

and the narrative flows freely and easily so that the book may appeal to both the academic community and to a wider reading public. It is in every way a fitting tribute to an institution which for over a century has served the cause of higher education exceedingly well, both at home and abroad. We can look forward with pleasure to Dr. Frost's second volume of the McGill story.

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W. Clark and Z. Zsigmond. *Job Market Reality for Postsecondary Graduates: Employment Outcome by 1978, Two Years After Graduation*. Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 1981, Cat. 81-572E, 509 p. French version: *Les diplômés du postsecondaire sur le marché du travail: Situation d'emploi en 1978, deux ans après l'obtention du diplôme*. Cat. 81-572F, 530 p.

In October the OECD is holding an intergovernmental conference on "Policies for Higher Education in the 1980s." There are to be four conference themes, one of which is changing relationships between higher education and working life. Without the data provided in this Statistics Canada report, members of the Canadian delegation to the OECD conference would be inadequately informed. Indeed, if the conference had been staged at any previous time our delegation would have been without an overall view of the employment outcomes of Canadian institutions of postsecondary education.

In June 1978, Doug Lynd and his colleagues of the Postsecondary Section, Education, Science and Culture Division, Statistics Canada, conducted a telephone survey of a large stratified sample of the Canadian citizens and landed immigrants who, two years earlier, had graduated from the universities and colleges of nine provinces (Québec did not participate). The principal questions were designed to discover how the graduates had fared in the employment market, but much related information was gathered as well. During 1979 and 1980 some preliminary reports on the results were issued. Now we have from Zoltan Zsigmond and his team in the Projections Section a comprehensive analysis.

Perhaps the best way to introduce the content of the report is to present a typical though abbreviated table, showing data representative of 66,481 university graduates: Table 6. The report itself also has a table showing data representative of 26,250 graduates of community colleges, technical institutes and other non-university institutions of postsecondary education – in both cases, in the nine provinces other than Québec.

From Table 6 one learns, for example, that of 58,282 who received a bachelor's degree in 1976, two years later 6.8% were not looking for work, 93.2% were in the labour force and of them 8.4% were unemployed. Other columns give comparable data for those who received advanced degrees, and for men and women.

Data for college graduates, presented in the companion table which is not shown here, indicate that of 26,250 who in 1976 received diplomas in courses of 1, 2, 3 or 4 years' duration, 4.0% were not looking for a job in 1978, 96.0% were in the labour force and of them 6.7% were unemployed.

An earlier report, *Higher Education – Hired? Sex differences in employment characteristics of 1976 postsecondary graduates* by M.S. Devreaux and Edith Rechnitzer (1980), highlights the evidence that women graduates of both universities and colleges fared less well than men.

Table 6 (Abbreviated). University graduates

Employment picture after graduation	Unit	Type of degree		Total Degrees	Total by sex	
		Bachelor's	Master's or Ph.d.		Male	Female
II) Total in 1978 survey	No.	58,282	8,199	66,481	35,857	30,396
IV) Employment status, June 1978 (As % of total in 1978 survey)						
1) Working	%	85.4	84.8	85.3	86.8	83.5
2) Full-time	%	79.6	79.4	79.6	82.6	76.1
A) Permanent	%	61.5	67.7	62.3	63.7	60.7
B) Temporary	%	14.7	9.5	14.0	13.9	14.2
3) Part-time	%	5.1	4.6	5.0	3.5	6.8
4) Not working	%	14.6	15.2	14.7	13.2	16.5
5) Accepted job to start in future	%	2.4	1.9	2.4	2.3	2.4
6) Looking for job	%	5.3	3.5	5.1	4.6	5.6
7) Not looking for job	%	6.8	9.4	7.1	6.1	8.3
V) Labour force (As % of total in 1978 survey)						
2) June 1978	%	93.2	90.6	92.9	93.9	91.7
VI) Unemployment (As % of labour force)						
2) June 1978	%	8.4	6.4	8.2	7.5	9.0
VII) Average length of job search for graduates looking for work two months after graduation	Months	4.9	6.2	5.0	4.9	5.2
VIII) Employed full-time, June 1978	No.	46,409	6,513	52,923	29,624	23,135
1) Relationship of job to field of study						
A) Direct	%	41.3	48.5	42.2	41.3	43.3
B) Partial	%	38.3	43.8	39.0	39.5	38.3
C) Not related	%	20.4	7.7	18.8	19.2	18.4
2) Percent who consider relationship of job to field of study important	%	80.6	82.0	80.8	78.5	83.7
3) Underemployment	%	37.7	10.7	34.3	31.8	37.3
4) Dissatisfied with job	%	12.7	9.9	12.4	12.2	12.5
5) Leaving job within 3 months	%	25.3	18.2	24.4	24.4	24.4
6) Annual salary						
A) 10% earned less than	\$	9,400	13,000	9,600	10,400	8,800
B) Average	\$	14,800	20,600	15,200	15,900	14,400
C) 10% earned more than	\$	21,900	27,000+	23,700	25,400	21,500
7) Dissatisfied with salary	%	18.7	17.8	18.6	18.9	18.2
8) Regret choice of field of study	%	25.5	17.6	24.5	23.9	25.2
9) Planning postsecondary enrolment in next 2 years						
A) For career prospects	%	41.5	22.6	39.2	39.0	39.5
B) Other reasons	%	8.5	8.8	8.5	7.4	10.0
Total	%	50.0	31.5	47.7	46.4	49.5

Section VIII of the tables presents information on the extent, according to the employed graduates, of the relationship between field of study and job. Also, there are data on underemployment (i.e. having educational qualifications higher than those required for the job), a situation applying to 34.3% of the university graduates and 25.3% of the college graduates. Other items relate to job satisfaction and earnings.

More than a quarter (25.5%) of the bachelor graduates regretted their choice of field of study, as did about the same proportion (25.8%) of college graduates. Indeed, half of the bachelor graduates said they planned to re-enrol for further postsecondary education within two years (part time or full time? and did they?)— 41.5% to improve their career

prospects and 8.5% for other reasons. Nearly half (45.7%) of the graduates of 3- and 4-year college courses said that they too planned to re-enrol, although fewer (38.6%) of the graduates of 1- and 2-year courses had such plans.

The sections omitted from this abbreviated table show numbers of degrees and diplomas awarded 1974-1978, data on employment status one month after graduation, and information about the occupational and industrial classification of graduates who were employed full time in 1978.

In addition, the report offers the same kinds of data by province and by field of study, as well as information on the migration of graduates – between provinces and out of Canada.

As for methodology, the questionnaire was imaginatively composed and the use of the telephone rather than the mail probably accounts largely for the high rate of response. Valid returns were received from 69% of the sample which, in turn, was 45% of the total number of 1976 graduates in nine provinces.

It is too bad that the Québec authorities declined to participate in the project. In the same year, 1978, the Direction générale de l'enseignement supérieur du Ministère de l'Éducation did follow up those who graduated from Québec universities in 1975. The resulting report, *Relance à l'université* by Marc Audet (1979), presented data that are similar though not strictly comparable to those of the Statistics Canada survey.

The United States conducts a survey of the employment of graduates every two years. The education staff at Statistics Canada would like to do so on a regular basis too, and also to widen the scope of the survey to include the output of other sectors of the school system. Apparently, however, there are no firm plans for this, no prospect of a time series that would permit the study of trends. That, too, is a shame. The data presented here are nearly fresh (the graduates came out five years ago and were surveyed three years ago), but soon the statistics will be, or will be assumed to be, out of date.

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities of Ontario surveyed the province's 1979 college graduates in November of that year (*Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Graduate Placement Report 1978-79*) and its 1979 university graduates in April 1980 (*Employment Survey of 1979 Graduates of Ontario Universities*). Its efforts at follow-up, too, are spasmodic.

Clark and Zsigmond say they hope this report will be useful to government policy-makers and administrators and to officials of institutions of postsecondary education. Indeed, such people are likely to be the ones to find it most useful. Some readers may be a bit upset to find so much emphasis on the vocational roles of colleges and universities. The authors recognize this bias: "As readers examine the survey results, it is important to remember that the goals of postsecondary education are more than simply meeting the needs of the job market. *A discussion of the multiple roles of postsecondary institutions is beyond the scope of this study, which deals only with the labour market success of graduates*" (p. 52). Obviously, though, they relished that limited task. In any case, the evidence here is clear that, for students and recent graduates, career goals have top priority. That has significant implications for planning.

Some may wonder about the suggestion that if more students made the right (for them) choice of field of study the first time round, it would cost society less to educate them. And so on. Many of the questions raised have sharp implications for policy.

The authors say, however, that directly, or through parents or guidance counsellors, "the primary goal is to help senior secondary students who are considering career choices and options for further study" (p. 37). Will the report do that?

One's first impression is of a dauntingly lengthy, drab and complex document that tells us more about the employment of college and university graduates than we need to know. As a test, though, let us suppose that a secondary school student seeks from the report information regarding a specific career for which there are programs of study at both university and college levels. Examination of the process he or she would follow, step by step, and of what in the end would be discovered, leads to the conclusion that for this purpose the report is not likely to be as useful to individual students as when treated as one of many sources available to professional counsellors, especially those engaged in preparing career information materials in popular form.

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