



Australian School Libraries Research Project

Australian Teacher Librarians: Report 1

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Summary

The Australian School Library Research Project (ASLRP) is an initiative of the Australian School Library Association (ASLA), the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA and Edith Cowan University (ECU). This paper presents the preliminary findings from an anonymous Web survey, designed to collect data about the status and role of Teacher Librarians (TLs) across Australia. It is part of a much larger data collection which examines Australian school library personnel and roles. A total of eight surveys were administered in this dataset and targeted TLs, librarians, library technicians, library officers, resource teachers, AV technicians, volunteers and general staff.

The scope and purpose of the TL survey included the following:

- age
- qualifications
- experience
- salaries
- employment
- *their role (what they do)*
- professional associations
- professional development activities

This report does not include the role of teacher librarians, which will be reported separately at a later date. The results of these findings include the following:

- **Age of TLs**
 - Teacher Librarianship is a feminised profession.
 - Teacher librarianship is an aging profession.
 - 88.888% of TLs in this survey group are aged 40+ years.
 - 77.28% are aged 45+ years.
 - 55.058% are aged 55+ years.
 - 10.116% are aged 60+ years.
 - Only 3.15% of TLs in this group are younger than 30 years.
 - Tasmania is the worst of the states with only 2.04% of the workforce younger than 40 years of age and 73.5% older than 50 years.
 - Anglican schools have greater numbers of TLs in the 50+ age bracket
- **Qualifications**
 - 6.799% of the participants have no library qualifications at all.
 - Only one person has a PhD (0.165%).
 - 20.729% have a Masters degree. However, 28.8% (36) of these participants indicated that their MA was not in Teacher Librarianship.
 - More than half of the respondents (57.213%) have qualifications gained before 1995.
 - 21.89% of participants gained their LIS qualification before 1980.
 - 50%+ of TLs acquired their qualifications before the birth of the WWW and the global changes wrought by ICTs in the area of information management and electronic resource development.
 - The number of TLs graduating is steadily falling.
- **Experience as a TL & a teacher**
 - Nearly a quarter (24.875%) of all TLs in this survey have less than 5 years experience as a TL.
 - 11.276% have less than 1 year experience.
 - WA and QLD have the most TLs with less than a year's experience.
 - NSW has the largest number of TLs with less than 5 years experience.

- Nearly a quarter (24.212%) of TLs in this sample have no prior classroom experience, with a further 9.784% with less than 2 years experience in the classroom.
- However, 32.835% of TLs in this sample have 10+ years of classroom experience.

- **Salaries**
 - 10% of participants earn less than \$40K.
 - 14% earn between \$40-50K per year.
 - 2% earn more than \$80K.
 - SA and WA having more participants in the less than \$40K salary bracket.
 - Anglican and Christian schools received higher salaries than TLs in other school types.

- **Professional staffing in school libraries**
 - 4% of TLs in this survey group work less than one day in the library.
 - Another 9.5% work less than two and a half days.
 - 24% work between three and four days in the library.
 - 62.5% of libraries in this survey group have a professional staff member on site either full time or for four and a half days a week.
 - TAS and SA have fewer professionals employed full time in their schools, followed by the ACT.
 - Anglican and Christian schools have more full time professional staff in their libraries.
 - 18.905% of participants in this survey have been employed in a non-school library.

- **Professional association membership**
 - 40-45% of the TLs surveyed in this group are also members of a variety of professional organisations.
 - Strong membership of SLAV and ACS across all states

- **Professional development activities**
 - 30.5% did not participate in or have access to any PD activity.
 - 45 – 50% of the participants in this sample group had either presented at a conference, published in professional journals, organised PD outside the school or been involved in organising a conference during the last 2 years.
 - Non-participation rates are highest in WA and VIC.
 - Conferences remain an important avenue for professional development.
 - 40-45% of TLs in this survey group accessed a range of electronic PD resources, with Alumni being the most popular.
 - 19% of TLs do not use any online PD resources.

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Background

While many studies have been conducted overseas about the efficacy of school libraries and Teacher Librarians (TLs), there is little data about the state of Australian school libraries. The lack of national data about school libraries has long been recognized as a factor that limits the effectiveness of advocacy. Lonsdale (2003 p.32) in the ACER Report commissioned by ASLA on the *Impact of school libraries on student achievement: A review of the research* pinpointed the serious nature of this gap. Lonsdale commented:

Perhaps a useful starting point for Australian library professionals would be to gain a more accurate picture nationally of the current state of school librarianship ... Before embarking on a sustained and systematic program of research, or even a promotional campaign to highlight the positive contribution that school librarians can make to student learning, it would be useful to have an accurate snapshot of what is currently happening around the country in regard to school library staffing. Clearly national data collection should be a priority on the research agenda. (Lonsdale, 2003)

As a result, the ASLA/ALIA Policy Advisory Group (PAG) was formed to act on the recommendations presented in the Review. The PAG is a joint committee of the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) and the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). It was formed in 2002 and part of its brief is to gather statistical information about the state of school libraries across Australia. In 2005, the PAG approached Edith Cowan University (ECU) to form a partnership to execute the research. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed in April 2007 and the Australian School Library Research Project (ASLRP) was created, with each partner contributing equally to the costs associated with the project.

The Australian School Library Research Project aims to build an accurate *snapshot* of school libraries across Australia by gathering useable and ongoing data about resource levels, budgets and personnel. This data will enable opportunities for evidence based advocacy for school libraries; to run a comparative study of resourcing in school libraries around the nation based on accurate data; and to investigate the roles of library personnel in schools. Thus, the survey data presented in this report is part of a much larger data collection, covering schools around Australia.

Method

The initial data collection for ASLRP consisted of two surveys:

- Survey 1: Australian School Libraries – State of the nation (completed by the person in charge of the school library); and
- Survey 2: Australian School Library Personnel and roles (completed by all school library personnel eg. teacher librarian, librarian, teacher, library technician, AV technician, library officer/assistant/clerk, library volunteers)

This report includes the preliminary findings of the TL survey for Survey 2: Australian school library personnel and roles. It does not include analysis of the data collected about the role of TLs in schools. This is an extremely large and complex dataset and will be completed at a later date. Respondents to this survey were either:

- qualified TLs who manage a school library under the title TL;
- qualified TLs who manage a school library under a different title;
- unqualified staff who manage a school library under the title TL; or
- unqualified staff who manage a school library.

Issues that arose with the data collection in other states as reported in email feedback included a lack of time to complete the surveys and an inability to access the required information from the library automated catalogue.

This report on the teacher librarian survey includes the following datasets:

- Demographic information

ASLRP: A snapshot of Australian TLs

- Age of teacher librarians
- Qualifications
- Experience as a TL and as a teacher
- Salaries
- Employment in school libraries
- Professional association membership
- Professional development activities

Findings - Australian TLs

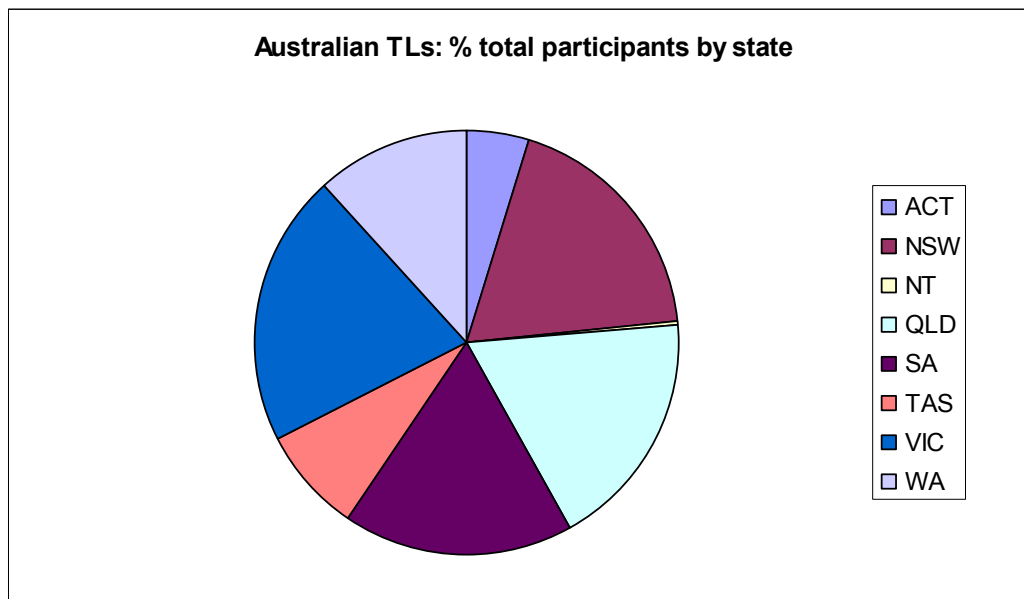
Demographic information

The TL survey received 702 responses. Of these, 99 responses were incomplete leaving a total survey population of 603. The number of participants is sufficiently large to provide a reliable snapshot of TLs across Australia. The number of participants per state is provided in Table 1 and Figure 1 below.

Table 1: Australian TLs: % total participants by state

State	%Total	Total
ACT	4.643	28
NSW	18.573	112
NT	0.497	3
QLD	18.242	110
SA	17.412	105
TAS	8.126	49
VIC	20.729	125
WA	11.774	71

Figure 1: Australian School Libraries: Survey 1, Participants by State, All Schools



Variables

It should be noted that the extremely small number of participants from the Northern Territory (3) make this subset unreliable. The lack of professional staff response to this survey may be due to:

- There are few professional library staff in school libraries in the NT;
- a lack of availability of Internet infrastructure, thus preventing respondents from completing the survey;
- a lack of knowledge about how to participate online hindered participation; or
- a lack of response from professional staff due to other reasons.

Participant numbers for the other states are large enough to allow some conclusions to be made about school library personnel in the each state, while the total number of participants provides sufficient evidence to draw some conclusions about the overall status of TLs in schools across Australia.

A further breakdown of the demographic data indicates the number of participants according to school type and school level. The largest number of participants came from the state government school sector (50.58%), with the various independent schools providing information about the independent schools sector. These participation rates probably reflect the percentage of TLs in government versus independent schools across the nation, as anecdotal evidence suggests the independent schools sector appears to have a greater commitment to professional staff in school libraries. The independent school subsets include Anglican, Catholic, Christian and Other (as identified by the respondents). Figure 2 indicates the participation breakdown for school level, with primary school (33.499%) respondents fewer in number than secondary (38.805%) and multi-campus sites (27.694%).

Figure 2: Australian TLs: Participants by school type, all schools

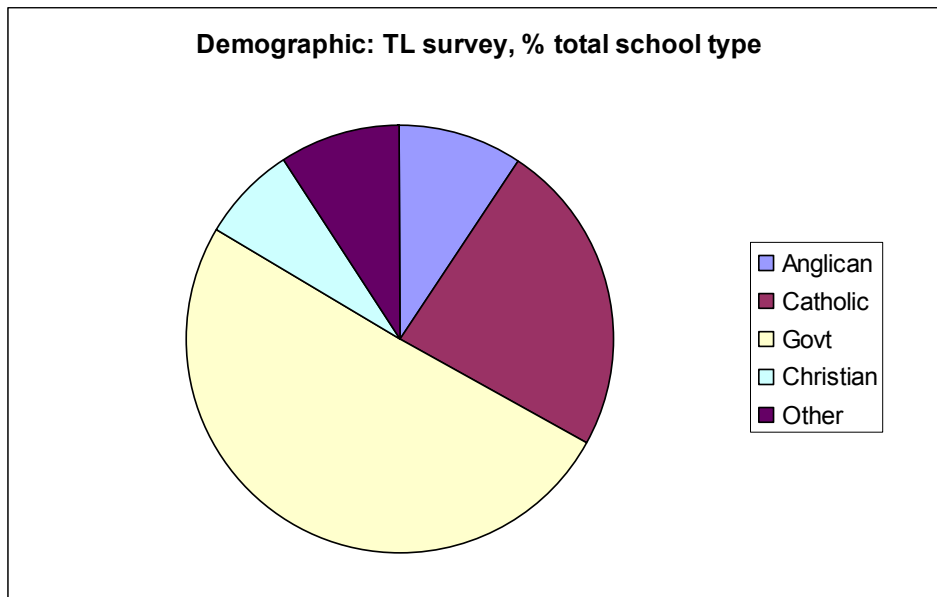


Figure 3: Australian TLs: Participants by school level, all schools

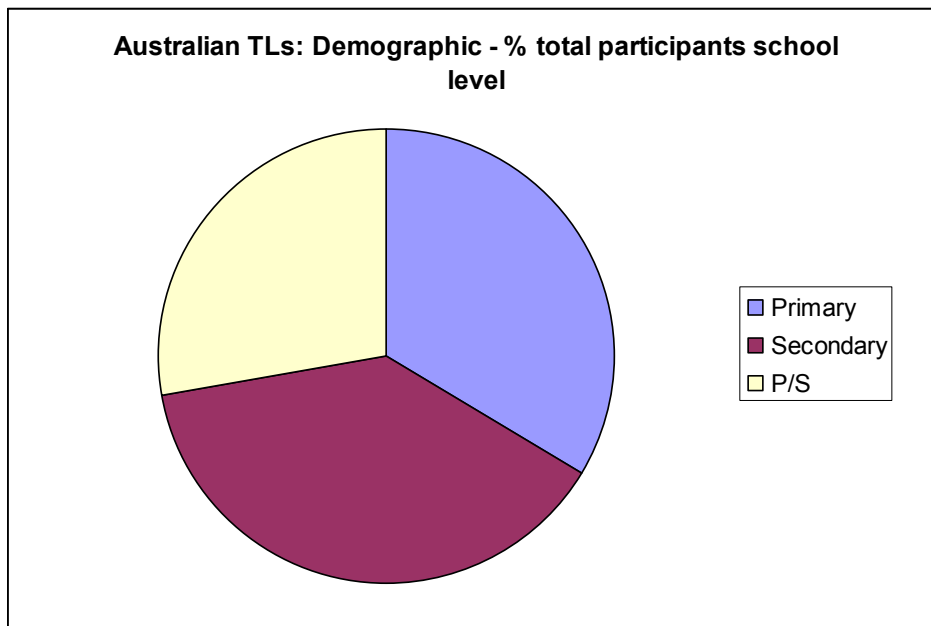
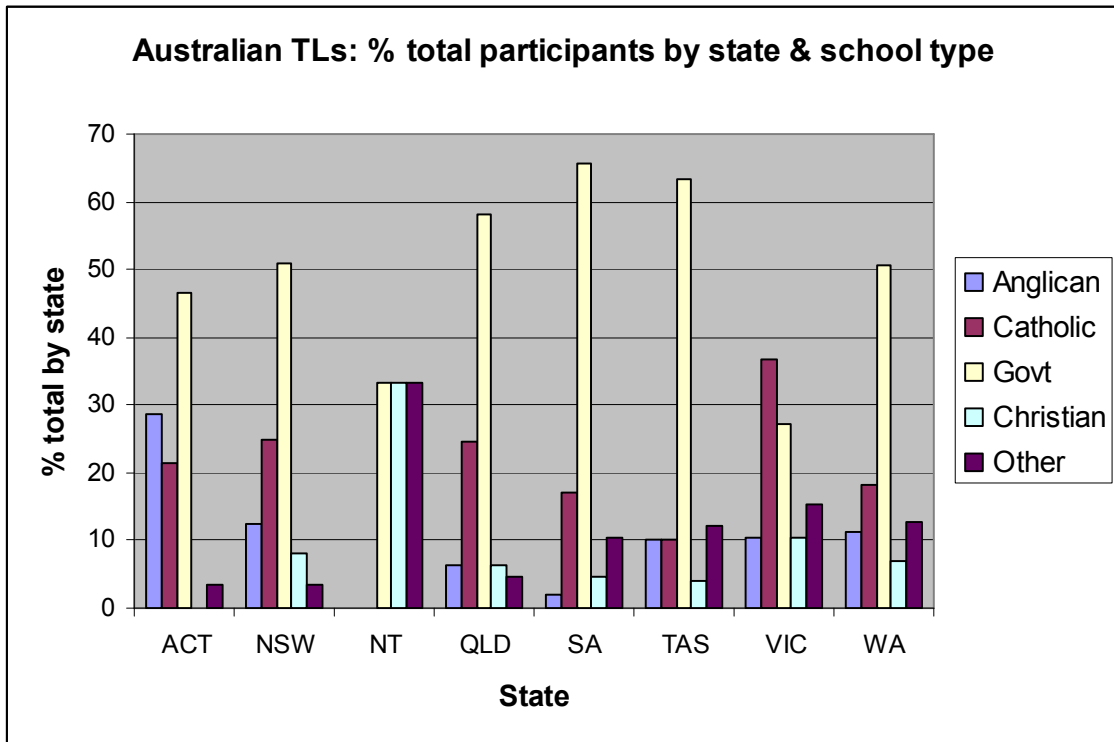


Figure 4: Australian TLs: Participants by school type and by state, all schools



As indicated in Figure 4, Anglican schools respondents featured prominently in the ACT, but not in the other states. Catholic respondents featured strongly in the ACT, NSW, QLD and particularly in VIC, while Christian schools do not feature at all in ACT, and in small numbers in the other states. Government schools did not feature as strongly in VIC. There may be a number of reasons for these disparities:

- TLs are not a component of the professional staffing in these schools;
- a lack of infrastructure hindered participation;
- a lack of knowledge about how to participate online hindered participation;
- the percentage total of respondents for each state are an accurate reflection of the number of school types for each state; or
- other reasons such as a lack of time.

Figure 5: Australian TLs: Participants by gender, all schools

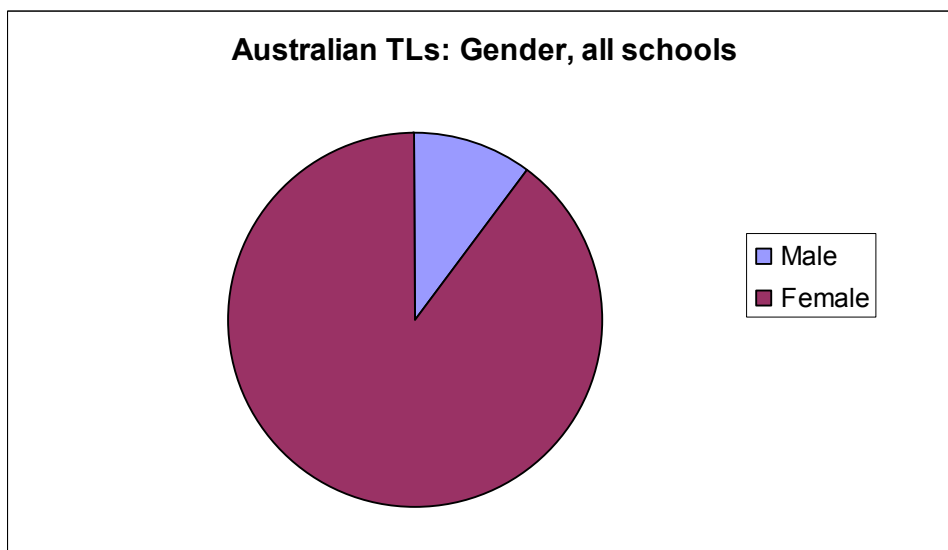


Figure 5 indicates that teacher librarianship is a heavily feminised profession with nearly 90% of female respondents.

Australian TLs - Age

Figures 6, 7 and 8 indicate that teacher librarianship is an aging profession. Succession planning and active recruitment need to take place across Australia if the profession is to survive. In this sample group 88.888% of all TLs are aged 40+ years, 77.28% are aged 45+ years, 55.058% are aged 55+ years and 10.116% of all TLs are aged 60+ years. Only 3.15% of all TLs are younger than 30 years.

Figure 6: Australian TLs: Participants, age (i)

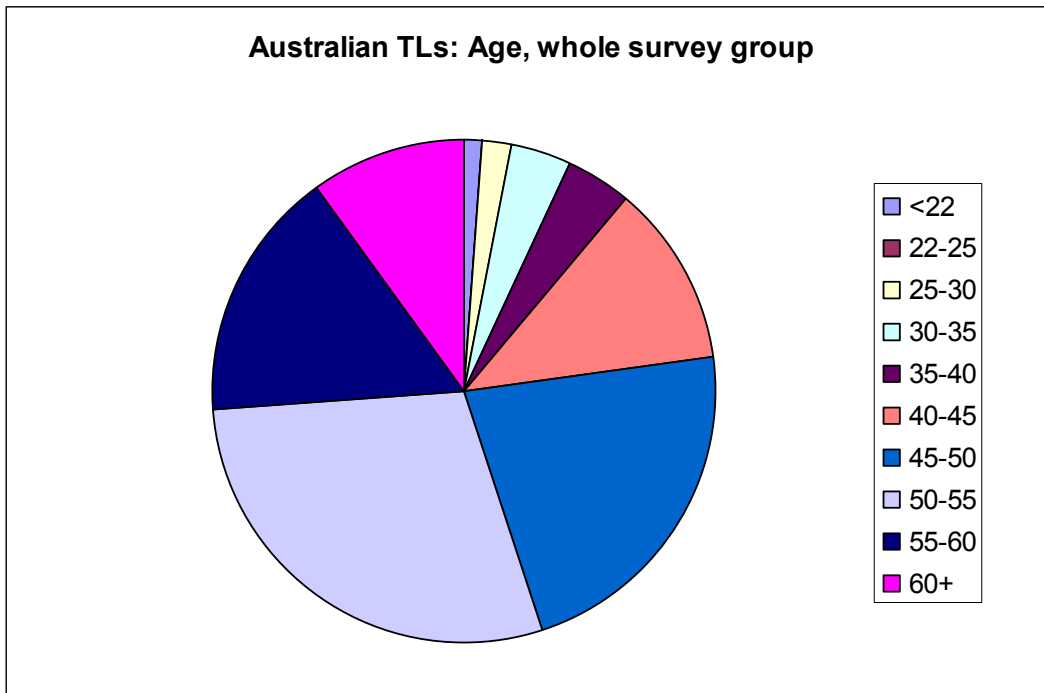


Table 2: Australian TLs: Participants, age

Age	Anglican	Catholic	Govt	Christian	Other	Total
<25	0	1	5	1	1	8
25-30	2	5	3	1	1	12
30-35	3	5	11	3	1	23
35-40	0	5	16	1	3	25
40-45	5	16	35	6	8	70
45-50	7	37	71	7	12	134
50-55	22	42	93	12	12	181
55-60	11	18	41	6	14	90
60+	7	14	30	5	4	60
Total	57	143	305	42	56	603

Figure 7: Australian TLs: Participants, age (ii)

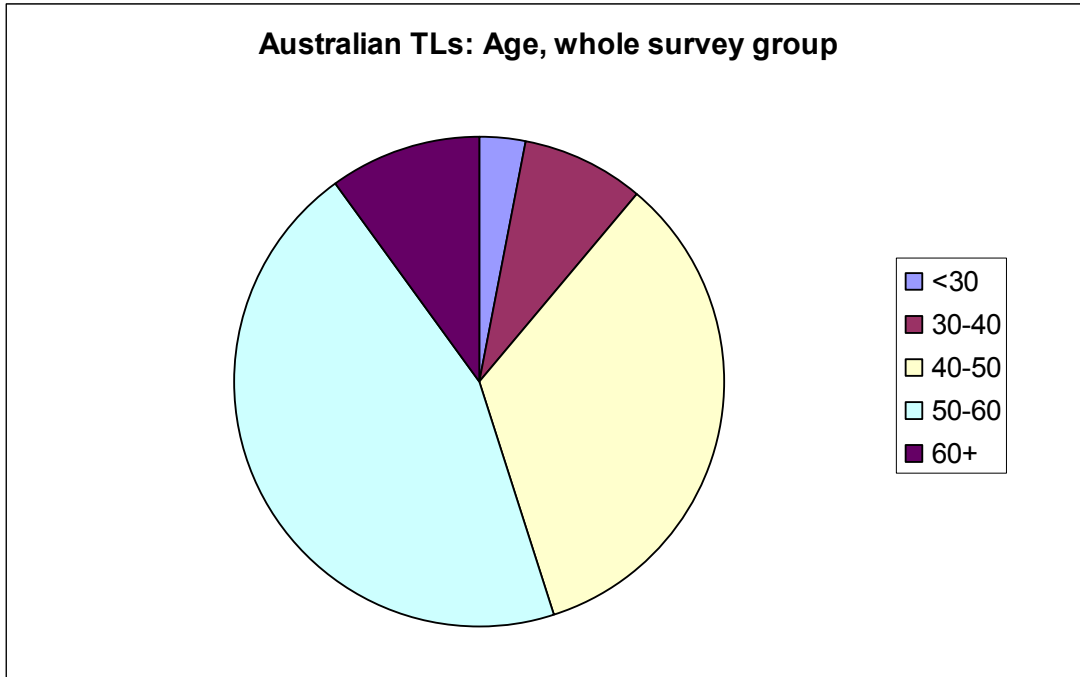
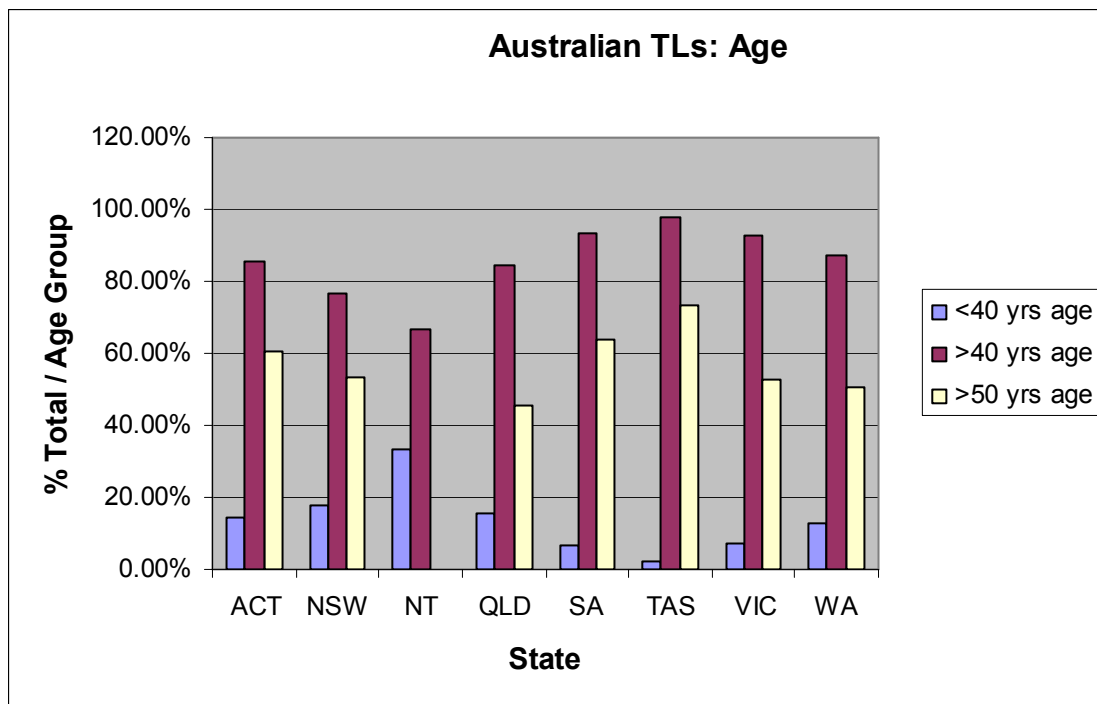
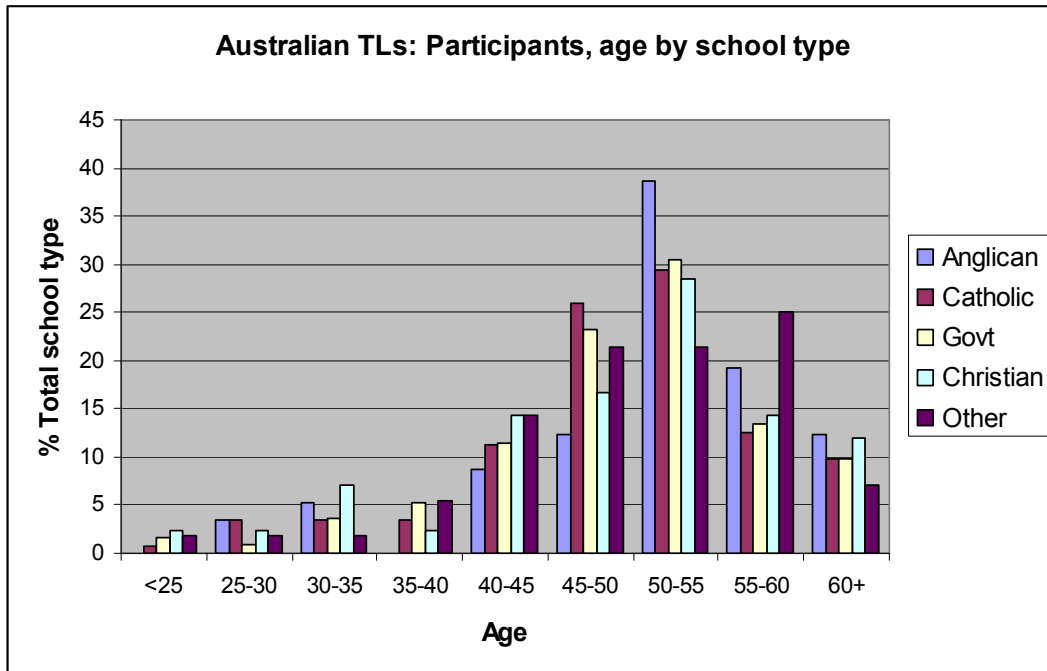


Figure 8: Australia TLs: Participants, age by state



The state breakdown of this data reveals Tasmania as the worst of the states with only 2.04% of the workforce younger than 40 years of age, with South Australia (6.666%) and Victoria (7.2%) coming a close second.

Figure 9: Australian TLs: Participants, age by school type



In this sample, the Anglican schools have greater numbers of TLs in the 50+ age bracket. However, it is difficult to single out any one school type, as the data indicates that aging of the profession is across sectors and across all states. Research conducted by Gillian Hallam (2006) reports that aging of the profession is an issue across LIS sectors and Australia-wide, with 60% of workers aged 45+. In this sample of TLs 72% are aged 45 and over.

Australian TLs - Experience

Even though TLs are an aging demographic, nearly one quarter (24.875%) of all TLs in this survey have less than 5 years experience in the job, with 11.276% with less than 1 year in the job. WA and QLD have the most TLs with less than a year's experience. NSW has a large number of TLs with less than 5 years experience.

Figure 10: Australian TLs: Years of TL experience, all schools

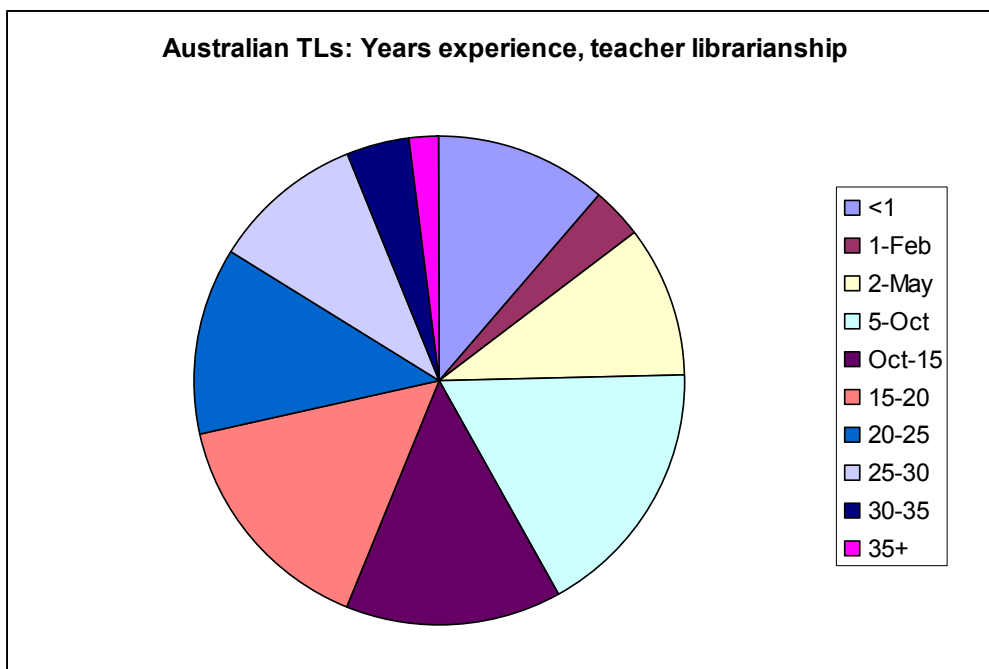


Figure 11: Australian TLs: Years of TL experience, by state, all schools

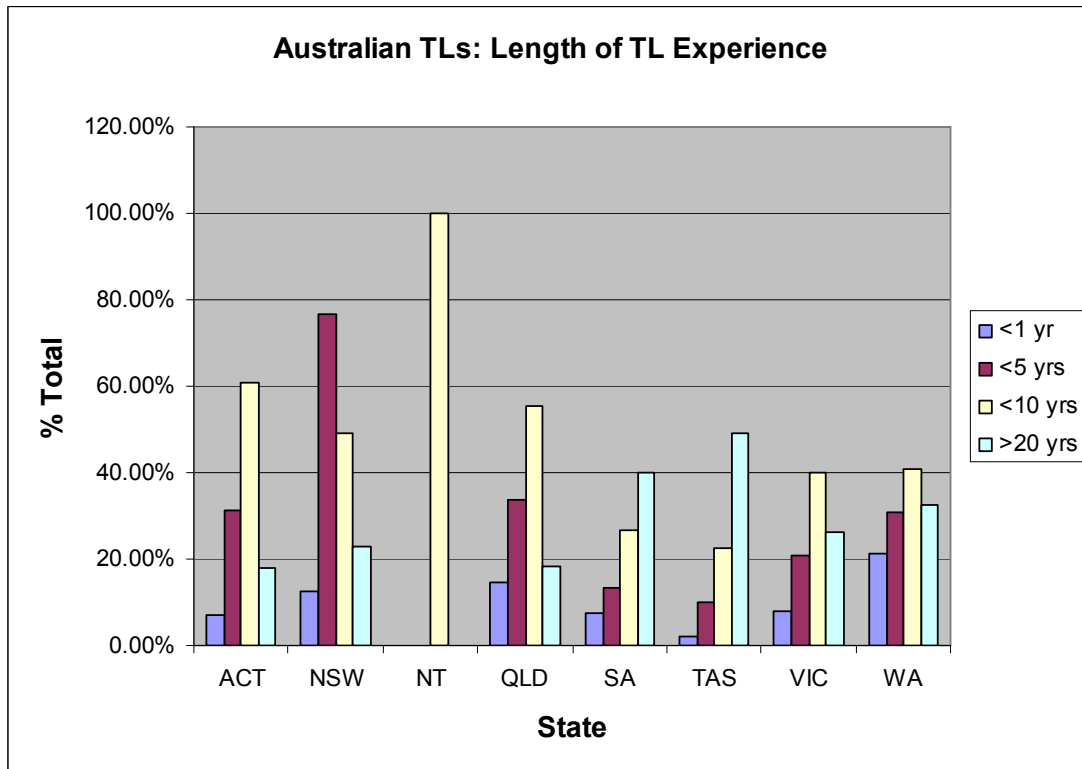
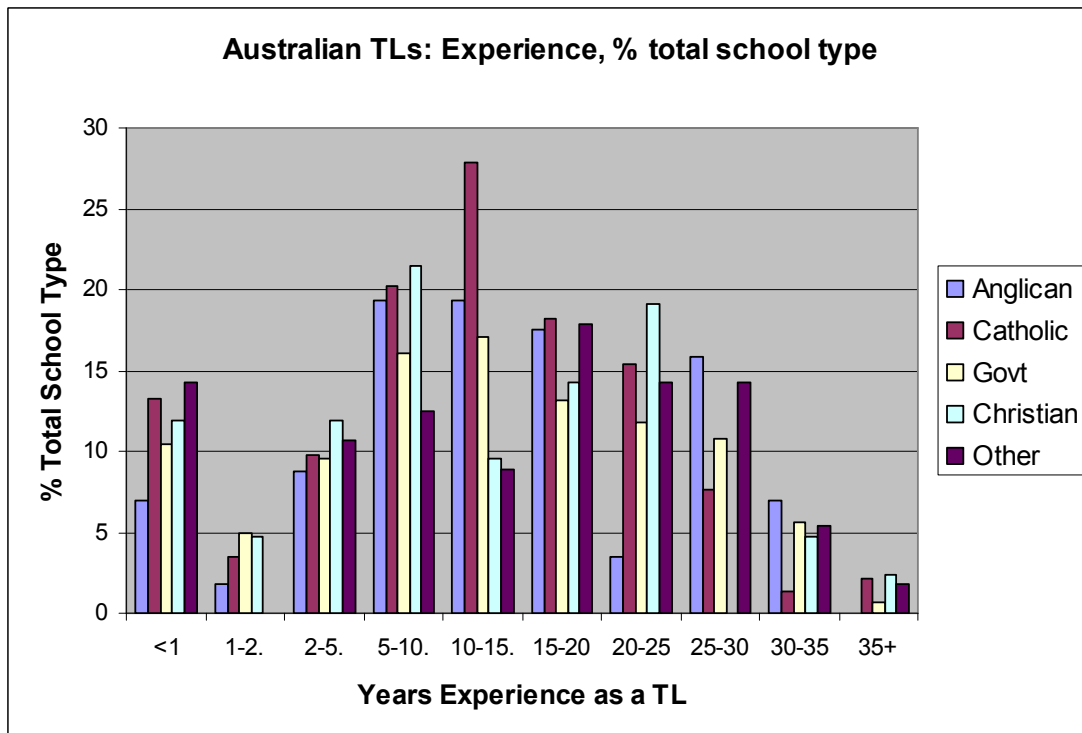


Figure 12: Australian TLs: Years of TL experience, by school type



Nearly one quarter (24.212%) of TLs in this sample have no prior classroom experience, with a further 9.784% with less than 2 years experience in the classroom. This accounts for almost a third of the TLs in this sample. However, 32.835% of TLs have 10+ years of classroom experience.

Figure 13: Australian TLs: Years of teaching experience, all schools

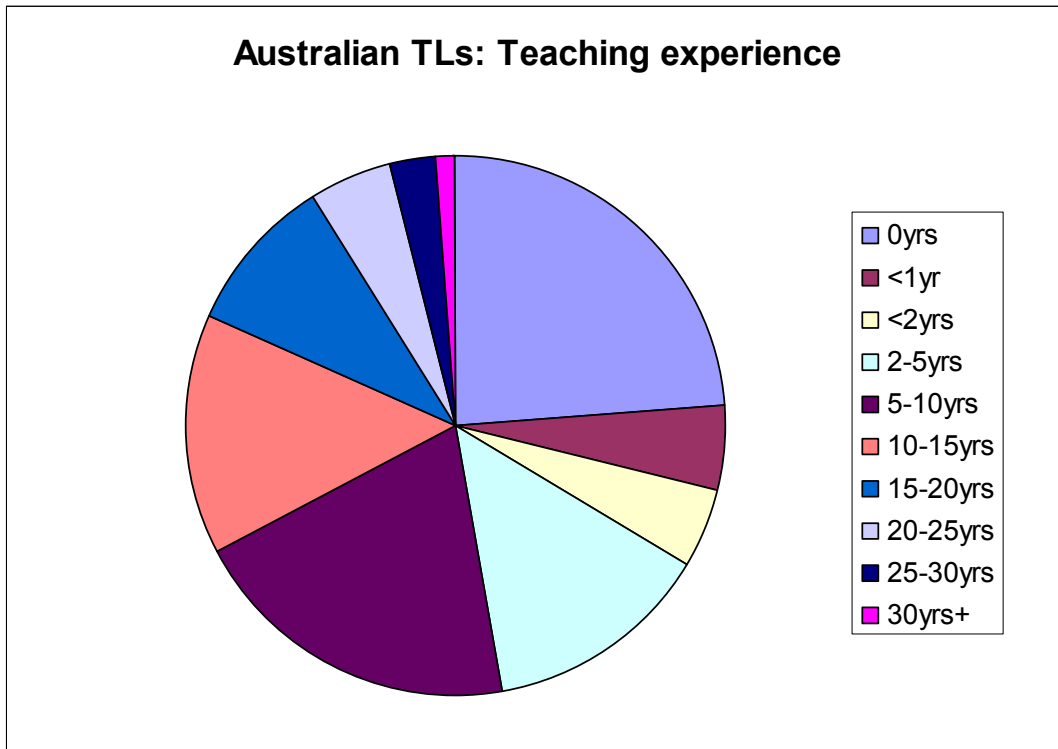
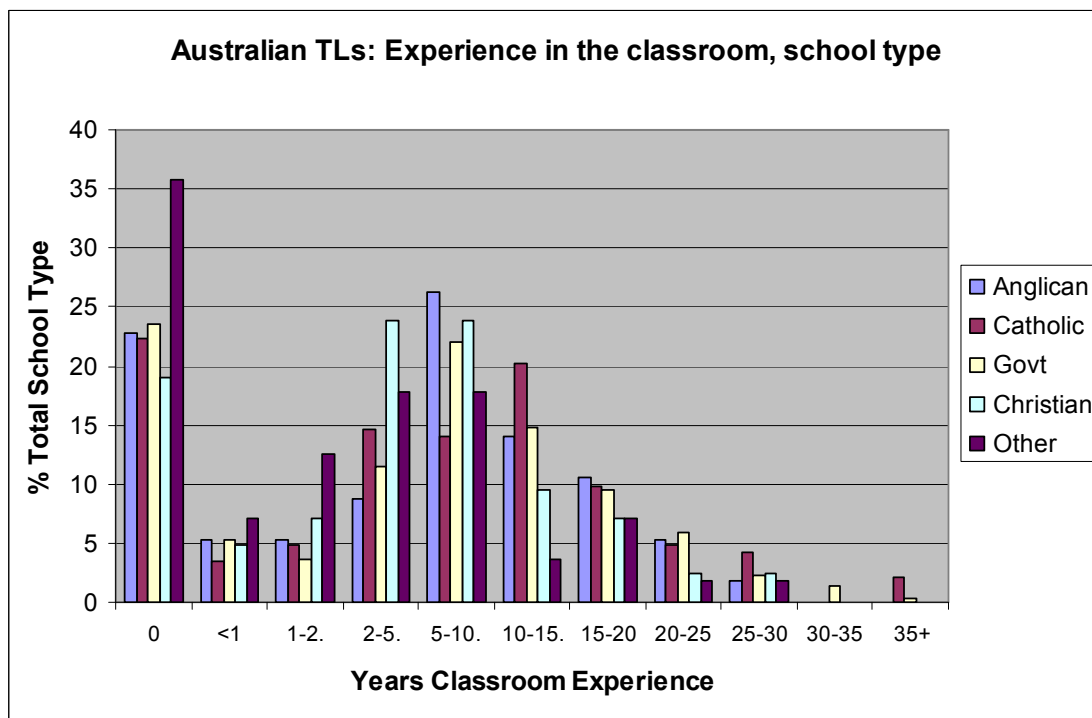


Figure 14: Australian TLs: Years of teaching experience, by school type



Qualifications

In this sample, 6.799% of the participants have no library qualifications at all, with one participant describing his/her title as volunteer. Amongst the participants who reported no library qualifications, are a few who indicated they are currently enrolled in LIS courses. This figure may be much larger and may become more significant when the other surveys in this dataset (Library Technician, Librarian, Teacher) are analysed. Only one person has a PhD (0.165%), while 20.729% have a Masters degree. However, 28.8% (36) of these participants indicated that their MA was not in

Teacher Librarianship. One hundred and thirty-two (21.89%) of the participants have qualifications gained before 1980. More than half of the respondents (57.213%) have qualifications gained before 1995.

Figure 15: Australian TLs: Highest qualification, all schools

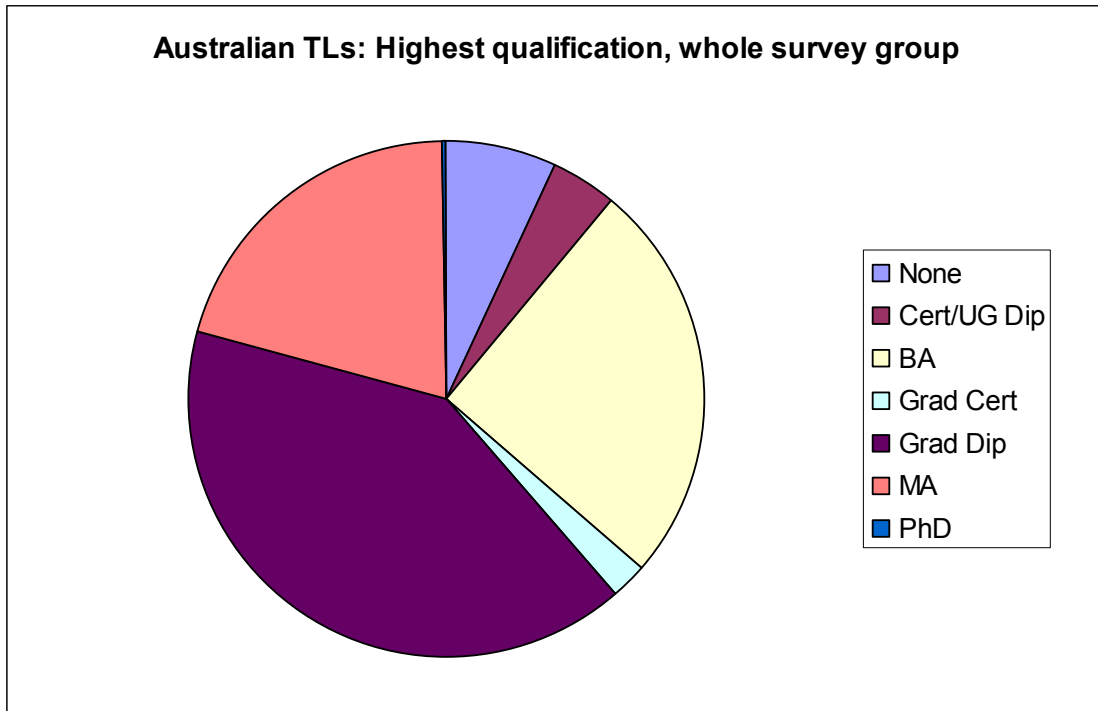


Figure 16: Australian TLs: Age of qualifications

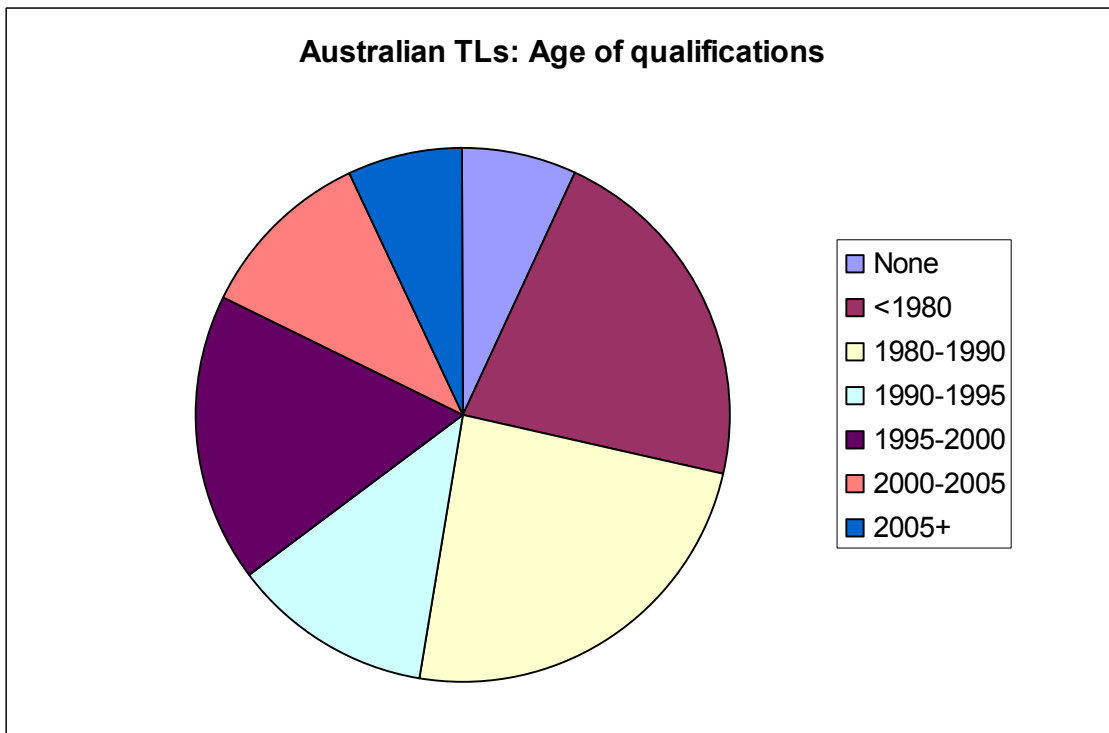
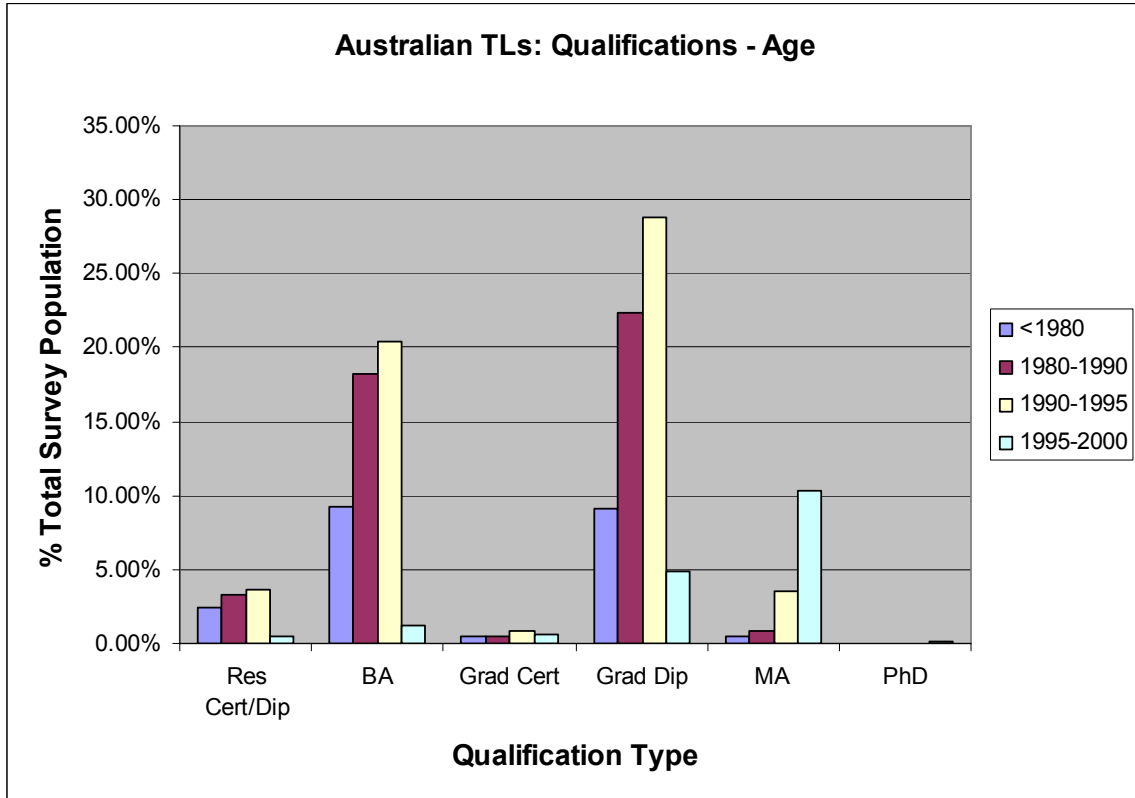
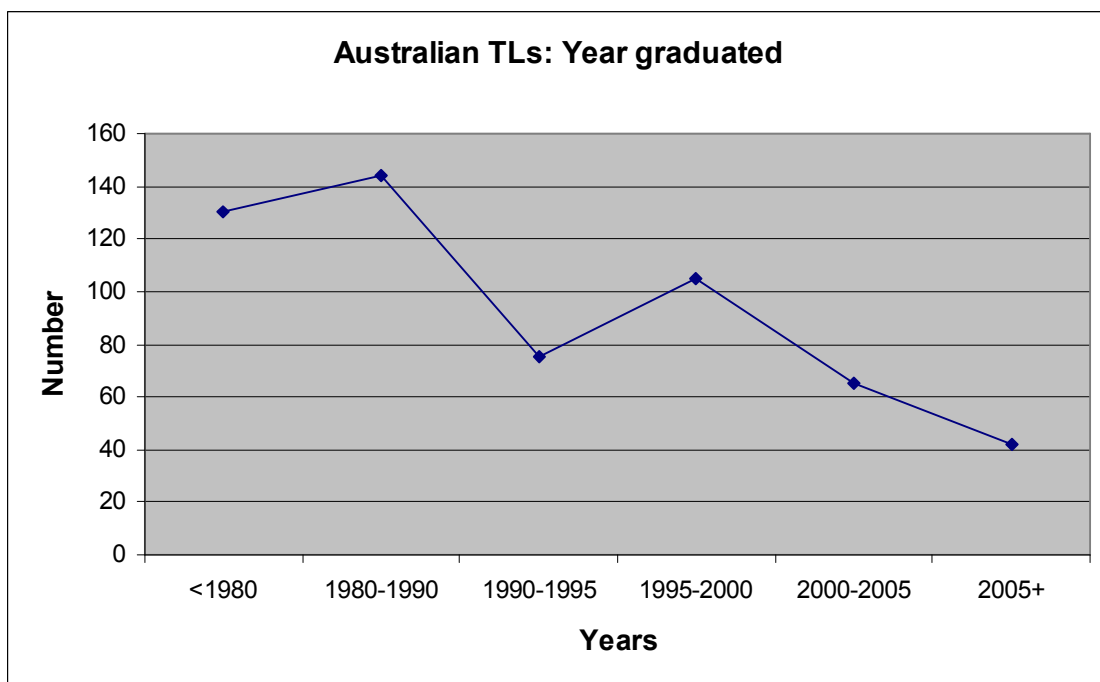


Figure 17: Australian TLs: Age of qualifications by type



21.89% of participants gained their LIS qualification before 1980, but this result is not surprising when this statistic is considered alongside the age of teacher librarians. Nearly half of the participants surveyed gained their qualifications before 1990 and nearly 57% before 1995. This dataset was taken from the questions dealing with the highest qualification (Q21-Q26) gained, rather than their LIS qualification. Figure 18 illustrates an emerging trend in graduating TLs, which indicates a fall in the number of TLs being graduated. This is of particular concern when viewed in conjunction with the aging of the profession discussed earlier.

Figure 18: Australian TLs: Qualifications year graduated

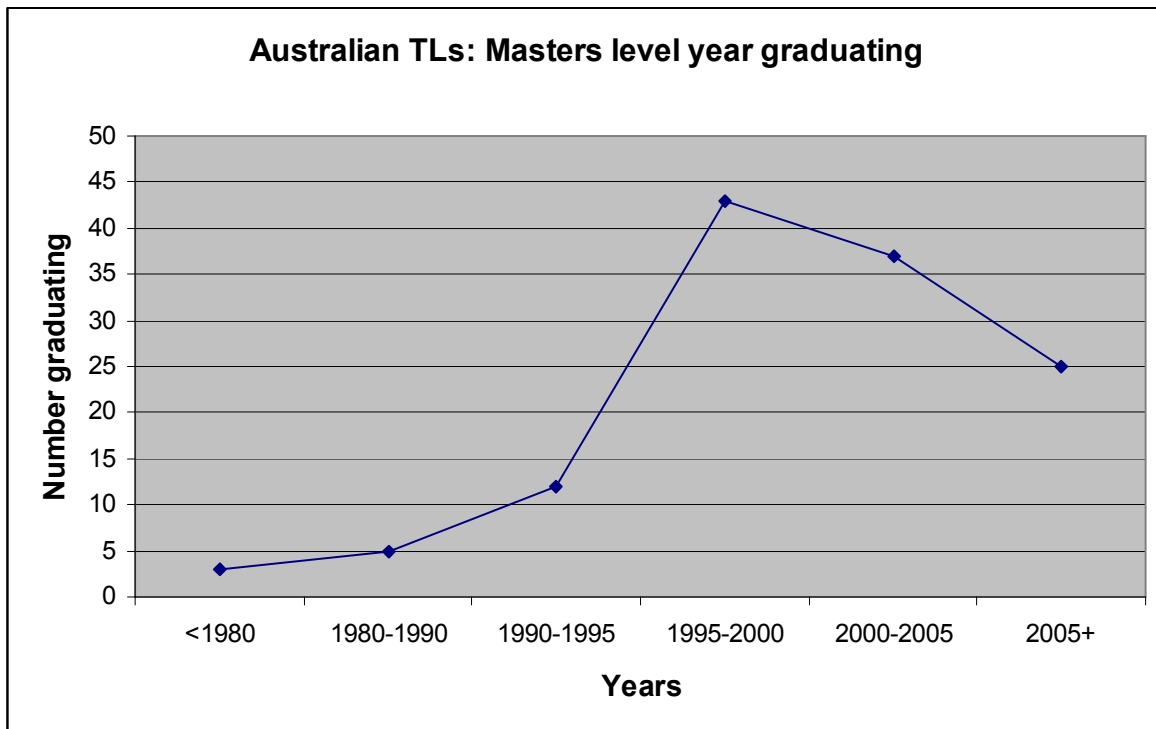


In this sample 20.729% have a Masters degree, with 16% acquiring this level qualification before 1995. Of this subset, 28.8% (36) indicated their MA was not in Teacher Librarianship.

Figure 19: Australian TLs: Masters level qualifications



Figure 20: Australian TLs: Masters level year graduating



However, Figure 20 also indicates that there has been a decline in the number of graduates at Masters level. Table 3 provides data about the major pre-service providers for teacher librarianship

courses around Australia. Some of these courses now no longer exist. Charles Sturt University remains the major course provider.

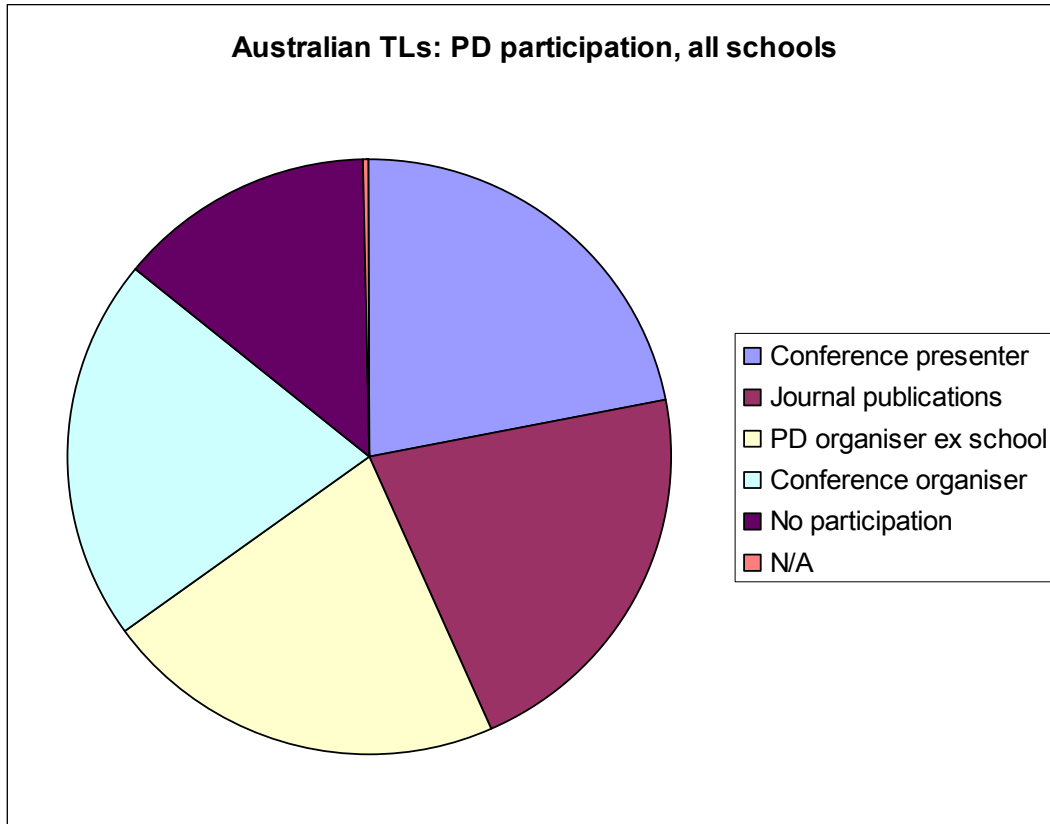
Table 3: Australian TLs: Major pre-service providers

Provider	Number
Charles Sturt Uni	182
Uni South Aust (Adelaide Coll Adv Edu, Adelaide Tea Coll)	81
Queensland Uni Tech (Kelvin Grove Coll Adv Edu,)	65
Edith Cowan Uni (Secondary Tea Coll WA, WA Coll Adv Edu)	50
Melb Uni (Melb Coll Adv Edu, Melb St Coll)	42
Monash Uni	31
Uni Tasmania (TasCAE, Tas CAE Mt Nelson, Tas Edu Dept)	31
RMIT	20
Uni Tech Sydney (Kuring-gai Coll Adv Edu)	23
Curtin Uni Tech	11
Uni Canberra	10
Macquarie Uni, Uni Ballarat (BallaratCAE), Uni NSW	4
Sydney Tea Coll	3
ALIA Reg, Deakin Uni, Library Assoc Aust	2
Uni New Eng, TAFE NSW, Uni Sydney, Uni West Sydney, TAFE QLD, Uni QLD, Uni Sth QLD, Austn Catholic Uni, Brisbane Col Adv Edu, Hartley Coll Adv Edu, Magill Coll Adv Edu, Sturt Coll Adv Edu, Uni Adelaide, Austn Library Assoc., Murdoch Uni	1
Uni Central Oklahoma State, Auckland Coll Edu, Uni West Ontario, Uni Coll Dublin, Uni Natal	1

Professional Development (PD)

To remain engaged in a profession, individuals need to participate in a range of PD activities. In this sample group 30.5% did not participate in or appear to have access to any PD activity.

Figure 21: Australian TLs: PD participation, all schools



Figures 21-22 indicates that approximately 45 – 50% of the participants in this sample group had either presented at a conference, published in professional journals, organised PD outside the school or been involved in organising a conference during the last 2 years. Figure 22 indicates that there are some disparities between states, where non-participation rates are highest in WA and VIC. Conferences remain an important avenue for professional development and many TLs are active providers and organisers of PD for teachers in their schools.

Figure 22: Australian TLs: PD access and participation, by state

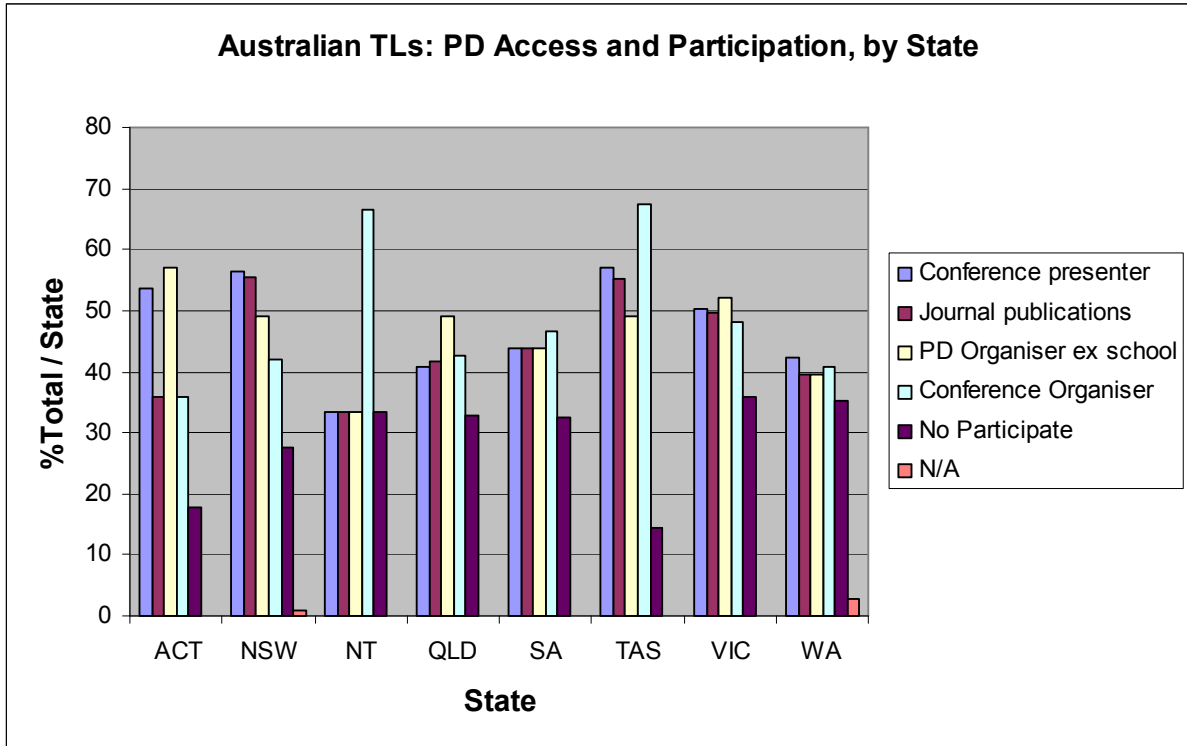


Figure 23: Australian TLs: PD access and participation, by school type

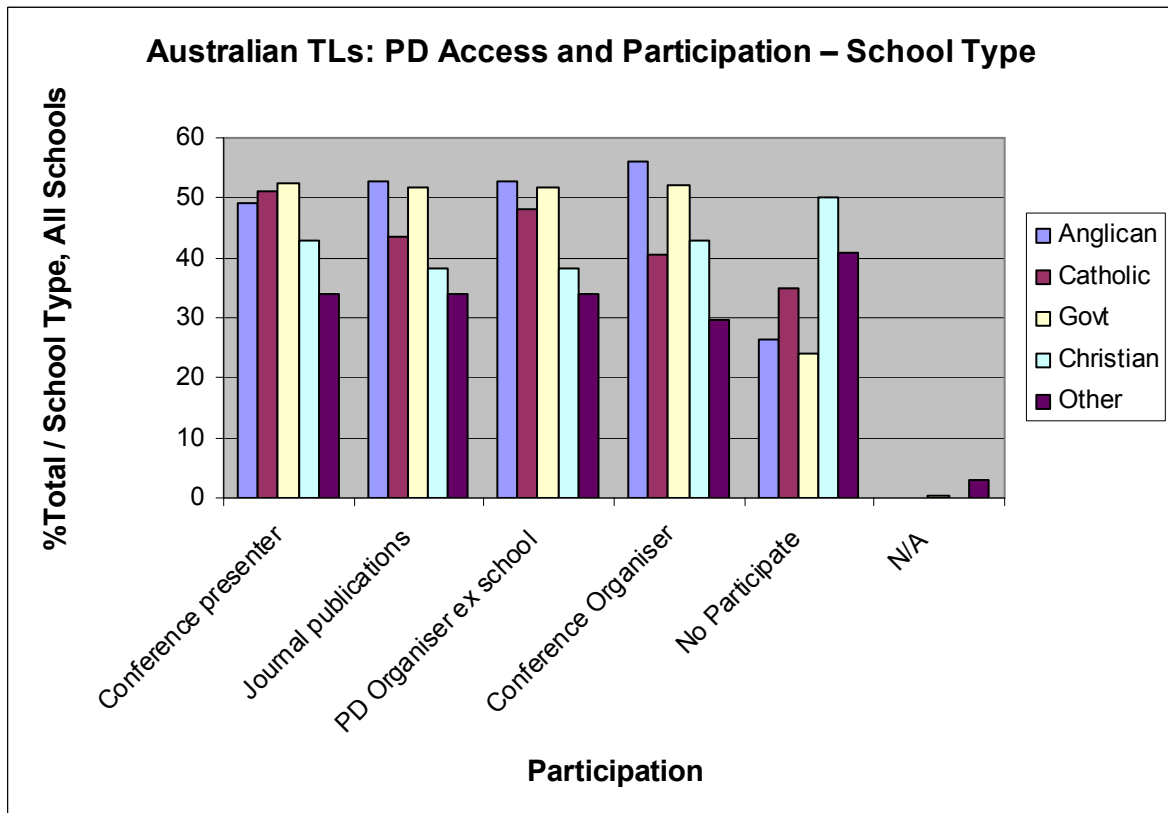
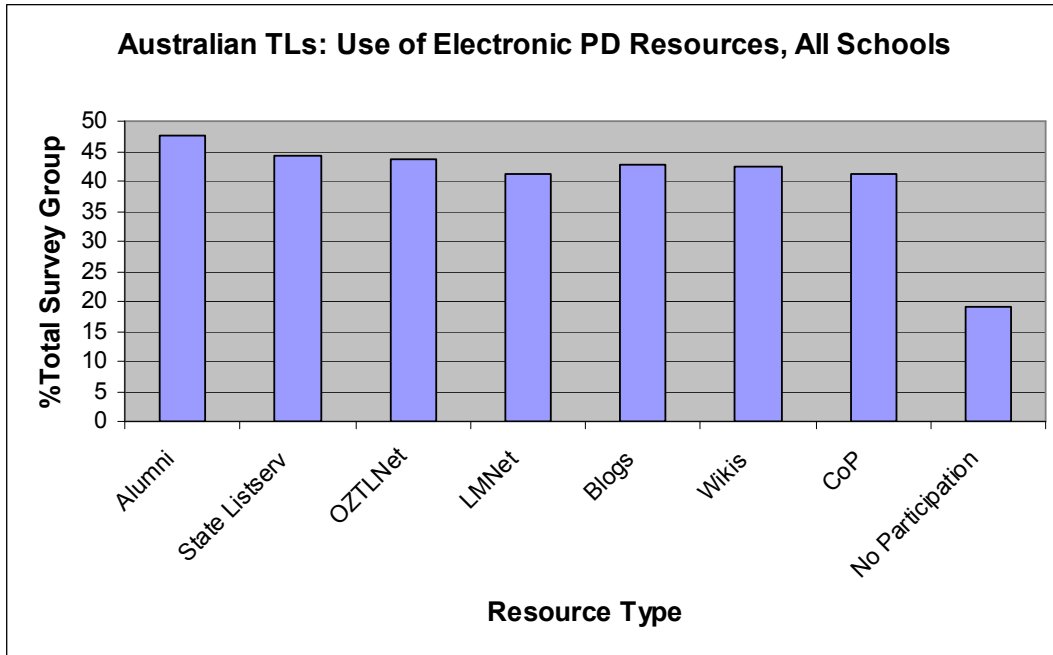


Figure 23 indicates that approximately 45 - 50% TLs across sectors are actively engaged in PD ranging from conferences, outside school PD and publishing in professional journals. Christian, Catholic and schools designated as Other have the highest non-participation and access rates for

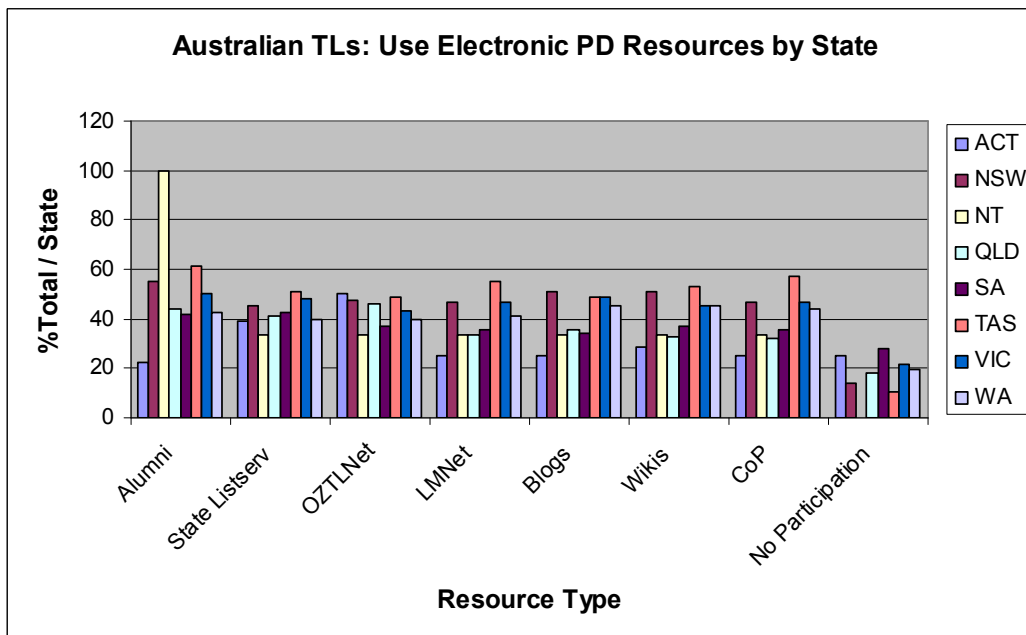
PD. These results suggest that TLMs are generally a pro-active and engaged group with regard to accessing and participating in PD. However, greater access and participation can only benefit the professional development of the profession as a whole.

Figure 24: Australian TLMs: Use of electronic PD resources, all schools



Figures 24 and 25 indicate that 40-45% of TLMs in this survey group accessed a range of electronic PD resources, with Alumni being the most popular. Even though technology is an important component of twenty-first century library services, approximately 19% of TLMs do not use any online PD resources.

Figure 25: Australian TLMs: Use of electronic PD resources by state



While OZTLNet is heavily used by 50% of TLMs in this survey group, there are some discrepancies in usage between the states. Generally, TLMs in the ACT, QLD and SA are less likely to access PD using electronic resources. 50% of TLMs in TAS however, are using a range of electronic resources

to access and participate in professional development online. Interestingly, the American listserv LMNet is also heavily used by TLs across Australia.

Professional Associations

According to the data in Figures 26 and 27, 40-45% of the TLs surveyed in this group are also members of a variety of professional organisations. 16.5% (100) of the participants in this survey group did not belong to any of the professional associations listed.

Figure 26: Australian TLs: Professional associations, membership, all schools

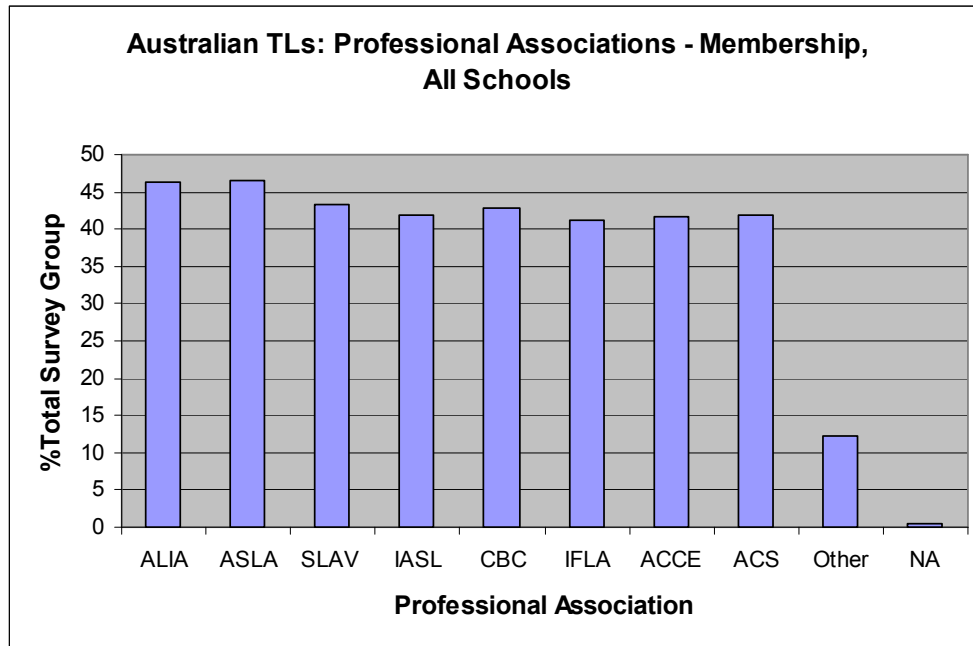
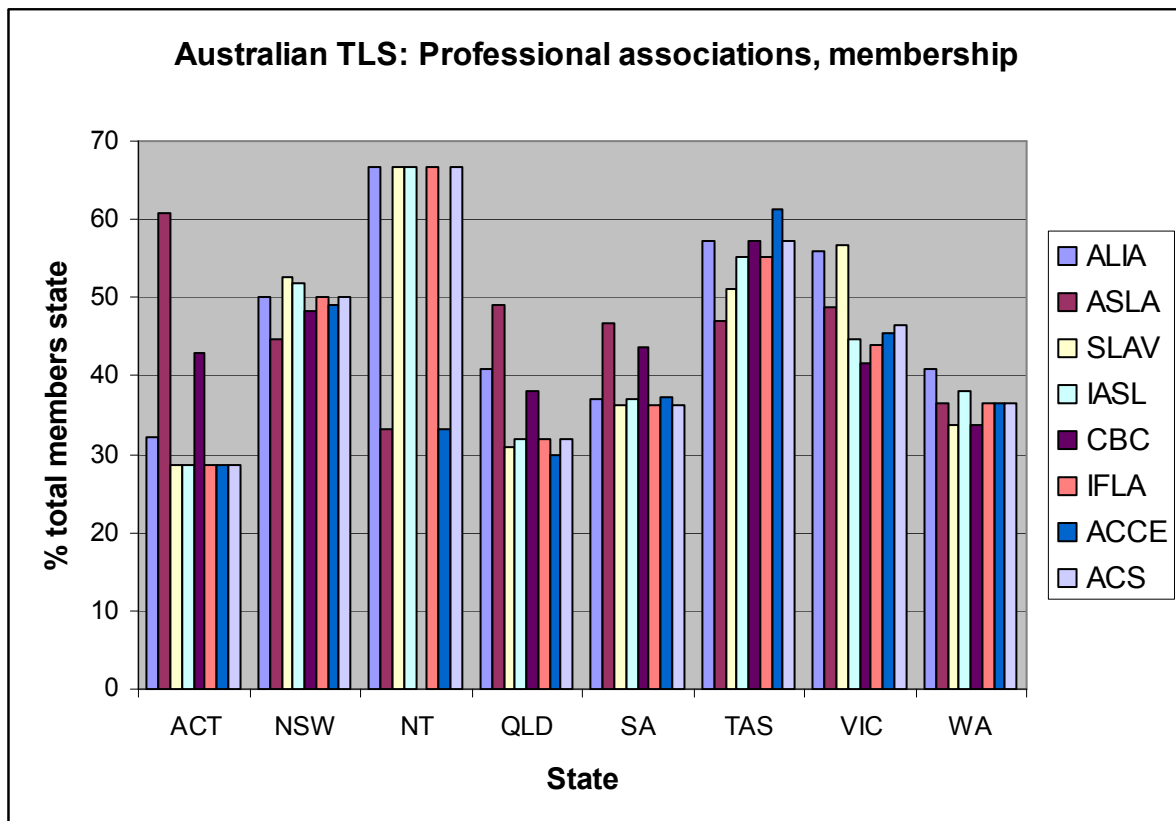


Figure 27: Australian TLs: Professional associations, membership by state



What is interesting when this data is broken down by state, is the strong membership of SLAV, the state-based Victorian teacher librarian group which is autonomous from ASLA. A reason for this membership outside Victoria may be access to SLAV's professional journal, since interstate members do not receive any of the PD benefits available to Victorian members. The level of membership to ALIA is also strong in most states. The high membership of the ACS is also indicative of the increasing importance of technology in libraries. TAS is the state with the highest overall membership of professional bodies.

Figure 28: Australian TLs: Professional associations, membership by school type

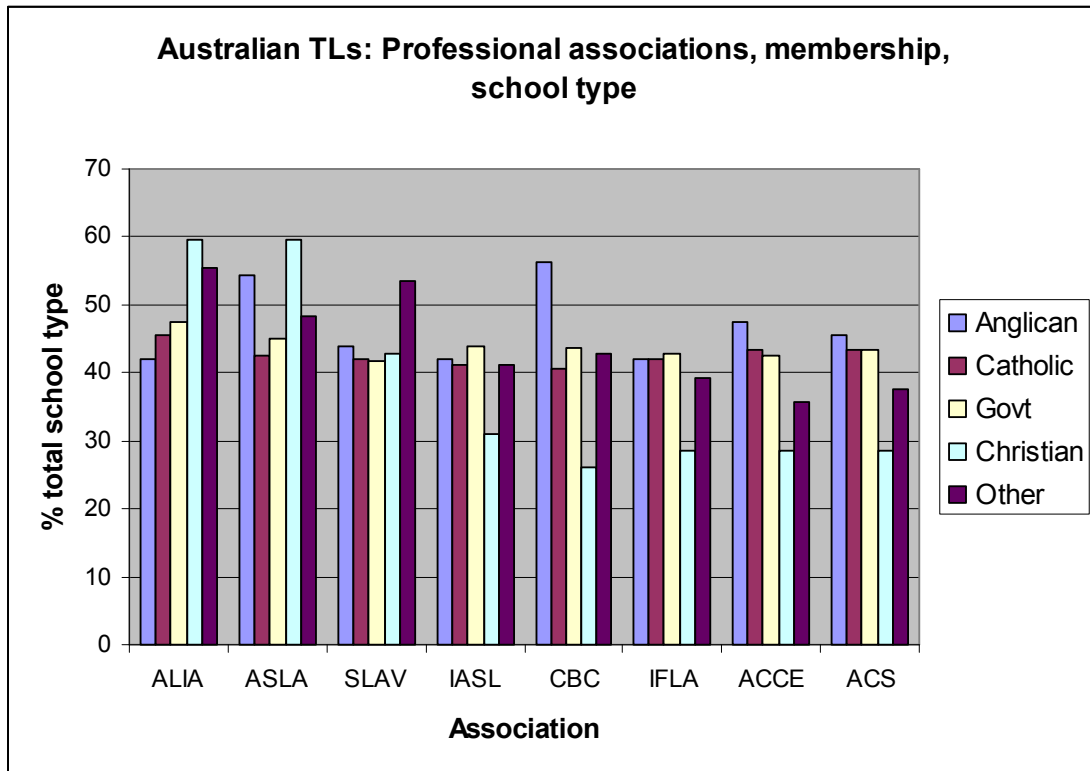


Figure 29: Australian TLs: Participants who are not members

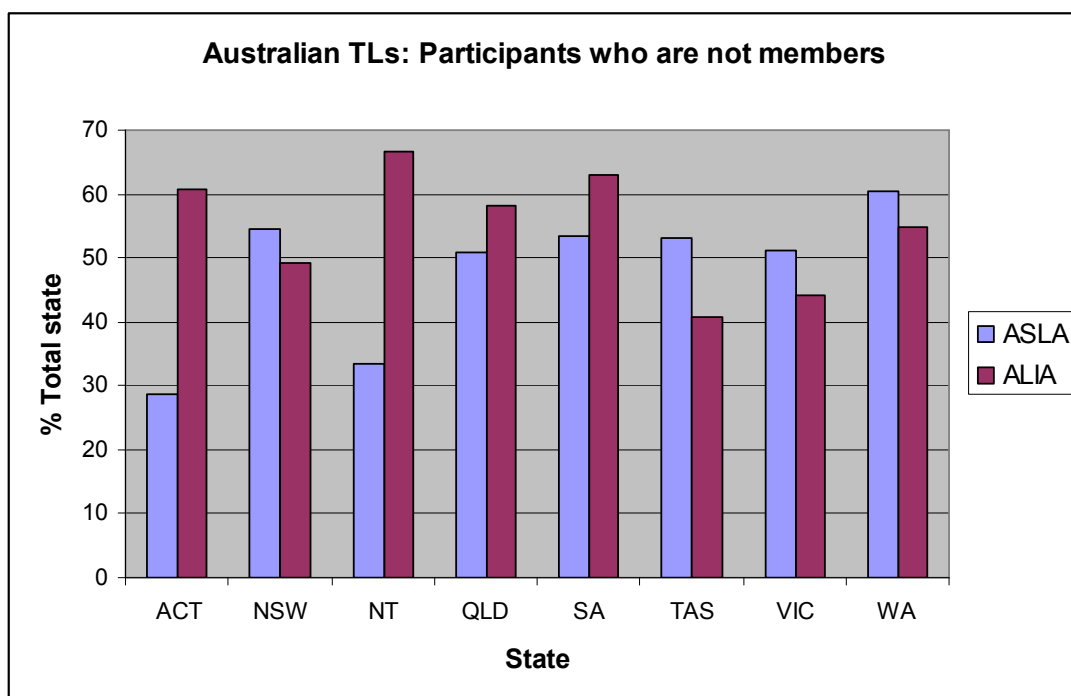


Figure 29 clearly indicates that there is a large number of TLs who are not members of the two major LIS Associations, ALIA and ASLA. In NSW, TAS, VIC and WA there are more TLs who belong to ASLA than to ALIA, the professional Association that is specific to teacher librarians.

Professional staffing in school libraries

This dataset indicates that 4% of TLs in this survey group work less than one day in the library and a further 9.5% work less than two and a half days. A further 24% work between three and four days in the library. 62.5% of libraries in this survey group have a professional staff member on site either full time or for four and a half days a week.

Figure 30: Australian TLs: Professional staff in the library, all schools (i)

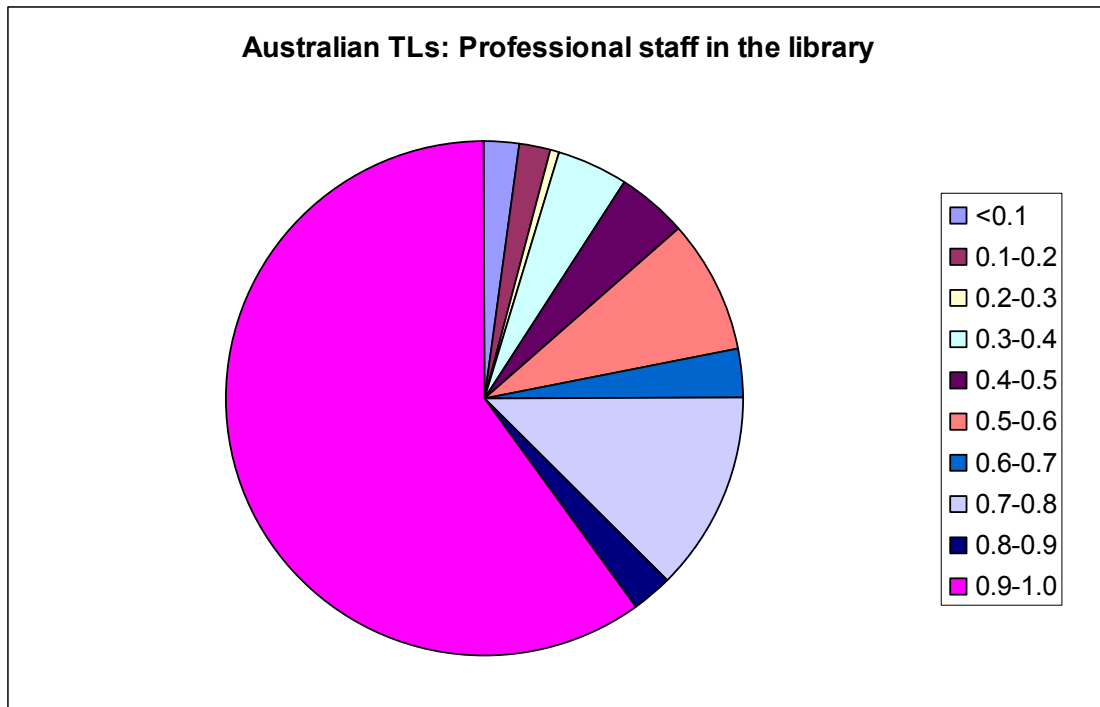


Figure 31: Australian TLs: Professional staff in the library, all schools (ii)

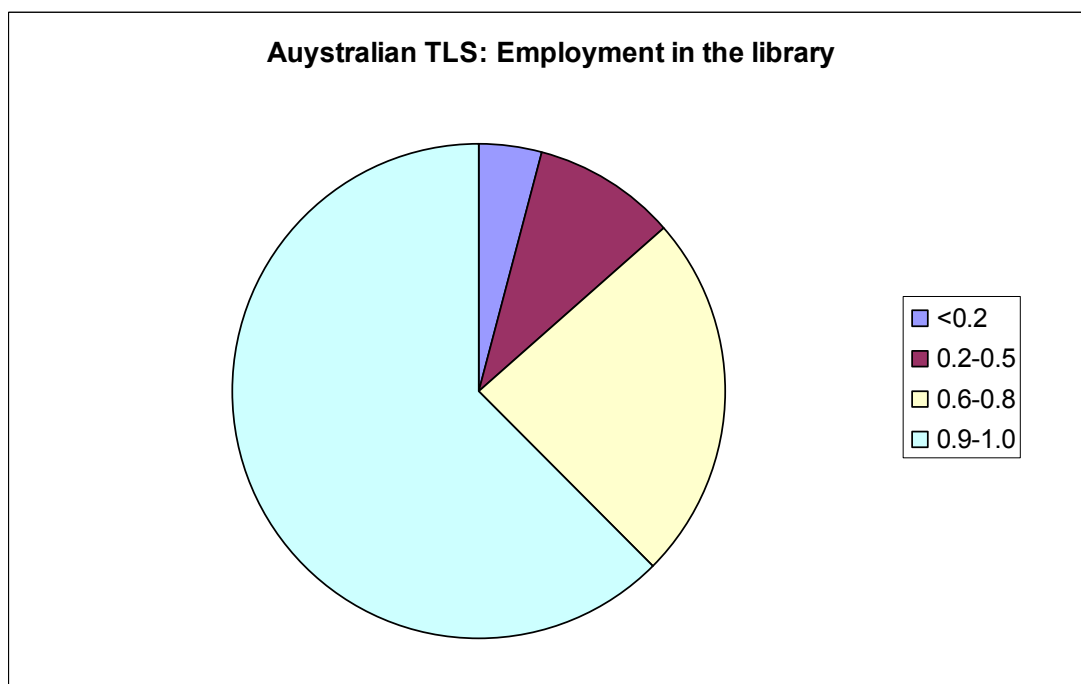
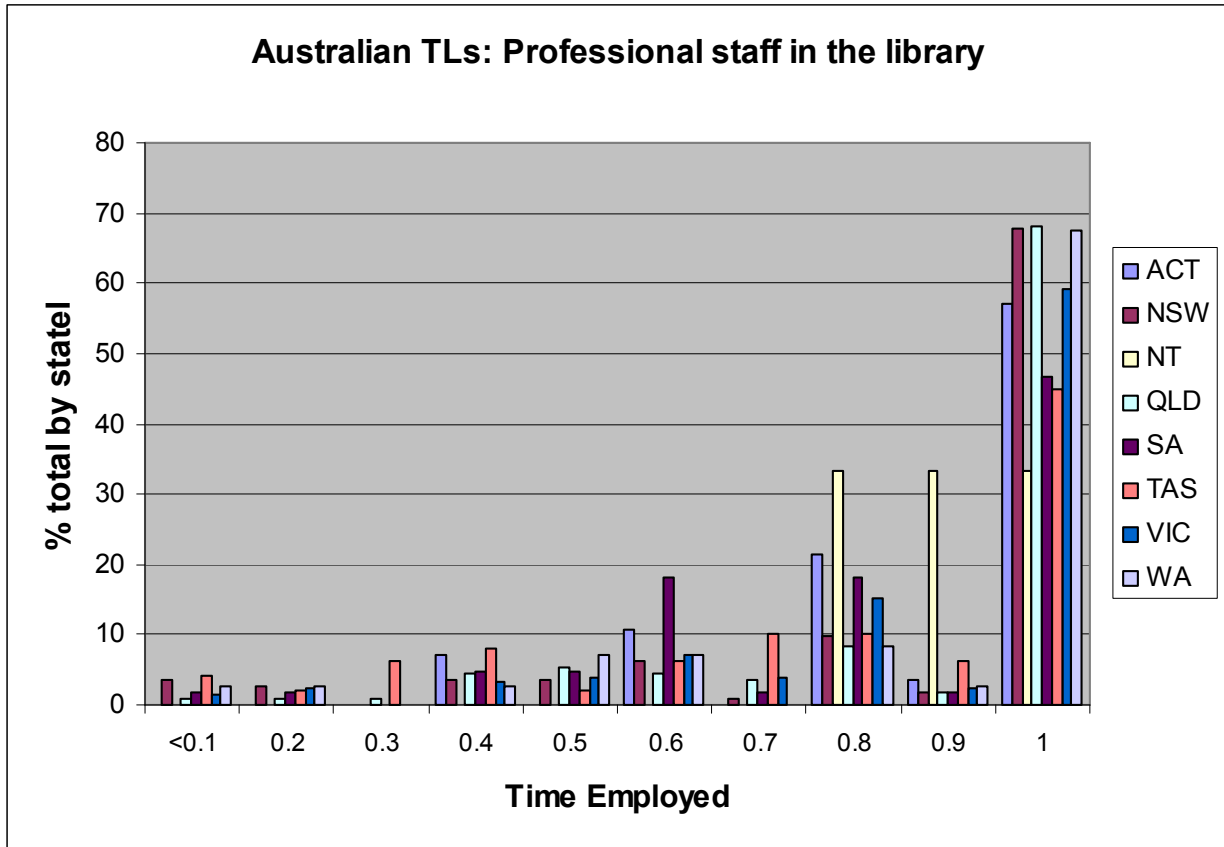


Figure 32: Australian TLs: Professional staff in the library, by state, all schools (i)



These results indicate that TAS and SA have fewer professionals employed full time in their schools, followed by the ACT. TAS schools fare the worst with 12%+ of schools employing a TL for less than one and a half days and 22% less than two and a half days per week. 9% of schools in SA have professional staff in their libraries for less than two days, and a further 23% for between two and three days a week. Figure 33 represents this data in days employed per week.

Figure 33: Australian TLs: Professional staff in the library, by state, all schools (ii)

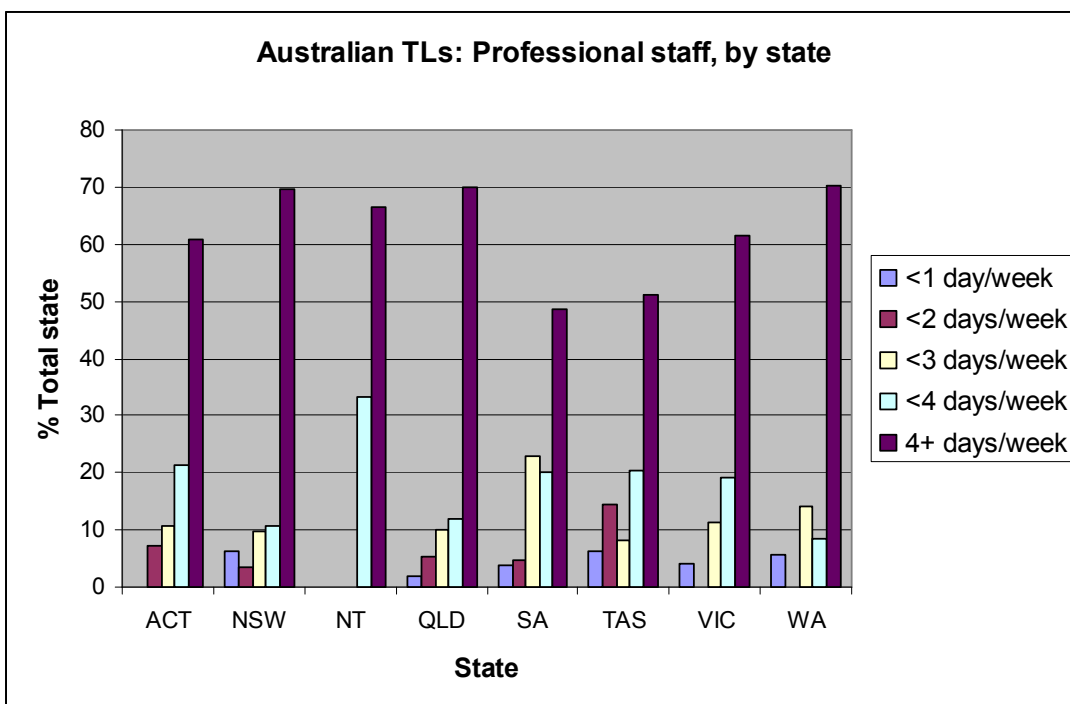


Figure 34: Australian TLs: Professional staff in the library, by school type

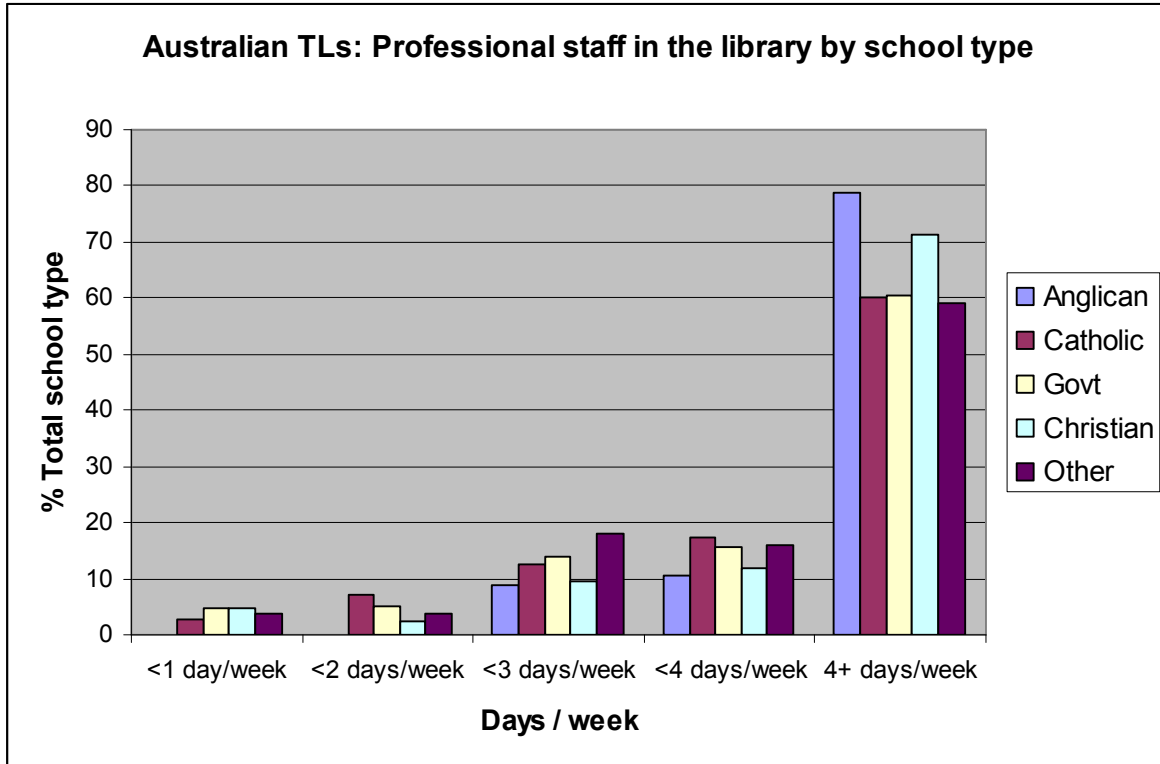


Figure 34 indicates that Anglican and Christian schools have more professional staff in their libraries. The results of this survey do not include libraries where there are no professional staff and should be considered in conjunction with the results from the other 7 surveys dealing with library personnel.

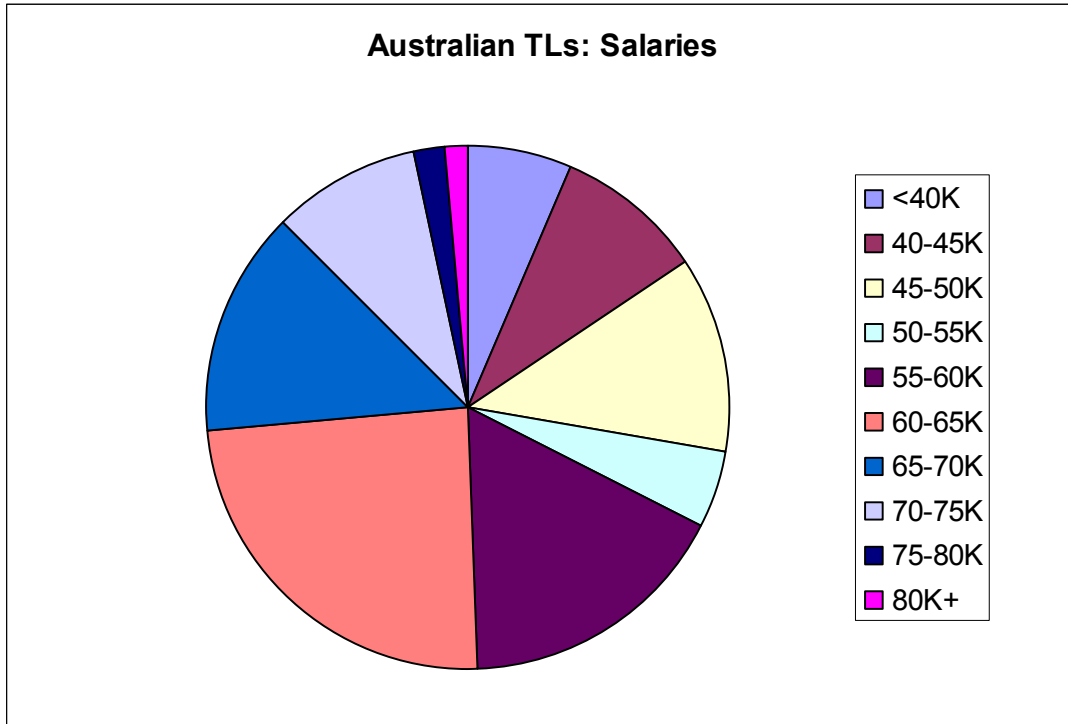
Salaries and titles

18.905% of participants in this survey have been employed in a non-school library. Approximately 10% of participants earn less than \$40K. A further 14% earn between \$40-50K per year. This is comparatively low considering the requirement of a dual qualification to be a TL. While a correlation analysis hasn't been done as yet, salary does not appear to be related to length of service as a TL or type of qualification. An example can be seen in Table 4 for participants in Victoria who earn less than \$40K per year.

Table 4: Australian TLs: Victorian TLs earning less than 40K/year

State	Length of Service	Qualification	Title
VIC	<1	Grad Dip	TL
12<\$40K	<2	None	TL
	<5	BA	TL
	<5	Grad Dip	TL
	<10	Grad Dip	TL
	<10	BA	Library Technician
	<15	Res Tea Course	TL
	<15	BA	TL
	<15	Grad Cert	TL
	<20	BA	TL
	<20	Res Tea Course	TL
	<25	BA	Volunteer

Figure 35: Australian TLs: Salaries (i)



A comparison between levels of salary with length of service indicates that over 60% of TLs in this survey earned more than \$60K/year. This is not surprising since 58% of participants in this survey also indicated they had more than 10 years experience in the classroom/library. However, only a small number of participants fell into the highly paid salary bracket, with less than 2% earning more than \$80K.

Figure 36: Australian TLs: Salaries (ii)

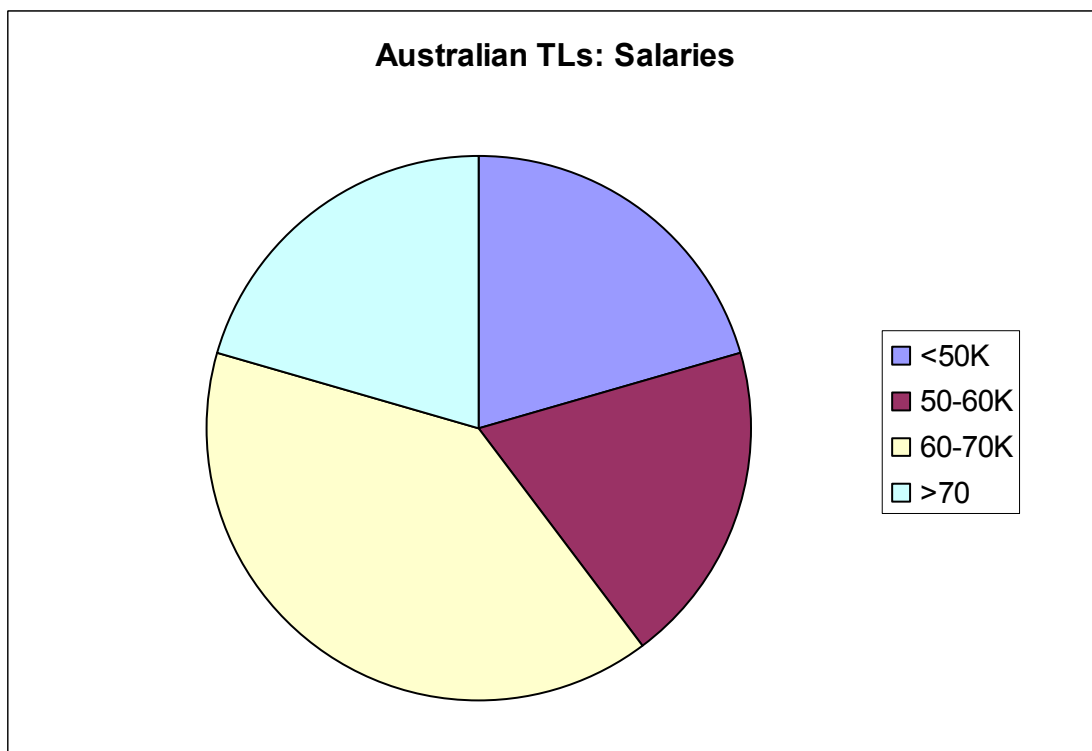


Figure 37: Australian TLs: Salaries, by state

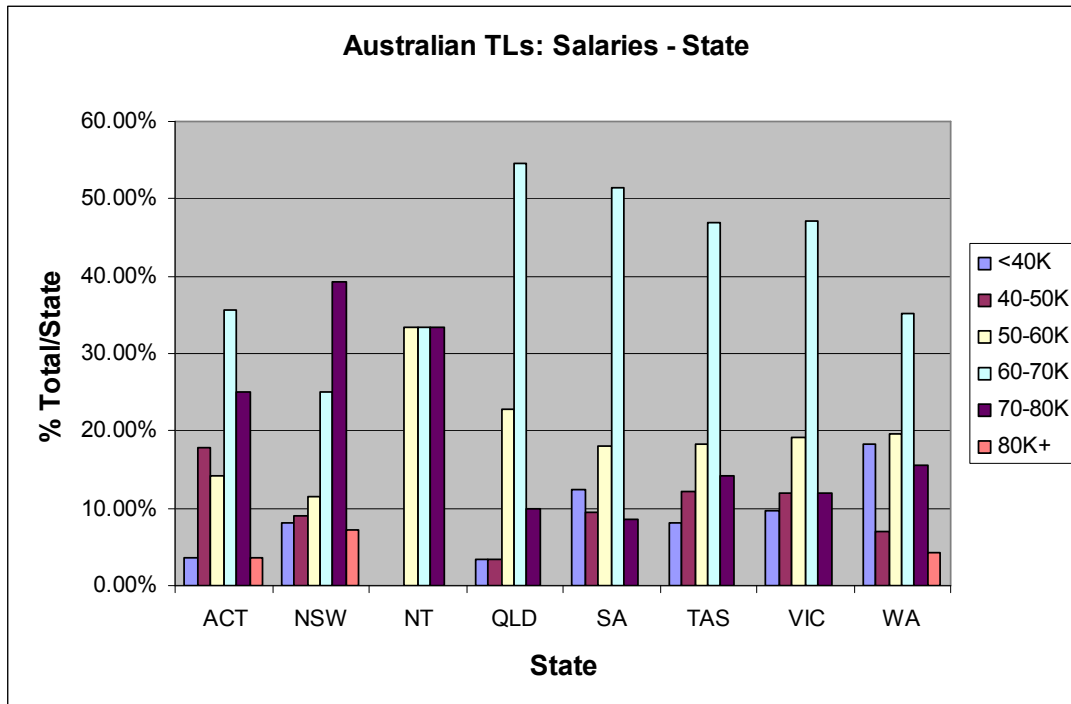


Figure 37 indicates that there are some discrepancies between states, with SA and WA having more participants in the less than \$40K salary bracket. While WA has a higher number of inexperienced TLs (<1 year), SA does not. Further analysis and correlation statistics will need to be run to determine if there is any link between salary and length of experience. Of course length of experience as a TL is not a reliable indication of length of experience education and many students come to the profession after a considerable time in the classroom as evidenced in Figure 13. The salaries of TLs and teachers are usually determined according to length of experience.

Figure 38: Australian TLs, Salaries by school type

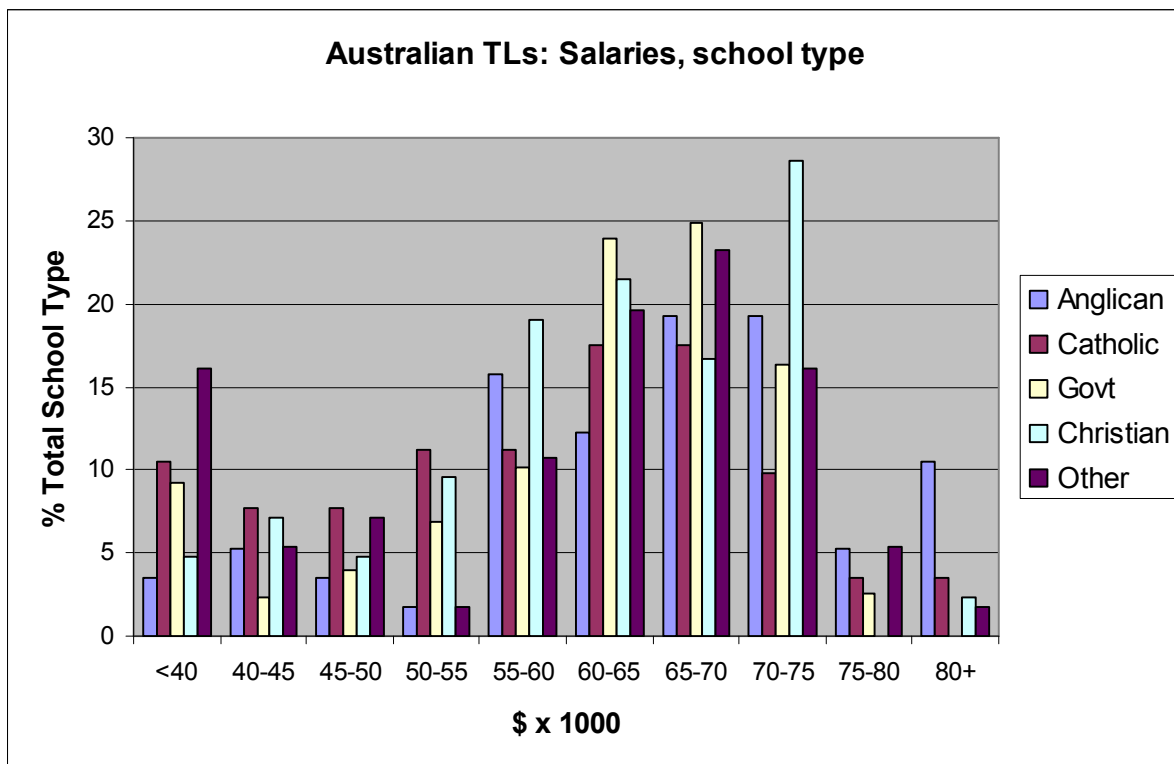


Figure 38 indicates that TLs in Anglican and Christian schools received higher salaries than TLs in other school types. Few Government schools pay their TLs at the top salary rate. Most of the participants used the title teacher librarian (85.406%). Interestingly, the higher the salary, the greater the likelihood the TL will be using an alternative title.

Table 5: Australian TLs: Titles

Salary	Title
<80K	3 Library Manager 5 Other 10 TL
80K+	1 Info man 1 Library Director 6 Other 4 TL