

BIRTH EXPECTATIONS OF MARRIED WOMEN (PRELIMINARY), NOVEMBER 1976

INQUIRIES

If you want to know more about these statistics —

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MAIN FEATURES

In November 1976, 21.2 per cent of married women, aged under 40 and without children, expected to have no children, 6.3 per cent one child, 50.3 per cent 2 children, and 22.2 per cent 3 or more. The proportions for married women under 40 who had already had one or more children, were 76.4 per cent no more children, 16.8 per cent one additional child, 5.6 per cent 2 additional children and 1.2 per cent three or more additional children. Over 92 per cent of the women surveyed provided information about birth expectations.

Just under half the married women under 40 who had had one child expected to have one more, and 84 per cent with two children expected to have no more children.

By adding together the number of children these women had had and the number of children they expected to have, an indication can be given of the total number of children (already born and expected to be born) of these women. The average number of actual and expected children of married women near the end of their child-bearing period, i.e. aged 35 to 39 years, was estimated at 2.9, compared with 2.4 at ages 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29, and 2.6 at ages 30-34. The average for all married women under 40 was 2.6.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains preliminary results of a survey in November 1976 of the child-bearing histories and birth expectations of ever-married women in Australia. The survey was conducted as a supplement to the regular quarterly Population Survey. Questions were directed to women under the age of 40 who were married, widowed or divorced, and who were available for personal interview. Information was obtained about the birth date and sex of each child and the number of children still living. Women married at the time of the survey were asked how many more children they expected to have, altogether and in the next five years, and when they expected the next child to be born.

Scope

The Population Survey is based on a multi-stage

area sample of dwellings covering about two-thirds of one percent of the population of Australia. The information is obtained by carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers, the interviews being carried out over four weeks. Members of the permanent defence forces and diplomatic personnel are excluded. Also excluded from the November 1976 questions on children and birth expectations were women in hospital and women living in institutions. Birth expectations questions were not asked of widowed and divorced women.

Estimation

To obtain the preliminary estimates shown in this statement ratio estimation procedures were used based on benchmarks of the female population in the required age, State or Territory and regional categories, derived from 1971 Census figures updated in accordance with subsequent deaths and net migration. For the final estimates it is proposed to use more suitable benchmarks, derived from the 1976 Census (adjusted for underenumeration) and classified by marital status.

Reliability of the Estimates

Since the estimates in this statement are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the information had been obtained from occupants of all dwellings. 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 in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors. Estimates of less than 4,000, i.e. with a standard error of more than about 20 per cent have not been shown, as they are subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. These estimates are denoted by an asterisk. Although in some cases figures for these small components can be derived by subtraction, they should not be regarded as reliable. More information on this topic, together with a table of estimated standard errors, is given in the quarterly bulletin *The Labour Force* (Catalogue No. 6203.0. Previously Ref. No. 6.20).

Items of Information

Items tabulated in this statement include age, birthplace, marital status and duration of marriage of mother, number of live-born children, number of (additional) children expected and the expected interval to the birth of the next child. Other items which will be processed from the survey but which are not included in the preliminary estimates are year of arrival in Australia (for overseas-born), occupation, hours worked, dates of birth and sex of live-born children, number of surviving children, number of (additional) children expected in the next five years, and derived items such as children of the current marriage, overseas-born and Australian-born children, age of youngest child, interval between date of marriage and birth of first child, age of mother at marriage and intervals between successive children. It will also be possible to cross-classify these details by certain particulars of the husband.

Further Tabulations

Additional tabulations will be produced for inclusion in a bulletin or for distribution to individual enquirers in other ways. Only a small part of all possible tabulations will be selected for publication in the bulletin to be issued when the estimates in their final form become available. Users likely to need special tabulations are therefore advised to contact the Australian Bureau of Statistics for further information and to discuss their requirements as soon as possible.

Symbols and Other Usages

- .. Not applicable
- * Very small estimate subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. Includes nil estimates.

Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in tables are due to rounding.

R. J. CAMERON
Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. CHILD-BEARING HISTORY SUMMARY: EVER MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15 TO 39 YEARS
NOVEMBER 1976

Live-born children	Currently married							
	Married once		Remarried		Total		Widowed and divorced	
	Number ('000)	Number ('000)	Number ('000)	Per cent	Number ('000)	Per cent	Number ('000)	Per cent
None	277.9	10.0	287.9	18.8	6.8	13.1	294.6	18.6
One	257.0	10.6	267.6	17.5	13.6	26.3	281.2	17.8
Two	490.1	20.0	510.0	33.3	13.5	26.1	523.5	33.1
Three	278.7	13.7	292.5	19.1	9.6	18.5	302.1	19.1
Four or more	158.3	14.5	172.8	11.3	8.3	16.0	181.1	11.4
Total	(a)1,462.8	68.8	(a)1,531.6	100.0	51.8	100.0	(a)1,583.4	100.0

(a) Includes women for whom the number of live-born children was not ascertained.

TABLE 2. CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15 TO 39 YEARS: BY NUMBER OF LIVE-BORN CHILDREN AND BIRTH EXPECTATIONS, NOVEMBER 1976

Additional children expected	Women whose live-born children numbered -					Total (a)	
	None	One	Two	Three	Four or more	Number	Per cent
	- '000 -						%
Expectation known -							
None	53.9	65.3	390.2	255.2	157.3	922.4	66.3
One	10.4	104.6	46.8	16.7	4.3	182.8	13.1
One or two	11.5	23.9	11.2	*	*	48.2	3.5
Two	106.8	29.1	9.4	*	*	147.0	10.6
Two or three	30.7	8.2	*	*	*	40.8	2.9
Three	21.3	5.4	*	*	*	27.1	1.9
Three or four	8.5	*	*	*	*	10.2	0.7
Four or more	11.4	*	*	*	*	13.0	0.9
Total	254.4	238.5	460.6	274.7	162.6	1,391.4	100.0
Uncertain of number	13.2	5.1	*	*	*	22.0	..
Expectation not known	20.1	24.0	47.3	17.2	9.1	118.2	..
Total, currently married	287.9	267.6	510.0	292.5	172.8	1,531.6	..

(a) Includes women for whom the number of live-born children was not ascertained.

TABLE 3. CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN BY AGE AND NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL CHILDREN EXPECTED, NOVEMBER 1976

Additional children expected	Women Aged -					Total
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	
-'000-						
Expectation known -						
None	4.6	67.7	219.7	318.3	312.1	922.4
One	5.6	56.1	82.7	32.5	5.9	182.8
One or two	3.5	16.5	20.9	6.2	•	48.2
Two	9.9	73.9	50.5	11.3	•	147.0
Two or three	•	26.8	10.9	•	•	40.8
Three	•	17.1	6.1	•	•	27.1
Three or four	•	7.3	•	•	•	10.2
Four or more	•	7.9	•	•	•	13.0
Total	31.6	273.3	395.3	370.4	320.8	1,391.4
Uncertain of number	•	8.2	8.2	•	•	22.0
Expectation not known	•	21.2	45.4	32.2	17.4	118.2
Total currently married	35.4	302.7	448.9	406.3	339.3	1,531.6

TABLE 4. CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN : BY AGE, NUMBER OF LIVE-BORN CHILDREN AND BIRTH EXPECTATIONS, NOVEMBER 1976

Age group (years)	Women whose live-born children numbered -					Total (a)	
	None	One	Two	Three	Four or more	Number	Per cent
-1000-							%
Expected no more children							
15-19	*	*	*	*	..	4.6	0.5
20-24	10.0	10.6	37.0	7.9	*	67.7	7.3
25-29	16.5	16.2	115.2	51.9	19.8	219.7	23.8
30-34	13.2	20.0	134.4	98.8	51.6	318.3	34.6
35-39	12.7	17.3	101.9	96.5	83.8	312.1	33.8
Total	53.9	65.3	390.2	255.2	157.3	922.4	100.0
Expected one or more additional children (b)							
15-19	16.0	10.5	*	*	..	27.1	5.8
20-24	117.1	66.3	19.6	*	*	205.6	43.8
25-29	55.7	74.3	36.5	8.5	*	175.7	37.5
30-34	9.9	18.9	12.4	7.4	*	52.1	11.1
35-39	*	*	*	*	*	8.6	1.8
Total	200.6	173.2	70.4	19.5	5.3	469.1	100.0
Expectation not known or uncertain of number (b)							
15-19	*	*	*	*	..	*	*
20-24	13.4	6.1	7.4	*	*	29.3	20.9
25-29	12.2	13.1	19.7	6.7	*	53.6	38.2
30-34	3.6	5.2	16.1	6.3	*	34.9	24.9
35-39	*	*	5.7	*	*	18.5	13.2
Total	33.4	29.1	49.4	17.7	10.2	140.2	100.0
Total currently married women							
15-19	19.4	12.8	*	*	..	35.4	2.3
20-24	140.5	83.2	64.1	11.9	*	302.7	19.8
25-29	84.4	103.6	171.4	67.0	22.5	448.9	29.3
30-34	26.8	44.2	162.9	112.5	58.8	405.3	26.5
35-39	16.8	23.9	108.9	100.9	88.6	339.3	22.2
Total	287.9	267.6	510.0	292.5	172.8	1,531.6	100.0

(a) Includes women for whom the number of live-born children was not ascertained. (b) Women expecting more children but uncertain of the number are excluded from the upper but included in the lower block.

TABLE 5. CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN : BY AGE AND NUMBER OF LIVE-BORN AND EXPECTED CHILDREN, NOVEMBER 1976

Age group (years)	Currently married women (a) Number (⁰ 000)	Live-born children (b)		Additional children expected (c)		Total children	
		Number (⁰ 000)	Per thousand currently married women	Number (⁰ 000)	Per thousand currently married women	Number (⁰ 000)	Per thousand currently married women
15-19	31.6	16.7	529	58.4	1,845	75.1	2,374
20-24	273.3	231.4	847	412.1	1,508	643.5	2,355
25-29	395.3	668.2	1,690	279.7	708	947.9	2,398
30-34	370.4	903.9	2,440	71.2	192	975.1	2,632
35-39	320.8	924.5	2,882	11.4	36	935.9	2,918
Total	1,391.4	2,744.8	1,973	832.9	599	3,577.7	2,572

(a) Excludes women who did not know their birth expectations and those who were expecting more children but were uncertain of the number. (b) Women with "5 or more" children were assumed on average to have 6 children. (c) Women expecting "1 or 2", "2 or 3" or "3 or 4" children were assumed on average to be expecting 1.5, 2.5 or 3.5 children respectively; women expecting "4 or more" children were assumed to be expecting 5 children.

TABLE 6. CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15 TO 39 YEARS (a) : BY NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL CHILDREN EXPECTED AND DURATION OF CURRENT MARRIAGE, NOVEMBER 1976

	Women whose current marriage was of duration -					
Additional children expected	Under 2 years	2 years to under 5 years	5 years to under 10 years	10 years or more	Total (b)	
- '000 -						
Expectation known -						
None	19.7	76.0	291.4	534.2	922.4	
One	14.7	70.4	81.5	16.1	182.8	
One or two	7.7	23.8	14.8	*	48.2	
Two	51.5	65.2	27.3	*	147.0	
Two or three	19.1	16.3	4.5	*	40.8	
Three	14.3	11.0	*	*	27.1	
Three or four	4.8	4.1	*	*	10.2	
Four or more	7.0	4.7	*	*	13.0	
Total	138.8	271.5	423.6	555.4	1,391.4	
Expectation not known or uncertain of number	18.1	30.9	59.0	30.9	140.2	
Total, currently married	156.8	302.3	482.6	586.3	1,531.6	

(a) Includes 68,800 remarried women. The duration of their current marriage was : under 2 years, 16,200, 2 to 5 years, 25,300, 5 to 10 years, 18,000, 10 years or more, 8,900, and a small number of unknown duration. 47,000 of these women expected no additional children. (b) Includes women for whom duration of marriage was not ascertained.

TABLE 7. CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15 TO 39 YEARS, BY BIRTHPLACE, NUMBER OF LIVE-BORN CHILDREN AND BIRTH EXPECTATIONS, NOVEMBER 1976

Additional children expected	Women whose live-born children numbered -					Total (a)	
	None	One	Two	Three	Four or more	Number	Per cent
	- '000 -						%
AUSTRALIAN-BORN WOMEN							
None	41.8	44.3	277.3	190.0	122.2	675.9	60.4
One or more	159.4	122.7	53.3	15.2	4.4	355.0	31.7
Not known or uncertain of number	22.0	19.0	29.7	9.8	7.8	88.5	7.9
Total	223.2	186.0	360.3	215.0	134.5	1,119.5	100.0
OVERSEAS-BORN WOMEN							
None	12.0	21.1	112.9	65.2	35.1	246.4	59.8
One or more	41.2	50.4	17.1	4.3	*	114.1	27.7
Not known or uncertain of number	11.5	10.1	19.7	8.0	*	51.6	12.5
Total	64.7	81.6	149.7	77.5	38.4	412.1	100.0
TOTAL, CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN							
None	53.9	65.3	390.2	255.2	157.3	922.4	60.2
One or more	200.6	173.2	70.4	19.5	5.3	469.1	30.6
Not known or uncertain of number	33.4	29.1	49.4	17.7	10.2	140.2	9.2
Total	287.9	267.6	510.0	292.5	172.8	1,531.6	100.0

(a) Includes women for whom the number of live-born children was not ascertained.

TABLE 8. CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN WHO EXPECTED ONE OR MORE (ADDITIONAL) CHILDREN (a) BY AGE AND EXPECTED INTERVAL TO BIRTH OF NEXT CHILD, NOVEMBER 1976

Expected interval to birth of next child (years)	Age group (years) -					Total	
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	Number	Per cent
	- '000 -						%
Under 1	8.4	57.1	66.2	25.0	6.2	162.9	34.7
1 and under 2	6.5	50.4	47.0	13.5	*	119.0	25.4
2 and under 3	5.6	44.8	36.3	5.5	*	92.2	19.7
3 and under 4	*	18.1	8.6	*	*	30.8	6.6
4 and over	*	12.5	5.3	*	*	19.0	4.1
Interval not ascertained	*	22.8	12.2	6.7	*	45.2	9.6
Total	27.1	205.6	175.7	52.1	8.6	469.1	100.0

(a) Excludes women expecting more children but uncertain of the number.