



**Homeschool Alumni Reaching Out**  
presents

**A Complex Picture:**

Results of a 2014 Survey of Adult Alumni of the Modern Christian Homeschool Movement  
Installment 6: Present and Future  
October 1, 2015

Data analysis provided by:



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Read the first installment, which includes a description of the survey methodology, [here](#). The second installment, which focuses on demographic variables, can be found [here](#). The third installment, which discusses academics and other non-academic educational aspects, is [here](#). The fourth installment, focusing on food and health, is [here](#). The fifth installment, on the topic of religion, is [here](#). *Note that this survey should not be used to make any generalized statements about homeschoolers as a whole; the only people it can be used to make claims about are the 3,702 people who took the survey.*

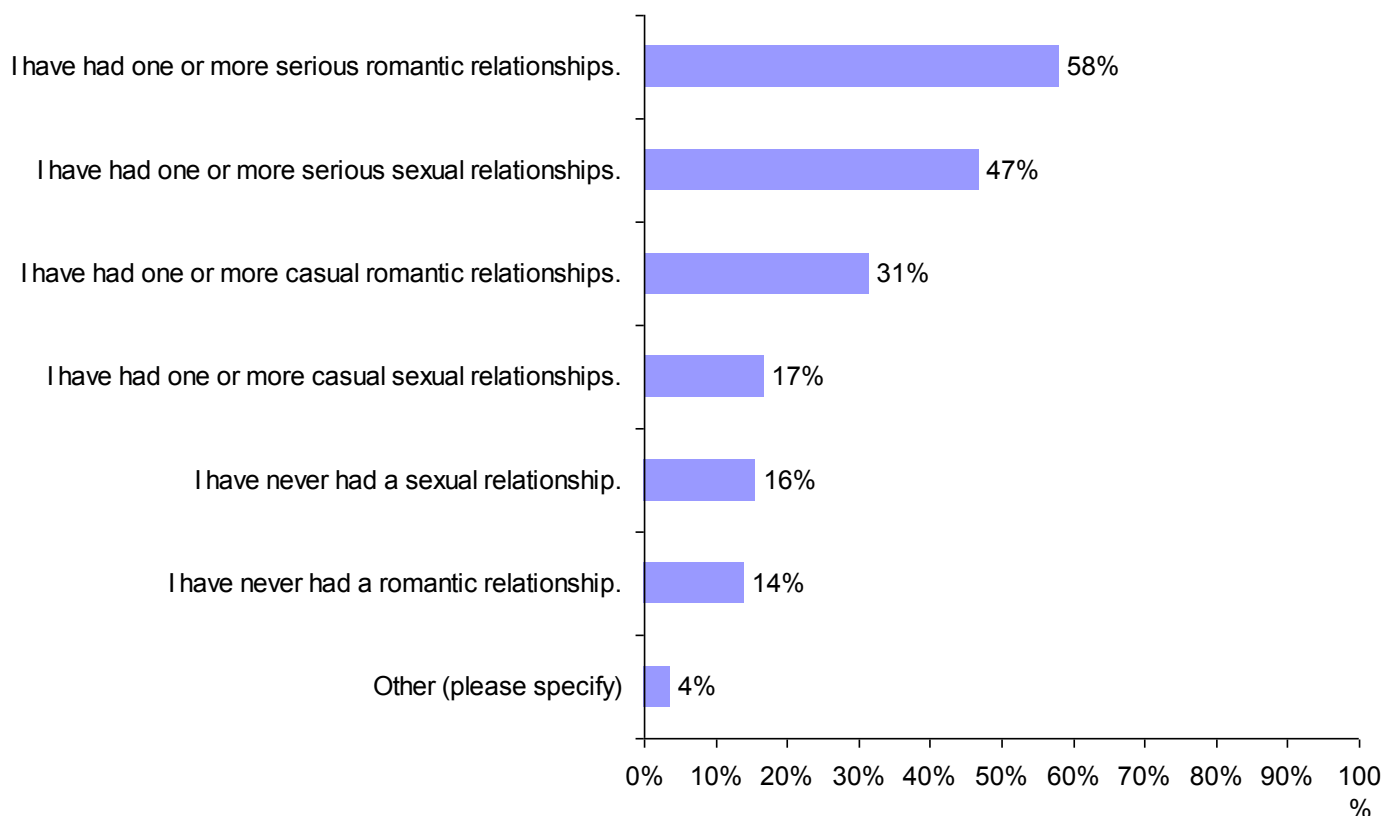
## 0. Introduction to Installment 6: Present and Future

In this installment, we discuss demographics related to respondents' present families and careers. Respondents were more likely to be married than members of the general public. Respondents' marital status and family size were affected by their gender and age. Most respondents were satisfied with their employment and their career preparation while being homeschooled.

### 1. Relationships and marriage

Most respondents had been successful at finding relationship partners. Approximately three-quarters (73%) of respondents reported that they had, at some point in their lives, been in a serious romantic or sexual relationship (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup>

**Figure 1: Have you ever been in a relationship? Select all that apply.**

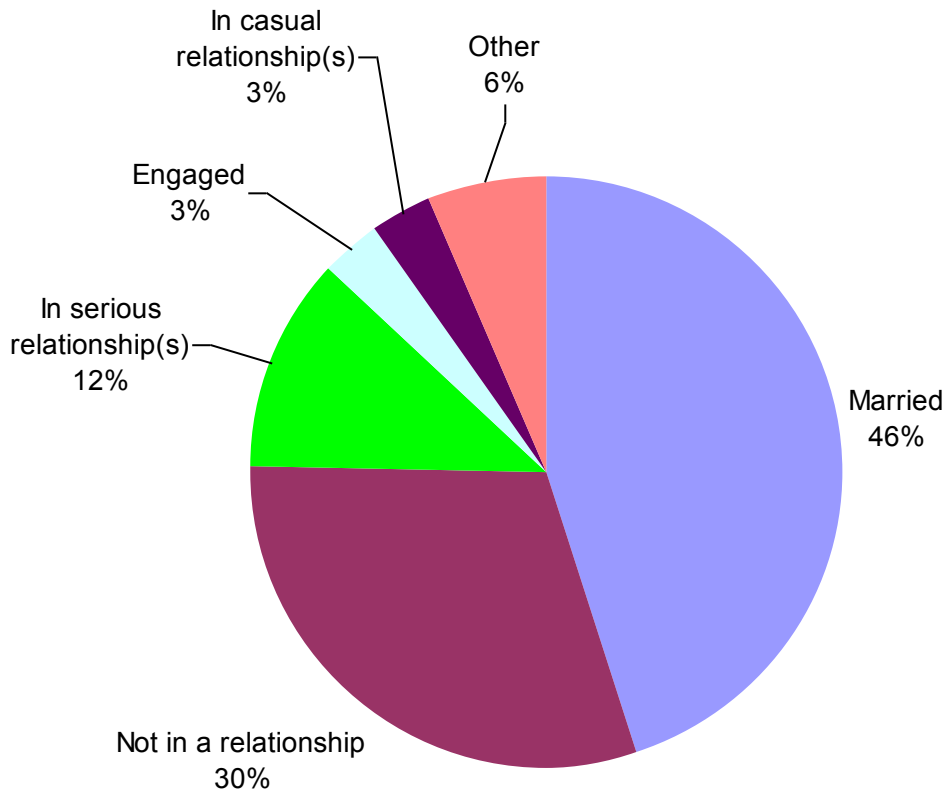


Of those who reported that they had never had a romantic relationship, the vast majority were between 18 and 25 years old: 22% of respondents in this age category reported that they had never had a romantic relationship. For older respondents, this figure dropped down to 8% (for those ages 26 to 34) and 5% (for those ages 35 and older).

<sup>1</sup> Note that the values sum to greater than 100%; the question asked respondents to 'select all that apply'.

At the time of the survey, almost half of the respondents were married and one-third were not in a relationship, as shown in Figure 2. The rest were in a relationship or 'Other', which includes widows/widowers, divorced, separated, and remarried respondents, as well as those who reported belonging to more than one category.

**Figure 2: Respondents' marital status**



Overall, survey respondents were more likely to be married than members of the [general population](#), as shown in Figure 3.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The NHSR data in Figure 3 comes from Table 1 of National Health Statistics Reports, Number 49 (2012). This appears to be the most recent marriage data available.

Figure 3: Marriage rates by age and gender (assigned at birth) in this survey (HARO 2014) and nationally (NHSR 2006-2010)

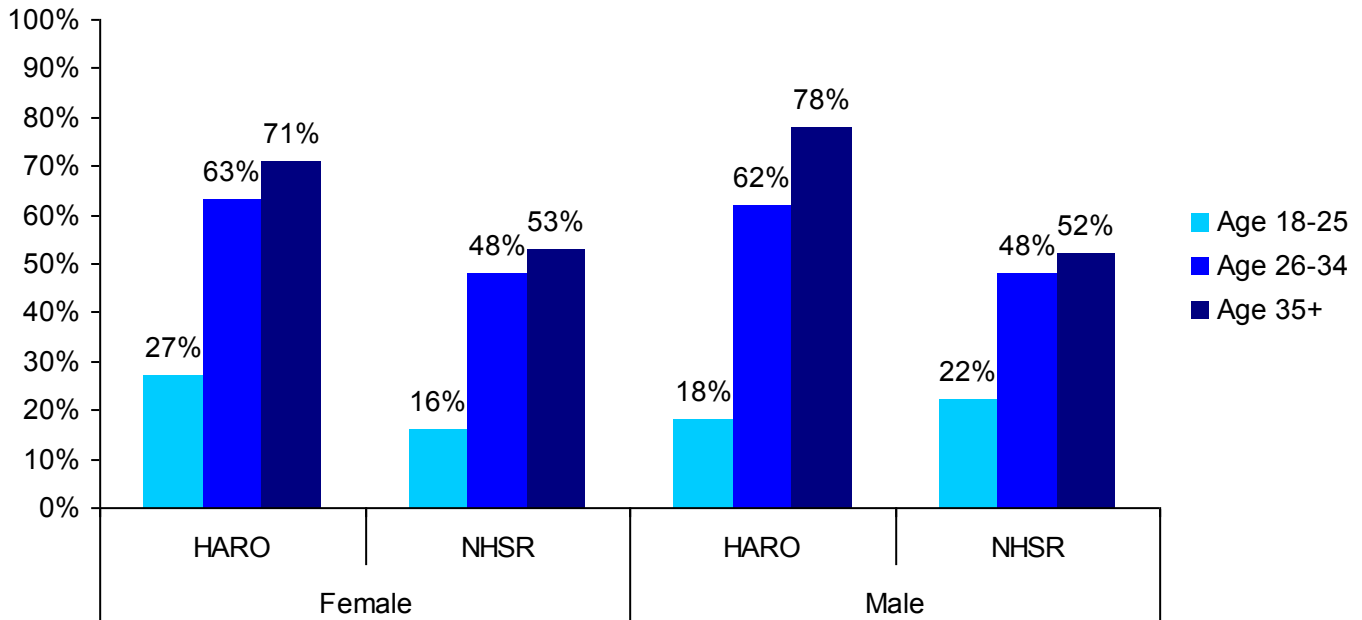


Figure 3 shows that marriage rates for the HARO respondents as well as for the general population tended to increase with age. Female HARO respondents were only slightly more likely overall than males to be married (48% versus 41% respectively). However, as shown in Figure 3, the main difference between the HARO respondents and the general population is found in the youngest cohort (ages 18 to 25). In almost every gender/age group, HARO respondents were more likely to be married than the corresponding group in the general population; however, the youngest male HARO respondents were *less* likely than men in the general population to be married. Further, in the national data, males in this age group are more likely to be married than females; while in the HARO data, females in the youngest age group are more likely to be married than males. These two findings seem to indicate that alumni of Christian homeschooling may favor earlier marriage for women and later marriage for men than in the general U.S. population. Even when respondents' current religious views were taken into account, women in the youngest group who did not consider themselves Christian were more likely to be married (19%) than women of the same age in the general population; and men in the youngest group who did consider themselves Christian were less likely to be married (19%) than men of the same age in the general population.

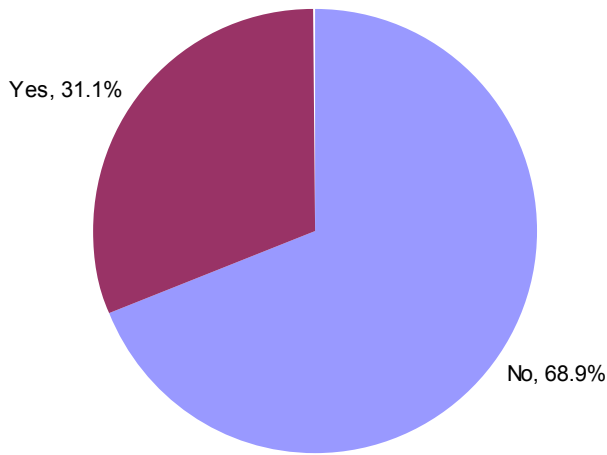
## 2. Family and children

In this section, we focus on respondents' choices regarding fertility, childbearing, and child rearing. In general, respondents had larger families than the general population, and family size was affected by respondents' age and gender. Most respondents planned their childbearing and preferred homeschooling as an educational method for their children.

### *Likelihood of having children*

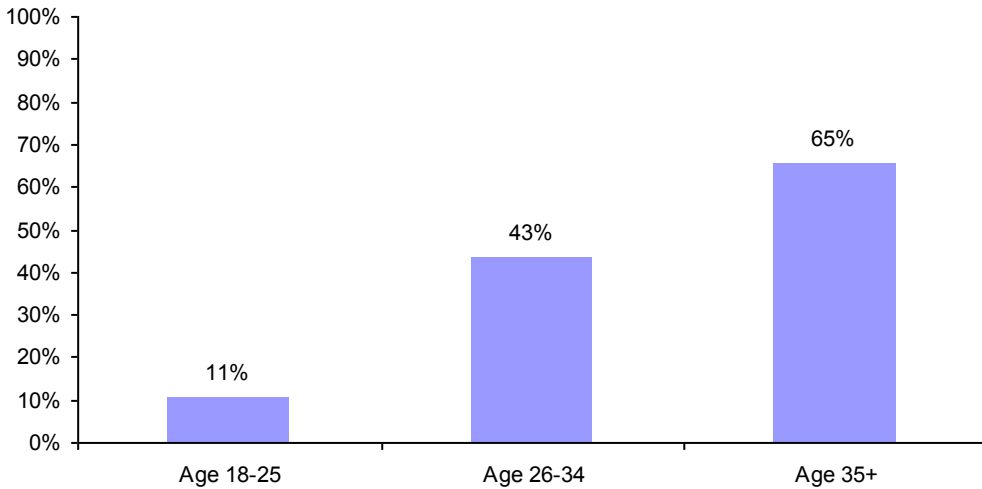
About one-third of respondents had children at the time of the survey, as shown in Figure 4. This figure would seem to indicate that respondents had fewer children than the general population, where [53% of Americans](#) aged 18-40 reported having children in 2013. However, this discrepancy is likely due to the fact that the HARO sample skewed very young. Half of respondents were under age 26, and many millennials are pushing back having children [until their late 20s or early 30s](#); this figure is not necessarily representative of how many respondents will eventually have children.

**Figure 4: Do you have children?**



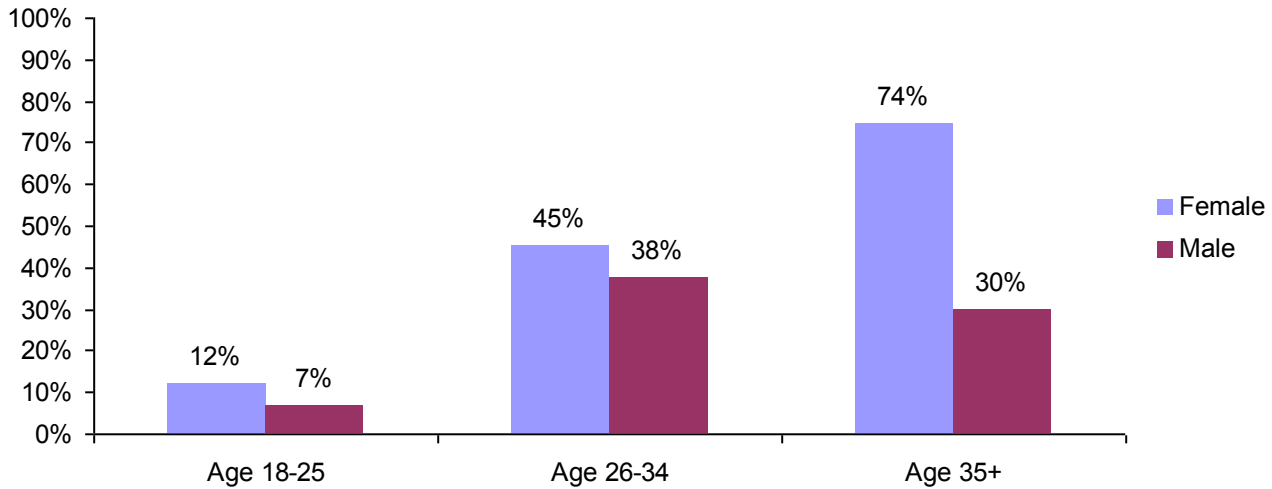
Indeed, when the respondents are broken down by age, we see that 46% of respondents over age 25 have children, and that the percentage of respondents who have children increases with each age bracket (Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Respondents in each age bracket who reported having children**



Respondents' likelihood of having children was greatly affected by gender. Overall, 33% of female respondents had children, while only 22% of male respondents did. This difference became more pronounced in each age bracket; for those over age 35, women respondents were more than twice as likely to have children as men (Figure 6).

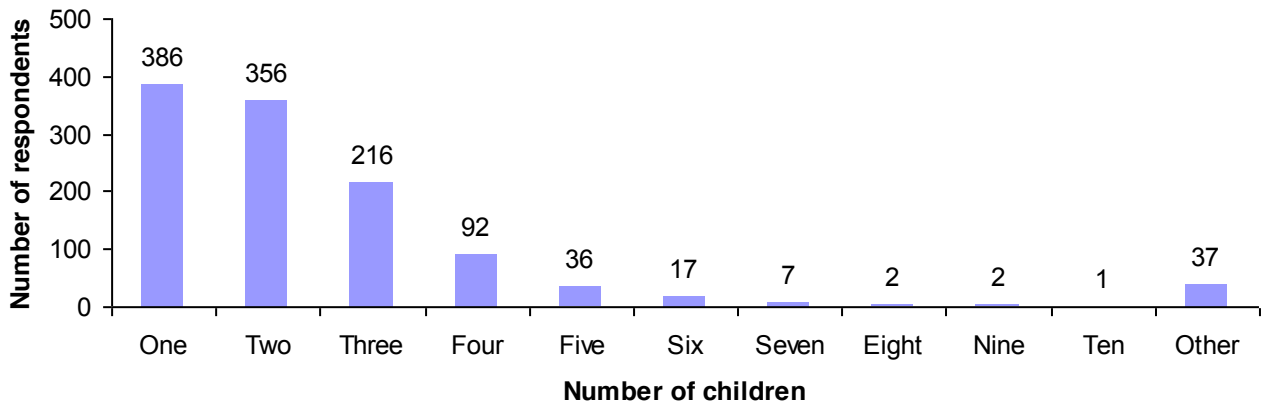
**Figure 6: Respondents who report having children by age and gender**



### **Family size**

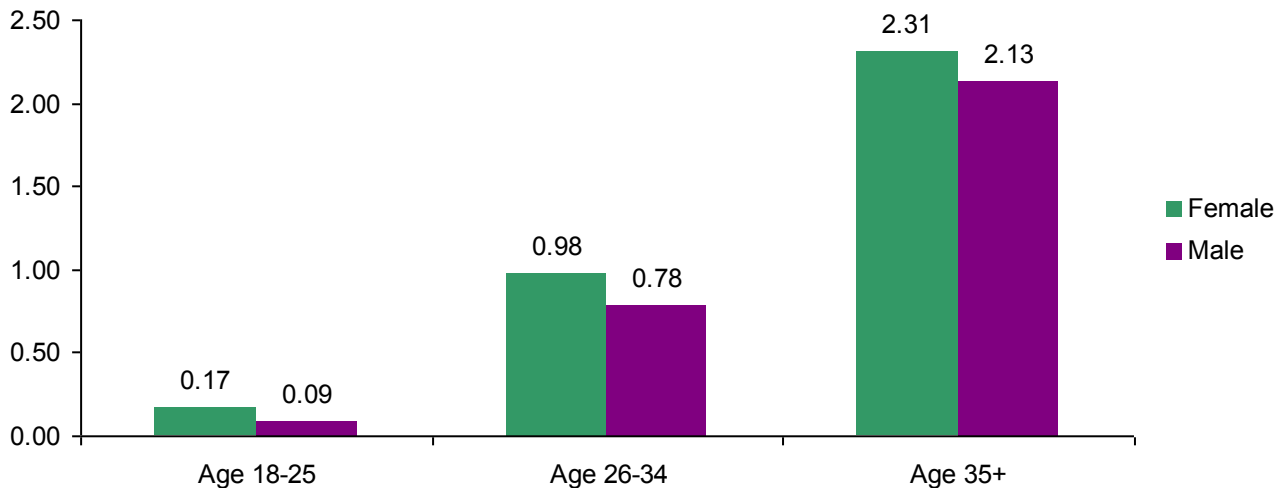
In terms of family size, the mean number of children respondents had was 3, as shown in Figure 7; the median was 2. These numbers include stepchildren, foster children, and deceased children. The 'Other' category includes those expecting their first child and those who did not identify the number of children they have.

**Figure 7: Number of respondents' children**



As with their likelihood of having children, the number of children respondents had was affected by age and gender (Figure 8). Female respondents had a higher number of children than male respondents in every age bracket, and the number of children for both genders increased with each age bracket.

Figure 8: Number of respondents' children, by respondent age and gender

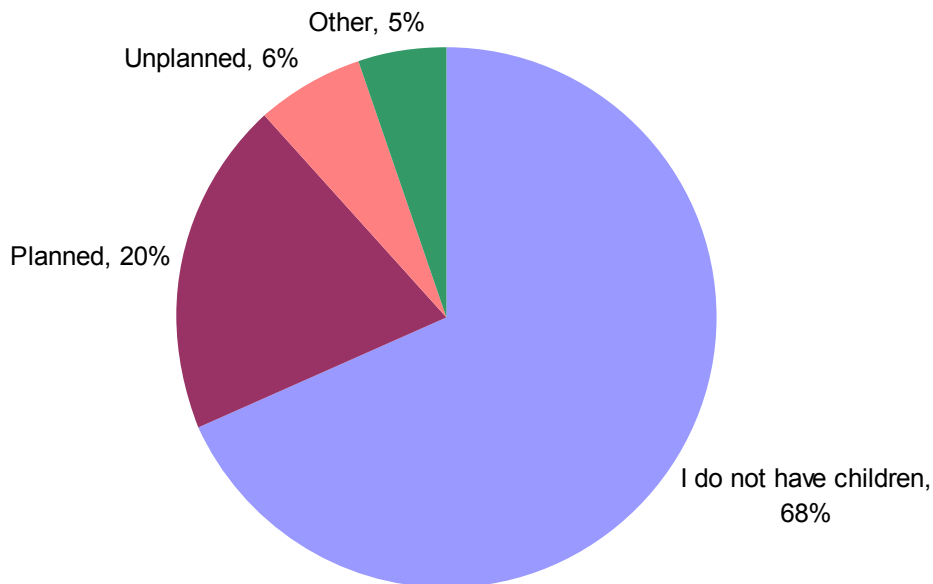


These cumulative birth rates were lower than the [national average](#) for the two younger groups and higher than the national average for the oldest group. In 2012, the national averages for women's cumulative birth rate were as follows: Ages 15-24 averaged 0.24 children; ages 25-34 averaged 1.26 children; and ages 35 and older averaged 1.99 children.

### Family planning

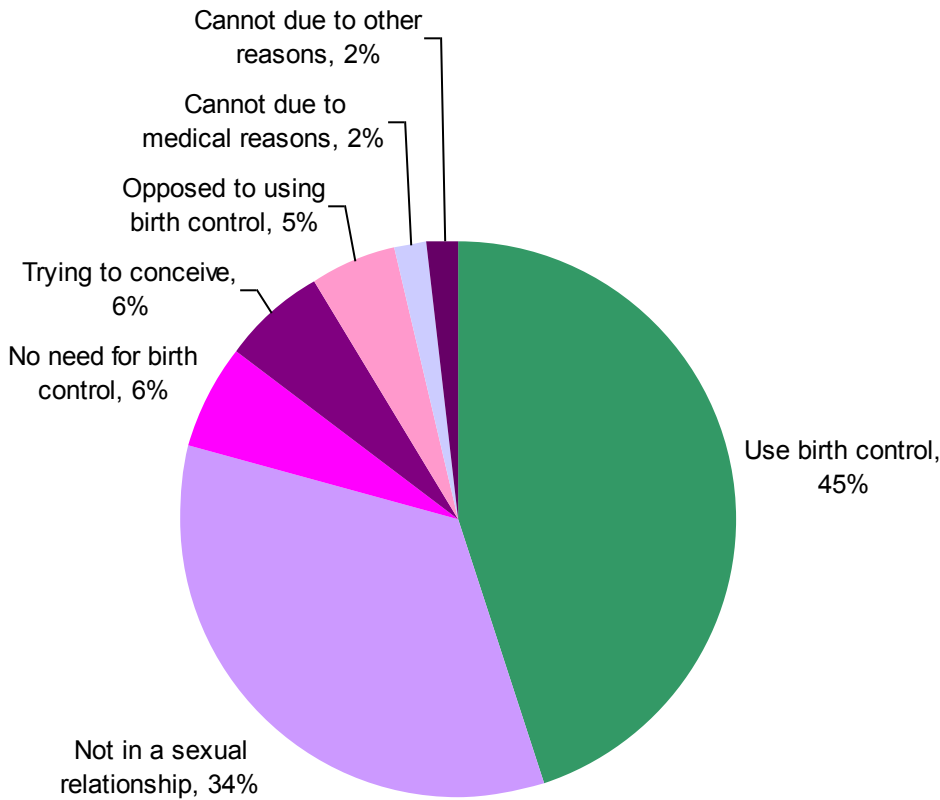
The majority of respondents' children were planned (Figure 9). Note that many of those who selected 'Other' had some planned and some unplanned children, or were opposed to the idea of family planning in general.

Figure 9: If you have children, were your children planned?



Of those respondents who were currently in a sexual relationship, more than two-thirds were using some form of birth control (Figure 10).

**Figure 10: Do you — or your partner(s) — use birth control?**



Of those who reported using birth control, hormonal (32%) and barrier (25%) methods were most common. Around one in ten (11%) used IUDs, 8% used natural family planning, and 5% used sterilization (Figure 11). Only 2% of respondents reported that they or their partner had ever had an abortion.

**Figure 11: What type of birth control do you use? (Only includes 1666 respondents who reported using birth control)**

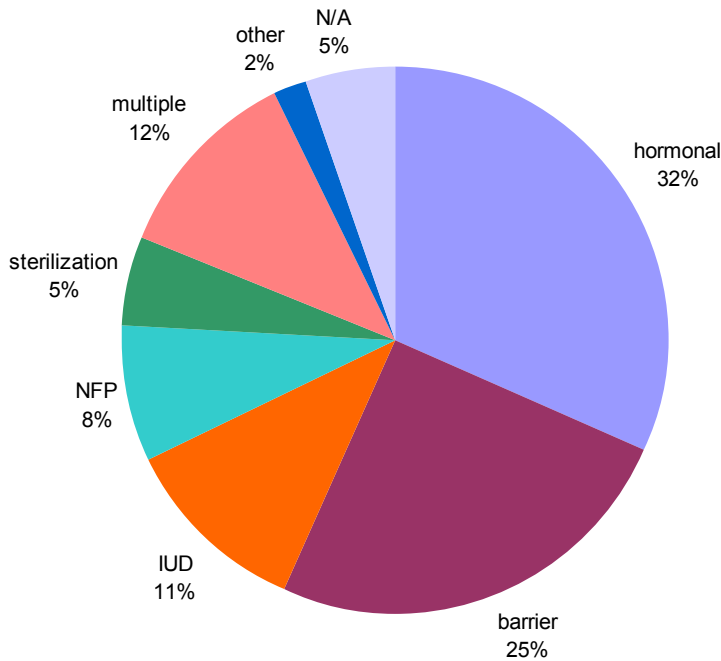
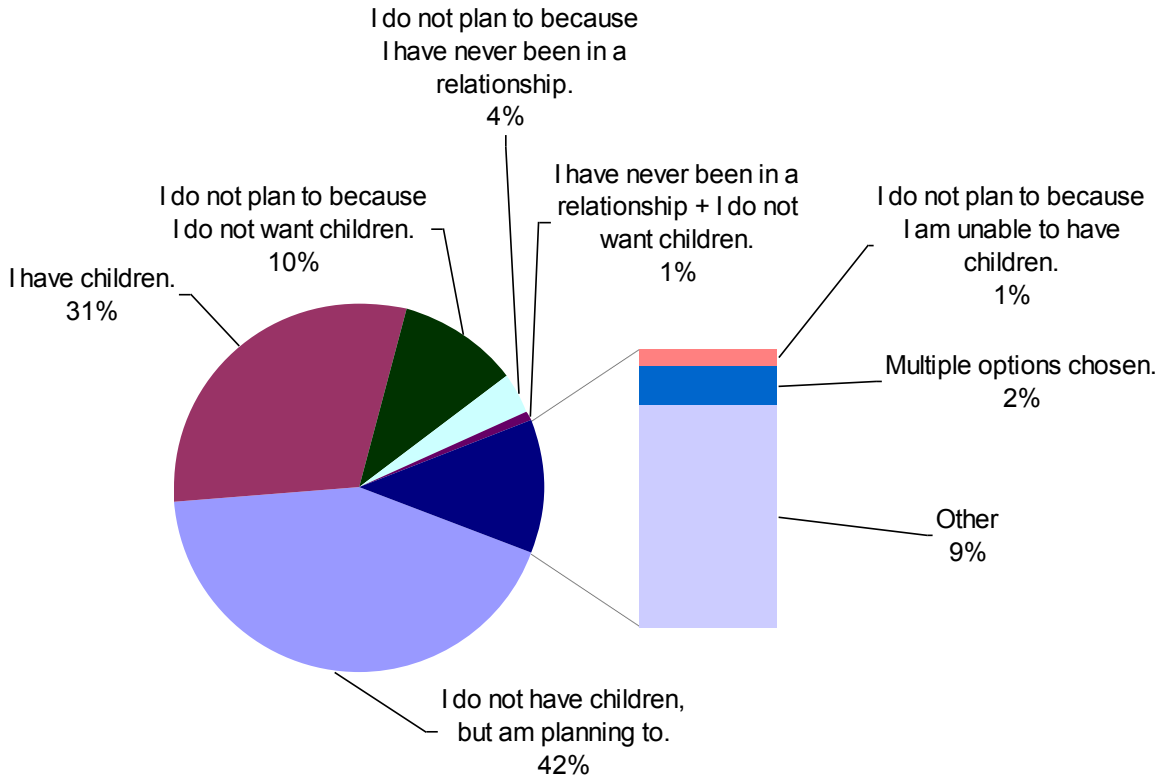


Figure 12 shows that 42% of respondents reported that they were planning to have children, while around 31% said that they already had children. The remaining 27% of respondents (around one in four) were



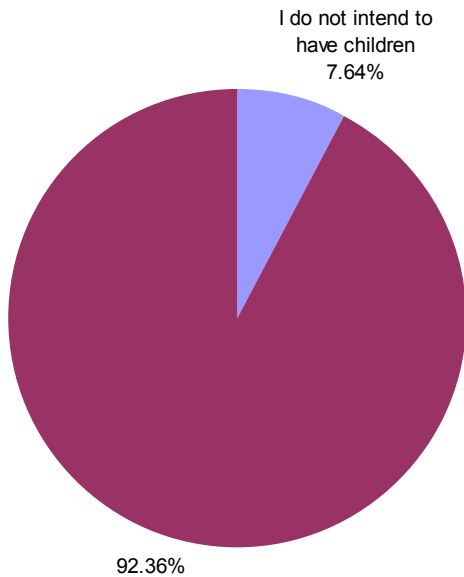
uncertain about their future choices or did not plan to have children. The most common reason respondents chose for not planning to have children was that they did not want them (10%).

**Figure 12: If you do not have children, do you plan to?**



Interestingly, when asked about educating their children, the survey participants responded differently; here only around 8% of the 3,702 respondents reported that they did not intend to have children, as shown in Figure 13.

**Figure 13: What is or would be your preferred method(s) of educating your children?**

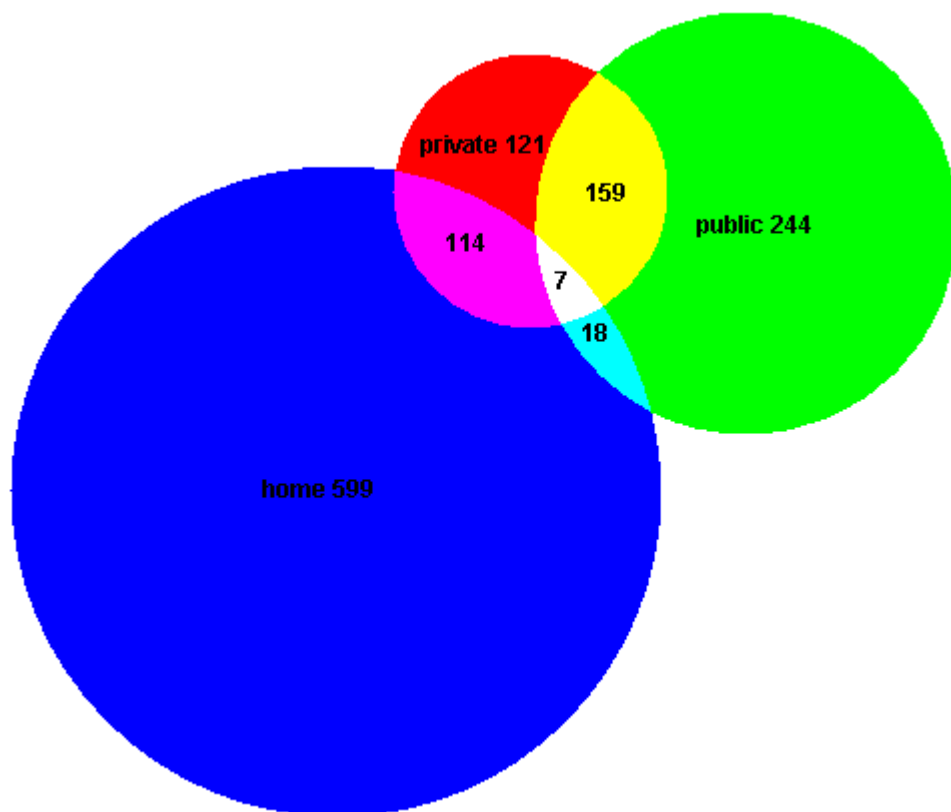


This discrepancy may reflect that respondents tended to answer the latter question as a hypothetical, i.e. 'if you have children how would you educate them?', rather than a direct question about the intent to have children.

### Children's education

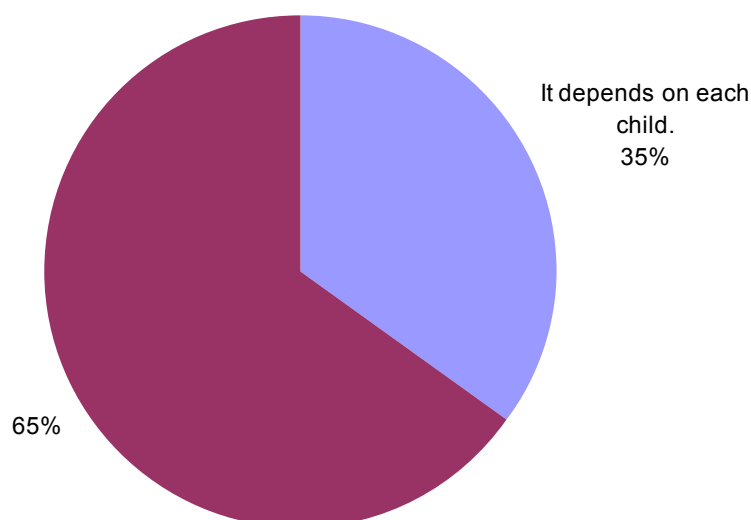
At this point we consider the set of 1,262 respondents who, when asked about their preferred method for educating their children, reported that a) they have or intend to have children and b) they did not choose 'it depends' or 'more than one' preferred method. This group is represented in Figure 14. The plurality of this group (47% of them) chose only homeschooling as their preferred method, with 'only public school' coming in second (19%) and 'only private school' being the least preferred method (10%).

Figure 14: What is or would be your preferred method(s) of educating your children?



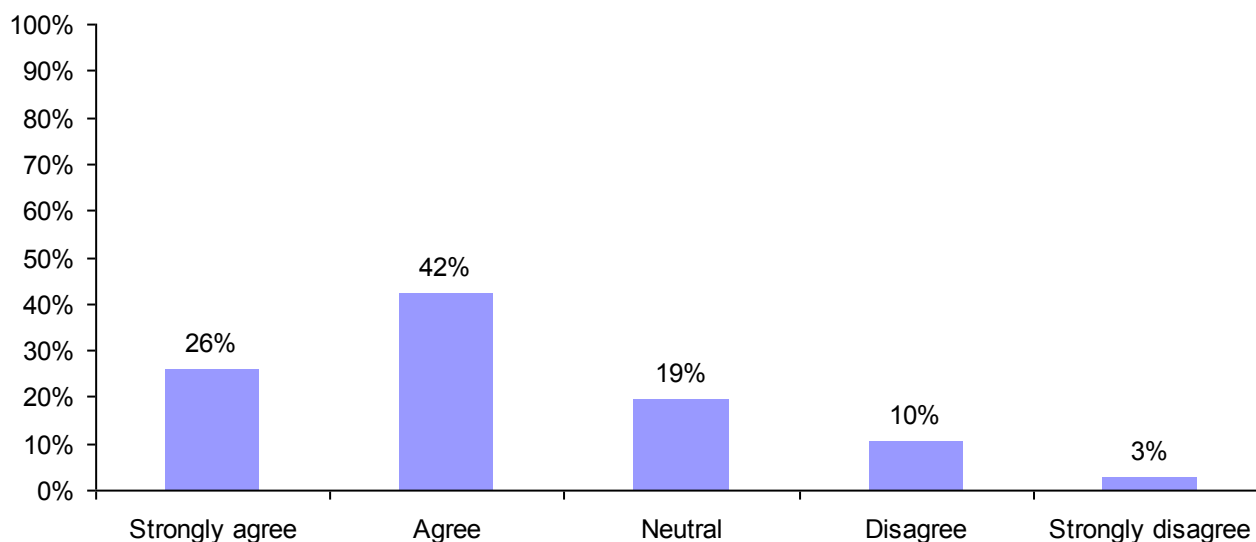
Of all 3,702 respondents, around one-third (35%) believed that their educational decisions should depend on each child, as shown in Figure 15. The other 65% stated that they would educate their children using one or more specific methods.

Figure 15: What is or would be your preferred method(s) of educating your children?



In general, respondents agreed that children's preferences about their own education should be considered a significant and substantial factor in deciding whether to enroll them in a public, private, home, or other school. In their responses to this question, 68% marked 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree', as shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Children's preferences about their own education should be considered a significant and substantial factor in deciding whether to enroll them in a public, private, home, or other school.



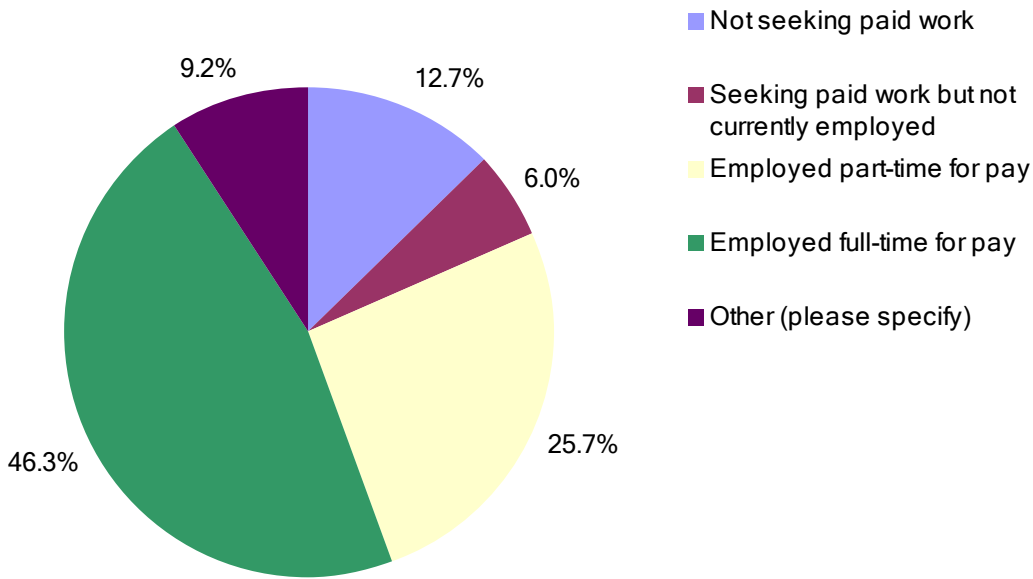
### 3. Career

In this section, we discuss respondents' current employment and career status. Most respondents were employed and felt that homeschooling had prepared them for their careers.

#### **Employment**

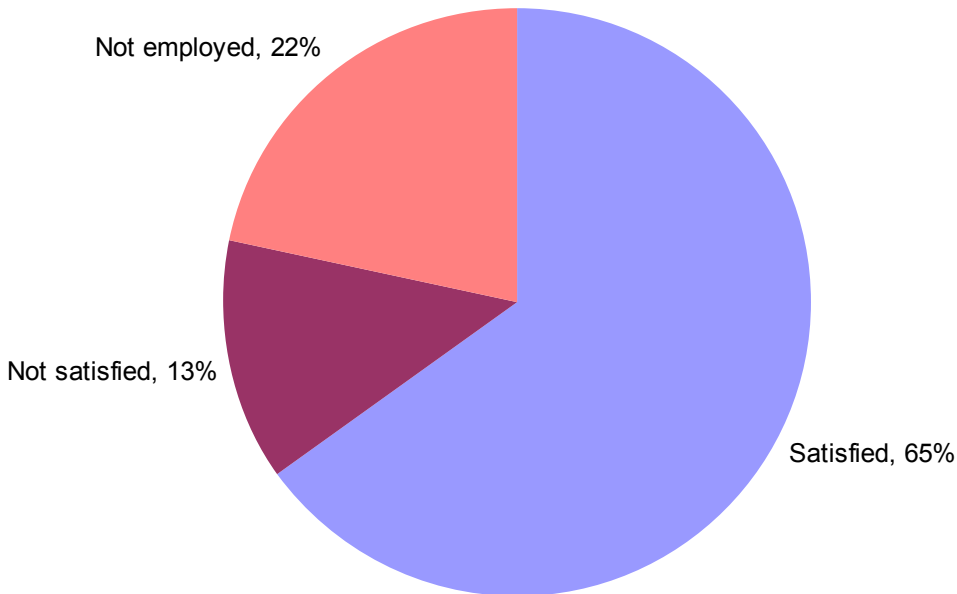
As shown in Figure 17 below, nearly three quarters of the 3,702 respondents (72%) are currently employed for pay, with two thirds of these (46% of the entire sample) employed full time. The unemployment rate for respondents in the sample was 6%, nearly identical to the [national unemployment rate](#).

**Figure 17: Are you currently employed for pay?**



Two-thirds of respondents (65%) reported that they were satisfied with their current employment status (Figure 18). Only 13% were not satisfied, although more than one-fifth (22%) stated that they were not employed.

**Figure 18: If you are employed, are you satisfied with your current employment status?**



Of the 1,561 respondents (about 42% of the total) who were employed and were not currently students, the most common industries were education (15%), health care (9%), IT/technology (6%), and arts & entertainment (6%). Other industries are shown in Table 1. The emphases on education and health care may reflect the fact that the sample skewed female. [Nationwide](#), the industries employing the largest percentage of people are Office/Administrative Support, Sales, and Food Preparation.

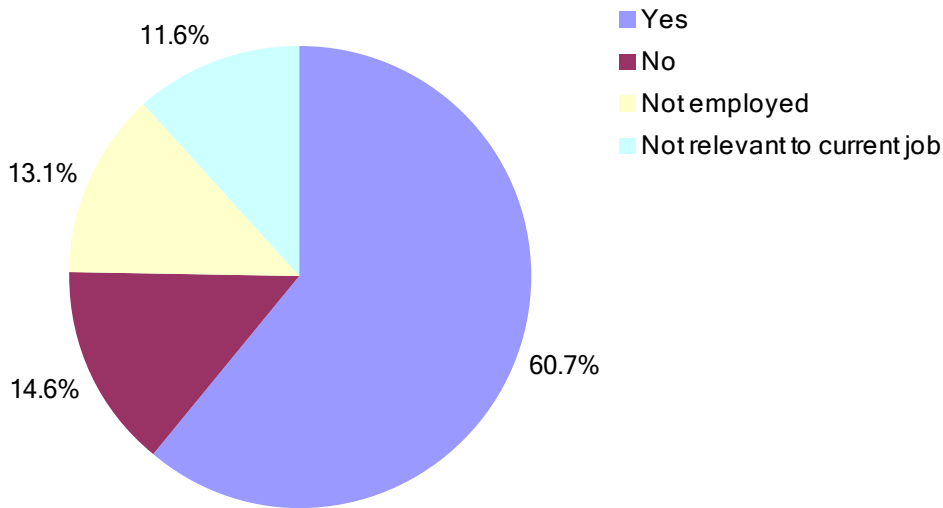
**Table 1: What industry are you in?**

Education	15%
Health care	9%
IT/Technology	6%
Arts & entertainment	6%
Sales	4%
Administration	4%
Writing & publishing	4%
Law	4%
Caregiving	3%
Food service	3%
Hospitality & customer service	3%
Media & marketing	3%
Ministry	2%
Engineering	2%
Accounting	2%
Nonprofit sector	2%
Military	2%
Library services	1%
Science & research	1%
Government	1%
Social work	1%
Finance	1%

**Career preparedness**

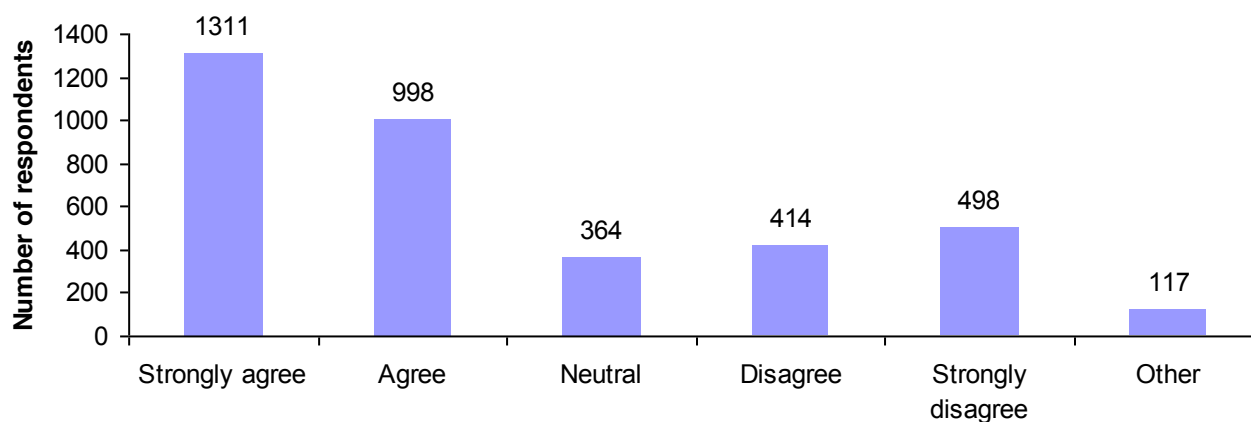
While 15% of respondents felt that they were not academically prepared for their current job (Figure 19), 60% did feel prepared.

**Figure 19: Do you feel that your homeschooling education gave you the academic skills you needed for your job?**



When asked whether their homeschool experience prepared them for the future (Figure 20), respondents rated their experience on average at 2.38, closer to 'Agree' than to 'Neutral'. About two-thirds of respondents (62%) agreed with the statement, while about one-quarter (25%) disagreed with the statement. The remaining respondents were neutral or 'Other'.

Figure 20: My homeschool experience prepared me for the future.



## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, most respondents were employed and had formed relationships outside their families of birth. Around half of respondents were married, and they were more likely to be married than members of the general population. It also appears that, in the youngest age bracket, female respondents were more likely to be married than their counterparts in the general population, while male respondents were less likely to be married than their counterparts in the general population. A third of respondents were not in a relationship at the time of the survey.

A smaller percentage of respondents had children than in the general population had children; however, this was not unexpected as the HARO sample skewed young. Female respondents were more likely to have children than males, and when they did they had, on average, larger families. Respondents' average number of children was lower than the national average for the two younger groups and higher than the national average for the oldest. The majority of respondents planned their childbearing and most of those in a sexual relationship used birth control, mainly hormonal and barrier methods. A total of 73% of respondents either have children or plan to have them. For parents who had strong preferences on educational method for their children, homeschooling was preferred, although one-third of respondents thought that the educational method should depend on the child. Two-thirds of respondents agreed that the child's preferences should be considered when choosing an educational method.

Three-quarters of respondents were employed for pay, and only 13% were not satisfied with their employment status. The largest industries represented were education and health care, which may reflect that the sample skewed female. Two-thirds of respondents said that they felt that homeschooling prepared them for the future.