



Strategic Research
La recherche stratégique

Indigenous Post-Secondary Education by Gender in 2011

Key Findings:

- The proportion of Indigenous persons holding post-secondary certifications increased between 2006 and 2011 for both men and women.
- More Indigenous women have post-secondary credentials than men, especially at the university level.
- Labour force participation and employment rates are consistently higher for Indigenous men than women.
- The differences between men and women in employment rates are smaller for those with higher levels of educational attainment.
- There is a large gap in employment income between Indigenous men and women, regardless of educational attainment.

Introduction

Education is an important tool used by individuals and communities to make social and economic progress. Educational attainment is associated with higher levels of employment and income. It often shapes an individual's occupational and career choices. Employment and income

differences between individuals and groups tend to decrease as education increases in the form of a certificate, diploma, or degree.

Past research documented these relationships. Such research focused specifically on formal certification of educational attainment. Since 2006 the Census of Canada has measured educational attainment in terms of an individual's highest level of certification. The 2011 National Household Survey defines post-secondary educational attainment as including three main types of certification: 1) an apprenticeship or trades certificate; 2) a college, CEGEP, or other non-university certificate or diploma; or, 3) a university certificate or degree.

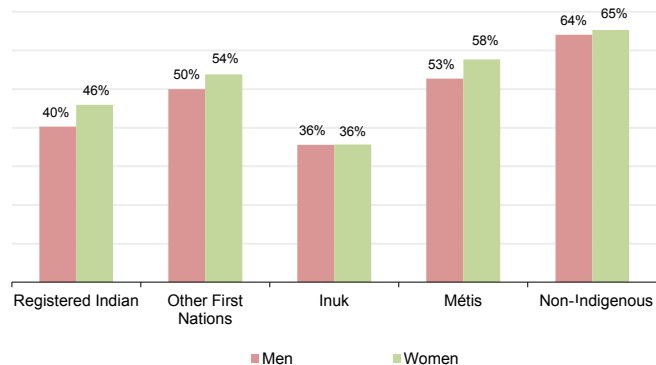
A detailed study of post-secondary attainment among the Indigenous population of Canada was carried out for Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. It includes information on educational attainment in relation to such factors as Indigenous identity, age, area of residence, language, family status, migration, employment, and income. This summary will highlight a few of the major findings of that study as related to gender.

Main Findings

Among most Indigenous identity groups, more women than men have post-secondary qualifications

There is a higher proportion of women than men with post-secondary certification among all Indigenous identity groups except for the Inuit population where there is gender parity. Generally, the proportion of Indigenous women's post-secondary certification is about 4% to 6% higher than found among Indigenous men. The proportion with post-secondary certification is lower among Inuit and Registered Indian men and women than among other identity groups (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Percent of the Population Aged 25-64 with Post-Secondary Certification by Identity Group and Gender, Canada, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

The proportion of Indigenous men and women with post-secondary certification increased

The proportion of Indigenous men with post-secondary certification increased from 33% in 2006 to 36% in 2011. Among Indigenous women, the proportion increased from 36% in 2006 to 40% in 2011.

The proportion of Indigenous men with post-secondary certification increased at all levels. The proportion of Indigenous men with trades or apprenticeship certification increased from 15% to 16%, the proportion with college or CEGEP certification was stable at 12%, and the proportion with university certification increased from 7% to 8%.

During the same period, the proportion of Indigenous women with trades or apprenticeship certification remained stable at 8%, while the proportion with college or CEGEP certification increased from 17% to 19% and the proportion with university certification increased from 11% to 13% (Figure 2). The result is that the gap between men and women grew slightly, especially at higher levels of education.

Figure 2: Post-Secondary Certification of the Indigenous Population aged 15+ by Types of Certification and Gender, Canada, 2006 and 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006; National Household Survey 2011

Indigenous men and women pursue different major fields

Indigenous men and women who have post-secondary qualifications tend to be in different fields of study. A large proportion of Indigenous men entered the field of engineering and architecture, which includes construction and related trades. More than two-thirds of Indigenous men with trades or apprenticeship certification are in this field. Indigenous women tend to have qualifications in a wider range of major fields. They are much more likely than Indigenous men to have qualifications in health and recreation, education, and business administration fields. Both men and women with college or university education are more evenly distributed over a wider variety of major fields. The differences between Indigenous men and women are similar to the differences found between Non-Indigenous men and women.

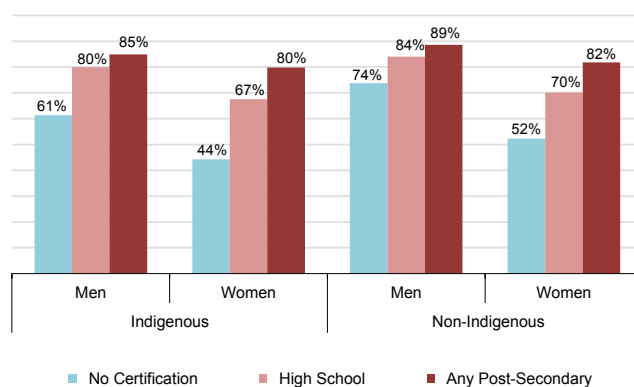
Indigenous men and women tend to work in different occupations

Differences in educational majors are also reflected in the different occupations of Indigenous men and women. In general, Indigenous women tend to be employed in higher skill level occupations. Among the Indigenous labour force with post-secondary certification, men are more likely than women to be found in managerial occupations and many times more likely than women to be in trades and manual occupations. In contrast, women are much more likely to be in professional, semi-professional, administrative, clerical, sales and service occupations.

Indigenous labour force participation rates are higher among men than women

In 2011 the labour force participation rates of Indigenous men ranged from 61% to 85%, depending on educational qualifications. In contrast, the labour force participation rates of Indigenous women ranged from 44% to 80%. Among Indigenous men without any certification, the participation

Figure 3: Labour Force Participation Rates of the Population 25-64 Years Old by Identity, Gender and Highest Level of Certification, Canada, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011

rate was 17 percentage points higher than that of Indigenous women with no certification. Yet, among those with post-secondary certification, the gap between Indigenous men and women was only five percentage points. Participation rates were higher among the Non-Indigenous population but, again, the differences in participation rates were smaller for those with higher levels of education (Figure 3).

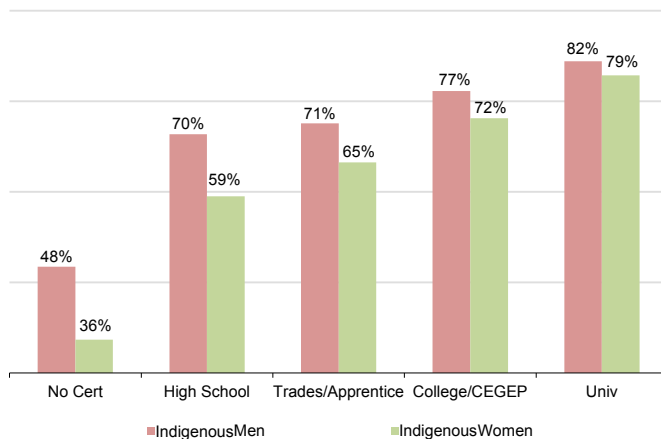
The difference in employment rates of Indigenous men and women are much smaller for those with higher levels of education

The gap in employment rates between Indigenous men and women declines with higher levels of certification. Among the Indigenous population 25-64 years old with no certification, there is a difference of 12 percentage points between the employment rates of women (36%) and men (48%). The male-female differences in employment rates decline steadily as educational certification increase. Figure 4 shows, that among those with university certification, there is a difference of only 3 percentage points between the employment rates of women (79%) and men (82%).

There is a large gap between the employment incomes of Indigenous men and women regardless of educational attainment

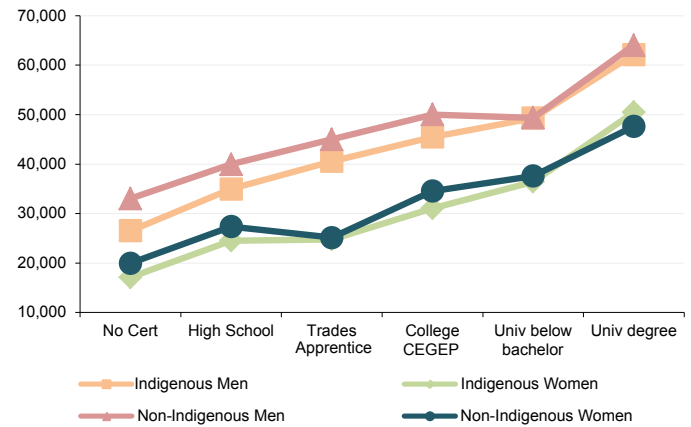
As with total income, employment income increases with education among both the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous populations. Indigenous men, 25-64 years old, without any educational certification, had a median employment income of \$26,527 in 2010, while those with a university degree had a median employment income of \$62,146. Indigenous women's employment incomes were much lower. Indigenous women, 25-64 years old, without any educational certification, had a median employment income of \$17,129, while those with a university degree had a median employment income of \$50,474. The differences between the employment incomes

Figure 4: Employment Rates of the Indigenous Population 25-64 Years Old by Gender and Highest Level of Certification, Canada, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Figure 5: Median Employment Income of the Population 25-64 Years Old by Identity, Gender, and Highest Level of Certification, Canada, 2010



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011

of Indigenous men and women ranged between \$9,000 to almost \$16,000. For example, among those with university degrees, Indigenous men had a median income that was more than \$11,000 higher than the median income of Indigenous women.

In contrast, the differences in the median employment incomes of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous men were smaller and those differences declined until disappearing at higher levels of education. The differences in median employment incomes of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous women were even smaller and among those holding university degrees, Indigenous women had higher employment incomes than Non-Indigenous women (Figure 5).

Conclusion

Educational attainment has increased among both Indigenous women and men. Indigenous women increased their educational levels to a greater degree than Indigenous men, particularly at higher levels of post-secondary certification. Indigenous men and women often major in different fields in school and they tend to work in different types of occupations.

Higher levels of educational attainment provide Indigenous women with greater access to employment, so that male-female differences in labour force participation and employment rates are much smaller than at higher levels of education. Higher levels of education also increase the employment incomes of both Indigenous men and women. The employment income gap between Indigenous men and women, however, does not diminish with education.

About the researcher

This research brief is based on a study completed in 2015 by Jeremy Hull, a Winnipeg-based research consultant. The study was commissioned in recognition of the importance of post-secondary education both to the well-being of Indigenous people and to the health of the Canadian economy. It is the fifth in a series of reports based on the 1991, 1996, 2001, and 2006 Censuses and the 2011 National Household Survey. The full report, entitled “Indigenous Post-Secondary Education and Labour Market Outcomes in Canada Based on Data from the 2011 National Household Survey,” is available at the Strategic Research Directorate’s GCPedia site and through the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada library.

Notes on Methodology

The data used in this summary come from the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2006 Census of Population. Comparisons are made among ‘identity groups’ based on self-reported identity and Indian registration status or membership in a First Nation. Identity groups include the Registered Indian, other First Nations (non-Status Indian), Métis, Inuit, and Non-Indigenous populations.

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1-800-567-9604 TTY only 1-866-553-0554

QS-7136-000-EE-A1 Catalogue: R3-235/2016E-PDF ISBN: 978-0-660-04242-8

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This Publication is also available in French under the title:

Études postsecondaires de la population autochtone en 2011, selon le sexe.