

To all participants involved in the Australian Longitudinal Study of Health and Relationships the team at La Trobe University, the University of New South Wales, and the interviewers at the Hunter Valley Research Foundation, extend our deepest appreciation for your involvement. The first interview for the study was conducted on the 21st of February 2005 with the last interview taking place on the 21st January 2006. The following is a description of the demographic of respondents followed by a summary of particular sections of the study.

* Description of respondents

There were a total of 8,205 people recruited into the study: 4,124 females and 4,081 males (see table 1). The distribution of males and females across the ages was equal, with the majority of participants aged between 30 and 55. The average age for both female and male respondents was 42. A breakdown of marital status revealed fairly equal distributions across the categories between the females and males; except for 4% more males reporting never being married compared to females. Another interesting difference is that whilst 17% of males reported not being employed this was double for females (34%). Additionally, 71% of men compared to 33% of women reported full time employment. Geographically, the distribution of interviews for men and women in each state were equal however the distribution of interviews across states was less balanced. One-third of all interviews were by respondents living in New South Wales and one-quarter of respondents were from Victoria. Due to the sampling design, the representation of respondents from Northern Territory, Tasmania and South Australia was small. Finally, of those interviewed 79% of females and 77% of males were born in Australia. The remaining group of respondents came from a 101 different countries across the world.

Table 1: Sex of respondents by age groups, marital status and employment status

	Sex			Total (n)
	Female %	Male %		
Age group (%)	16-19	4	5	402
	20-24	6	7	539
	25-29	9	7	653
	30-34	12	9	859
	35-39	13	12	1,042
	40-44	13	13	1,060
	45-49	12	14	1,048
	50-54	12	12	985
	55-59	11	12	929
	60+	8	9	672
	Total (n)	4,124	4,081	8,205
Marital status (%) <small>*1 persons refused</small>	Married	60	60	4,893
	Never married	24	28	2,120
	Divorced	10	9	777
	Separated (not divorced)	4	3	271
	Widowed	3	1	143
	Total (n)	4,124	4,080	8,204
Employment status (%) <small>*6 persons refused</small>	Unemployed	34	17	2,071
	Part-time	33	12	1,851
	Full-time	33	71	4,277
	Total	4,118	4,081	8,199

Table 2 cont: Sex of respondents by age groups, marital status and employment status

	New South Wales	34	32	2,669
	Victoria	24	25	2,010
	South Australia	8	8	636
State	Western Australia	10	10	817
*34 persons refused	Queensland	18	19	1,516
	Northern Territory	1	1	55
	Tasmania	3	3	267
	Australian Capital Territory	2	3	201
	Total (n)	4,110	4,061	8,171

* Description of households

Of the 8205 people recruited for the study approximately 10% lived alone. Table 2 highlights the breakdown of household size and the types of people residing in the households sampled. It can be seen that almost 1 in 3 of all households consisted of only two people who were in a live-in relationship. Only 5% of the households had a non-family member residing, the remaining households also included other family members.

Table 3: Description and size of households

Household representation	Number of people in the household (n)										Total
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Live-in partner only	2,189	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2,193
Other family only	345	390	312	113	39	11	4	1	1	0	1,216
Non-family only	132	47	18	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	208
Live-in partner and other family	0	1,116	1,501	687	164	47	14	6	0	1	3,536
Live-in partner and non-family	0	42	16	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	60
Other family and non-family	0	25	18	16	5	3	1	0	0	0	68
live-in partner, other family, and non-family	0	0	20	35	14	7	3	0	0	1	80
Total (n)	2,666	1,620	1,887	862	226	68	22	7	1	2	7,361

* Sexual identity, attraction and experience

Table 3 (below) highlights the distribution of respondents' sexual identity, sexual attraction and previous sexual experience. The table details that approximately 98% of males and females sampled indicated that they identify as being heterosexual. The remaining 2% of respondents indicated that they were either homosexual or bisexual. Whilst, sexual identity is how a respondent defines their sexual self, the majority being heterosexual a number of the respondents did indicate that they were sexually attracted to the same sex. Approximately 90% of women and 95% of men indicated that they were exclusively attracted to the opposite sex. This suggests that almost 10% of women and 5% of men were attracted to the same sex. Similarly, as can be seen in table 3, approximately 90% of both women and men indicated only ever have sexual experiences with the opposite sex; with over 7% of women and 6% of men noting that they had had sexual experiences with people of the same sex. Approximately 1 in 40 men and women in the study indicated that they have never had any sexual experience.

Table 4: Sexual Identity, Attraction and Experience of Respondents

		Sex		Total
		Female	Male	
Sexual identity	Heterosexual	98.08	97.72	8,027
	Homosexual	0.66	1.03	69
	Bisexual	1.26	1.23	102
	Queer	0	0.02	1
	Total	4,121	4,078	8,199
Sexual attraction	Opposite sex	90.6	95.88	7,642
	Both sexes	8.89	3.31	501
	Same sex	0.22	0.64	35
	Neither sex	0.29	0.17	19
	Total	4,117	4,080	8,197
Sexual experience	Opposite sex	89.94	91.08	7,418
	Both sexes	7.21	6.06	544
	Same sex	0.1	0.37	19
	Neither sex	2.74	2.5	215
	Total	4,117	4,079	8,196

* Surgeries that impact pregnancy

A number of questions relating to types of surgeries that impact whether respondents are able to parent children biologically were addressed. Of the women interviewed, roughly 20% currently have a tubal ligation, fewer than 1 in 20 women indicated a double oophorectomy (removal of the ovaries) and fewer than 1 in 5 women indicated a single oophorectomy. More than 10% of women reported having a hysterectomy. It should be noted that over a quarter of women who reported having had a hysterectomy had also reported a double oophorectomy (it is likely that the ovaries were removed at the same time). Of the men interviewed, approximately 1 in 5 had reported having a vasectomy; less than 1% reported having a prostatectomy or a bilateral orchidectomy (removal of both testes).

* Pregnancies and outcomes (females only)

In total there were 10,021 pregnancies reported from 3275 female respondents. Over 70% of all births resulted in a live birth, roughly 15% in a miscarriage and less than 10% in a termination. Of pregnancies within the last year there were a total 453 to 402 mothers. Roughly half of these resulted in live births and 25% of women were currently pregnant. Of the remaining 25% of pregnancies: roughly 1 in 7 were reported as miscarriages, and less than 1 in 10 resulted in a termination.

* Attitudes

Respondents were asked eight attitudinal statements and had to indicate whether he or she agreed or disagreed with the statements. Table 4 summarise these data. Typically, women and men tended to respond equally to most items except for statements about the explicit nature of films and sex between adult men. Men were less likely to agree than women that films are too sexually explicit and men were more likely to agree that sex between two men is always wrong. Almost 80% of both men and women disagree that terminating a pregnancy is always wrong.

Table 5: Percentage of respondents who agreed or disagreed to the attitudinal statements

		Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Refuse
Films these days are too sexually explicit	women	54.27	43	3.18	0.05
	men	35.26	63	2.13	0
Sex before marriage is acceptable	women	86.15	12.56	1.21	0.07
	men	87.77	11.37	0.81	0.05
If two people had oral sex, but not intercourse, you would still consider that they had had sex together	women	78.20	19	2.62	0.12
	men	77.92	20	1.84	0.12
Sex between two adult women is always wrong	women	21.24	75	3.42	0.34
	men	22.08	76	2.08	0.17
Abortion is always wrong	women	15.62	82.23	1.94	0.22
	men	19.19	77.90	2.70	0.22
Having an affair when in a committed relationship is always wrong	women	79.44	18.55	1.87	0.15
	men	79.56	18.92	1.42	0.1
An active sex life is important for one's sense of well-being	women	80.67	17.46	1.77	0.1
	men	88.61	10.44	0.88	0.07
Sex between two adult men is always wrong	women	26.24	70.44	2.98	0.34
	men	43.4	54.59	1.84	0.17

For further information please contact
 Jason Ferris
 Research Officer
 La Trobe University
 215 Franklin Street, Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia
 ph: 61 3 92855282
 fx: 61 3 92855220