroom teacher doesn't. (FG4)

Another woman who described the need for women to constrain personal behaviour to fit within the boundaries of the religious organisation further expanded this view. Although it was acknowledged that similar circumstances would apply to males, the feeling was expressed that it was more important for a woman to be a "conforming Catholic woman" than for males who appear to have a broader range of social positions sanctioned within the Catholic Church or at least overlooked by the Church hierarchy. This view was explained during the focus group discussion. Australian Catholic men were seen to be more akin to 'the larrikin' ideal, enjoying pursuits like sport, gambling and drinking than to the 'waspy' values of Protestant men. Catholic men appear to be able to get away with more than women can in the eyes of the Church. This is perhaps a generational perception not applicable to young men in an Australian community that is less predisposed to sectarianism, at least between alternative Christian groups. Nevertheless, one of the focus group participants claimed that a young woman teacher was reported to her principal for her 'unseemly behaviour' at a nightclub.

In terms of specific lifestyle issues, the Catholic teacher must be aware of taboos associated with sex before marriage, living together without the benefit of marriage, marriage to a divorced or separated person, and marriage outside the Church. A homosexual orientation may also prove an unacceptable lifestyle for a teacher if it contravenes Church teaching. The view was expressed that the further up the organisation one moved, the more likely it was that you would be under public scrutiny. There is a consciousness of either living an exemplary life in terms of Church rules or keeping very quiet about personal intimate relationships and 'hoping like hell that no-one becomes any the wiser'. There were stories told of women who had been asked to leave their teaching positions in the diocese because they were not in conformity with these rules. Their non-conforming lifestyle issues included in one case, irregular marriage, and in another, unmarried mother status.

Associated with lifestyle is the position of single women in Catholic education who may wish to remain single but also experience the intimacy and pleasure of a sexually fulfilling relationship and perhaps even have a child without the benefit of marriage. This matter was raised by a woman who preferred to be single but wanted to have the choice of having a relationship with a man outside of marriage. As a mature person, this woman felt comfortable with her behaviour as a Catholic woman in a senior administrative role. Working for the Catholic Church, however, meant she had limitations placed upon her lifestyle choices and she was required to maintain a very discreet personal life. Whilst admitting to feeling the constraints of the religious organisation upon her private life, there was also a feeling that her religious upbringing had instilled in her a strong sense of self-respect and strength of character. The place of single women in the Catholic Church, however, was not addressed in terms of the adult needs for intimacy and sexual expression. This situation reinforces the division between

public and personal worlds for single women at a time when organisations are being asked to introduce measures such as family-friendly policies designed to allow consonance between career and family life.

For some women, the issue of following Church rules is firmly locked into a personal conscience particularly with issues such as birth control:

The decisions I make about my personal life are my own to make. I don't ask for permission to do anything from the Church although I am aware of its teachings especially in regard to birth control. Possibly, my decisions wouldn't stand the scrutiny of Church teaching. But seriously, some of those priests must be curious at least when the birth rate in Australia is at its lowest and women working in Catholic schools only have 1 or 2 children. May be they think it's something in the water. (IT3)

In similar fashion, a lesbian woman considered her private life her own but was aware that her public support for this lifestyle could lead to dismissal. The woman made it plain, however, that proving the lifestyle case could be difficult:

I'm certainly not going to tell anyone at school what my sexuality is and they'd (the Catholic Education Office or Church) have to be able to prove I was a lesbian and how could they do that without hidden cameras in my house. (FG4)

Non-Catholic status creates dilemmas for the woman who wants to experience career change and stay in the organisation. For the non-Catholic woman, there was a feeling expressed of 'not knowing where to go next' in career terms. Another woman who is a committed Anglican and feels 'very much at home within Catholic education' expressed a strong desire to take on a role of APRE (Assistant to Principal Religious Education) but the criteria of 'committed Catholic' was a barrier. Whilst the particular women did not blame the system, there was a sense that they felt their career aspirations would not be given any consideration by the Director or parish priests. Another woman said that she believed some people in authority in Catholic education felt that the



Catholic school would be much better employing only Catholic teachers. Whilst she enjoyed working in Catholic education, it was disconcerting that her obvious commitment to her Christian faith was not validated in her career chances in Catholic education.

The women in this case study held strong views on the Catholic Church: many views expressed concern, frustration and anger with the Church. It was clear, however, that they believed the Church was changing and would continue to change even in the light of an ultra-conservatism that appears to be creeping back. Some supported a view that whilst women have been patient, they are not prepared to wait forever for the image projected by Church structures of a masculine, clerical and hierarchical system to be dismantled. Most of the women had friends who no longer had anything to do with the Church. Women, however, are prepared to challenge a power structure that rewards conformity by not conforming to the passive stereotype the Church prefers for women.

Mirola (1997) highlights the ways women challenge power relations in the Christian tradition. Whilst on the one hand the Judaeo-Christian ideology, controlled and disseminated by men, has been used to strengthen the power of men over women, in some cases it has challenged that power relationship. The institutional church remains a source for the legitimisation of gender roles, in that it often reinforces the supposed rightness or naturalness of them. A focus on legitimisation alone, however, overlooks the dynamic nature of gender relations and the definition and re-definition of gender roles within religious institutions. Women appropriate the religious tradition and narratives, according to Mirola, in an effort to challenge existing gender relations as well as to provide a moral context for mobilising collective action aimed at social reform:

Thus, while being kept out of the central arenas of ecclesiastical power, women have been segregated into their own semi-autonomous institutional sphere within

which gender-based oppositional ideological impulses could develop and gain momentum. (1997, p.240)

These impulses have seen women join organisations such as the Movement for the Ordination of Women and participate in local feminist spirituality groups. Some women in the case study, however, were less sanguine in their views, wondering what effects a new Bishop would have on schools and local parishes that were more progressive. Women in the case study diocese have taken on many leadership roles in their local parishes but they are also aware of the conservative backlash occurring in other diocese throughout Australia.

The understanding of what is meant by the word 'church' requires consideration. Byrne (1986), indicates that Church leadership defines it as "the handing down of core beliefs, doctrines, dogmas and spiritual experiences, stitched into tradition by the apostolic succession to give us decisive guidance" (p.10). It is also the active participation in one of the branches of the Church of all Christians who commit themselves to the ideals of Christian life. This interpretation has a much broader focus and includes the work of teachers in Catholic schools without necessarily tying them to absolute observance of Church rules, rites and rituals. From a research perspective, O'Leary, Pitman, Johnstone, Hay, and O'Hagan (1977) have formulated a schema which reflects how the Catholic Church has dealt with change over the centuries. This schema identifies five stages associated with how change occurs within the Church:

1. the new discipline or idea is not mentioned;
2. it is rejected;
3. it is allowed as an exception;
4. it is encouraged; and
5. it is imposed.

Changes in the Church of significance to this schema include the shift of the Catholic Church from non-participation to involvement in the ecumenical movement. Apologies have also been made posthumously to such luminaries as Galileo and Martin Luther. Obviously the Catholic Church does get it wrong!

### Professional Development

The women in this case study identified professional development processes and activities as a vital element of an organisation's responsibility in creating a positive career outlook. Professional development is considered to be an essential element of a teacher's career (Dwyer, 1997; Ingvarson & Chadbourne, 1994). The establishment of career pathways is just one element of the career process within an organisation. Professional development should count by benefiting a person intrinsically; it should count at the system level and for career progression within the system; it should also have the potential for credit at university or other institution; and, of course, teachers' professional development should be of benefit to the students in a teacher's class.

Professional development has however, been largely ignored in Australian education organisations in respect to a teacher's career:

(A)fter a hundred years of compulsory education, Australian teachers wanting to make a career in teaching still have no clear direction about what they should get better at, few incentives for undertaking professional development and little tangible recognition for improvements in their knowledge and skill. (Ingvarson & Chadbourne, 1994, p.12)

In particular, there is a need for professional development that addresses the notion of career development. This must focus on professional growth and the establishment of opportunities to develop skills and knowledge that bring individual expectations in line with existing and potential organisational realities. The concept of professional development should be seen as a "process of growth through which teachers add range,

depth and quality to the performance of their professional tasks” (Australian Schools’ Council, 1990, pp.148-149).

The skill and knowledge of a school’s teaching staff is the most important resource for achieving a quality learning environment. According to Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1994), the most important strategy for maintaining and improving that resource is a career development process that entails teacher self-evaluation and professional development. This notion is relatively new within the case study diocese. The approach to professional development throughout the various phases of the teaching career is very much the individual’s responsibility. Everett (1997) highlights the autonomous nature of Catholic schools within each diocese and the implications for teacher professional development:

Traditionally, every Catholic school has been established and supported by a local faith community to meet that community’s needs; a school’s vision, mission, direction and survival depend, therefore, upon its own resourcefulness and self-direction. In essence, all students, staff members and parents associated with a Catholic school live in a culture which strives to encourage the individual to be autonomous, reflective, goal-oriented and review conscious. Autonomy in an individual or an organisation does not, however, imply acting alone or in isolation. Rather, true autonomy sees the locus of decision as being in the self and acknowledges that decision-making may well encompass the spectrum of actions, from solitary to highly collaborative. Self-directed professional development is encouraged and supported at all levels, for individuals, groups and communities, and by a range of philosophical and practical considerations. Within such a culture the natural mode of behaviour is to accept challenges, plan appropriate actions and carry them out. The role of the system is to monitor overall achievement and to provide pastoral support when required. (p.52)

It is important to note that the organisation does provide professional development to meet the accreditation requirements mandated for all teachers in Catholic schools. Teachers are required to participate in seven pupil-free days per year with the program

for these days not usually being based on the individual needs of the teacher. The professional development programs that the organisation provides for teachers in Catholic schools remain very much attuned to meeting the organisation's goals especially in the area of growth in understanding of the Catholic religious tradition and adult-faith development. The document, The Catholic School, indicates this stance:

The witness and conduct of teachers are of primary importance in imparting a distinctive character to Catholic schools. It is, therefore, indispensable to ensure their continuing formation through some form of suitable pastoral provision. This must aim to animate them as witnesses of Christ in the classroom and tackle the problems of their particular apostolate, especially regarding a Christian vision of the world and of education, problems also connected with the art of teaching in accordance with the principles of the Gospel. (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, n.78)

It has been recognised that most teachers hold views of education, teaching and learning which they encountered during their pre-service training (Duffy, 1999). Such research has indicated the resilience of the initial induction into the profession of teaching. The mean age of teachers in the case study diocese is 41 years of age. For many teachers, the initial training period was more than twenty years ago. During that time the nature of teaching and work as a professional educator in a range of roles has undergone substantial change as a result of social, cultural and economic change. The issue of what would constitute effective professional development therefore requires the urgent attention of all educational organisations, including the case study organisation. Most importantly, teachers need professional development that will assist them in understanding the nature of their work more comprehensively.

In examining the need for change in the organisational response to professional development, it is important to consider the direction that has been taken and the direction that is possible. Within Catholic education, staff development or learning in

the workplace has been associated with 'human resource development' which is informed by entry-level standards and job classifications.

More recently, the notion of socially sustainable organisations (Limerick, Cunnington & Crowther, 1998; Baker, 2000) has encouraged new approaches to professional development based upon organisational transformation. This approach requires that opportunities are established to deal with deeper and more pervasive issues such as personal growth, vision, trust, creativity, purpose, leadership, mastery and cultivating organisational spirit. This approach would support the view that career development in education does not end with the handing over of a degree. Changes are occurring with beginning or novice teachers receiving a comprehensive process of orientation and induction within Catholic schools.

The ideal for professional development is that staff members are enabled through the culture, climate and work practices of the organisation, to give their best in meeting their own personal goals in their work-life, as well as fulfilling the requirements of the position to which they have been appointed. The role of the Catholic Education Office in responding to professional development that promotes career saliency is to provide the structures and personnel to support the employee through such processes as orientation and induction into the organisation, performance appraisal, and the provision of worthwhile professional development activities. Each person is responsible, however, for determining and actioning his/her own career pathway. This position assumes that there is a career pathway established by the organisation and that the individual is able to access these positions without hindrance based on merit.

The policy orientations and strategies within organisations that govern teachers' professional development are largely implicit and influenced by economic constraints (Little, 1992). The decisions made within the organisation concerning the deployment

of funds reflect the general status that professional development occupies within the broader array of organisational priorities. There is an emphasis on personal responsibility for continuing education to upgrade skills and knowledge with a salary progression based on annual increments tied to experience. The case study diocese operates on a much smaller resource base compared with the larger city diocese. Given the limited resource base, the major emphasis for career development is directed towards orientation and induction of new full-time teachers and administrators, and the performance appraisal of senior administrators and, more recently, of teachers. In terms of orientation, this is understood as introducing new staff whether beginning teachers or experienced, to the organisation and reflecting on the significance and expectations of working within the particular vision and mission that directs the Catholic education organisation. Induction carries on from orientation as it relates to the new staff member becoming progressively familiar with the role being undertaken within the organisation.

The research data indicated that the general feeling about the organisational response to professional development was that this response was piecemeal, ad hoc and limited in scope being more often directed at religious formation issues. Many of the women in the case study were involved in personal study or had in the recent past completed study. Some received assistance with university fees but others did not if the area of study was not seen as a diocesan priority area. The issue of paid study leave for approved courses was considered a desirable addition by the participants. One woman in a senior role admonished the organisation for its limited efforts:

Women are eighty percent of the system. These same women already face extraordinary difficulties in juggling a triple shift of work, home and/or childcare responsibilities. There appears to be an implicit assumption on the part of the organisation that women have unlimited stamina in their efforts to maintain career currency if they are expected to seek out their own professional development in addition to meeting the normal obligations that go with teaching. (IT7)

The research participants were not averse to presenting for the organisation to consider. One participant offered a suggestion that the use of information communication technology would assist in developing the teacher as a professional as through networking and access to information. An example was given of a school in Canada in which every classroom teacher has a networked laptop computer, telephone and voice message facilities that allow for greater professional networking, access to parents and vice versa. These changes were seen as putting teachers 'more in control' and allowed better use of meeting time to deal with substantive professional issues rather than using valuable staff meeting time to deal with 'administrivia'. Technology training has become a serious issue within the case study diocese with women being very supportive of the training programs provided in term time. Interestingly, all of the women interviewed in the case study, with the exception of two, had their own computers but they were not networked to the schools.

One way that research participants agreed that the organisation provided a 'good structure' for professional development was in the establishment of standing committees and reference groups to address a range of issues from curriculum innovation to behaviour management. These diocesan committees are staffed by teacher representatives from schools across the diocese and gave teachers a broader set of career experiences. The Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workforce Committee has representatives from a broad cross-section of positions including teaching and non-teaching roles. The members of these groups are charged with monitoring school views and assisting in supporting and planning to meet the core terms of reference set out for each group. This approach provides an opportunity to meet the goals of individuals and of the organisation in meeting the demands of the State for accountability, efficiency and effectiveness. Membership on these committees is seventy percent females.



Another suggestion was the use of the Catholic Education Office website as a good source of information for women. In terms of career planning however, women were very definite about what was required. This included skills in applying for positions such as Curriculum Vitae writing, interviewing skills and self-promotion skills. The need for women to hear from other women in different roles about the personal and professional dilemmas they face and how they overcome such dilemmas was considered essential.

A further initiative, which has the potential to improve career planning as an organisational response, was the introduction of annual teacher appraisals in 1999. This process, which is based upon self-evaluation and career-goal orientation, relies upon collaborative planning with school administration to meet personal professional goals. It has the potential to change the focus of professional development to incorporate the personally defined career goals and professional development needs of individuals provided school principals are adequately prepared to assist teachers and that resources can be made available to support professional development. It is too soon to judge the impact of this initiative but resource decisions will no doubt impinge.

The themes identified by the women as important to career outlook provide an understanding of the most cogent issues on women's minds in their efforts to define career outlook. In general, there was a sense of limited opportunity for advancement in the organisation. Opportunity was seen firstly as limited to an understanding of career as promotion out of the classroom rather than with the continuous development of the teaching role. The need to address careers in classrooms requires more vigorous attention. Secondly, there is a lack of recognition by the organisation of women's lives that in general have not changed markedly in terms of the burdens associated with responsibility for running families. The result in this case is that some women are

forced to choose family first because it is too 'stressful' to meet organisational requirements both in credentials to access senior roles and in the time commitment for these roles. Furthermore, there is a sense of resentment that issues such as being given adequate notice to arrange childminding are often ignored when meetings are called or professional development is held after school.

Thirdly, women are subject to the visible presence of an all-male priestly hierarchy, which is a constant reminder of the Church's position of women's roles. Individual priests are not necessarily seen as 'a problem' but the structural barriers associated with the institutional church do create a sense of gender segregation and subordination of women. The image of lay men in senior positions in Catholic education is less imposing than the image of the male clerical roles of Pope, Bishops and priests within which structural power resides. The all-male clerical hierarchy has the power to determine the content of curriculum to be taught and the conditions of employment for men and women in the organisation. One participant reflected on the structure of the organisation and the opportunities for women within it:

Women can't be in charge because the Catholic Church blocks ordination. Even within the positions of authority that women can access in Catholic education, the thought of being overruled by the male clergy is off-putting. (FG4)

Whilst a man may find the clerical hierarchy equally 'off-putting' there is a view that men find it easier to work with the clergy which is typified in the types of relationships that they forge. These relationships allow for the informal relationship between men whilst women must be more careful in maintaining a professional distance.

Within the focus groups, women were invited to share personal experiences that illustrated their views on the organisation as a place for a career as well as attending to the more prescriptive listing of barriers and opportunities. In the round table 'story

telling' that exemplified the focus group process, the women spoke freely of their experiences as women rather than simply employees in the organisation. This meant that they expressed feelings and emotions associated with their desires and ambitions for a satisfying career. They explored the constraints in their personal lives and their working lives that had to be ameliorated and the need for enjoyment that was derived from the close personal relationships forged within particular schools. In doing so, they expressed the compromises, contradictions and pressures associated with developing an understanding of women as teachers and teachers as women. Women make sense of the organisational career context through the discourses in which their lives are constituted: discourses on mothering /parenting, the teaching career with teaching and administration being culturally constructed as feminine and masculine enterprises, and the religious discourses of the Catholic Church. Within the multiple subjectivities that construct women's' lives, career is tied to the desire for lifestream compatibility and the quest for community. These are seen as significant issues that women felt helped create positive career outlook but needed greater focus within the organisation. A Catholic organisation allows for the experience of the spiritual and religious dimension of life.

There is the need, I believe, for the Church to recognise that Catholic women have become more ambitious, articulate and outspoken on issues of justice. The implications for Catholic education are profound. Women want their contributions to the Catholic Church and to Catholic education recognised. Women are more highly educated, more independent, and more career-oriented than ever before. The career position of non-Catholic women is a concern especially with moves to ecumenism which is becoming prominent on the Catholic Church agenda. The establishment of a few ecumenical schools in other diocese also raises a justice issue for non-Catholic teachers. Not every woman expressed a strong sense of career ambition but they each held strong views that

the teaching career must be made more attractive to women and to men.

### Career Orientations

As part of the focus group exercise, women were asked to write what they desired for their careers within the next three years. In analysing the responses, it became notable that women had different career orientations. I chose four categories within which to locate the responses. The categories included women whose career orientation is goal-oriented, detached, stuck or empty. These categories are explained below:

- Women who are goal-oriented included those in the process of leaving the organisation for other roles such as family life, new jobs and full-time study as well as those who desired the achievement of career progress whether through accessing senior administration positions or within the classroom teaching arena and generally knew what steps to take to position themselves favourably. An example of a woman within this category is:

I'm happy as a classroom teacher but I want the chance to teach an upper grade and I want to see our salaries really improve. Oh, and I'd really love an air-conditioned classroom. (FG2)

- Women who are detached from the traditional view of career included those who were not interested in change, as they were generally satisfied with their present roles. This included some older women teachers who felt that it is too late to make changes and, in any case, they were comfortable. Others included women who were teaching part-time because of family-first priority and did not want the hassle of taking on more responsibility including the personal drama of getting more involved in their teaching roles. They felt happy for the next three years to unfold and career was important but in the 'slow track'.

The detached category is exemplified within the following quote:

If I have my way, I'll still be teaching grade one for the next ten years! (FG4)

- Women who are stuck included those who have a desire to take on other roles but have barriers such as non-Catholic status and lack of appropriate credentials preventing them from being eligible to apply for Senior Leadership roles. Others included those who felt restricted by decisions taken within the particular school which limited their choices, such as the grade level they would teach each year. I'd love to take on an APRE's role (Assistant to the Principal Religious Education). But I'm Anglican. (FG1)

- Women who are 'empty' included those who had experienced their careers in recent times as unsatisfying, difficult and monotonous. The next step for such women was to experience change in some way either by transferring to another school, taking up study, taking leave or resignation. This category included women who had applied unsuccessfully for other positions, sometimes on more than one occasion. This category is exemplified in the following brief but meaningful statement:

I'm out of here and out of teaching! It's (teaching) a pain of a job. (FG3)

Accomplishing a career means different things to different women at different phases of their lives. The diversity of women's lives means that one single approach to career management within an organisation will not suffice. The Catholic education organisation in the case study is small enough at the diocesan level to develop a better understanding than that which exists of those who are employed and to provide challenge and support through a career management approach. Currently teacher service is recognised through presentations of certificates and mementos after fifteen, twenty and twenty-five years. In terms of the contribution these awards make to career

outlook, such recognition of service is appreciated by the women but is seen as 'window-dressing' when the bigger issues associated with career outlook remain 'under-done'.

Principals of schools were recognised as key people in assisting teachers to develop career orientations. The role of school principals was considered of prime importance in providing feedback on individual teacher's contributions, establishing in-school opportunities to do broaden experience, sponsoring teachers and to be the gatekeeper, assisting teachers through the barrage of change. The principal in this sense is seen as a career-broker and must understand that:

Within the complex interactions among Church, workplace, occupational and personal factors which constitute the teaching career the dynamic between the individual's orientation to the organisation and the organisation's responsiveness to the individual teacher is revealed. The Catholic school principal is a key person in mediating tensions, contradictions and ambiguities that arise out of a conflation of secular and religious perspectives on the teaching career. Teachers look to their school principals for guidance, support and example in their efforts to make career progress within an environment that gives precedence to the religious dimension of life. (Day, 2000, p.1)

My own experiences as a long time employee of a Catholic education organisation have revealed a tension between individual and structural constraints in terms of my career progress. The importance of particular workplace experiences has been a major catalyst to my own career pattern. Having women in superordinate positions was critical as they acted as mentors and created opportunities for women like myself to develop an organisational profile. They also provided constructive and critical comment on issues I initially found difficult. Critical feedback is an issue that is affected by gender relations. In her study of women and leadership in Australian education, Heath (1999) prefaces her criticism of educational organisations as places for women to aspire

to leadership roles with a comment that women must make an additional effort to seek out constructive criticism if they are to gain professional development which will allow them to excel. She refers to research which indicates that male principals are unlikely to criticise their female staff, for fear that these women may burst into tears. Heath states that this leads to maintenance of a staff of women who will only ever operate with a certain level of capability. Women were seen to be socialised from childhood in such a way that they feared criticism leading to an inability to receive valuable criticism and deal with it constructively.

As a corollary to this perspective, there was an opinion given by a young participant in this case study, that having a religious woman as a principal was a barrier to ambitious lay women. This position was related to a view that a woman religious is seen as having a “different reality” of career advancement and career pathways than would be appropriate for lay women. A different perspective on ambition could also be expected.

For those women who are principals, the need for support from other women principals was a key factor in developing and maintaining direction and motivation. Within the case study diocese, it was felt that the numbers of women in leadership was encouraging although a feeling still exists that if there were more men available, women would be sidestepped. There is a general lack of trust in women’s leadership ability and this is seen as an issue that both women and men perpetuate. There is a need for training programs for women in leadership to assist in giving women the skills, confidence and credibility they need to be successful.

### Summary

Women within this case study expressed a range of perspectives associated with career outlook. They desire credibility, rewards and influence in the education

profession that other professional careers would accrue. They view their career as a way of achieving recognition and legitimacy as well as personal satisfaction through intellectually stimulating work and 'just' remuneration. Women want to be able to influence what is happening in education as an element of their careers. The commentary provided by the women in the case study revealed a sense of the contradictions in women's lives as they strive to attain a meaningful career within the organisational context of Catholic education. This context is both facilitative and limiting for different women as they meld their personal needs, beliefs and values with those that the organisation promotes.

The reality of the current organisational arrangements, including the career structures, create limitations because of the limited size of the diocese, the perceived lack of mobility in many positions mostly in large coastal towns and the lack of a transfer system across diocese. Men are believed to be more sought after for principal positions than are women. Teaching remains a devalued career choice and being in Catholic education does nothing to alleviate this view although it is no worse than teaching in other organisations. The Catholic religious tradition preaches selflessness and the common good over self-interest and individual competitiveness. This value stance is often lost within the competitive market orientation of schooling. Women's roles are narrowly defined in Church teaching. Career outlook is facilitated through creative structures, effective professional development and through the relationships that are forged with other women in Catholic education.

There are women who enjoy the communal and relational elements of their work and the spiritual life within Catholic education but they still require the more commonly understood career rewards for their work. Career outlook for women remains ambiguous due to the framing of careers and personal lives as issues for the individual



rather than the organisation. There is a need to include systemic issues associated with the development of a positive career outlook as an element of organisational life that the organisation should accommodate.