

STUDENTS RESEARCHING STUDENTS: AN EQUITY PROJECT AND A METHODOLOGY FOR RESEARCH

Bill Atweh and Tom Cooper

Centre for Mathematics and Science Education
Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove

The Students Researching Students project at the Faculty of Education at QUT is in its second year of operation. In 1992, a group of nine grade 11 and 12 students from a high school in a very low socio-economic suburb of Brisbane participated in an equity project that aimed at (a) investigating the factors that affect the higher-education aspirations and participation of students from the school; and (b) increasing the awareness of these students of University study as achievable option. In collaboration with a teacher and University staff, the students designed a study of their peers, conducted the study, analysed the data and wrote the final report, a report that included specific recommendations on improving University opportunities for students from their school. The students were given a short University-based training session on research techniques. The study appeared to be successful on two counts: (a) the students were able to gather interesting data about their peers' aspirations and attitudes to University; and (b) the research benefited the students it studied by being an effective bridge across the gap between the culture of the students and the University.

Students' engagement in research activities such as planning, collecting data and information, analysing and writing of reports, is not uncommon in education. For teachers, the primary outcomes of these projects are to develop skills and attitudes toward research and to develop the student's own knowledge. Very infrequently does this knowledge form the basis for decision making or for solving real problems. In the context of the project reported here, the research undertaken by students is conceived differently. Here the emphasis is on genuine attempts to generate knowledge that is both valuable and forms that basis for action. Using students as researchers is a partnership between experienced researchers and students to undertake authentic research. Ideally the knowledge developed may also lead to action by the participants on the research project.

There are several rationales behind this 'students researching students' approach to educational research. The first rationale argues that the providers of information are the owners of the information and the provision of information is seen as an activity that should directly benefit the providers themselves as well as a service for promoting the status of the gatherer of information. Several researchers have identified the role of research in empowering the researched community involved (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1986; Kemmis, 1983). This rationale has often been used to argue for Collaborative research (Stenhouse, 1975), also known as Participatory research (Horton & Zacharakis-Jutz, 1987) and Educative research (Gitlin, 1990). The second rationale is based on the belief that the methodology of using students to research students is in accordance with the principles of ethnographic participant-observation research

techniques. As Denzin (1986; 39) noted, "The researcher who has not yet penetrated the world of the individuals studied is in no firm position to begin developing predictions, explanations and theories about that world". Who is in a better position to penetrate the students world than the students themselves? Evidence points to research using young people as researchers yields prespectives and data that may not have been possible using other techniques (Schwartz, 1988). The third rationale is based on the belief that student participation in authentic research has great benefits to the students themselves. Participating with students as co-researchers is an acknowledgment of trust and respect in their ability to find out creative solutions to their current life problems as well as an opportunity for nurturing this ability. Further, the employment of students to research significant questions provides students with "intrinsic motivation for talking, reading, and writing, and has the potential for helping them achieve mature language skills" (Goswami, 1987). These benefits have been discussed by Slee (1988) and Cole (1981), who have

also identified some of the conditions for success in projects using students as researchers.

Student researching students is a relatively new method for research. A review of literature yielded only a handful of funded research projects that employed this technique. Schwartz (1988) reported on a study to investigate the effect of the use of electronic network on the writing abilities of students. Alder and Sandor (1990) used young unemployed people to conduct a study on homeless youth as victims of crime. Although, initially, money was a factor that made these young people volunteer for the project, Alder and Sander reported that the young people also shared a commitment to increasing knowledge about, and possible solutions to, the problems of the homeless. Alder and Sandor argued that the second motivation was strong because the young people persisted with the project even after the money was drained. The young people were trained in research techniques and then they planned and conducted the interviews and transcribed and analysed the data. Alder and Sander reported that the students felt confident in planning and conducting of interviews and were pleased with themselves for having acquired these skills. The results of the research were presented in public meetings. Alder and Sander reported that this was the highlight of the project for some of the participants in that it provided a public acknowledgment that their project was worthwhile. A third study employing young people in paid research work was conducted in Melbourne (Slee, 1988). The study aimed to identify the educational needs of 13-14 year olds, needs that appeared not to met by the education system, and to review the existing Education Unit at the Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service. A fourth study, reported by Knight (1982), described the work done in several schools by young people independently investigating different aspects of vandalism.

Equity and participation in higher education

The inequity in Australian education systems has been documented by Connel, Ashenden, Kessler, & Dowsett (1982), Henry, Knight, Lingard & Taylor (1988) and Western (1983). This inequity has been particularly

pertinent with regard to opportunities to attend University and, from this, opportunities to gain a high share of the benefits, privileges and power available in our society. In a wide ranging review of literature on patterns of participation in Australian post-secondary education, Anderson and Vervoorn (1983; p 1) presented the following caricature of a university student:

He's the son of a doctor, lawyer, or someone else with a house in Saint Ives of Kew. Because his parents wanted to have the best education money could buy they sent him to a private school, to study academic subjects and learn the importance of not getting his hands dirty. He went direct from school to college, avoiding the real world en route except for glimpses through he windscreen of the sports car his parents bought him. After a few years he too becomes a doctor or lawyer, and so begin to accumulate the money necessary to build a house larger than his father's and to send his children to university.

Although conceding that, like all caricatures, it was simplifying a complex picture and exaggerating some of its features, Anderson and Vervoorn argued that the results of the different studies reviewed presented a picture not far from the caricature. More concerning to them was the observation that such imbalance has been stable for the years. As they concluded, "graduation from higher education has been and remains a sought after prize. It opens the door to the prestigious professions, social status, economic security and positions of leadership (p. 1)."

Jenks (1972) argued that the problem of inequality at higher education goes beyond inequality of participation and of outcome. He contended that evidence from overseas indicated that although education level attainment is generally correlated with future income, disparities in after-graduation income exist between different social classes even after controlling for education level.

Inequity and power

Secada (1989) has made a distinction between equality and equity concerns - equality is taken to mean a quantitative judgement about the distribution of opportunity, conditions or output; whereas equity is a

qualitative judgement about justice. While this project accepted this distinction, it was based on the claim that equal opportunity to participate is a prerequisite for equity in education. In other words a lack of equality in access and participation is an indication that inequity persists.

In a review of American and British literature, Flude (1974) offered the following classification of reasons for the under representation of the low socio-economic students in higher education: cultural deprivation; cultural differences; class-based inequalities; educational deviance; and the structure of school knowledge. A more recent commissioned report to the School Council (1990) on schools serving disadvantaged communities indicated four main reasons: (a) the students themselves (they lack basic intelligence, self discipline, self esteem); (b) their parents (low parental involvement and expectations, lack of role models); (c) their

schools (lack of responsiveness to the needs of their students); and (d) the system (educational system is producing and reproducing inequality).

The reproduction theory of schooling argues that gender, race and class inequalities are "structural features of society and not the products of individual pathology." (Henry et al, 1988, p 231). Society in this view is seen as a perpetual conflict of interests between workers and owners of power and the means of production. The function of school within this society is seen in terms of the reproduction of the forces of society through the socialisation of students into their respective roles (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Apple, 1980; Giroux, 1980).

The social reproduction stance has been criticised as too deterministic; it fails to take into account resistance and penetration (Willis, 1977): student resistance towards the underlying ideological basis of schooling (e.g. schools enable social mobility); and penetration by students of the myths that school attempt to perpetuate (e.g. you are solely and personally responsible for not succeeding). The process by which students become inculcated with the ideologies that perpetuate the system (a system which is often failing the students being inculcated) is complex and involves a measure of self-delusion (see Willis, 1977, for a case study). This view is supported by Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) who asserted that the role of the school is to reproduce the cultural capital of society, leading to social reproduction only indirectly.

The social reproductive forces within education and schooling are often subtle. They gain their power indirectly, from the shared perceptions of what is legitimate practice (the hegemony of Gramsci, 1971) and from the unwillingness of teachers to challenge, in numbers, the ideas of those who are in a position to effect promotional opportunities (the non-decision making of Bachrach & Baratz, 1970).

Education as a commodity

An illuminative way to view low participation of students from low socio-economic backgrounds in higher education is to view education as a marketplace. Marginson (1992) has identified two commodities that would be exchanged in such a market: (a) intellectual property (patents, books, software, knowledge as 'know-how', etc.); and (b) positional goods (the relative advantage given to individuals through the institutions they have attended and the courses completed). According to Marginson, positional goods differ from other commodities in that: they are "scarce in absolute terms." (p. 6); they owe their value to this scarcity; their number is not increased by competition; they are gained at the expense of someone else and they provide low sovereignty to their consumers. As described by Marginson, the "positions" that provide the value of positional goods are a socio-historical construction. Elite private schools provide such positional value and this value can be used for a University position in a high 'position' course such as medicine. In turn, this course provides further positional value which can be exchanged for other commodities. The schools attended by most socio-economically disadvantaged students do not provide this positional value. Similar to the acquisition of land (another commodity which is a positional good), low socio-economic students as consumers have little power to gain the first commodity which has positional value, an acquisition which may enable them to begin a process

of exchange which may end with a vocation with inbuilt value. Such students are forced to rely on market irregularities, in the form of

scholarships and special entry provisions, to gain access to higher education. It seems evident from Marginson's descriptions of positional goods, that these irregularities would have to stay small in number or otherwise positional value may desert the commodity for which they provide entry. Low socio-economic students are therefore disadvantaged because, except for a few, they can not even join the market.

The 'Finding Out' project

The project that is described in this paper emerged from concerns about the effects of gender, ethnicity and socio-economic background of students on access to and participation in further study at a university. It was designed to address these equity issues at three levels: (a) as a research project to investigate the perceptions and beliefs of students from low socio-economic backgrounds about higher education and to identify the factors that effect their participation in higher education; (b) as an action project to address some of the factors identified above, setting up procedures and information channels to overcome them; (c) as an education project to provide low socio-economic students an opportunity to develop skills that are useful for university study and an opportunity to experience university life with the aim of bridging the gap between their culture and the culture of the university.

The project was unique in two aspects. Firstly, all decisions on research questions and methodology, as well as actions taken were carried out by students from the school - staff from the University and school only provided initial training and back-up support. Secondly, the project was a joint endeavour between the University and the school - the schools' support of the project is of paramount importance for its success. The project was mindful of the pressures of time and resources that disadvantaged schools operate under. Care was taken to minimise the burden the project imposed on the school. The schools' support involved providing space and time for meetings of the project team and students and teachers from the school inside and outside teaching times and allowing students time to collect information from other students and staff within the school.

The purposes of the project were three-fold:

- (1) to trial the 'students researching students' methodology, a methodology where the students have significant control over their participation and where the basis of lecturer-student interaction is collaboration;
- (2) to explore the attitudes and knowledge of students and past students at the supported school towards Universities such as QUT and to gather information on the supported school which can be the basis of future action; and
- (3) to improve the awareness of the participating students of the social issues affecting their plans for further education and their research skills, and most importantly to gain familiarity with the culture of the University.

METHOD

The school

The selected school was located at the very low socio-economic suburb at the southern outskirts of Brisbane. The school had a high Aboriginal and Islander population and a significant Asian population. A situational analysis (Middleton, 1991) indicated that: (a) 72% of adults in the area were educationally disadvantaged; (b) the number of single parent families was six times the Brisbane average with 75% of them depending on Social Security benefits; (c) the school had suffered from a 'brain drain' during the past few years, with many of the more academic students choosing to transfer to nearby schools in higher socio-economic areas; (d) about 80% of the students commencing grade 8 had some form of learning disability; and (e) half of the student population had suffered a moderate to severe emotional or mental trauma. However, as the school principal, in describing the student and suburb population, was quick to add: 'Don't get me wrong. Some of the best people I have ever met live in the suburb. and some of the best students in the world are in this school.' Middleton's situational analysis also indicated that "most teachers had a real sense of love and caring for the students" (p. 8).

The Students

Nine students from grade 11 and 12 took part in the project. The students were selected by the liaison teacher from the school who supervised the students' participation in the project. This selection was based on the students' academic achievement, gender, social and racial backgrounds. Of the selected group, six were females, one was a mature age student (22 years) and three were Vietnamese. In spite of the school's efforts, no student from Aboriginal and Islander background volunteered. Seven of the students were receiving AUSTUDY assistance at that time. Most of these students believed that their parents and teachers were encouraging them to succeed in school and to consider higher education. They were less sure about their parents' and teachers' beliefs in their abilities.

The nine students surveyed 72 other students from the school, fourteen in Years 8, 9 and 12 and fifteen in Years 10 and 11. They also interviewed seven past students who covered a wide range of situations, including politicians, mothers, students and unemployed. These interviews were used to build up case studies of the seven past students.

Instruments

The instruments used by the students to gather data on their peers and past students were a questionnaire for the school students and an interview script for the past students. The questionnaire was designed to be filled in by the students with minimal assistance. The interview script consisted of questions concerned with: (a) how the school was during the time the interviewee attended it; (b) what influenced the interviewee decisions about their life; (c) how the interviewee perceived University then and now; (d) how the interviewee perceived the school now; and (e) how the school effected their later life. The interviews were audio taped.

The instruments used by University staff to study the students'

activities were interviews, organised observations of group activities and informal field notes.

Procedure

In the project, the students were employed as research assistants to: (a) attend training sessions at the University; (b) gather and analyse data from their peers and other past and present members of their community; and (c) organise and write a report on this data. These three tasks correspond to the three stages into which this project was organised.

The first stage consisted of four days of training and planning at the university. The locating of the project at the university was seen as important for achieving the aim of bridging the gap between the students' culture and that of the University. The students received some financial assistance to cover the transport to and from the university. This training session was conducted during the mid-year school holidays. During these days, the students (a) considered the social issues of disadvantage and education; (b) heard the experiences of University staff who came from backgrounds similar to the students; and (c) undertook training sessions to gain library, computer and research skills, including questionnaires and interviews, that would help them in the project and in future studies at the university if they decided to pursue that option.

After the initial sessions, much of the University staff's involvement in the training and planning days became reactive because of the involvement of the students in decision making. Specific planning for the next stages of the project was most intensive during these days, as the University staff reacted to the proposals of the students.

The first decision by the students was to identify the aims of their research (these are included in an Appendix A). These aims were identified by the students in brainstorming sessions and later summarised by university staff. To achieve these aims, the students decided to divide into two research groups, one to plan the questionnaire with which to survey students at the school and the other to prepare the script for the interview of past students. As the task progressed, the two teams further divided into smaller groups to design specific aspects of the questionnaire and the interview to deal with different populations. The rest of the time during this first training and planning days was devoted to developing the instruments and trying them out on each other. The University staff provided advice when needed.

The second stage of the project involved the conduct of the study and

the collection of data. Students received support from the school to go into classes to conduct the questionnaires. The case study group conducted their interviews outside class time. The student worked on this stage of the project independently from the University team, but worked under the supervision of the school teacher.

The third stage of the program was seven days conducted at the University during the September school holidays. During these days, the students analysed their data and wrote the final report (Borowicz, Davis, James, Le, Nguyen, Owens, Pham, Strachan & Wilkins, 1992). Also during these days, the students were able to reflect on the project as a whole and

make recommendations from the findings. The executive summary of the students' findings and recommendations are listed in Appendix B.

After the report was finished, the University staff interviewed the nine students individually about their experiences in the project.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The students coded the data from the questionnaires and entered it into a computer. Frequencies were calculated and the data discussed in terms of a variety of issues that emerged from the data. The students also transcribed the interviews and organised the results under the various questions.

The observations of the students were combined with the field notes, transcriptions of the University staff's interviews of the students and the students' report, to provide a base of information on which the University staff could reflect when evaluating the project.

The Students' report

In general, the students found the writing of the final report difficult yet challenging. They required considerable assistance in editing and formatting as well as guidance in generating conclusions from the data. Yet in the report they reveal substantial maturity in their ability to be reflective and evaluative. The report contained evidence that these students have developed a good 'research sense'. For example, they were able to identify the strengths of questionnaires as a method for research which enables them to "question a large anonymous audience, within a minimal amount of time" (Borowicz et al, 1992; p 2). At the same time, they were able to identify some of the pitfalls in designing and conducting surveys, e.g., "The design of the survey relied heavily upon the brain" (p.2). They also identified that the attitude of the data collector toward the respondents was a major factor in obtaining valid information. They concluded that "one must commit oneself to the task, taking a professional outlook and reflecting this image toward the respondents" (p.3). Similarly, they were not afraid to go beyond the data and raise hypotheses about its meaning and causes. In noting that 71% of the boys and 29% of the girls have University aspirations in spite of the fact that girls indicated that they enjoy school more than boys, they were able to provide the following explanation: "Possibly this may be due to a lack of female role models who have completed university other than teachers, as well as early motherhood which is common in [this suburb](rather than girls concentrating on careers)" (p.21).

The Interviews with students

One of the aims of the project was to increase the nine students' familiarity with University life. The interviews showed that being invited to perform research in a local University with other students their own age, to experience a new environment, new challenges and to learn new skills, proved to be very rewarding for these students. The students expressed positive views about the experience. For a number of the students, Universities had been perceived, prior to the research, as an alien environment. They knew nobody who had gone to a University. As one student put it: "They don't think uni is for them". After the research, one student commented with some surprise that "I didn't think it would be

such a big place ... how sociable people are! ... Like, at first, I thought it might be like school ... They're not trying to go around big noting themselves like school kids are". Another student described her experience of University in the following words:

I used to think university was this monstrous place. I thought it was

a really difficult place to get into, that the lecturers were these sort of people high up on a pedestal. Our teachers said that when you go to university, the lecturers are not like teachers, they aren't there twenty four hours a day. You've sort of got the feeling that you only get to see them for whatever lecture you have and then they are off and you never get to see them again and then you are stuck with all this work and I used to think how dreadful it would be. Like ... I like the responsibility and freedom the teachers allow me here but I also like the fact that they are there. And I sort of got the feeling that if I go to university they won't be there. But ,... um, it's not like that at all, you're human too (laughter). I thought that the lecturers got on really well with us. You know they treated us as adults even though we actually aren't.. I felt comfortable at the university. I didn't feel out of place or anything like that. It didn't scare me like I thought it would. I don't know why most people think that university is for the most intelligent people, people with status or something like that. It's like school except that it's much bigger. There are a lot more people. People seem to be running around a lot more.

Learning to Work in a Team.

One of the main features of the organisation of this project is that it was based on team work. Working on the research project gave students the opportunity to reflect on their own abilities and to learn new skills. Because they worked in teams they were able to divide the tasks, making best use of the skills of all. Some typical comments about their roles included the following: "Well I think team work was a big part. We all relied heavily upon one another I think, lecturers and the students." Another student reflected on the project in the following words: "It was simple. Easier than I thought. I thought it needs more working and all that but really it's team work and we finished things earlier than we thought because we work in a team. [If] we do it alone, it would take time. real long time".

Another benefit from the project arose from the fact that the nine students came from different ethnic backgrounds. The students appeared to gain understanding of each others' cultures. This is illustrated by the experience of one girl who said: "When I came here I just hang around the, you know, my people, the Vietnamese people, and I didn't really socialise with other people and I thought those people must be bad and all this. But now that I done the survey there's heaps of people that [are] real nice.".

Although the students saw the benefits of team work, they also reflected on the problems that arose. During both sessions at the University there were a few moments where real conflict arose between individual students or between groups of students. This conflict of ideas

between students was highlighted by one student as follows:

Everybody has different viewpoints in regard to the actual survey. Like when we were sitting around discussing things that I sort of picked up on that not all of us agreed on certain aspects that we were talking about. I knew quite a few of the people who actually took part in the project with me. I thought I knew them pretty well but when we got into the research thing I found out how differently each of us actually were. We weren't as close or related as I thought we were.

Another problem arose because of the perceptions of unequal amount of work that the different students have performed. One student commented on differences in work rate as follows.

The thing that came across to me was that the reason why we had to come back for longer [time] was just because we didn't all pull our weight. I mean some of us pulled more weight than others and that was one thing that I think we should try to avoid if you done [sic] it again.

The student was asked how such a situation should be handled: "I don't know cause it's really hard. because I mean I hate to hurt anyone's feelings. Which is me and I don't know how to handle it.". Asked whose job it was to handle the situation, the student said "I think it's really our job. We have to really pull them into line. Say, hey, you know, you're not pulling your weight, you know, you've got to do this and you've got to do that and give them a deadline so they finish that by. And they think, `Oh Wow, I've

done it' so they can actually feel proud of themselves. And then we'd feel proud too cause they'd actually done it. (laughs) Instead of us doing it".

Benefit to the students

The third principle guiding the development of this project was that the students participating should directly benefit from the experience; Such benefit could best be illustrated by the following quotes from three students. The first student talked of how the project had benefited her.

I didn't think that I would actually become so involved in the project. Like, I didn't actually know what it was about. Then I became very interested in it because I wanted to. The project benefited my friends, the up and coming seniors and whatever. I didn't think that I could handle the responsibility that was, no it wasn't forced on me, like there was so much responsibility. ... Well, I thought it was very huge, even though there were a lot of people in it. It took a lot of time...and I didn't think that I could handle something that big. But I think that I came out pretty good and I'm pleased with the result. ... I didn't think that I would be able to handle the work load ... but with a lot of time planning, you know, certain things set around certain times? Yeh, I did, and I was really pleased with myself. Well looking at the first draft of the final report, I sat there looking at it thinking, we couldn't have done this. It was the biggest thrill to look at it and say, 'That is mine!'. ... It has boosted my self-esteem a lot. I'm very proud of myself for this and I feel

very capable of undertaking a project so large, like, I'd be willing to do it again just to see if it would actually turn out like this again, but I feel very capable.

Another student identified confidence as her primary gain.

I've always been the type of person who sits in class and, if I don't understand I'll wait for the end of the class to, you know, ask the teacher. But ever since then I ask them during class. Cause I always used to worry what people would say. Oh, you're dumb or something, but it just doesn't worry me any more. ... It (the project) made me realise that not all my doors are closed to uni, that I do still have a chance and I'm going to do everything that I can to get there.

The third student discussed her new determination to go on to university.

I think it's got me to think of university more. Cause like, I, even six months ago I wanted to go to university but I didn't want to put the effort in to get good marks and I was only just sitting on sounds. But now I've picked my grades up to, like, B's and A's I've got and I've surprised myself too. And my marks are getting better and my Dad's a lot happier and everybody is a lot happier. ... It's making me more confident about getting to the end of grade 12 and getting into university.. And I really want to go now more than I thought I did.

CONCLUSIONS

This project was based on the concern that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds do not participate in higher education to the same degree as students from other backgrounds. It appeared that the cultural difference between the low socio-economic status students and institutions of higher education contribute to this inequality. Hence, one way to counteract some factors that entrench inequality is to bridge the gap between the two cultures. Thus, the aims of this project were to provide a low socio-economic group of students with experiences and skills that are appropriate for university study and to provide them with experiences of University life that will acquaint them with the culture of higher education.

However, having asserted these two aims of this project, we are well aware of the limitation of such a project to change the structures that give rise to inequality in education. Foucault said in a personal communication quoted in Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982), that "People know what they do; they frequently know why they do; but what they don't know is what what they do does".

The intention behind the project was that the students involved would

consider going to University and that they would be successful at University study. Whether or not in the process of doing so, they are enculturated into the elite culture of the University or use the experience as an empowerment to be critical of the system, and to empower others in their social class to do so, while is a major concern, was not within the scope of this project. However, although the project hoped that the

students would benefit from the experience in terms of personal social mobility, it was also hoped that the research undertaken would give results generalisable to other students and illuminate the practices of the very system that gave rise to the inequality in the first instant.

FINAL NOTE

Although the results and discussion above concentrated on the first year of the running of this project, the meaning of the project is not complete without mentioning the follow up project in the following year. Additional funds available from the Equity Board of the University made it possible to extend the project to a neighbouring school serving the same community. The activities in the second school were parallel to the events in the original school. The second year of operation also allowed students from the first school to form action groups to implement the recommendation of the 1992 report. Four groups of students from the first school were able to: (a) organise a Homework Centre for students within their school seeking extra tuition from volunteer teachers; (b) organise a Buddy System between the grade 8 students from the school and University students; (c) organise University shadowing experiences where some grade 11 students become University students for one full day; and (d) form a publication committee that wrote press releases and letters to the editors and got them published. Four grade 12 students from the first group are at the University this year thanks to a special entry program QSTEP that accepts selected students from disadvantaged backgrounds who do not meet the normal entry requirements for the University.

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APPENDIX A: AIMS OF THE STUDENTS' RESEARCH PROJECT

Aims:

The project aims at the following

- I. Survey Inala's students on
 1. attitudes towards higher education
 2. career expectations and plans
 3. self concept of ability for higher education
- II. Investigate the effect of some background factors as they effect the factors in I, in particular:
 1. gender
 2. work and education of parents
 3. ethnic background
 4. age and grade level
 5. area of residence
- III. Investigate the effect of other people on student's attitudes, in particular:
 1. peers

 2. parents
 3. teachers
- IV. Investigate the level of knowledge of student on options at university and sources of such knowledge
- V. Case studies on past Inala students who belong to either of the following categories:
 1. were successful at university
 2. were not successful at university
 3. could not enter university

APPENDIX B: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

List of Findings

1. Language is a barrier.
2. Parental Influence is important.
3. Enjoyment of education for girls is important.
4. Boys have higher aspiration than girls for university.
5. Students need encouragement from others.
6. Not everybody wants to go to university.

7. Some students are unaware of financial support.
8. Some students do not do well at school for different reasons.
9. Some students have a limited knowledge of university.
10. There is a lack of university role models.
11. Geographical position of Inala. (isolated)
12. Communities view of Inala. (stigma)
13. There is a need to motivate students.
14. There is a lack of resources in the school and community.

Recommendations

1. The Inala State High School administration and School Support Centre to include a "Tertiary Education Course" within the senior curriculum.
"Tertiary Education Course "
Interested students could attend this course for one or two hours per week and some activities included in this course could be
 - * Visits by lecturers and tertiary students.
 - * Student adviser relationship between selected tertiary students and senior high school students.
 - * Reading pamphlets from universities and tertiary institutions and maybe the provision of a room for this.
 - * Visits to universities and tertiary institutions.
 - * Work shadowing projects at universities.The course could be run by one teacher or member of staff and university students and Inala students could be accredited for attendance and participation.
2. The research group to discuss the findings with the guidance officer regarding the information found and the guidance officer to do something about it.
3. The research group to discuss the findings with the Education Department and Universities.
4. The research group to distribute the report to the
 - * The Premier, Mr Wayne Goss
 - * Interviewees
 - * Education Minister
 - * Universities
 - * Researchers
 - * Media
5. The school to organise seminars or talks involving female role-models in non traditional careers.
6. The Education Department to provide funds and resources for the establishment of a homework study centre.
7. The Brisbane City Council to expand and modernise the local library. (this has already been proposed but needs community/school support).