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# Anomie in the Asia Pacific Region

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# 1 Abstract

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The goal of the Asia Pacific Anomie Research Project (APARP) is to develop a working model of the way in which accelerating rates of social change, conducive to the development of anomic structures, impact upon quality of life, particularly within urban areas in the Asia Pacific region. Integral to the construction of such a model is the development of a comprehensive understanding of the *factors mitigating the impact* of such change and thereby reducing the likelihood of the development of anomic structures. Once the desk research and field studies in South *East Australia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore* are complete, APARP will be in a unique position to: (a) model the *impact* of proposed changes in urban planning strategies for the quality of life of urban residents in the countries researched, and (b) suggest *alterations to such planning strategies* which may enhance the quality of life of urban residents by equipping communities with the means to respond to the emergence of anomic forces.

Anomie can be seen as the condition reflected in the breakdown of particular social structures, most often where a social structure is in the process of transformation with a consequent degree of social instability. Anomie however, may also be present in a society with rigid social structures which has enshrined unequal access to resources, facilities and goals. It is also important to note that as a condition of societal structures, anomie is both a cause and a consequence.

Three social processes, *globalization, urban transformation and mass migration*, have constituted and will continue to constitute underlying factors responsible for the development of the pre-conditions for the development of anomic structures and so for the production of social change at both national and international levels for the foreseeable future.

We have suggested that the concept of anomie is useful in capturing and focusing attention on both the *structures* that are found following the impact of the de-stabilizing forces and the character of the response at the *individual level*.

The Australian study has produced significant findings which will contribute importantly to the development of an early warning system. The examination of the anomie profiles was instructive. First, it was clear that over time the impact of the post-modernizing forces of globalization, mass migration and urban transformation on Australia society increased in magnitude. Foreign Direct Investment, an indicator of economic globalization, increased over the last thirty years as has short-term visitor movement, an indicator of cultural globalization. Mass migration has continued at a steady rate over the same period, although the ethnic composition of the immigrating population has shown a significant change toward greater cultural diversity. Finally, there has been a movement towards the growth of mega-metropolitan areas.

While the forces conducive to the development of anomic structures have increased in strength over the past 30 years, objective indicators of anomie have also become more prominent. Social polarization, the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged segments of society, has grown, as have rates of unemployment, particularly among the young, and suicide is a major cause of death, again among the young.

The field study revealed that subjective anomie was not widespread throughout the entire community. It was, however, most noticeable among the young unemployed and among others with disrupted social relationships, for example, the widowed and divorced. Anomie, we saw, had negative impacts on quality of life. Those groups experiencing relatively high levels of anomie, particularly the young unemployed, were most likely to report a poor quality of life.

The two sets of findings are instructive and tend to reinforce one another. An increase in magnitude of post-modernizing forces is associated with increased social polarization and unemployment and the growing significance of suicide as a cause of death among young people. At the level of the individual, unemployment among young people is associated with high levels of anomie which in turn is reflected in low levels of reported quality of life. It is clear from these analyses that an early warning system can be developed from existing statistical data. Once the predictors of subjective anomie have been identified, these can then be used in a sense as a „barometer“. Tracking changes in these predictors over time will allow inferences to be made about the rise and fall of levels of anomie among different segments of the population.

## 2 Goals of the Research

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The goal of the Asia Pacific Anomie Research Project (APARP) is to develop a working model of the way in which accelerating rates of social change, conducive to the development of anomic structures, impact upon quality of life, particularly within urban areas in the Asia Pacific region. Integral to the construction of such a model is the development of a comprehensive understanding of the factors mitigating the impact of such change and thereby reducing the likelihood of the development of anomic structures. Once the desk research and field studies in South East Australia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore are complete, APARP will be in a unique position to: (a) model the impact of proposed changes in urban planning strategies for the quality of life of urban residents in the countries researched, and (b) suggest alterations to such planning strategies which may enhance the quality of life of urban residents by equipping communities with the means to respond to the emergence of anomic forces. Such capabilities provide the foundation for the development of a unique nexus between data management, modeling and projection – the framework for a social planning process which can forecast negative impacts of suggested change and which can provide a platform for the mitigation of those impacts, that is, the development of an early warning system.

## 3 Concept

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### 3.1 The Nature of Anomie

The countries of the Pacific Region are characterised by the emergence of global cities, the experience of economic and cultural globalising forces such as foreign investment, movement of people between countries for purposes of housing, business and education, and internal migration, the movement of people from the countryside to the cities (Lanyon and Western 1997). We have argued elsewhere (Lanyon and Western, 1997) that these are the pre-conditions for the development of structures which predispose anomie.

It is clear, however, that anomie occurs in a number of guises. It can be thought of as the condition reflected in the breakdown of the cultural structure (the normative order). As well it can be seen as the condition reflected in the breakdown of particular social structures, most often where a social structure is in the process of transformation with a consequent degree of social instability. Anomie however, may also be present in a society with rigid social structures which has enshrined unequal access to resources, facilities

and goals. As society is constituted by the relationships between social actors, anomie can also be seen at the level of the individual actor.

Any comprehensive definition of the concept, therefore, must acknowledge these different components. The definition we propose is consistent with that adopted by the Swiss Academy of Development and can be stated as follows: anomie is a condition of socioeconomic structures that appears in periods of rapid structural change whereby the social systemic processes which reinforce social integration decline in salience and force. At the same time the malintegration between social and cultural structures is heightened. This state of anomie is associated with great difficulties in individual adaptation, resulting in a loss of general social orientation, the development of feelings of insecurity and marginalisation, uncontrolled rising expectations, feelings of relative deprivation and the questioning of the legitimacy of core societal values.

This represents a definition of anomie in its generality. It outlines the theoretical ultimate state of 'normlessness' alluded to previously. It is important to note at this point that as a condition of societal structures, anomie is both a cause and a consequence. Anomic conditions emerge as a consequence of marked structural tensions and then are causally significant in the production of social change. Three social processes, globalisation, urban transformation and mass migration, have constituted and will continue to constitute underlying factors responsible for the development of the pre-conditions for the development of anomic structures and so for the production of social change at both national and international levels for the foreseeable future.

## 3.2 Globalization

The process of globalization refers to the rapid transcendence of modern life currently centralized around the nation state to a form of social life which knows no national boundaries. The three core dimensions of globalization are commonly described as economic, political and cultural (Waters, 1995). The economic dimension is seen in the structural transformation of national economic entities into transnational corporations which cannot easily be identified with any one particular nation state. While head offices may be located in a particular city, most generally a global city, the corporation's employees come from diverse national backgrounds; their loyalty is to the company and its expansionist goals. The political dimension of globalisation was identified by Burton (1972) and Rosenau (1990). These writers drew attention to the fact that „political action was decreasingly confined to the sphere of the nation state and that an elaborate web of transnational connections was emerging alongside it“ (Waters 1994: 230). Estimates of the degree of political control retained by the nation state within the global system are not uncontroversial (Gern 1995). The third, and perhaps most important dimension of globalisation in the present context, is the cultural dimension. McLuhan's work on 'the global village' (Carpenter and McLuhan, 1970; McLuhan, 1964) was one of the first pieces of research to attempt to formulate more clearly the nature of this dimension. McLuhan highlighted the way in which electronic media increasingly displaced 'industrial media' (for example, paper, wheels and roads) as the medium by which culture is transmitted. More recently Boli and Thomas (1997: 172) have claimed that culture is increasingly global and that „world cultural principles and institutions shape the actions of states, firms, individuals and other sub-units“.

As the nation state declines in significance as a consequence of the emerging global forces, the development of identities becomes increasingly complex (Afshar and Batzli, 1995; Yeatman, 1995). Culture increasingly becomes a contested site within social life. Until a new order emerges behavior can be erratic. Previously "hyphenated identities" (Yeatman, 1994: 251) may attempt to manifest themselves as legitimate economic, political and social entities, for example, the Serbs in Bosnia, while groups previously constituted within past „totalising fictions“ (Yeatman, 1994: 251) of the Nation are likely to

be significantly destabilized. The effect of these globalizing forces may be to produce a state which can best be described as anomic.

### 3.3 Urban Transformation

Marked increases in rates of urbanization accompanying the emergence of post-industrial cities, polycentric and multi modal in form, go hand-in-hand with globalization. Cities like New York, London and Tokyo, variously called post-industrial, post-fordist, or post-modern, best typify this new form (see Fainstein et al., 1992; Mollenkopf and Castells, 1991; Sassen, 1991; Hamnett, 1994). The economies of these post-industrial cities are based upon advanced producer services and these are markedly affecting the shape of the contemporary world economy (Fainstein et al., 1992; Mollenkopf and Castells, 1991; Sassen, 1991, 1994). Their class structures are characterized by the conspicuous presence of professionals and managers; a sharp decline in the industrial working class following de-industrialization; the rise of a large service working class employed in support activities from retail to clerical, and from entertainment to cleaning; and a marked growth in a diverse collection of unskilled, insecure low paid workers who were initially identified by the term 'urban underclass' (Wilson, 1987). More recently they have been labeled 'the new urban poor'. Those households which form the new urban poor are heterogeneous; they are characterized by diversity, not uniformity (Gans, 1993; Mingione, 1993). Their emergence has led to increasing social polarization: the marked division between those who are well off and those who have, at best, limited access to goods and services (Baxter et al., 1991; Hamnett, 1994; Sassen, 1991; Western, 1983).

The growth of post-industrial cities together with the increased social polarization it produces can have de-stabilizing effects on existing social structures and so lead to a heightening of anomic tensions. If the opportunity for the resolution of such tensions is restricted, the very nature of social life will come under threat for certain sectors of a society, and quite possibly for society in its entirety.

### 3.4 Mass Migration

In an increasingly international economy it is difficult to open borders for movements of information, commodities and capital and yet close them to people. Global circulation of investment and know-how always means movement of people too.

Most new settlers move into the largest urban areas, notably global cities, and here with the exception of highly skilled temporary workers they tend to fill the least skilled jobs (Portes and Stepick, 1993; Sassen, 1991). Regardless of skill, these international population movements inevitably result in the development of ethnic minorities in host countries. The transition between cultures can be difficult both for the immigrating individual and for the host country. As a result of globalizing forces, many national societies are experiencing significant increases in levels of cultural diversity. The destabilizing effects of such change is contingent upon how diverse cultural groups are integrated into mainstream cultural discourse and resulting structures.

Global cities in both the developed and developing world are confronted by significant population movements. Within the developed world this comes significantly from external migration of guest workers and others and in some instances from an influx of refugees. Global cities in the developing world of Asian and Latin and South America, in particular, experience population growth around their peripheries from adjacent rural areas with consequent strain on physical and social infrastructure. Rapid and unplanned population growth whenever it occurs can have destabilizing effects on existing social structures thereby providing the conditions for the emergence of anomic pressures.

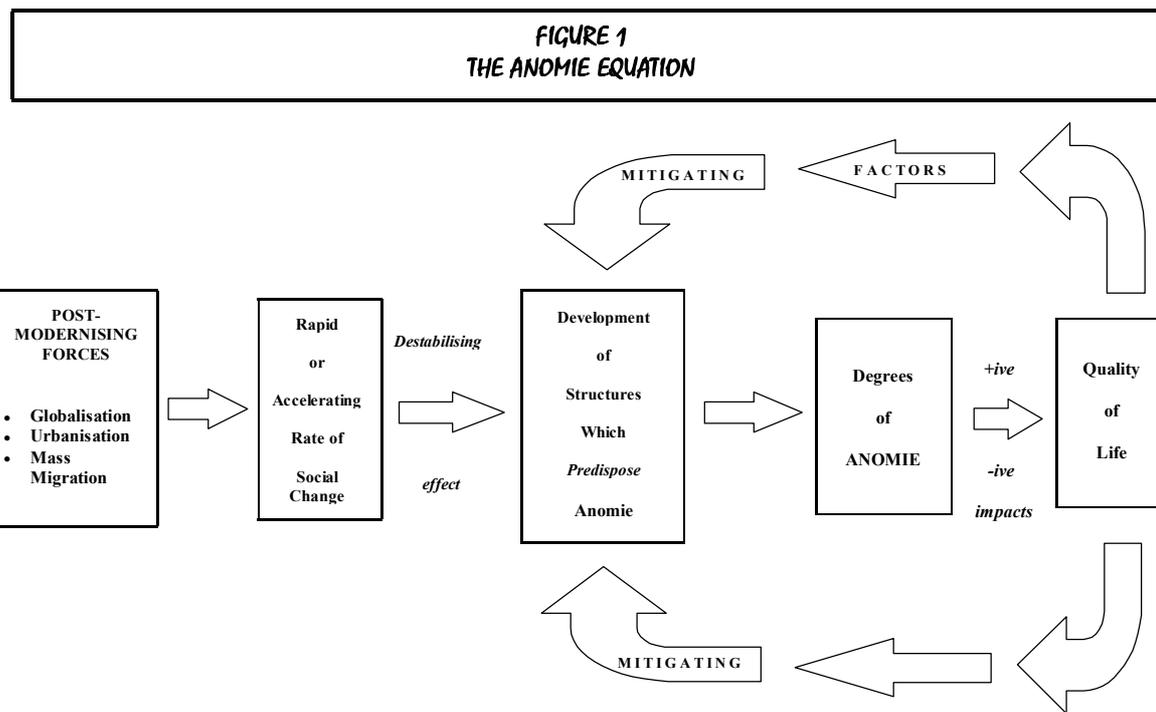
## 4 Main Hypothesis

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We have argued that the post-modernizing forces of globalization, post-urbanization and mass migration are likely to have de-stabilizing effects on the national and international structures on which they impinge. We have suggested also that the concept of anomie is useful in capturing and focusing attention on both the structures that are found following the impact of the de-stabilizing forces and the character of the response at the individual level. As a result we can talk about objective anomic structures and subjective anomic orientations. Figure 1 depicts the process with which we are concerned.

As can be seen, we suggest that the three post-modernizing forces impact on existing structures resulting in their change at an increasingly rapid rate. Change is exponential in form. The structures which emerge are highly unstable and transient and can be described as anomic in nature. Anomie observed both objectively (structurally), and subjectively (in terms of personal orientations), emerges as a consequence of the destabilizing effects of post-modernizing forces on existing structures. Collectively these social forces interconnect to affect the processes which organize and more importantly which integrate individuals with one another to form a society. Given the powerful nature of these forces and social processes, ultimately the quality of life of people who live in any contemporary society will be in some way affected.

It is important to emphasize that Figure 1, while representing a simplification of the dynamic process which results in anomie and its consequences, attempts to capture the relationship between the core factors in the anomie equation. The conceptualization is sufficiently broad to allow for application of the proposed model to a variety of social and cultural contexts and at various systemic levels.



## 5 Research Program

The strategy we have adopted in employing the concept of anomie empirically has been to focus on both „objective“ and „subjective“ manifestations. The objective manifestations are represented by anomie profiles based on existing national data. The subjective manifestations are derived from survey research where levels of anomie are determined from individual responses to standardized questions.

### 5.1 The Anomie Profiles

In the development of anomie profiles, three countries in the Asia Pacific region, Australia, Malaysia, and the Philippines have been the focus of attention. The profiles are based on data collected from existing sources and are concerned with the development of measures of both post modernizing forces and degrees of anomie. Specifically, these profiles are based on data reflecting the following:

1. The extent to which each of the three selected countries has experienced globalization (economic, political and cultural), mass migration (international and intranational) and urban transformation.
2. The extent to which anomie is revealed in such macro characteristics as: levels of homelessness in urban areas; the nature and extent of urban squatter populations; the levels of youth employment; the rates of suicide and other violent deaths; levels of delinquency and crime; the nature and extent of political agitation.

Comparisons of data between countries is fraught with problems. In some cases, comparable data is non-existent, in other cases it is only partially present. To complicate matters further, definitions of variables are not always provided. However, despite these problems, the development of country profiles is proceeding.

The operational indicators chosen for the three variables defining the concept of post modernizing forces, that is, globalization, urban transformation and mass migration are presented in Table 1. The operational indicators of anomie are shown in Table 2.

*Table 1: Definition of post-modernizing forces*

Globalization		Mass Migration	Urban Transformation
Economic	Cultural		
% of foreign direct investment	% of population travelling overseas (short-term stays)	Increase in number of international migrants	% of population living in urban areas
% of industry base which is service oriented	Increase in number of international visitors	Changes in ethnic breakdown of migrant population	Rate of rural to urban migration Rate of urban to rural migration Rate and nature of urban to urban migration

## 5.2 Field Studies

The field studies being undertaken in Australia, the Philippines and Malaysia and proposed for Singapore share a common focus on the factors giving rise to subjective anomie in identified populations, and the consequences of anomie for factors such as perceived well-being and quality of life.

*Table 2: Objective anomie indicators*

Living conditions:	rate of homelessness in urban areas size of urban squatter population
Characteristics of youth:	levels of youth unemployment rate of delinquency
Suicide and homicide:	rate of suicide rate of other violent deaths
Crime rate:	rate of crimes against the person rate of crimes against property
Political unrest:	number of street demonstrations number of strikes level of political instability
Economic standing:	level of inflation business failures unemployment
Socio-economic standing:	growing social polarization

In the development of the field studies much attention was given to how the concept of anomie should be understood operationally. In a meeting in New York in April 1997, Professor Li Han-lin, Director of the Chinese Study proposed a four-component operationalization of anomie including measures of Discontent, Distrust, Estrangement and Mobility. After much discussion it was suggested that anomie might most usefully be

understood as Estrangement. In the Australian project, the measure of anomie chosen is the MOS (Margins of Society) scale (Travis 1993). Both measures refer to the subjective component of anomie and, as can be seen from Table 3 below, include similar elements.

*Table 3: Comparison of MOS and estrangement scale items*

MOS Scale	Estrangement Sub-scale
I feel all alone these days. No matter how hard people try in life, it doesn't make any difference.	<p>■ <i>Tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following sayings:</i></p> <p>NEGATIVE ATTITUDE ABOUT LIFE (five-point selection set)*</p>
I feel discriminated against.	(four culture specific items)
My whole world feels like it is falling apart.	ITEM 27: <i>Enjoy life while you can and tomorrow will take care of itself.</i>
I wish I were someone important.	ITEM 28: <i>Policies and reforms are beyond our ordinary citizens. It is useless to be part of it.</i>
It's hard for me to tell just what is right and wrong these days.	ITEM 29: <i>Each one sweeps the snow from his own doorstep and doesn't bother about the frost on his neighbour's roof.</i>
I don't like to live by society's rules.	ITEM 30: <i>Friends can't be easily found around us whom we can trust.</i>
	REBELLIOUS OF CORE NORMS AND BEHAVIOUR*
	(four culture specific items)
	ITEM 31: Making money overrides everything even a good education.
	ITEM 32: The means justify the ends as long as we can solve problems.
	ITEM 33: Nowadays things change so fast that it is hard to tell right from wrong.
	ITEM 34: If bribery can get whatever you want, I will pay my way too.
	(two culture specific scenarios with 6 items)
	<p>■ <i>If somebody holds back the pay you believe you deserve, which of the following three actions you would probably take?</i></p>
	ITEM 35: I would go on a demonstration in the street.
	ITEM 36: I would go directly to the highest possible authority to settle the matter.
	ITEM 37: I would bring the matter to the public through mass media.

- *Imagine yourself in a situation of possible relocation due to a state construction project. Further imagine yourself that you had demanded a large sum of compensation for the move but had been rejected. What then would you do as the next step?*

ITEM 39: I would not move no matter what.

ITEM 38: I would not move until police were involved.

ITEM 40: I would not move until my neighbour's move.

While field research has been completed in Australia and is planned to commence shortly in Malaysia, the research plans by the Philippines and Singapore groups are less developed. Nevertheless, in the field studies currently being planned the two measures (Estrangement and the MOS scale) will be included. Analysis of the relationship between the measures will, therefore, be possible, as will an examination of their relative predictive power in structural equation modeling.

Although all field studies share a common conceptual framework, the actual research question posed differs in the different research programs. Thus, in the Australian context, anomie and quality of life are linked to questions of urban living and satisfaction with the urban environment. In Malaysia, the focus will be on the urban population and the nature and extent of the breakdown of core values as a consequence of cultural globalization, while in the Philippines and Singapore the specific research questions are still being formulated.

The intellectual challenge these projects pose is to ensure that the common conceptual core is retained to allow comparative analyses, not only between the countries concerned but also with the Chinese study for which Professor Li Han-lin is responsible, while at the same time allowing the specific research questions raised in the different contexts to be fully investigated.

In earlier papers (Lanyon, Li, Wang & Western 1995; Lanyon and Western 1997) we have argued that cultural practices and beliefs play an important mediating role in the "anomie equation". The comparative analyses will enable us to examine empirically the mediating effects of these practices and beliefs in the emergence and control of anomic situations.

## 6 The Australian Anomie Profile

### 6.1 The Pre-Conditions for Anomie

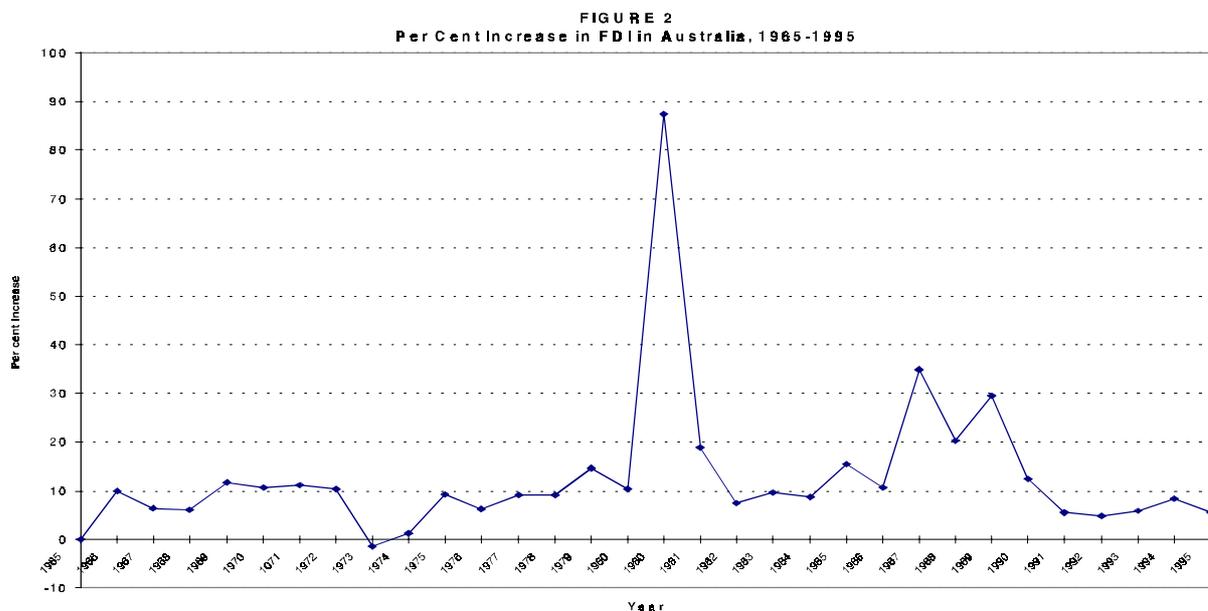
The nature of Australian society – its structure and relational base – is currently being transformed by the impact of increased involvement in the global economy and global society. The globalization of production, finance and trade, and the associated flows of people, have wrought changes in industry sectors, the structure of employment and the labor market. The expansion of Australia's trade and investment activities within the Asia Pacific region has played an important part in this process. Increases in capital flows and population movement between Australia and countries within the region have partly been responsible for the „Asianization“ of Australian life. In combination with demographic changes in the Australian population, these factors have generated significant changes in employment trends by industry sector both within metropolitan regions and across non-metropolitan regions of Australia (Stimson, 1994). In particular, the spatial patterning of employment has changed.

Such structural changes have significantly impacted upon the way in which Australians live their lives and particularly upon their quality of life. Certain categories of people clearly have benefited from this change more than have others. Nevertheless the globalization of capital and information has elevated levels of knowledge among the majority of men and women regarding possible lifestyles and alternative places to live and work. The decline in travel costs and time has also meant that people can now more readily act upon that knowledge than was the case in the past. Broadly speaking then globalizing forces have been instrumental in increasing levels of social capital among the population. Problems may arise however when commensurate levels of economic capital are not available to satisfy heightened expectations resulting from that broadening of horizons. Additionally, value conflict may occur because of the different levels of social and economic capital among different segments of the population.

## 6.2 Economic Globalization

Changing levels and sources of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) are two of the best measures of the extent to which a national economy is a player in the global economy. High levels of FDI in a country are seen to be a measure of the extent to which a country is considered to have a dynamic yet sound economy. In the Australian instance, levels of FDI by foreign companies has generally increased over the past 30 years. However growth in FDI has slowed during that period. As seen in Figure 3, per cent increase in FDI hovered around 10 per cent between 1965 and 1980 (an exception was 1973) peaking at 14 per cent in 1979. Between 1982 and 1987 the per cent increase in FDI rose; it dropped 15 percentage points in 1988 but rose again in 1989. This was followed by a decline in growth to 12 per cent in 1990; between 1991 and 1995 per cent increase in FDI fluctuated between 5 and 8 per cent.

Increasingly however, Australian investors have turned their interests toward overseas concerns in the Asia Pacific. While in the beginning level of interest in the Asia Pacific market was low, business interest in the region has broadened and appears to be running parallel to the expansion of trade.



Changes in Australia's economy have followed broad trends in the development of the economies of other advanced nations during the past 25 years:

- Most growth has occurred in the services sector, especially in transport, storage and communications, the electricity, gas and water and the community services industries.

- The mining industry's output share has increased while its employment share has fallen and the manufacturing industry has declined in shares of both output and employment.
- The shifting structure of employment has brought changes in the nature of work, with a decline in industries dominated by male, blue-collar, full-time workers and an expansion in industries employing female, white collar workers and part-time and casual labor (EPAC, 1993:v)

During this time, the Australian economy grew in real terms at an average annual rate of 3.5 per cent and while all industries showed real growth, the rates varied widely with the mining sector leading the way (Table 4).

*Table 4: Per annum growth of industry in Australia, 1970-1995*

Industry Sector	% Growth Per Annum
Mining	6.3
Transport, storage and communications	5.4
Electricity, gas and water	5.2
Community services	5.1
Finance	3.9
Rural and manufacturing	< 3.5

Source: Stimson, 1994

### 6.3 Cultural Globalization

Within this context of increased involvement of Australian business in the global economy, levels of cross-cultural interaction have notably increased. The development of long haul jet aircraft, satellites, fibre-optic cabling and broadband communications have not only provided the technological platform for global markets in capital and manufactured goods and commodities, such innovations have also allowed the expansion of tourism, information dissemination (for example via the Internet), producer services (finance, property, business services, and research), knowledge, and data (global broadband super highways).

Temporary movement by Australians to overseas countries plays an important role in the process of cultural globalization. People are exposed to different ways of seeing and doing – of living. Their tastes, values, beliefs and aspirations can change as a result of that exposure. Invariably part of the newly experienced culture and society is brought back to Australia upon return. Data collected for the period from 1965 to 1995 displays a steady increase in the proportion of the total population who traveled overseas for short-term stays. In 1960 the proportion was only 1.4 per cent of the population, while by 1995 it had increased tenfold to approximately 14 per cent (ABS, various).

The magnitude of short-term visitor movement to Australia has dramatically increased in the past 30 years from just under 200 000 persons in 1965 to approximately 3 million people by 1993. Clearly Australia has become increasingly popular as a tourist destination, 63 per cent of short-term visitors traveling here for that very purpose. Tourism movements are expected to increase by 7 per cent per annum (Hugo, 1996).

### 6.4 Mass Migration

In the year ended 30 June 1995 Australia's population grew by 215,600 persons or by 1.2 per cent. Approximately 39 per cent of this growth was due to net overseas migration

(or net migration gain) and 61 per cent to natural increase (births minus deaths). Over the last 20 years, natural increase has been the main contributor to population growth. Fluctuations in net migration gain are the major cause of fluctuations in Australia's population growth. Migratory patterns are changing and in more recent years long term movement has been accounting for a more significant part of the overall gain (around one third in 1994/95).

In 1947, at the commencement of the migration program in Australia, slightly more than 90 per cent of the white Australian population were Australian born, and slightly less than 10 per cent had been born overseas. Between 1947 and 1971 the proportion of the population born overseas doubled and has remained at about 20 per cent since that time. The ethnic character of the overseas born population has changed during this period. In 1947, 88 per cent were European born (73 per cent of these being British). The remainder came from Africa (1 per cent), America (2 per cent), Asia (3 per cent) and Oceania (7 per cent). In recent years there has been a marked reduction in the European component of the overseas born. By comparison, the proportion of Asians has increased significantly from 3 per cent in 1947 to 17 per cent in 1986. By 1986 then, the Australian population was less indigenous, less European and more Asian than at any point during the post-war period (Western and Turrell, 1993).

There is a marked parallelism between the changing ethnic composition of the Australian population and the pattern of immigration. The data summarized in Table 5 indicates that between 1965 and 1995 there has been a consistent increase in the proportion of Asians migrating to Australia; in 1965, they comprised 4 per cent of total settler arrivals. In 1995 this proportion had increased to 38 per cent, after peaking at 56 per cent in 1992. Settlers originating from the United Kingdom and Ireland only comprised 12 per cent of settler intake in 1995. This lies in stark comparison to 54 per cent in 1965. By 1995 the proportions of settlers originating from Africa and Oceania (mainly New Zealand) had also noticeably increased.

*Table 5: Australia's settler arrivals by country of birth, 1965-1995*

Year	Country of Birth					
	Africa %	America %	Asia %	UK and Ireland %	Europe %	Oceania %
1965	2.1	2.4	3.7	54.1	35.5	2.2
1975	4.2	12.0	25.4	32.1	18.9	8.1
1985	4.5	7.6	47.5	16.1	12.7	11.5
1995	14.2	4.1	38.5	11.8	15.7	15.6

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue No. 3101.0, 3402.0, 3404.0 and Dawkins et al. 1995.

*Table 6: Distribution of Australia's population major regional units, 1971-1991  
(Per cent share of the national population)*

Region	Census 30/6/71	Census 30/6/76	ERP 30/6/81	ERP 30/6/86	ERP 30/6/90	ERP 30/6/91
Mega-metropolitan	73	73	73	73	74	74
Major regional centres	9	9	9	9	9	9
Minor regional centres	2	2	2	2	2	2
Small towns	3	3	3	3	3	3
Coastal, Qld, NSW, Vic.	5	6	6	6	7	7
Rest	8	7	7	7	6	6
Total (million)	12.694	13.474	14.921	16.032	17.037	17.250

Source: O'Connor and Stimson, 1996

## 6.5 Urban Transformation

While for the past twenty-five years three-quarters of the Australian population have lived in large functional urban regions largely on Australia's east coast, those regions have expanded in size over that time. Mega-metropolitan areas (MMAs) now comprise polycentric urban forms based upon the self-contained regional labor markets developed following patterns of suburbanization. Table 5 displays the pattern of population distribution within Australia across such mega-metropolitan areas for a 20 year period spanning 1971 and 1991. There has been very little change in that distribution over time even though the national population has increased by five million since the early 1970's.

Such functional regionalization of the urban environment is integrally related to forces of economic globalization. Increasingly economic activity in MMAs is concentrating and agglomerating and becoming more specialized. Sydney/Newcastle/Wollongong is renowned as Australia's international gateway. The Melbourne/Port Phillip region is dominant as the nation's manufacturing center while economic activity in the Brisbane/Gold Coast/Sunshine Coast region is primarily consumer-based.

It is clear from this account that the impact of post-modernizing forces on the Australian national scene has increased over the last two decades. We have now to examine selected objective indicators of anomie over the same period and the pattern of change they exhibit.

# 7 Indicators of Anomie

## 7.1 Post-Modernization and Social Inequality

Increasing involvement in the global economy has changed the way in which Australians live their lives. Not only has there been a dramatic change in the industry base of employment, but associated changes in the spatial distribution of employment, in the nature of the urban environment itself and cultural life have resulted in increased marginalization of specific categories of people.

There has been a rapid rise in the rate of unemployment since the 1970s. In 1972 only 1.9 per cent of the total labor force were recorded as being unemployed. A decade later this had increased to 7.2 per cent reaching a peak during 1984 of 9.3 per cent. While unemployment declined to 6.2 per cent in 1990 it rose to 11 per cent in 1994. By 1995 it

had declined once again to below 1984 levels. Of particular significance has been the dramatic increase in the number of very long-term unemployed (VLTU). „By August 1993, about 924,000 persons were unemployed in Australia, of whom 62 per cent were male... Of the unemployed, 63 per cent had been unemployed for less than a year, 17 per cent for one to two years and 20 per cent for two or more years.“ (Stimson, 1994)

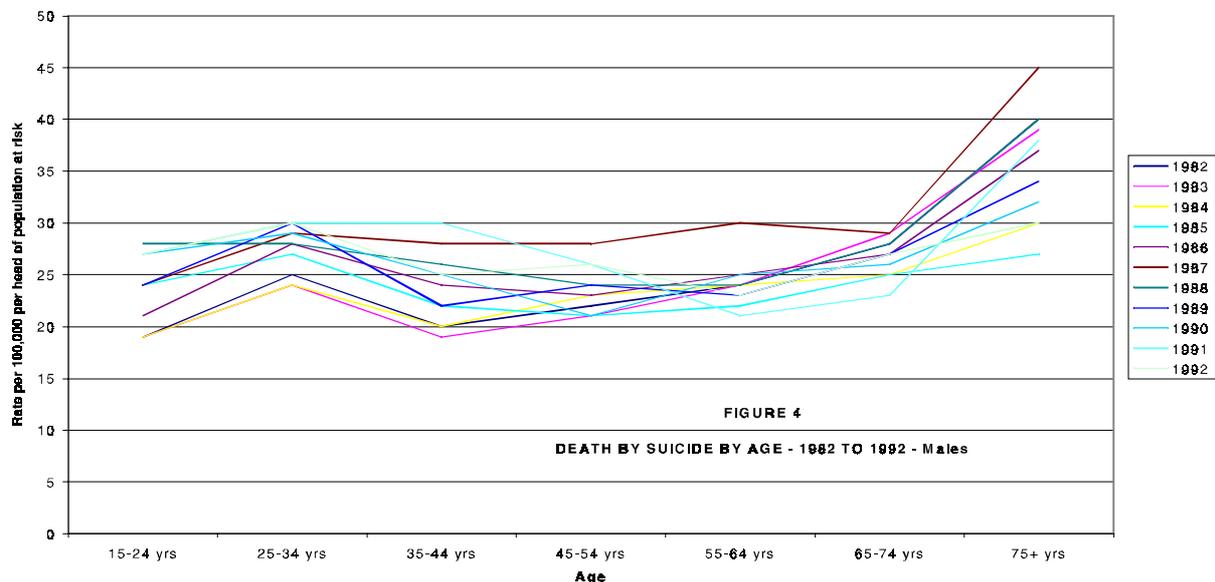
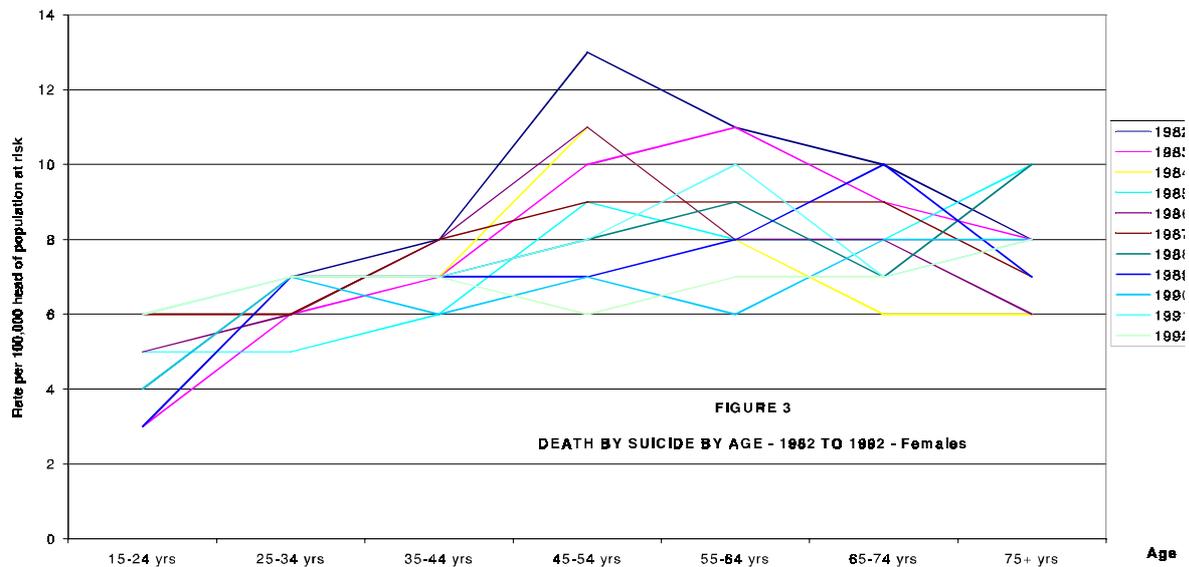
Significant variations in the incidence of unemployment among various cohorts of the labor force have been reported. In 1993 the 15 to 19 year age group had an unemployment rate considerably higher than the national average. In some urban areas rates as high as 30-35 per cent of this age cohort have been reported. Unemployment rates tended to decline with age up until the mid-forties. Thereafter unemployment rates increased, especially for those aged 55 years and over. The 15 to 19 year age group had the highest overall incidence of unemployment and the 20 to 24 year age group had the highest incidence of VLTU. Overseas born persons have tended to have higher unemployment rates than persons born in Australia with migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) having the highest level of unemployment. Additionally, in 1993 unemployment rates for indigenous peoples were nearly three times as high as the rate for the rest of the population.

Analysis of national data regarding death by suicide and self-inflicted injury and death by motor vehicle accident broken down by age and gender provide further details of which groups in Australian society are „at risk“ in terms of their marginal status. Referring first to suicide, clearly Australian men are more likely to take their life than are Australian women. Data pertaining to death by suicide collected since 1950 indicates that amongst males there is a steady increase in rate of suicide as age increases. However, since the mid 1980s the rate of suicide amongst males aged between 15 and 24 and 25 and 44 has notably increased. Amongst women the age related pattern of suicide is quite different – refer to Figures 4 and 5. Once again, following trends in suicide rates since the 1950, incidence of suicide appears to peak for women between the ages of 40 and 60. In recent years the highest rate of suicide for women has been amongst women between 44 and 54 years of age.

A synthesis of trends in death by motor vehicle accident since 1950 also clearly shows the greater propensity for males to meet an untimely death. While the pattern of death by motor vehicle accident in relation to age is quite similar for both males and females, the rate of death amongst males per 100,000 head of population at risk is consistently higher than it is for females. The pattern of death by motor vehicle according to age is roughly bi-modal, first peaking at the 15 to 24 age group and then again amongst people aged 75 years or more. In 1995, 11 females per 100,000 head of the population<sup>1</sup> aged 15 to 24 years, died as a result of a motor vehicle accident. During the same year however 32 males within the same age bracket died in car accidents. Amongst persons aged 75 years or more, 16 females per 100,000 head of population died in motor vehicle accidents in comparison with 29 males.

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<sup>1</sup> At-risk.



These data suggest (and in particular trends in rates of suicide) that in comparison with other sectors of the population, young males, middle aged women and elderly males consistently experience some form of separation from society at large. The high rate of unemployment amongst young males provides a partial explanation of the disruption in social integration for that age group. Further research needs to be conducted into factors predicting the dislocation of the elderly. The collection of data detailing marital dissolution broken down by age and gender is continuing. It is expected that this will provide a context within which to understand the lack of social integration experienced by middle aged women.

Such „at-risk“ groups, the long-term unemployed, elderly people and middle aged women, particularly if divorced, are perhaps proportionately more likely to be in receipt of low incomes. It is therefore important to provide a brief overview of trends in the cost of living in Australia over the past twenty years. While inflation has decreased from a high of 16.7 in 1975 to 2.4 in 1992, GDP per capita declined from 1990 to 1992. The distribution of income across the Australian population has also remained unchanged for the past 15 years (the gini coefficient staying at approximately 0.4 since 1982). In real terms such trends suggest that while the cost of living in Australia has not risen dramatically, overall there has been a decrease in the amount of money available per head of population. Relatedly, there has been no substantial re-distribution of proportionate share of the total income pool from the wealthier to the poorer sector of the population. Projected patterns

of growth in employment will only serve to reinforce, if not worsen, such a distribution. The post-modernisation of Australia has clearly played a part in developing a set of social structures which could widen the gap between the poorly and highly skilled.

## 8 The Australian Field Study

### 8.1 Introduction

The South East Queensland urban region, the focus of the Australian study, comprises 20 local government areas and has a combined population of nearly 2 million persons. It is the fastest growing area in Australia and contains six of the ten most rapidly developing municipalities in the country. Currently around 45,000 people are moving to this region every year and population projections for the next 30 years anticipate a doubling of the region's population. Nationally and internationally, this is a very rapid rate of growth; the area is one of the ten fastest growing urban regions in the developed world.

Under this condition of rapid population growth, facilities, services, and infrastructure will need to be continually upgraded and expanded to prevent damage to the social and natural environments. Adaptations will have to be made to reduce present and potential demands on available resources and services which will result from the in-migration of new residents. The potential for crisis is such that a number of social and environmental issues will need to be addressed. Proper planning and management practices will have to be implemented to sustain an acceptable quality of life. The experience from large metropolitan regions in other countries indicates that a vast range of problems can arise from indiscriminate rapid urban growth: escalating crime rates, massive environmental degradation, severe housing problems and increasingly inadequate social infrastructure among other outcomes.

### 8.2 Methodology

The overall research program is based upon an integrated methodological framework using geographical information systems (GIS), survey research and historical and comparative analyses. The survey comprises a random sample of some 1300 persons over the age of 18 years resident in the South East Queensland study area. Data collected using a CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing) system, are grouped into the nine clusters of variables listed in Table 7.

*Table 7: Clusters of variables included in the south east queensland questionnaire*

- 
1. Quality of life. Subjective Anomie and Life Satisfaction
  2. Health and related behaviors
  3. Nature of residence and length of residence
  4. Perceptions of neighborhood and environment (including evidence of crime)
  5. Economic activity, employment characteristics and paid work
  6. Expenditure patterns, consumption activity involving purchase of household durables, vehicles, recreation and leisure
  7. Travel patterns
  8. Social networks and voluntary work
  9. Socio-demographic characteristics
-

In the discussion which follows the prevalence and patterning of anomie will be explored.

### 8.3 Main Findings

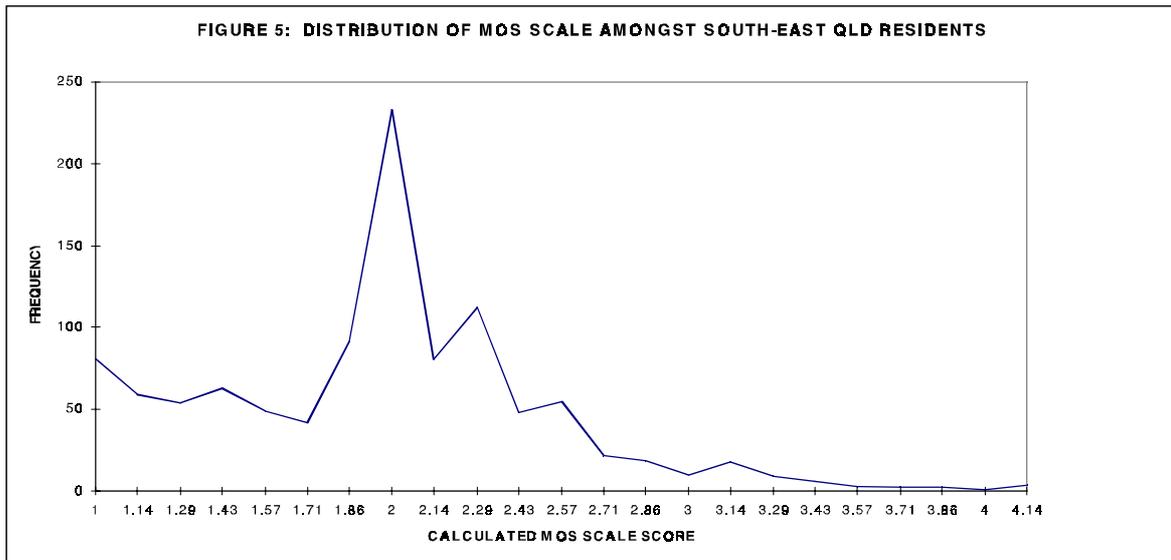
As already shown (Table 3), the Margins of Society (MOS) scale comprises 7 items. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a five-point scale varying from strongly agree to strongly disagree. For ease of presentation responses have been collapsed into „agree“ and „disagree“ categories. Table 8 presents a summary of the responses to each item. It is clear that „anomic“ responses are given by only a minority of the sample. Less than one in ten feel that their whole world is falling apart; slightly more report feeling that it doesn't matter how hard in life people try, it doesn't make any difference, and that they wish they were someone important. Slightly more again, but still no more than around 15 per cent of the group report feeling discriminated against and all alone these days. Finally, somewhat less than a third indicated that they did not like to live by society's rules.

*Table 8: Summary responses to items of the MOS scale (Percentages)*

Item	Disagree	Agree
I feel all alone these days	84	16
No matter how hard people try in life it doesn't make any difference	88	12
I feel discriminated against	86	14
My whole world feels like it is falling apart	92	8
I wish I were someone important	88	12
It is hard for me to tell what is right and wrong these days	89	11
I don't like to live by society's rules	71	29

Aggregate scores on the scale were obtained by summing the scores on each item (ratings ranged from 1 to 5) and dividing the total by 7, the number of items in the scale. The distribution of scores are shown in Figure 5. Scores range from a low level of reported anomie, a score of 1, to a high level, a score of 4.14 with a mean of 1.95 and a median of 2. Clearly, high levels of anomie are found in only a small proportion of the total sample. Table 9 provides a distribution of the MOS scale collapsed into quintiles.

Mean 1.95 Median 2 Mode 2  
 Standard Deviation 0.57



While it is clear that anomie is not widespread among the sample of residents surveyed in the South East Queensland region, it is also clear that relatively high levels of anomie do exist among a minority.

Table 9: Distribution of MOS scale collapsed into quintiles

MOS Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Low Anomie (Score = 1-1.29)	194	18.2
Med-Low Anomie (Score = 1.43-1.86)	245	23.0
Medium Anomie (Score = 2)	233	21.9
Med-High Anomie (Score = 2.14-2.29)	193	18.1
High Anomie (Score = 2.43-4.14)	199	18.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1064</b>	<b>100.0</b>

To determine the extent to which the characteristics of this minority are socially patterned or a function of the post modernizing forces discussed earlier, a series of exploratory bivariate analyses are being undertaken. We report the results of four of these here, others will be reported when completed at a later date.

Table 10 documents the levels of anomie among males and females. As can be seen, there are virtually no differences; at each level of anomie the proportion of males and females is almost identical.

Table 11 displays the effects of age on anomie. While the results are just outside a statistically significant level, the  $X^2$  has a probability value of around .09, the differences observed in the table are noteworthy. High levels of anomie are most likely among those under 30 and least likely among those 60 and over.

*Table 10: Levels of anomie among males and females  
(Row Percentages)*

Gender	Anomie Level					N
	Low	Med-Low	Med	Med-Hi	Hi	
Male	18	23	22	18	20	569
Female	17	23	23	18	18	704

*Table 11: The effect of age on anomie  
(Row Percentages)*

Age	Anomie Level					N
	Low	Med-Low	Med	Med-Hi	Hi	
Under 30 Years	15	21	18	18	26	306
30-39 years	18	21	24	17	19	309
40-49 years	17	28	22	17	16	299
50-59 years	20	21	25	15	19	55
60 and over	18	23	26	21	12	201

Marital status also makes a difference (Table 12). Those who are single, divorced or separated and widowed are significantly more likely than those who are married to display high or moderately high levels of anomie.

Finally, employment status can also be seen to have an effect with those who are unemployed or disabled two or three times more likely to display high or moderately high levels of anomie than wage and salary earners, business owners, those employed in home duties, still at school and retired (Table 13).

*Table 12: The effects of marital status on anomie*

Marital Status	Anomie Level					N
	Low	Med-Low	Med	Med-Hi	Hi	
Single	14	20	17	20	30	278
Married	19	25	25	16	14	804

*Table 13: Employment Status And Anomie*

Employment Status	Anomie Level					N
	Low	Med-Low	Med	Med-Hi	Hi	
Wage Earner	18	25	20	17	19	602
Own Business	20	25	29	14	12	177
Unemployed and Disabled	4	8	18	29	42	77
Home Duty	13	29	27	15	24	150
School	18	22	18	18	25	68
Retired	20	22	25	22	11	187

These findings are instructive. They indicate that high levels of anomie are likely to be present when key social relationships in both work and family situations are disrupted by

unemployment in the first instance and divorce, separation or widowhood in the second. The relatively high levels of anomie found among the young and the single may be due to the fact that stable social relationships have not yet been formed. It is apparent that this data needs further examination by multivariate procedures. There are clearly relationships between age and marital status and very probably between age and employment status. The employment of multivariate procedures would enable the independent effects of these factors on anomie to be systematically evaluated. Nevertheless, it is already clear that in the context of the development of an early warning system the confluence of youth and unemployment as a precursor to the development of subjective forms of anomie should not be ignored.

The effects of the post modernizing forces of globalization, urban transformation and mass migration on subjective anomie have yet to be determined. Further analysis of the survey data currently under way is concerned with these questions.

The final issue on which this paper focuses is the relationship between anomie and perceived well being or life satisfaction. Life satisfaction was measured by a six-item scale:

- satisfaction with amount of money received from employment
- satisfaction with housing
- satisfaction with time to do things
- satisfaction with degrees of independence in life
- satisfaction with standard of living
- satisfaction with life as a whole

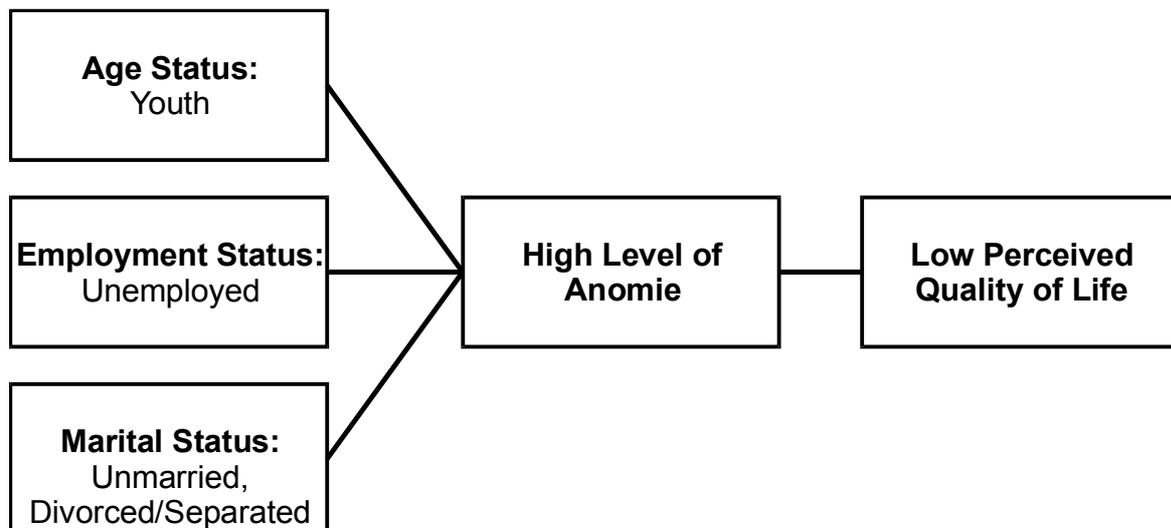
The items were presented in „Likert“ format with respondents being asked to indicate the extent of satisfaction with each on a five-point rating scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied. With six-item scores could range from a minimum of 6 to a maximum of 30. By dividing total scores by six, a summary five-point scale was realised. The distribution over the scale collapsed into quartiles is presented in Table 14.

*Table 14: Distribution over life satisfaction scale*

Score	Frequency	Percent
1 - 3 (Very Dissatisfied)	324	25
3.5 - 3.7 (Dissatisfied)	331	25
3.8 - 4.0 (Satisfied)	328	25
4.1 - 4.8 (Very Satisfied)	301	27.5

The effect of anomie on Life Satisfaction is presented in Table 15. The results are striking. Low levels of anomie are associated with high levels of life satisfaction, while high levels of anomie are associated with low levels of life satisfaction. The results are highly significant, the probability level of  $X^2$  calculations being greater than .001.

This preliminary analysis has already produced some promising results which can be represented diagrammatically as follows:



It must be emphasized that the analysis is still at a very preliminary stage, but nevertheless the pattern of relationships is clear. Anomie is likely to emerge when social relationships are unstable. This instability is apparent early in the life cycle when individuals are attempting to create a stable social environment for themselves; instability is exacerbated when unemployment is experienced. Paid work is a fundamental factor of social life and when it appears out of reach as it currently does for significant numbers of young people, the conditions for the emergence of anomie are at hand. What follows from the emergence of anomie is a decline in perceived well being, quality of life comes to be questioned and a general social malaise may follow.

*Table 15: The effect of anomie on life satisfaction*

Life Satisfaction	Anomie Level					Total
	Low	Med-Low	Med	Med-Hi	Hi	
Very Dissatisfied	15.00	17.65	21.75	22.57	46.67	309
Dissatisfied	15.91	25.26	23.16	30.53	19.17	289
Satisfied	23	24	29	27	21	315
Very Satisfied	46	33	26	20	13	347

## 9 Conclusion

The focus of this paper has been on the Australian component of the study. A delay in obtaining relevant data has meant that work on the development of anomie profiles for Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore is still continuing. The work is likely to be completed by the end of the calendar year. Fieldwork has begun in Malaysia and will commence in the Philippines and Singapore early in the new year once the research instruments have been developed and pilot tested.

The Australian study has produced significant findings which will contribute importantly to the development of an early warning system. The examination of the anomie profiles was instructive. First, it was clear that over time the impact of the post-modernizing forces of

globalization, mass migration and urban transformation on Australia society increased in magnitude. Foreign Direct Investment, an indicator of economic globalization, increased over the last thirty years as has short-term visitor movement, an indicator of cultural globalization. Mass migration has continued at a steady rate over the same period, although the ethnic composition of the immigrating population has shown a significant change toward greater cultural diversity. Finally, there has been a movement towards the growth of mega-metropolitan areas.

While the forces conducive to the development of anomic structures have increased in strength over the past 30 years, objective indicators of anomie have also become more prominent. Social polarization, the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged segments of society, has grown, as have rates of unemployment, particularly among the young, and suicide is a major cause of death, again among the young.

The field study revealed that subjective anomie was not widespread throughout the entire community. It was, however, most noticeable among the young unemployed and among others with disrupted social relationships, for example, the widowed and divorced. Anomie, we saw, had negative impacts on quality of life. Those groups experiencing relatively high levels of anomie, particularly the young unemployed, were most likely to report a poor quality of life.

The two sets of findings are instructive and tend to reinforce one another. An increase in magnitude of post-modernizing forces is associated with increased social polarization and unemployment and the growing significance of suicide as a cause of death among young people. At the level of the individual, unemployment among young people is associated with high levels of anomie which in turn is reflected in low levels of reported quality of life. It is clear from these analyses that an early warning system can be developed from existing statistical data. Once the predictors of subjective anomie have been identified, these can then be used in a sense as a „barometer“. Tracking changes in these predictors over time will allow inferences to be made about the rise and fall of levels of anomie among different segments of the population.

While the results of the present analyses are promising, clearly more work needs to be done to confirm the findings reported here. Nevertheless, the strategy being proposed, the identification of predictors of level of anomie using data available from census collections or other governmental sources, is independent of any particular relationships observed in any one data set.

## 10 User's Manual

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The field study contributed significantly to the development of an early warning system. It was based on a random sample of some 1300 persons over the age of 18 years resident in the South East Queensland region. A core component of the study involved collecting data on individual experiences of anomie using Margins of Society (MOS) scale. The scale comprises seven items. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a five-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. For ease of presentation responses have been collapsed into „agree“ and „disagree“ categories. Table 1 presents a summary of the responses to each item. It is clear that „anomic“ responses are given by only a minority of the sample. Less than one in ten feel that their whole world is falling apart; slightly more report feeling that it doesn't matter how hard in life people try, it doesn't make any difference, and that they wish they were someone important. Slightly more again, but still no more than around 15 per cent of the group report feeling discriminated against and all alone these days. Finally, somewhat less than a third indicated that they did not like to live by society's rules.

*Table 16: Summary responses to items of the MOS scale  
(Percentages)*

Item	Disagree	Agree
I feel all alone these days	84	16
No matter how hard people try in life it doesn't make any difference	88	12
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Aggregate scores on the scale were obtained by summing the scores on each item (ratings ranged from 1 to 5) and dividing the total by 7, the number of items in the scale. The distribution of scores is shown in Figure 1. Scores range from a low level of reported anomie, a score of 1, to a high level, a score of 4.14 with a mean of 1.95 and a median of 2. Clearly, high levels of anomie are found in only a small proportion of the total sample. Table 2 provides a distribution of the MOS scale collapsed into quintiles.

*Table 17: Distribution of MOS scale collapsed into quintiles*

MOS Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Low Anomie (Score = 1-1.29)	194	18.2
Med-Low Anomie (Score = 1.43-1.86)	245	23.0
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TOTAL	1064	100.0

While it is clear that anomie is not widespread among the sample of residents surveyed in the South East Queensland region, it is also clear that relatively high levels of anomie do exist among a minority.

Anomie was, however, most noticeable among the young unemployed and among others with disrupted social relationships, for example, the widowed and divorced. Anomie also had negative impacts on quality of life. Those groups experiencing relatively high levels of anomie, particularly the young unemployed, were most likely to report a poor quality of life.

The two sets of findings are instructive and tend to reinforce one another. An increase in magnitude of post-modernizing forces is associated with increased social polarization and unemployment and the growing significance of suicide as a cause of death among young people. At the level of the individual, unemployment among young people is associated with high levels of anomie which in turn is reflected in low levels of reported quality of life. It is clear from these analyses that an early warning system can be developed from existing statistical data. Once the predictors of subjective anomie have been identified, in this case youth and unemployment in particular, these can then be used in a sense as a „barometer“. Tracking changes in these predictors over time will allow inferences to be made about the rise and fall of levels of anomie among different segments of the population.

While the results of the present analyses are promising, clearly more work needs to be done to confirm the findings reported here. Nevertheless, the strategy being proposed, the identification of predictors of levels of anomie using data available from census collections or other governmental sources, is independent of any particular relationships observed in any one data set.

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