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EDUCATION EXPERIENCE AND INTENTIONS SURVEY, AUSTRALIA, 1979 (PRELIMINARY)

INQUIRIES

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MAIN FEATURES

Preliminary estimates from a survey of the education experience and intentions of the Australian population aged 14 years and over conducted between September and December 1979, show that:

Of the 679,800 school students attending secondary school Years 9 and above in 1979, 94 per cent knew what type of activity they hoped to undertake in the year after leaving school:

- 22 per cent — apprenticeship
- 36 per cent — full-time study
- 20 per cent — work and part-time study
- 14 per cent — work and no study
- 2 per cent — some other activity

The remaining 6 per cent either did not know or did not specify the activity they hoped to undertake.

21,600 students attending a government secondary school in 1979 had previously attended a non-government secondary school; 14,100 students attending a non-government secondary school in 1979 had previously attended a government secondary school. Sixteen per cent of students attending non-government non-Roman Catholic schools had previously attended a government or Roman Catholic school.

22 per cent (1,937,600) of the total population aged 14-64 years had some form of post-school education experience in 1979 — 1,018,000 attended a technical and further education college, a college of advanced education, university or some other educational institution, and 919,500 undertook a non-formal course (for example, a hobby course or course at work).

49 per cent of persons who attended a post-school educational institution in 1979 had already obtained a prior post-school qualification after leaving school, while 52 per cent of persons undertaking a non-formal course possessed such a prior qualification.

intentions of the Australian population aged 14 years and over. Interviews were carried out over a period of approximately 3 months commencing 3 September 1979.

2. This publication contains preliminary estimates of some of the main aspects of the survey. More detailed estimates will be released at a later date. The estimates are preliminary and subject to revision.

Scope and coverage

3. The survey was based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (about 15,000 houses, flats, etc) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, etc) and covered about one-third of one per cent of the population of Australia.

4. The estimates in this publication relate to all persons aged 14 years and over except:

- (a) overseas visitors touring or holidaying in Australia;
- (b) non-Australian servicemen, their spouses and their dependants, stationed in Australia;
- (c) non-Australian diplomatic staff and members of their household, and
- (d) long term patients in hospitals, nursing homes and other health institutions, some boarding school students, and inmates of reformatories.

Survey method

5. Each person over the age of 14 years in the selected dwellings was interviewed personally by carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers.

Definitions

6. *School* — refers to only primary and secondary schools. Any form of tertiary attendance is excluded as are coaching or business schools regardless of whether they teach school subjects. (Note that secondary correspondence schools and schools of the air are included.)

7. *Type of school* — refers to the governing authority of the school, that is, either government or non-government (Roman Catholic or other non-government).

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

A survey was conducted throughout Australia during September to December 1979 to obtain information about the education experience and

8. *Persons with post-school qualification(s)* are those who stated they had gained a qualification (usually at a post-school education institution) after first leaving school. Included here are persons who after first leaving school completed school level qualifications at night classes or at technical and further education colleges.

9. *Classification of educational courses and post-school qualifications* – respondents indicated which of the following groups best described their highest qualification gained since leaving school and/or courses undertaken at educational institutions in 1979:

- (i) *secondary school course* – includes any secondary school course at all, regardless of where undertaken or whether undertaken on a full-time or part-time basis.
- (ii) *trade certificate/apprenticeship* – refers to a trade apprenticeship or training course, or training leading to recognition of competence in a skilled manual occupation, for example, plumbing, air conditioning, hairdressing, motor mechanics, etc.
- (iii) *certificate (non-trade)/diploma* – refers to certificate or diploma courses/qualifications in secretarial or business studies, nursing, teaching, town planning, etc.
- (iv) *bachelor degree or post-graduate diploma* – includes honours degree and masters qualifying course.
- (v) *higher qualification* – includes master degree and doctorate degree.
- (vi) *adult education, hobby course or preparatory course* – refers to courses/qualifications of general interest or of an introductory nature.
- (vii) *other course/qualification* which could not be classified to any of the above levels.

10. *Non-formal course* – refers to hobby courses, courses at work, evening or correspondence courses. Included are an unknown number of persons who indicated that they had not attended an educational institution in 1979 but who may have attended such institutions when undertaking hobby or general interest courses.

11. *Classification of educational institutions* – respondents indicated which of the following types of institution they had attended in 1979, or in the case of school students hoping to undertake some form of study in 1980, which institution they planned to attend:

- (i) *Technical and further education college* – includes any technical college and further education college.
- (ii) *College of advanced education* – includes any institute of technology or teachers college.
- (iii) *University* – includes any university college.
- (iv) *Other educational institution* – includes any agricultural college, business college, teaching hospital, school, etc. not classified to any of the above.

Reliability of the estimates

12. Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings they are subject to sampling variability, that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of dwellings was included in the survey. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors. Another measure of the likely difference is the relative standard error, which is obtained by expressing the standard error as a percentage of the estimate.

13. Space does not allow for a separate indication of the standard error of all estimates in this publication. A table of standard errors for general application is given below. These figures do not give a precise measure of the standard error of a particular estimate but they will provide an indication of its magnitude. An example of the calculation and use of standard errors is as follows: the table below shows that the estimated number of persons aged 14-64 years who attended a university full-time in 1979 was 114,600. From the table it will be seen that this estimate has a standard error of about 5,800. This means that there are about two chances in three that the figure that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey will fall within the range 108,800 to 120,400 and about nineteen chances in twenty that the figure will fall within the range 103,000 to 126,200.

14. As the standard errors in the table show, the smaller the estimate, the higher is the relative standard error. Very small estimates would thus be subject to such high standard errors (relative to the size of the estimate) as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable uses. In this publication, only estimates with relative standard error less than approximately 30% are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. Estimates with relative standard errors greater than 30% have not been shown and although figures for these components can in some cases be derived by subtraction, they should not be regarded as reliable.

Standard errors of estimates

Size of estimate (persons)	Approximate standard error (persons)	Relative standard error (per cent)
4,500	1,380	30.8
6,000	1,590	26.6
10,000	2,040	20.4
20,000	2,800	14.0
30,000	3,350	11.2
50,000	4,200	8.4
100,000	5,600	5.6
200,000	7,300	3.6
300,000	8,500	2.8
500,000	10,000	2.0
1,000,000	13,000	1.3
2,000,000	16,000	0.8
3,000,000	18,000	0.6

15. The imprecision due to sampling variability should not be confused with inaccuracies that may have occurred because of imperfections in reporting by interviewers and respondents. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as the non-sampling error, and they may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or only a sample.

Related publications

16. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in *Catalogue of Publications* (1101.0) which is available free of charge from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

- * subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 14.

17. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

R. J. CAMERON
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**SECTION I: PERSONS AGED 14-20 YEARS ATTENDING SECONDARY SCHOOL IN
AUSTRALIA IN AUGUST 1979**

**TABLE 1. PERSONS ATTENDING SECONDARY SCHOOL, BY TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED AND NUMBER
OF TIMES CHANGED TYPE OF SCHOOL (a), 1979**

Type of school attended in August 1979	Number of type changes (a)			Total number of secondary school students aged 14-20 years (^{'000})	Changes as a proportion of the total number of secondary students aged 14-20 years (Per cent)
	One (^{'000})	Two (^{'000})	Total (^{'000})		
MALES					
Government	11.4	*	11.9	301.7	3.9
Roman Catholic	*	*	*	58.8	*
Other non-government	5.5	*	6.3	37.3	16.8
Total	18.6	*	19.8	397.8	5.0
FEMALES					
Government	9.1	*	9.7	282.3	3.4
Roman Catholic	*	*	*	63.7	*
Other non-government	*	*	*	22.9	*
Total	15.3	*	15.9	368.9	4.3
PERSONS					
Government	20.5	*	21.6	584.0	3.7
Roman Catholic	4.5	*	4.5	122.5	3.7
Other non-government	8.9	*	9.6	60.2	15.9
Total	33.9	*	35.7	766.8	4.7

(a) The term *number of type changes* means the number of times a secondary school student has changed his/her attendance from a government school to a non-government school or vice versa during their period of secondary schooling.

**TABLE 2. PERSONS ATTENDING SCHOOL YEARS 9 AND ABOVE IN 1979, BY INTENDED ACTIVITY IN
THE YEAR AFTER LEAVING SCHOOL**

Intended activity in the year after leaving school	Males	Females	Persons
NUMBER (^{'000})			
Apprenticeship	124.5	24.9	149.4
Full-time study	101.8	141.5	243.3
Work and part-time study	56.2	78.7	134.9
Work and no study	38.5	58.6	97.2
Something else	8.2	8.1	16.2
Don't know	9.1	8.5	17.7
Not specified	13.5	7.7	21.2
Total	351.8	328.1	679.8
PER CENT			
Apprenticeship	35.4	7.6	22.0
Full-time study	28.9	43.1	35.8
Work and part-time study	16.0	24.0	19.8
Work and no study	11.0	17.9	14.3
Something else	2.3	2.5	2.4
Don't know	2.6	2.6	2.6
Not specified	3.8	2.3	3.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 3. PERSONS ATTENDING SCHOOL YEARS 9 AND ABOVE IN 1979 WHO INTEND TO COMMENCE POST-SCHOOL STUDIES IN 1980, BY TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION PROPOSED TO ATTEND, AND PROPOSED TYPE OF ATTENDANCE

Type of educational institution proposed to attend in 1980	Proposed type of attendance							
	Full-time		Part-time		Total			
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Persons	
	('000)						(Per cent)	
Technical and further education college	*	13.1	41.5	16.5	45.0	29.7	74.7	45.9
College of advanced education	7.0	11.1	*	*	10.2	14.0	24.1	14.8
University	15.6	12.8	*	*	18.5	15.3	33.8	20.8
Other institution (a)	*	*	11.0	10.1	12.1	11.8	23.9	14.7
Don't know/unsure	*	*	*	*	*	*	6.0	3.7
Not specified	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	27.3	39.5	62.5	33.4	89.8	73.0	162.8	100.0

(a) Includes business colleges, teaching hospitals, etc. not elsewhere classified.

SECTION II : PERSONS AGED 14-64 YEARS : POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION COURSES UNDERTAKEN IN 1979

TABLE 4. PERSONS WHO ATTENDED AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN 1979, BY TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION ATTENDED (a), AND TYPE OF ATTENDANCE

Type of educational institution attended in 1979	Type of attendance						
	Full-time		Part-time		Total		
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Persons
	NUMBER ('000)						
Technical and further education college	31.7	32.2	237.9	144.0	269.6	176.2	445.8
College of advanced education	41.4	48.2	69.5	48.9	110.8	97.1	207.9
University	61.1	53.6	50.4	28.4	111.5	81.9	193.5
Other institution (b)	25.9	39.9	53.4	51.8	79.3	91.6	170.9
Total	160.0	173.8	411.2	273.0	571.2	446.8	1,018.0
PER CENT							
Technical and further education college	3.1	3.2	23.4	14.1	26.5	17.3	43.8
College of advanced education	4.1	4.7	6.8	4.8	10.9	9.5	20.4
University	6.0	5.3	5.0	2.8	11.0	8.0	19.0
Other institution (b)	2.5	3.9	5.2	5.1	7.8	9.0	16.8
Total	15.7	17.1	40.4	26.8	56.1	43.9	100.0

(a) Estimates on attendance at all educational institutions relate to students, not enrolments, that is, persons who may have been enrolled in more than one course at educational institutions in 1979 have been allocated to that course which the person considers to be of major importance to them. (b) Includes business colleges, teaching hospitals, etc. not elsewhere classified.

TABLE 5. PERSONS WHO ATTENDED AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION OR UNDERTOOK A NON-FORMAL COURSE (a) IN 1979, BY LEVEL OF COURSE UNDERTAKEN IN 1979 AND LEVEL OF HIGHEST QUALIFICATION OBTAINED SINCE LEAVING SCHOOL

Level of post-school course undertaken in 1979	Level of highest qualification obtained since first leaving school												
	Secondary school course (b)	Trade certificate/apprenticeship	Certificate (non-trade)/diploma	Bachelor degree or post-graduate diploma	Higher qualification	Adult education, hobby course, preparatory course	Other post-school qualification	Total post-school qualification	No post-school qualification	Total			
										Males	Females	Persons	
(Per cent)													
COURSE UNDERTAKEN AT AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN 1979													
Secondary school course (b)	7.9	*	10.4	*	*	*	*	24.6	28.2	18.5	34.3	52.8	2.7
Trade certificate/apprenticeship	*	52.2	4.5	*	*	*	*	59.8	114.0	161.3	12.5	173.8	9.0
Certificate (non-trade)/diploma	11.9	24.4	100.1	11.7	*	*	*	149.8	143.0	139.4	153.4	292.8	15.1
Bachelor degree or post-graduate diploma	9.0	*	47.0	57.3	*	*	*	119.7	148.5	152.7	115.4	268.2	13.8
Higher qualification	*	*	*	24.0	*	*	*	33.3	*	23.5	10.4	33.9	1.8
Adult education, hobby course or preparatory course	*	11.1	48.6	13.7	*	7.0	*	88.1	73.7	52.7	109.1	161.8	8.3
Other course	*	7.4	7.1	*	*	*	7.0	24.6	10.1	23.1	11.6	34.7	1.8
Total	34.4	104.5	220.5	111.7	9.1	8.8	10.9	500.0	518.0	571.2	446.8	1,018.0	52.5
NON-FORMAL COURSE UNDERTAKEN IN 1979													
Non-formal course (a) (not included in any of the above)	26.4	116.9	237.5	72.3	10.4	6.9	7.9	478.3	441.2	409.1	510.4	919.5	47.5
ALL COURSES UNDERTAKEN IN 1979													
Total all courses	60.8	221.4	458.1	184.0	19.5	15.8	18.7	978.3	959.3	980.4	957.2	1,937.6	100.0

(a) *Non-formal course* - refers to hobby courses, courses at work and other courses. Included are an unknown number of persons who indicated that they had not attended an educational institution in 1979 but who may have attended such institutions when undertaking hobby or general interest courses. (b) *Secondary school course* - includes any secondary school course undertaken after leaving school.