

“Where have all the young men gone?”

A research project related to reluctance of males to enrol in Business Qualifications offered by The School of Business and Tourism, Waiariki Institute of Technology

Project Leader and Participants

Mark Pearce and Ananda Wickramasinghe , Project Initiators, formerly Academic Coordinator and lecturer respectively, School of Business and Tourism;

Cecile Hoods, Lecturer Macro Economics & EBusiness and Supply Chain Management: Literature Review, Data Analysis, and Primary Author;

Dr Chris Asby, Project Manager, Editor and Research Project Mentor;

Gordon Acres, Publication Editor and Advisor

Brent Wyatt, Interviews and Data Collation

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Summary

The Project arose from casual observation on the dearth of males, especially in the 25 to 35 years age group, within cohorts of learners enrolled in the National Diploma in Business and the Bachelor of Tourism, within the School of Business and Tourism compared with other qualifications offered by Waiariki Institute of Technology (Waiariki). This was reflected in the project Title: "Where have all the men gone?"

The research was designed to ascertain the reasons why there is a relatively low proportion of males, compared to females, enrolled in Business Programmes within the School of Business and Tourism(BTO) in particular to:

- Examine male views on Tertiary Study
- Barriers to study
- Motivations operating for them within Rotorua and other Waiariki areas
- suggest action/responses that may increase both the number and proportion of males to study Business Programmes within BTO.

In addition, this research adds to the body of knowledge available to Waiariki planners, in the wider context of New Zealand, relating to impacts of gender on enrolment in and study of business subjects. Furthermore, to definitely impact upon Waiariki's objectives of positively impacting upon the economic and social well being of its communities, as part of its commitment to government policy, embedded in its Investment Plan 2008-2010.

Methodology

Stage 1: Literature review and project justification:

In advanced Western and Asian cultures, male and female genders have virtually equal opportunity to study, affected by social and economic barriers rather than by gender itself. Recent reports of impact of gender upon choice of study vary from an historical account of the impact of "masculinity" (Boddice, 2009), to ways in which technology impacts, on gender performance in education (Heemskerk, Dam, Volman & Admiral, 2009). Others have considered differential levels of student enrolment (Thorat, 2009).

At Waiariki, in the School of Business and Tourism (BTO), gender issues have come under scrutiny in relation to enrolment patterns and market segmentation of learners. It has been noted that different marketing approaches are necessary for qualifications offered by the School or the wider Institute according to market segment characteristics.

Casual observation in 2008 determined that education participation rates of men and women who were studying business subjects were not the same as in other subject areas. This difference impacted upon viability of certain courses, within qualifications, especially those that were designed to upskill practicing business people, or to offer vocational pathways from secondary school, or lower level qualifications into business management. The course objectives of enhancing management capacity for those in business management employment or who were owner operators appeared not to be achieved. Casual observation demanded that a greater understanding of the drivers or barriers to enrolment be gained, for both business owners or for their employee's, in order to encourage more effective participation in modern business management courses. Greater participation and enrollment would both impact on business management capability in the real world but also would strengthen the viability and context as well as content of qualifications to which such courses of study were designed to lead.

Stage 2: Environmental Scan of Waiariki Enrolments

Information from the Waiariki (ARTENA) student enrolment database was used to compare gender participation rates, through analysis of the demographics of enrolments. The enrolment gender mix for BTO led qualifications was compared with that of other Waiariki Schools. Age cohorts, trends across years and differences between gender participation rates were compared to assess whether the observations in Stage One were supported by actual records.

Stage 3: Survey of Employers in Rotorua

A simple survey was designed and further refined through an iterative process of consultation within the research community of Waiariki and subsequently with potential respondents in the business community.

Criteria were developed which would enable data to be collected from a cross section of employers in Rotorua City from several business sectors. It was necessary to maximize survey efficiency within resources available by concentrating on businesses which employed more than 5 people and in which one person had an overall Human Resource responsibility. Such businesses were then selected from the total number of potential contacts supplied by the Rotorua Chamber of Commerce.

The target number of respondents to be surveyed was selected at 35 to give meaningful results. Local advice was sought on the best businesses to approach, with survey potential and which employed persons within the age range target of the project – i.e. young men who might be expected to be able to benefit from vocational tertiary study in business subjects. In a region where aging population is an issue within the business population, the number of respondents was reduced from an original 45 to 25 through this selection process, below the ideal number required. Nevertheless it was felt that the project should go ahead as a pilot to gain new knowledge, albeit under restricted conditions. Individual companies were then contacted by telephone and time agreed for a face to face interview with the project technician and researcher. Data was transferred from survey/interview forms to MS Excel for analysis.

Stage 4: Analysis, contextualisation and conclusions

The researcher and technician left Waiariki at the end of Stage 3. As a result some redefining of priorities took place and a new business tutor was introduced to the project. This person (C Hoods) took over the analysis and strengthened the literature review, then drafted the research report and a potential publication for publication. The project mentor/manager and a colleague also contributed to the discussion and editing process, ensuring due rigour and research outcomes to meet AKO Aotearoa objectives.

The analysis of data was completed for twenty substantive respondents.

Findings

1. Literature Review

This pilot research project adds to the existing body of knowledge on the impact of gender, within a business employment context, on enrolment and study in vocational business education.

Although a review of literature revealed no scientifically designed study reported within recent times in New Zealand, gender based research and diversity has been in progress for many years (Boddice, 2009, Heemskerk et al., 2009, Calvin Hennick, 2009). Peled (2009) explores the tertiary participation rates in the Persian Gulf region now that western universities are opening their doors in this region. For the first time, female participation rates have increased dramatically. Before, females were excluded from tertiary education and if they wanted to participate, they had to leave their home country and study abroad. On student enrolment, Thorat, in an interview with the Hindu (March 23, 2009), found that student enrolment in the rural areas of Chennai, India is far lower than the world average at eleven percent. In addition to the enrolment ratio issue. Thorat also raised the importance of improving quality and excellence in education. Comparing an area's enrolment with that of the rest of the world provides a measuring stick for years to come. Long and Kurlaender (2009) use a measuring stick to gauge the success of students entering community colleges to complete baccalaureate degrees. Their results suggest that students choosing this pathway were less likely to complete their degree within 9 years. Institutes of Technology in New Zealand can be likened to Community Colleges overseas. Some students in New Zealand choose to do their baccalaureate degree at Institutes of Technology, and Waiariki, an Institute of Technology in Rotorua, is one such organization that can be likened to community colleges overseas. In addition to vocational training, Waiariki provide students with pathways into at least seven baccalaureate degrees. Often pathways are via specialist diploma and national diploma, leading directly into degrees. The Business and Tourism School (BTO) at Waiariki has a range of pathways that can be followed to obtain a baccalaureate degree. The lecturers, have, however over the years noticed a drop in the number of young men choosing these options within the BTO. Analysis of the student database, Artena, confirmed this phenomenon, and various companies in the Rotorua region were canvassed for local opinion.

2. Artena Analysis:

Overall there are 24% males in BTO compared to 43% at a Waiariki level.

Table 1: BTO versus the whole of Waiariki

Gender	Female	Male	Overall	% Female	% Male
Waiariki Level	6605	4936	11541	57%	43%
BTO School	1936	600	2536	76%	24%

2.1 Comparison of students enrolled in programmes within BTO

For all programmes, the percentage of males compared to females is substantially lower. Overall, the percentage of males decreased over the 2005-2008 and 2004-2008 periods.

Table 2: Business Administration by gender for the period: 2005-2008

Year Gender	Female	Male	Overall	% Female	% Males
2005	126	89	215	59%	41%
2006	84	22	106	79%	21%
2007	124	12	136	91%	9%
2008	90	13	103	87%	13%

For Business Administration, the percentage of male students decreased sharply from 41% to 21% over the 2005-2006 period, and continues to fall to 9% in 2007, with a slight increase to 13% in 2008.

Table 3: Business Management by gender for the period: 2004-2008

Year Gender	Female	Male	Overall	% Female	% Males
2004	207	91	298	69%	31%
2005	203	59	262	77%	23%
2006	249	61	310	80%	20%
2007	307	82	389	79%	21%
2008	253	81	334	76%	24%

For Business management, the percentage of male students showed a decrease from 2004-2006, a slight increase in 2007 and 2008, Overall the percentage of male students decreased from 31% in 2004 to 24% in 2008.

Table 4: Tourism Management by gender for period 2005 -2008

Year Gender	Female	Male	Overall	% Female	% Males
2005	1	3	4	25%	75%
2006	19	13	32	59%	41%
2007	8	5	13	62%	38%
2008	8	7	15	53%	47%

For Tourism Management, the percentage of male students decreased sharply from 2005-2007. Overall, the percentage males decreased from 75% in 2005 to 47% in 2008.

2.2. Comparison of BTO with other Waiariki Schools per age group:

The following graphs indicate number of students enrolled by Waiariki Schools, gender and age group from 2005-2008. In some vocational areas like forestry, the graphs clearly correspond with the perception that males have a predisposition to follow these pathways, while nursing and health studies are followed predominantly by females. . Importantly, trades training include hair dressing, fashion and interior design, which are predominately followed by females. The number of females enrolled in BTO in every age group is consistently second highest, while the numbers of males fluctuate between second and third lowest. Forestry has the highest number of male enrolments for the 21-25 age category, while the School of Maori Development, Social Sciences and Education has the highest number of female enrolments for the rest of the age categories.

Figure 1: Comparison with other Schools: Age 21-25 for 2005-2008

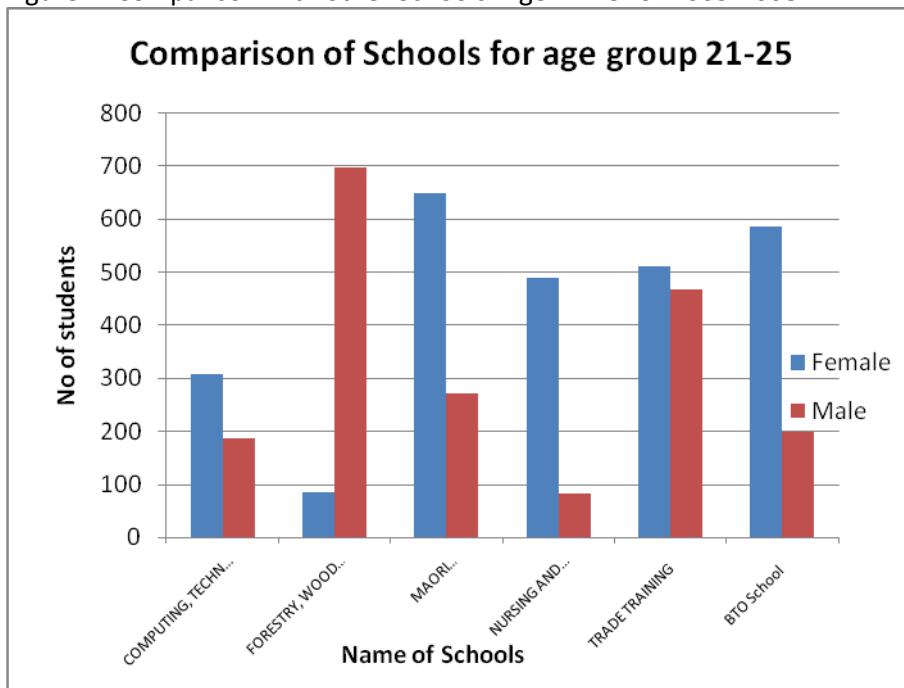
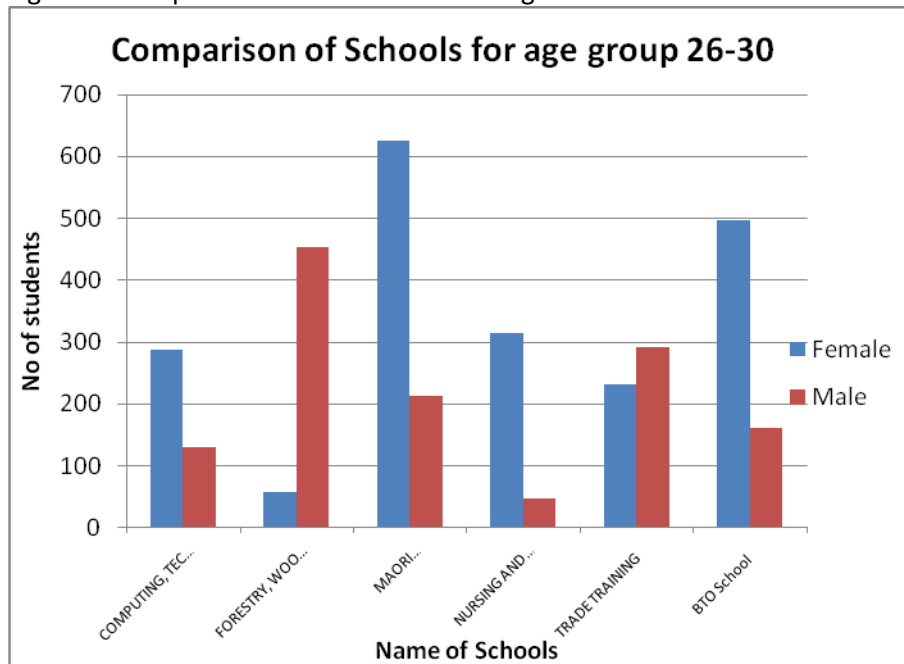


Figure 1 show that in BTO, the number of females far out number the number of males enrolled. Overall, the number of enrolled males is third lowest; the lowest male enrolment, as expected, is claimed by the School of Nursing and Health studies.

Compared to the rest of the Waiariki Schools, figures 1 and 2 show that the number of females enrolled in BTO is second highest, while the number of males is third lowest. The School of Forestry, Wood Processing and Biotechnology has the highest number of males enrolled, while the School of Maori Development, Social Sciences and Education have the highest number of females enrolled.

Figure 2: Comparison with other Schools: Age 26-30 for 2005-2008



For the age 31- 35 and 36-40 categories, the number of males enrolled in BTO slip to second lowest, while the number of females maintains the second highest enrolment.

Figure 3: Comparison with other Schools: Age 31-35 for 2005-2008

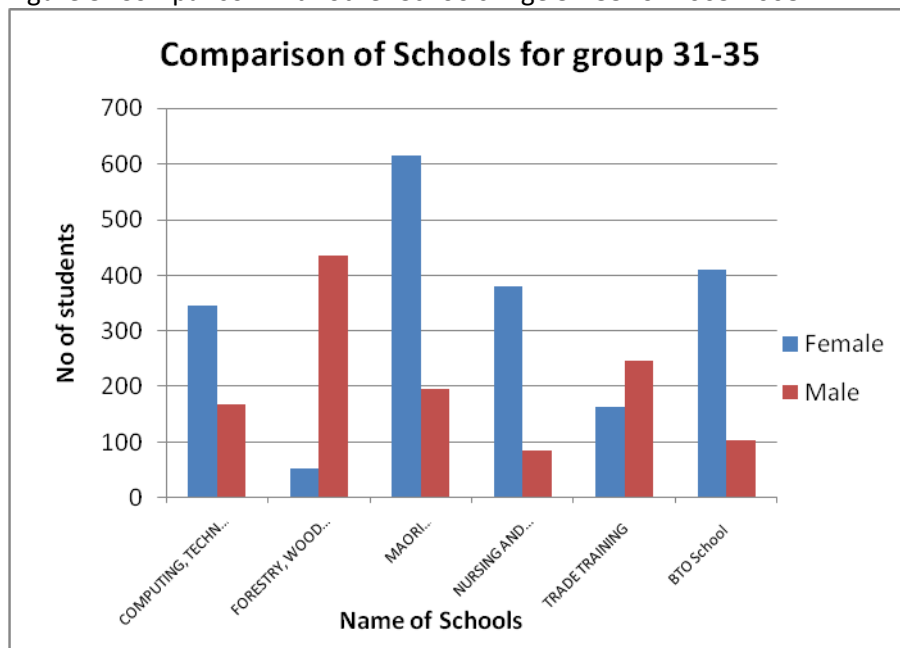
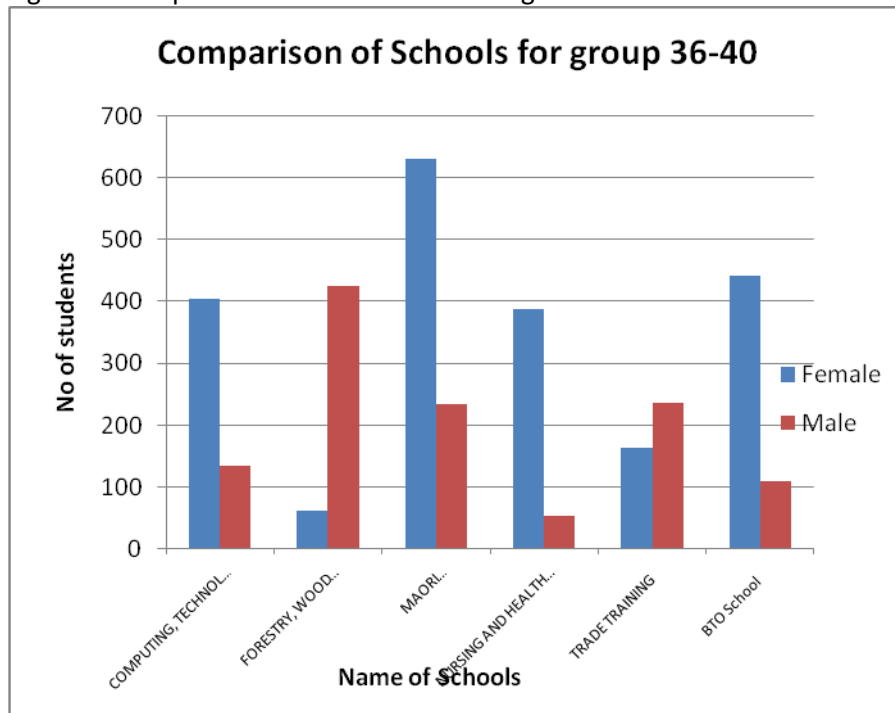


Figure 4 clearly shows that although BTO and School of Computing, Technology and Communications experienced a drop in male enrolments in the 36-40 category, the number of males enrolled in BTO still occupies the second lowest position. Both Schools experienced an increase in female enrolments. The School of Maori Development, Social Sciences and Education experienced an increase in both male and female enrollments.

Figure 4: Comparison with other Schools: Age 36-40 for 2005-2008



3. Interview Analysis:

There were 20 responses from male participants in four age groups. Most respondents were in a management position at their organization.

3.1 Demographics

Demographics can play a very important role in determining which path young people take. In the 25-27 age group, no respondent identified as Maori, while four respondents identified as NZ European. Overall, 35% identified as Maori and 65% identified as NZ European

Age Group		25-27	28-31	32-35	36-40	Total	Percentage
Respondents		4	7	5	4	20	
Ethnicity	Maori	0	3	1	3	7	35%
	NZ European	4	4	4	1	13	65%
Dependants:	none	3	5	2	2	12	60%
	More than one	1	2	3	2	8	40%
Marital Status	Single	2	2	0	0	4	20%
	Married	0	4	2	2	8	40%
	De Facto	2	1	3	1	7	35%
	Divorced	0	0	0	1	1	5%

Sixty percent has no dependants while 40% has more than one dependant. A high percentage (75%) of males identify as being either married or in a defacto relationship, In the 32-35 and 36-38 category, no respondents identify as being single, while in the 25-27 age category, no respondents identify as being married.

3.2 Educational Background

To answer this question, respondents had to state their highest secondary school qualification. The responses are summarized in table six below. No respondent identified seventh form as their highest qualification therefore this category was excluded. Six respondents stated that they obtain university entrance (UE), the highest number in the 28-31 and none in the 32-35 age categories. Six respondents stated that they completed sixth form, with at least one respondent in every age category. Five respondents stated that they had no secondary qualifications.

Table 6: Secondary and Tertiary Study

Age Group		25-27	28-31	32-35	36-40	Total
Highest Secondary School Qualification	University Entrance	2	3	0	1	6
	Sixth Form	1	1	2	2	6
	School Cert	0	1	1	1	3
	None	1	2	2	0	5
Tertiary Qual held certificate/dipl		0	2	3	0	5
Incomplete Tertiary Qual		1	4	1	2	8

In the 25-27 age category, no respondents hold a completed tertiary qualification while only one respondent holds an incomplete tertiary qualification through part time study. Apart from NZ Diploma in Business, the rest of the qualifications are all trade related, i.e. customer service, animal care certificate and hotel reception. It appears that, in age categories 25 -27 and 28-31, although respondents hold UE and has no dependants; they do not hold a tertiary qualification. Overall five respondents hold a tertiary qualification and eight stated that they have an incomplete tertiary qualification, the highest number of an incomplete tertiary qualification being 28-31 age category.

3.3 Employment Background

All respondents are in fulltime employment and fulfill a variety of roles, from shop floor to management positions, with one respondent, with no formal qualifications, holding the position of a Director. The average time spent with an employer is 0-5 years, with one respondent spending 16-20 years with one employer. Part of the criteria of the interviews were that all companies had to be Rotorua based, so there are no companies represented that are outside the Rotorua region.

There are a number of respondents though who previously worked outside Rotorua, the bay of Plenty and even outside New Zealand. There is a large number though who have previously worked for employers in Rotorua.

Table 7: Location of previous employers

Location	25-27	28-31	32-35	36-40
Rotorua	2	4	6	2
Auckland	0	1	1	1
Tauranga	0	1	0	0
Japan	0	1	0	0
Australia	1	0	0	0
No Previous Employer	1	0	0	1

In particular, in the 32-35 age group, six respondents indicated that their previous employer was located in Rotorua.

3.4 Tertiary Study

Most respondents across the categories are not in tertiary study at the moment. Those who are in tertiary study have chosen Waiariki as the place of study because of location, quality of teaching staff, convenience in getting to the premises, because their employer chooses who they can study with. For one respondent, the employer chooses the training, time and duration. Although fifteen students said they had some form of school leaving certificate, 53% has no tertiary qualification and 47% percent has no tertiary qualifications.

Table 8: Comparison of School leavers and Tertiary Qualification

Category	U E	Sixt h Form	Scho ol Cert	Tot al	Incompl ete Tertiary Quals	No Tertia ry Quals	% Incompl ete Tertiary Quals	% with no Tertiar y Quals
No of studen ts	6	6	3	15	8	7	53%	47%

3.5 Future Tertiary Study and Preferred training modes

Eight respondents stated that they are unlikely to study over the next 12 months, citing reasons such as financial difficulty, student loan work commitments and one stating near retirement as barriers. Most respondents would attend regular lectures full time or part time, including block courses, while two respondents chose online as an option.

3.6 Barriers to study

Most respondents work on average 40 hours per week and indicate lack of time as the single most important barrier to completing tertiary study, followed by financial commitments. Study interests range from business studies, music, arts to early childhood. Four respondents would choose Waiariki because of its high quality tutorial staff and its location. Around 90% of respondents are involved with some form of sport or community activities.

Unexpected findings of this pilot study:

1. Most of the respondents had no tertiary qualification, but were nevertheless employed in a management role.
2. The number of males with UE, sixth form and school certificate did not correspond with the number of males with tertiary qualifications. Although there was a high proportion of respondents with capability to have gone on to tertiary study post secondary school, with necessary UE, sixth form or other school certificates, very few had a tertiary qualification.

Point 2 above is indicative of a regional trend which has been observed and reported across the Wairariki rohe from analysis of census 2006 data (Wairariki 2007-8).

The finding of this pilot project could be combined with the regional framework (Pells, 2009), a survey questionnaire completed and the questionnaire extended to females in the regions. As this study will cover a bigger sample, statistically significant tests can be used to analyse the data.

- Other colleagues knew more about this project and could provide some back ground information
- The editors contributed to the final document
- Collaboration with other organisations provided a research assistant at short notice

Updates and information have been added to original thoughts and conclusions from the national ITF Research Conference 2009, relating to research in work base training in NZ .

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