



Strategic Research La recherche stratégique

Indigenous Post-Secondary Education, 2011

Key Findings:

- In 2011, 38% of the Indigenous population aged 15 years and older had some form of post-secondary certification.
- Between 2006 and 2011, the percentage change of the Indigenous population holding a post-secondary certification increased more rapidly than among the Non-Indigenous population.
- Indigenous women were more likely than Indigenous men to have received university or college certification but were less likely to have completed trades or apprenticeship certification.
- For all populations, the greater the level of post-secondary certification, the greater the employment rate.

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.

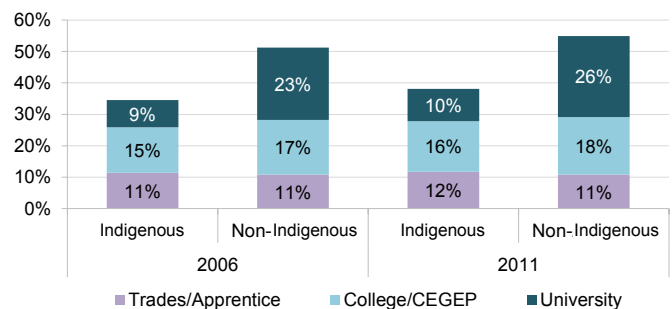
A detailed study of post-secondary attainment among the Indigenous population of Canada was completed by Jeremy Hull for Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. This study includes information on educational attainment in relation to such factors as Indigenous identity, age, gender, area of residence,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

Main Findings

Over one-third of the Indigenous population completed post-secondary education

In 2011, 38% of the Indigenous population had completed some type of post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree. This included 12% who had an apprenticeship or trades certificate, 16% who had a college, CEGEP, or other non-university certificate or diploma, and 10% who had a university certificate or degree (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Post-Secondary Certification of the Population Aged 15+ by Type of Certification and Identity, Canada, 2006 and 2011



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

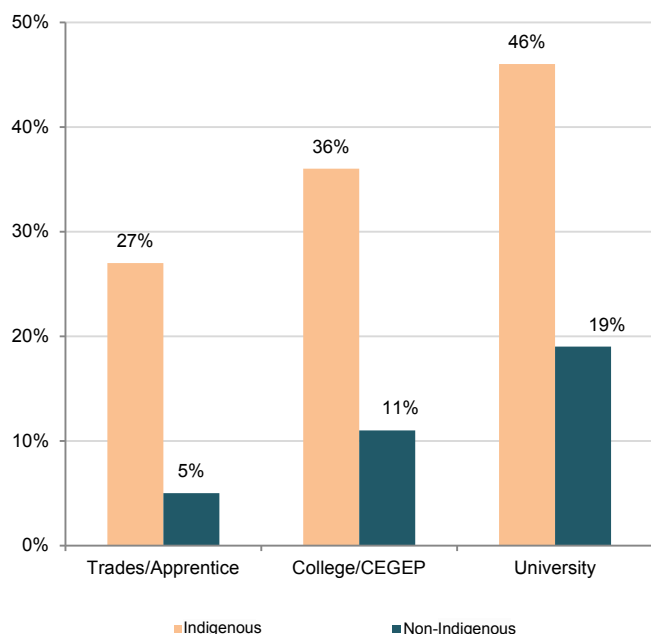
A smaller percentage of the Indigenous population has university education

While the Indigenous population had similar levels of non-university certification to other, Non-Indigenous Canadians, they lagged behind others in university attainment. In 2011, the proportions of the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous populations with apprenticeship or trades certificates and with college or CEGEP certificates were similar. In contrast, the percentage with university certificates or degrees was around two times higher among the Non-Indigenous Population than among the Indigenous population. The difference in university attainment accounted for most of the difference in post-secondary attainment between the two populations.

College and university certification grew more quickly among the Indigenous population than the Non-Indigenous population

Post-secondary attainment grew rapidly among both the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous populations. Between 2006 and 2011, post-secondary certification increased by 35% among the Indigenous population and by 13% among the Non-Indigenous population. When calculated as a percentage increase, the proportion with college/CEGEP certification grew more quickly among the Indigenous population (36%) than among the Non-Indigenous population (11%). The proportion with university certification grew even more quickly among both groups, by 46% among the Indigenous population, and by 19% among the Non-Indigenous population (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Percentage Change in Post-Secondary Certification for the Population Aged 15+ by Type of Certification and Identity, Canada, 2006 to 2011

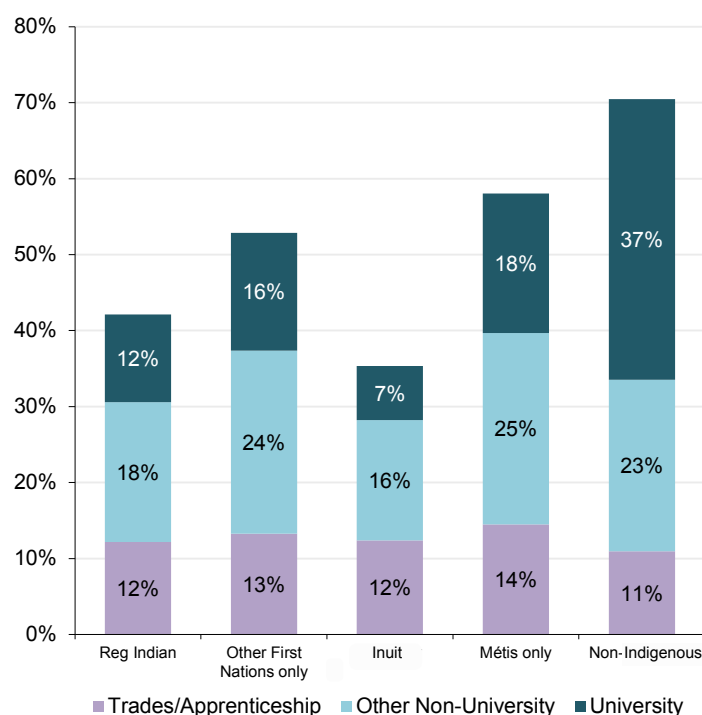


Source: Statistics Canada, Census of the Population, 2006; National Household Survey, 2011.

Differences among identity groups and genders

The study compared four Indigenous identity groups: the Registered Indian, Other First Nations (non-status), Inuit, and Métis populations. Comparative information was reported for the Non-Indigenous population. Higher proportions of the Métis and Other First Nations populations have post-secondary certification as compared to the Registered Indian and Inuit populations. The differences among identity groups were largest when looking at the proportion with university certification. Among those persons 25-44 years old, 7% of Inuit had university certification in 2011, as compared to 12% of the Registered Indian population, 16% of the Other First Nations population, and 18% of the Métis population. In comparison, 37% of the Non-Indigenous population in the same age range held university certification (Figure 3).

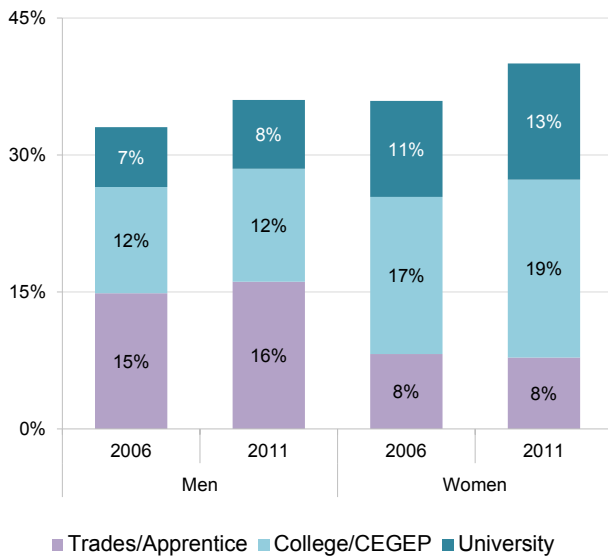
Figure 3: Population 25-44 Years Old by Type of Post-Secondary Certification and Identity Group, Canada, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Among all identity groups, except the Inuit population, higher proportions of women than men had post-secondary certification. Indigenous women were more likely than men to have completed university or college certification but less likely to have completed trades or apprenticeship certification. Between 2006 and 2011, the proportion of Indigenous women with post-secondary increased from 36% to 40%; for Indigenous men the proportion with postsecondary increased from 34% to 36%. (Figure 4).

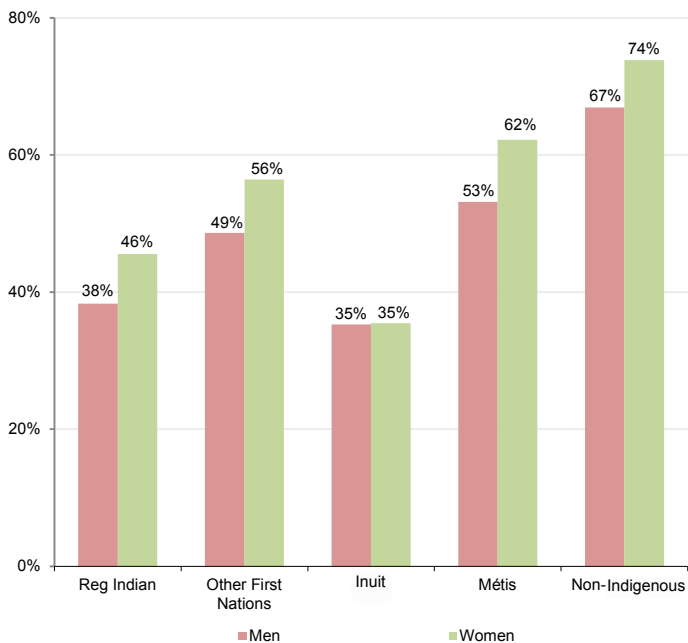
Figure 4: Post-Secondary Certification of the Indigenous Population Aged 15+ by Type of Certification and Gender, Canada, 2006 and 2011



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

In 2011 the differences between men and women, 25-44 years old, ranged from seven to nine percentage points with the exception of the Inuit, where there were no differences (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Population 25-44 Years Old with Post-Secondary Certification by Group and Gender, Canada, 2011

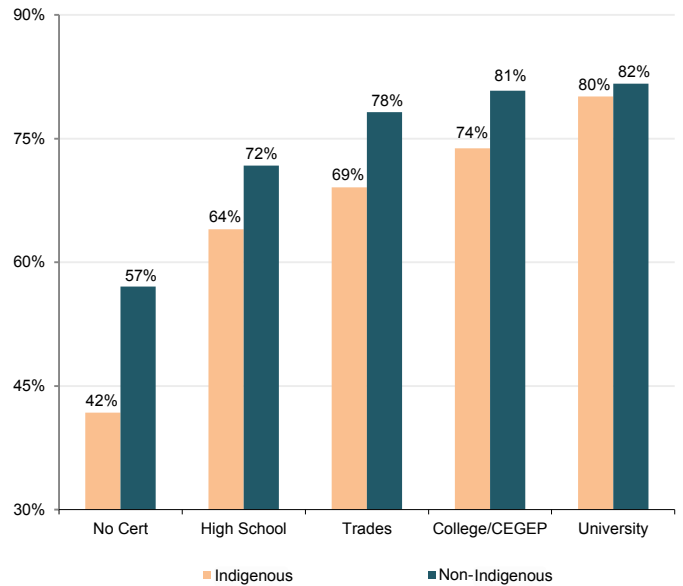


Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Educational certification is closely related to employment rates

As was found in other studies, differences in employment rates between the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous populations became smaller as educational levels increased. (The employment rate is the percentage of the total population that is employed.) The difference in employment rates for Indigenous and Non-Indigenous populations was largest for those without certification – a difference of 15%. The difference was smaller for those with high school (8%), trades (9%), and college or CEGEP (7%) certification. There was less than 2% difference between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous employment rates for those with university certification (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Employment Rates of the Population 24-65 Years Old by Identity and Highest Level of Certification, Canada, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Conclusion

The number and proportion of Indigenous people with post-secondary education is continually increasing, providing improved employment opportunities and income. There remains a gap in post-secondary educational attainment between the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous populations, especially at the university level. There are also substantial differences between Indigenous identity groups and between Indigenous men and women, which seem to suggest a need to improve educational systems and supports for particular identity groups and for men and women in particular educational fields, and income.

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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