

Professional Programs Unit

Habitus in the Hallways: Skill Shortages in the Streets

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Habitus and AI

Create an A.I. image of:

A snail riding a sloth across an ocean of bubblewrap

Email it to me:

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Best 2 get a prize

Hypothesis

Skill shortages in regional, remote and rural communities are due to a state of habitus among school students.

Prove It

1. We ask students in Year 8 to talk about:
 - Their potential career choices.
 - What they think of university
2. Analyse the results using Reflexive Thematic Analysis
3. Use quantitative data from Jobs & Skills Australia to identify skill gaps in the region of the schools
4. Identify a connection between career choices, university aspiration and skills gaps

Spoiler Alert

There's a connection:

- Students in Year 8 who provided serious responses regularly named occupations where there is NOT a skills shortage in the region.
- The occupations that require university degrees that were most frequently mentioned by students were:
 - Teachers
 - Nurses
 - Doctors
- Occupations where skill shortages exist were not mentioned by the students.
 - Allied Health Professionals
 - Social Workers
 - Business Professionals (Accountants, Human Resource Management, Marketing)

What is Habitus?

Coined by Bourdieu in 1967 as a concept where people do not seek to 'rise above' their station through the following measure:

- **Internalised dispositions:** Ingrained habits, skills, and tendencies acquired through life experiences.
- **Shapes perception and action:** Influences how individuals perceive the world and guides behaviour in social contexts.
- **Reproduces social structures:** Reinforces existing social hierarchies by predisposing individuals to act in ways that align with their social position.



Me as a child, colourised.



The Research

- Quantitative survey of 349 students in Year 8 in the MidCoast Local Government Area.

Occupations:

- Qualitative responses were categorised by occupation.



Thoughts of University

- Students were asked what they thought about going to university.
- This reinforces Bourdieu's notion that education is the primary means of reinforcing or breaking habitus.



Skill Shortages

Most Frequently Responded Occupations

Occupation	Responses
Construction Trade	46
Retail Worker	27
Teacher	18
Mechanic	15
Nurse	9
Doctor	8
Chef	8
Beautician	7
Military	7

Don't Know = 172

Inappropriate = 38

Occupations With Minimal Vacancies

Occupation	Vacancy Rate
Military	0.0%
Beautician	0.01%
Teacher	0.05%
Doctor	0.05%
Retail Worker	0.07%
Construction Trade	0.10%
Chef	0.80%
Mechanic	2.8%
Nurse	3.6%

Skill Shortages

Least Frequently Responded Occupations

Occupation	Responses
Physiotherapist	1
Actor	1
IT Professional	1
Agriculturalist	2
Engineer	2
Psychologist	2
Architect	2
Business Professional	3
Social Worker	3

Don't Know = 172

Inappropriate = 38

Occupations With Significant Vacancies

Occupation	Vacancy Rate
Psychologist	7%
Social Worker	6.8%
Actor	5%
Engineer	4.4%
Business Professional	3.6%
IT Professional	3.0%
Physiotherapist	2.7%
Architect	1.2%
Agriculturalist	1.1%

Future Research

Sample Size:

- Growing the sample size.
 - Expect another 350 responses this year.

Capturing the Habitus:

- Qualitative interviews with students in Years 11 & 12 in other geographic areas.

Conclusion

We can identify habitus in the schools in the region.

Habitus contributes to the skill shortages in the region.

Students need to be exposed to broader range of occupations on an ongoing basis

Career development practitioners need to be equipped and released to give additional guidance to these students.

Any Questions?



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