

A PROFILE OF THE N.Z. PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY: EDUCATION, SEX, FIRST EMPLOYMENT

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A survey was carried out of the highest degrees and first employment of members of the Society. The results indicate that almost 50 percent of the Members have received their highest degrees during 1970-74, that 94 percent of first jobs were supported by tax money, that Health Services are rapidly replacing the Universities as the largest employer and that the proportion of psychologists recruited from overseas for jobs in New Zealand is decreasing rather than increasing.

Pursuant to a Remit of the 1973 (Auckland) A.G.M. of the New Zealand Psychological Society, in which it was recognised that there is a strong need for enquiry into the availability of job opportunities for psychology graduates, a survey was conducted among the members of the Society on the assumption that the picture obtained of the first jobs of present members would help us predict the range and number of jobs available for new graduates in psychology. Psychologists in other countries have been worried about availability of employment for graduates for some time (Warren, 1973; Boneau and Cuca, 1974) and it would seem timely and pertinent to ask what positions have, in the past, been available for graduates in psychology from New Zealand universities. *The New Zealand Psychologist* (Gregson, 1975) has addressed itself to the question of the availability of such jobs in the near future.

PATTERNS OF CHANGE IN GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Greenway (1973) suggested that three major questions need to be considered by those responsible for educational policy. First, are the correct numbers of graduates being produced for the jobs available; second, if they are not, is there an obligation to change the situation; and third, if there is, how can this best be achieved at the lowest possible overall cost (in financial and personal terms) to graduates, employers, taxpayers and parents?

In New Zealand, there is only limited information available about openings in psychology for graduates seeking employment. For this reason, the following survey was conducted. It is hoped that the results of the survey will be of interest and value in the following respects.

- (i) information has been obtained as to the range of employment (and qualifications) held by members of the N.Z.Ps.S. both historically and currently;

- (ii) new graduates in psychology will now have some idea of the range of employers and job opportunities available to them. In addition this survey should serve to indicate the academic qualifications needed to fill various positions, and also indicate the nature of work involved;
- (iii) statistics obtained on the proportion of new members of the society entering certain fields, e.g., clinical, would enable University psychology departments to advise prospective graduates appropriately and concentrate efforts where the demand lies.

In analyzing a survey of this nature, the limitations of the data must be recognized. They are first, that members of the N.Z. Psychological Society are, in fact, a biased sample in that they represent only those graduates who have remained in, or returned to, psychology after graduating. This excludes those graduates who did not find employment in psychology or allied fields. Secondly, the first employment statistics apply to members of the N.Z. Psychological Society at only one point in their careers, which in some cases tends to conceal much about their life-time employment history.

METHOD

The Sample

The sample included 384 Members, Associates, and Fellows of the New Zealand Psychological Society (Inc.) as recorded in the 1974-1975 membership list. Also included were 79 Student Subscribers and 17 Subscribers, making a total of 480 people.

A questionnaire, including a stamped return envelope, was sent to all members of the sample, asking for:

- (i) name
- (ii) year of graduation (highest degree)
- (iii) highest degree
- (iv) University
- (v) other relevant qualifications (if any), and year these were obtained
- (vi) first appointment (job) after attaining highest academic qualifications
- (vii) job title
- (viii) employer
- (ix) nature of work (e.g. therapy, research, etc.)

RESULTS

Response to the Questionnaire

Of the 480 questionnaires which were sent out, 297 (62 percent) were returned. Twenty-nine of the returned questionnaires were incomplete, most from Student Subscribers who sent personal replies indicating that they felt that they were not in a position to answer the questionnaire.

Section I: Characteristics of Members of the New Zealand Psychological Society

Table 1 suggests that over the last ten years, approximately one quarter of those psychology graduates who subsequently joined the Society have been female. This represents an approximately 10 percent increase from the preceding five years (1960-64). Females are less well represented among those with overseas degrees (15 percent, 1965-74).

TABLE 1
Number and Percentage of Responses of Each Sex
According to Year in which Highest Degree was Earned

Year	Female (N)	%	Male (N)	Total
Pre 1950	4	31	9	13
1950-1954	—	0	7	7
1955-1959	2	18	9	11
1960-1964	6	15	34	40
1965-1969	16	24	51	67
1970-1974	36	28	94	130
TOTAL	64	24	204	268

Table 2 demonstrates that the number of N.Z. degrees in psychology has shown a consistent increase in each 5-year block since 1950, although the increase has varied widely (from 15 percent to 45 percent). Just under 50 percent of the current members of the society (who completed this questionnaire) received their highest degree during the last five years.

Table 2 also indicates that approximately 80 percent of those responding obtained their highest degree from one of the New Zealand Universities, while approximately 20 percent graduated from overseas Universities. It is surprising that all overseas degrees come from only four countries. Great Britain accounts for 44 percent of the 52 overseas degrees; the United States and Canada for another 44 percent, and Australia for the remaining 12 percent.

TABLE 2
Number and Percentage of New Zealand and Overseas Degrees
According to Year of Graduation

Year	Great Britain		North America		Australia		Total Overseas		N.Z.		Total N
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Pre 1950	6	46					6	46	7	54	13
1950-54	2	29	1	14			3	43	4	57	7
1955-59	3	27	2	18			5	45	6	55	11
1960-64	5	13	4	10			9	23	31	78	40
1965-69	6	9	7	10	1	1	14	21	53	79	67
1970-74	1	1	9	7	5	4	15	12	115	88	130
Total	23	9	23	9	6	2	52	19	216	81	268

In general, the number of new Members with degrees from Great Britain has been declining in recent years, while the number of people with degrees from North America and Australia has been increasing.

Table 3 shows that more degrees have been earned in New Zealand than overseas. Additionally, 70 percent of members with New Zealand degrees have Honours or Masters degrees, while approximately 16 percent have a Bachelors Degree and 14 percent the Doctorate.

TABLE 3
New Zealand and Overseas Degrees According to Year of Graduation

Year	Bachelors		Hons, P.G.D. (A, Sc, Ed), Dip. Clin. Psych., Masters, M.B.Ch.Bs.		Doctorate	
	N.Z.	Overseas	N.Z.	Overseas	N.Z.	Overseas
Pre 1950	2		5	2		4
1950-54	1		3	1		2
1955-59	1	1	4	1	1	3
1960-64	3		22	1	6	8
1965-69	8		40	8	5	6
1970-74	18		82	4	15	11
Sub Total	33	1	156	17	27	34
Total		34		173		61

Of those members who obtained degrees overseas, three quarters (74 percent) have a doctorate. It is interesting to note that while the total number of respondents with overseas doctorates is greater than respondents with N.Z. doctorates, this relationship has been undergoing a gradual change since 1955, and has, in the last five years, completely reversed itself. The number of new New Zealand doctoral degrees in 1970-74, for the first time, exceeds the number of new overseas doctorates. There is every reason to expect this trend to continue.

Section II: First Employment

Table 4 indicates that a plurality of N.Z. Psychological Society Members (31 percent) over the years obtained their first employment at Universities. Indeed education-related employment accounts for a full 56 percent of first employment. This trend does, however, appear to be changing with the increase in Health Department and Hospital Board jobs over the 1970-74 period. In 1965-69, such jobs accounted for only 12 percent of first employment, while in the 1970-74 period they accounted for 31 percent (a plurality) of first employment.

Few of our respondents (2 percent) obtained their first jobs from tertiary teaching institutions other than universities, and this area of employment has not shown a tendency to increase over recent years. Another area which would seem a natural and appropriate one for people with psychological training is Social Security and/or Child

TABLE 4
First Employers of N.Z. Psychological Society Members

Employer	Pre-1965	1965-69	1970-74	Total	
	N	N	N	N	%
Positions outside Psychology	4	1		5	2
Private Enterprise		6	4	10	4
Non-Governmental Social Services			2	2	1
University	26	18	38	82	31
Other Tertiary Teaching Institutions	3	1	2	6	2
Education Departments	20	18	24	62	23
Justice Department	2	8	13	23	9
Health or Hospital Board	11	8	40	59	22
Social Security or Child Welfare		1		1	0.4
Other Government Departments (Statistics, Defence, Labour)	5	6	7	18	7
TOTAL	71	67	130	268	

Welfare but Table 4 shows us that only one of the 268 N.Z. Psychological Society Members in our sample was initially employed there, and none have been so employed in the last five years. More encouraging are the 10 respondents who have been employed in psychology-related jobs by private enterprise over the last 10 years. No one reported working for private enterprise prior to 1965. Despite this enterprising group, tax money has at least initially supported 94 percent of us, summing together respondents employed in Government departments and tertiary education institutions.

Comparing the ratio of male/female employment over the two blocks 1965-69 and 1970-74, we find that a constant percentage (16 percent) of new University employees are female. Health or Hospital Board employment also presents a fairly constant ratio (38 percent female 65-69, 30 percent female 70-74) despite a five-fold increase in overall first employment (see Table 4). The Education and Justice Departments, however, show rather radical changes. The percentage of women obtaining first employment from the Education Department doubled between the two blocks (22 percent; 42 percent) while an even more dramatic drop occurred in the percentage of new female employees in the Justice Department (63 percent; 23 percent). The numbers of new employees in the other categories are so small as to render other comparisons on the basis of sex untenable.

Of the 82 people working for the largest first employer, the Universities, 50 (61 percent) worked in Departments of Psychology. Another 26 (32 percent) worked in Departments of Education. The remaining 6 people were distributed among Psychological Medicine (2), Student Health and Welfare (1) and three other Departments. Women are less well represented in University employment ($N=12=15$ percent) than in the general population of respondents (24 percent).

TABLE 5
University Job Titles and Corresponding Degrees
(Before 1965, 1965-69, 1970-74)

	Before 1965		1965-69		1970-74	
Research Assistant or Technician	Hons.	1	MA/MSc.	1	M.Ed.	1
Tutor or Demonstrator			Hons.	2	BA/BSc.	1
			MA/MSc.	2		
			Ph.D.	1		
Scientific or Research Officer			MA/MSc.	1	PGD (Psych)	1
			Ph.D.	1	MA/MSc.	2
					Ph.D.	2
Junior or Assistant Lecturer	MA/MSc.	5	Hons.	1	BA/BSc.	1
	Ph.D.	3	MA/MSc.	1	Hons.	2
					MA/MSc.	3
					M.Ed.	1
					Ph.D.	6
Lecturer	MB,Ch.B.	1	MA/MSc.	2	Hons.	1
	MA/MSc.	5	Ph.D.	5	MA/MSc.	5
	Ph.D.	11			Ph.D.	11
Other			Ph.D.	1	Ph.D.	1

In the Health Department-Hospital Boards the overwhelming majority of the 59 psychologically trained respondents were employed as Assistant Psychologists (56 percent) or Psychologists (27 percent). There have been, however, a few psychologically trained people scattered throughout the Health Services as Audiologists (2), Research Officers (2), Social Workers (2), Psychiatric Nurses (2), and one Training Officer.

The Education Department employed 62 members of our sample directly after they obtained their highest degrees. Forty-three (69 percent) were employed for direct psychological duties and the rest (19) as teachers.

Questions were raised at the 1975 N.Z. Psychological Society Annual General Meeting about the importation of psychologists from overseas. Analyzing the responses from those members of our sample who work for the four largest employers and comparing the periods 1970-74, 1965-69 and pre-1965, we find that the Universities have recruited a fairly constant 30 percent of their newly-graduated staff from overseas universities; the Education Department shows a striking decrease in overseas trained staff (before 1965, 35 percent; 1965-69, 17 percent; 1970-74, 0 percent), over the three time blocks, the Health Department and Hospital Boards also show a decrease from about 37 percent in the periods preceding 1970 to 8 percent for 1970-74, and the Justice Department has only 1 graduate trained overseas in our sample of 23. Assum-

ing that our sample is not badly biased, overseas graduates as recently as 1974 presented little or no competition for N.Z. jobs in psychology outside the Universities and even there, the percentage of overseas degrees represents a relatively unchanging minority. A closer look at the four biggest employers, Universities, Education Department, Health Department (and Hospital Boards) and the Justice Department is in order.

While the absolute number of N.Z. Psychological Society members employed by the Universities has increased substantially over the years, the percentage of employees at each degree level does not seem to have substantially altered. Members with Ph.D.'s, for example, represent approximately 50 percent of new university employees in all three year blocks (before 1965, 1965-69, 1970-74) so, despite rumour to the contrary, this degree does not appear to be becoming any more necessary for obtaining a University position than it was ten or more years ago. The position obtained may, however, be further down the scale. In the 1970-74 period, for the first time since 1962, some new Ph.D.'s were employed at the Junior Lecturer rather than the Lecturer level (Table 5). On the other hand, Honours and Masters degree holders were appointed to 35 percent of the lecturing positions reported during 1970-74.

Unlike the Universities and Health Services, Education Department Psychological Services show no growth in N.Z. Psychological Society Membership between 1965-69 and 1970-74 (Table 6). During this period, Masters degrees and Post Graduate Diplomas in Education are the only new degrees reported as acceptable for the grading of Psychologist. Other applicants with Masters, Bachelors and Honours degrees were accepted for Assistant Psychologist positions.

Five people with Honours and Masters degrees report becoming teachers of regular classes during this period and one Bachelor's graduate reports becoming a special class teacher. A disturbing note is the lack of N.Z. Psychological Society members among new Vocational Guidance Officers with the Education Department (1970-74). In prior years, five members of the Society found initial employment in this area.

TABLE 6.
Education Department Psychological Service:
Job Titles and Corresponding Degrees (Before 1965, 1965-69, 1970-74)

	Before 1965	1965-69	1970-74
Assistant Psychologist	BA/BSc. 1	BA/BSc. 1	BA/BSc. 2
	PGD (Ed.) 1	Hons. 4	Hons. 3
		MA/MSc. 1	MA/MSc. 2
Psychologist	PGD (Ed.) 2	PGD (Ed.) 2	PGD (Ed.) 3
		Hons. 1	
	MA/MSc. 5	MA/MSc. 3	MA/MSc. 5
		M.Ed. 1	
	Ph.D. 4	Ph.D. 1	

The requirements of the Justice Department appear to have become steadily more stringent or their applicants better qualified as the years progress (Table 7). Masters degrees now prevail (62 percent 1970-74) with one additional respondent reporting a Diploma in Clinical Psychology and another the doctorate.

TABLE 7
Justice Department Psychological Services:
Job Titles and Corresponding Degrees (Before 1965, 1965-69, 1970-74)

	Before 1965	1965-69	1970-74
Assistant Psychologist		BA/BSc. 2 Hons. 2	BA/BSc. 2
	MA/MSc. 1	MA/MSc. 3	MA/MSc. 6
Psychologist		PGD (Psych) 1	MA/MSc. 2 Dip.Clin. 1 Psych. 1 Ph.D. 1
	Probation Officer	MA/MSc. 1	BA/BSc. 1

The Health Department and Hospital Boards, like Universities, show a substantial increase in absolute numbers of new employees, but they too, retain about the same proportion of degrees over time. The bulk of new employees (as with Education and Justice) hold Masters degrees (approximately 42 percent) and approximately 20 percent the Diploma in Clinical Psychology (Table 8). All but one of these twelve Diplomates are Canterbury graduates.

TABLE 8
Health Department and Hospital Board Employment in Psychology:
Job Titles and Corresponding Degrees (Before 1965, 1965-69, 1970-74)

	Before 1965	1965-69	1970-74
Assistant Psychologist	BA/BSc. 1		BA/BSc. 1 Hons. 4
	MA/MSc. 2	MA/MSc. 2	MA/MSc. 14
	Dip.Clin. 1	Dip.Clin. 1	Dip.Clin. 6
	Psych. 1	Psych. 1	Psych. 6
Psychologist		BA/BSc. 1	Hons. 1
	PGD (Ed.) 1		MA/MSc. 1
	MA/MSc. 1	MA/MSc. 1 MB.Ch.B. 1	
	Dip.Clin. 1	Dip.Clin. 1	Dip.Clin. 2
	Psych. 1	Psych. 1	Psych. 2
	Ph.D. 1	Ph.D. 1	Ph.D. 3

Overall there appears to be very little difference between what male and female respondents perceive and report as the primary duties involved in their first employments. Examining Table 9, the only differences between the male and female data that stand out are the surprisingly consistently larger percentage of males than females who perceive their first employment as primarily involving teaching. The reversal in the percentages of males and females whose main responsibilities are in the area of research (1965-69 vs. 1970-74) is a result of the number of males staying fairly constant (1965-69: 7, 1970-74: 8) in a doubling population (1.8 times, see Table 1) while the number of females doing this type of work increased six-fold (1965-69: 1, 1970-74: 7) also in a doubling population (2.25 times, see Table 1).

Of more interest are the totals for each class of duties. Overall 50 percent of the sample see themselves (in their first jobs) as therapists, 33 percent as teachers of one variety or another (classroom teachers, lecturers, etc.) and 10 percent as researchers.

TABLE 9
Primary Duties During First Employment

	Before 1965		1965-69		1970-74		Sub-Totals		Total %
	Male %*	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male N	Female N	
Positions Outside Psychology	3	17		6			2	3	2
Research	7		14	6	9	19	19	8	10
Therapy	40	42	51	63	52	58	99	36	50
Teaching	46	42	25	19	35	19	73	15	33
Personnel			4	6	3		5	1	2
Other Psychology Positions	3		6	3	1		6	1	3
TOTALS	100	100	100	100	100	100	204	64	100

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Ninety-four percent of us found our first jobs in tax-supported institutions or departments and, for the foreseeable future, this is where the bulk of our graduates can expect to find their first employment. Universities have been the biggest employers in the past but the Health Services have now overtaken them and clinical jobs of one sort or another will probably represent the major area of first employment for the next five to ten years. We include in the clinical area, the activities of the Psychological Services of the Education and Justice Departments.

The levels at which these new graduates can expect appointment, judging by the data to date, will to a large extent, depend on something other than their basic academic qualifications. The criteria probably include prior experience and the need of the employing agency to fill a vacant position.

The worries expressed by some Members that New Zealand could be "flooded" with overseas psychologists may have some validity in the future, but predicting from past behaviour this does not seem likely, as the overall percentage of N.Z. Psychological Society members with overseas degrees has been declining steadily from a high of 27 percent prior to 1965 to a low of 12 percent in the 1970-74 period.

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