

The Australian and Canadian General Public's Views of Gender and Mathematics

STUDY BACKGROUND

As part of a large-scale study, we explored the Australian and Canadian general public's views about gender and mathematics ability, and the importance of studying mathematics by gender. Since students are exposed to ideas about mathematics in contexts outside of the classroom, it is essential to gain insight on the views of the general public more broadly. In our study, we view gender as non-binary and socially constructed.

HOW WE CONDUCTED OUR STUDY

Uniquely, we used a questionnaire with non-binary language. Data were collected in two cities - one in Australia and one in Canada. In each city, four 'matched' locations were selected as sites for data collection. In total, we surveyed 405 participants. We describe trends from our findings by country, gender, age, and education level.

OUR FINDINGS

OVERALL FINDINGS

MATHEMATICS ABILITY

Most participants felt that there was **NO RELATIONSHIP** between gender and mathematics ability.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING MATHEMATICS

Most participants felt that **BOTH/ALL GENDERS** should study mathematics.

TOP 3 PARTICIPANT EXPLANATIONS

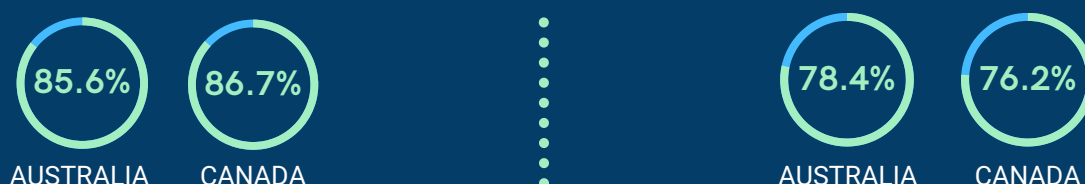
- "Everyone can do everything."
- "Mathematics is important in everyone's everyday life."
- "My personal experiences and/or observations informed my beliefs."
- "Mathematics is important for everyone's educational pathway and/or future career."
- "Mathematics ability is based on an individual's choice, ability, and/or interests."
- "Everyone should have equal opportunities."

FINDINGS BY DEMOGRAPHIC

The figures below represent the percentage of participants who felt that there was **NO RELATIONSHIP** between gender and mathematics ability by demographic.

The figures below represent the percentage of participants who felt that **BOTH/ALL GENDERS** should study mathematics by demographic.

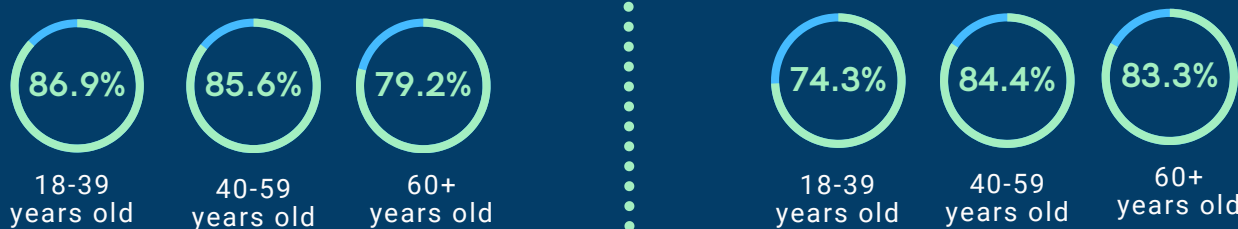
FINDINGS BY COUNTRY



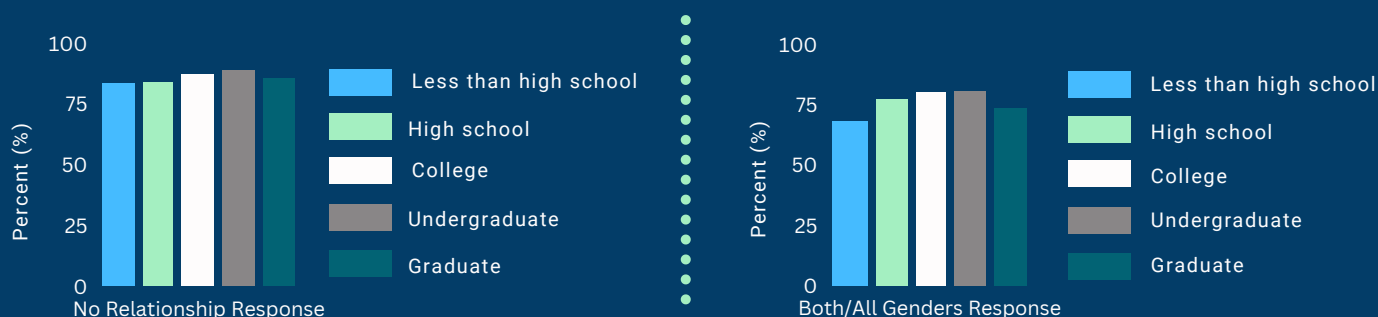
FINDINGS BY GENDER



FINDINGS BY AGE



FINDINGS BY EDUCATION LEVEL



CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Although most participants held gender-neutral views about gender and mathematics ability and the importance of studying mathematics, some held gendered views. As such, it is important to continue exploring perspectives of gender and mathematics of the general public in gender-inclusive ways.

Jao, L., Hall, J., & Di Placido, C. (2023). "If you're a dude, you're a chick, whatever the hell in between, you need to know about maths": the Australian and Canadian general public's views of gender and mathematics. *Mathematics Education Research Journal*, 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13394-023-00448-y>

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