

OPINION POLL

**Prepared for:
Saskatchewan Learning**

January, 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Government of Saskatchewan contracted with Pulse Research Ltd. in January 2005 to conduct an opinion poll on behalf of Saskatchewan Learning. The main objectives of the Department of Learning survey are:

- To continue gathering ongoing longitudinal data,
- To measure public satisfaction with the province's education services, and
- To measure public satisfaction with department programs and services.

This report will assist Saskatchewan Learning in making curriculum and service assessments and to satisfy performance measurement requirements for the department's accountability process.

Methodology

Pulse Research Ltd. call centre conducted the Saskatchewan Learning Survey from January 25 – 31, 2005. In total, 1,001 surveys were completed at a margin of error of ± 3.1 percent, 19 times out of 20.

Major Findings

- When asked to compare Saskatchewan's kindergarten to grade 12 system and post-secondary education and training system to those in other parts of the country, almost half of respondents indicated that the systems were the same.
- Half of respondents indicated that the quality of kindergarten to grade 12 education system in Saskatchewan is good or excellent. 10.2% indicated it was poor or very poor.
- Almost half of respondents indicated that compared to their own education, students' education today is better to much better.
- Almost half of respondents indicated that the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is the same as compared to the rest of the country.
- Just over half of respondents indicated that the quality of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training system is good to excellent.
- Almost 7 out of 10 respondents indicated that the quality of services from your public library system is generally good to excellent.
- The percentage of respondents that indicated they or their family have used the Internet for the following library services are:
 - Searching library catalogues – 23.4%
 - Accessing online magazine articles – 16.5%
 - Using the "Ask Us" service – 9.1%

- 61.5% of respondents have borrowed library materials from their local library and 21.4% had borrowed from a library outside of their community.
- Half of respondents felt their level of awareness for what students learn in school is good to excellent.
- 42.5% of respondents felt the education system in Saskatchewan provided good or excellent information about its programs and services.
- 32.5% of respondents felt the Saskatchewan education system is good or excellent in its support of school library programs. 21.9% were unable to respond to the question.
- 63.8% of respondents indicated that the Saskatchewan education system is doing good to excellent in using new technology like computers and the Internet to enhance learning opportunities for students.

1 OBJECTIVES

The Government of Saskatchewan contracted with Pulse Research Ltd. in January 2005 to conduct an opinion poll on behalf of Saskatchewan Learning. The main objectives of Saskatchewan Learning survey are:

- To continue gathering ongoing longitudinal data,
- To measure public satisfaction with the province's education services, and
- To measure public satisfaction with department programs and services.

This report will assist Saskatchewan Learning in making curriculum and service assessments and to satisfy performance measurement requirements for the department's accountability process.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was provided by Saskatchewan Learning. Closed-ended questions were used to gather information. The questionnaire was pre-tested and adjustments were made as necessary to improve wording clarity. See Appendix 1 for a copy of the survey.

2.2 Survey Sample

In total, there were 1,001 respondents. The random sample of Saskatchewan households was derived from an online public telephone directory (InfoCanada).

2.3 Survey Administration

Telephone interviews were conducted from January 25, 2005 to January 31, 2005 from 10:30 am to 9:00 pm Monday through Friday and 10:00 am to 6:30 pm on Saturday. All surveys were administered by Pulse Research Limited.

2.4 Response Rates

The following chart represents the response for the numbers dialed which were necessary to achieve the required success rate:

RESPONSE RATES		
Response	#	%
Completed	1,001	10.4
Declined	1,439	14.9
Busy Signals/No Answer/Answer Machine	5,444	56.5
Not Available	757	7.9
Fax/Not in Service	862	8.9
Not Qualified	132	1.4
Total Attempts	9,635	100.0
Total Households contacted	6,000	

In total, **9,635** attempts were made to reach the 6,000 households randomly selected to participate in the survey, **10.4%** of which resulted in the completion of a survey. The majority of the unsuccessful attempts were No Answer/Answer Machine (56.5%).

The proportion of respondents declining to participate in the survey was **14.9%**; the reasons for declining to participate included:

- Not interested
- Too busy
- Don't do surveys
- Respondent did not feel they could contribute enough information to complete the survey

In total, respondents were classified as "not qualified" for the following reasons:

- No one in the household over the age of 18
- Non-residential phone number
- The respondent did not speak English
- The respondent was unable to understand the survey

2.5 Survey Analysis

All surveys were conducted by Pulse Research Limited in Saskatoon. Surveys were administered using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) software. This software allows surveyors to input respondent data directly into the computer which reduces data input errors. The CATI system automatically verifies each response to ensure that data falls within specified parameters for each quantitative question.

At the completion of the survey administration all data was input into an SPSS data file. A series of computer checks were made to ensure that the data was consistent and suitable for statistical analysis.

The frequency distribution results of all questions were computed.

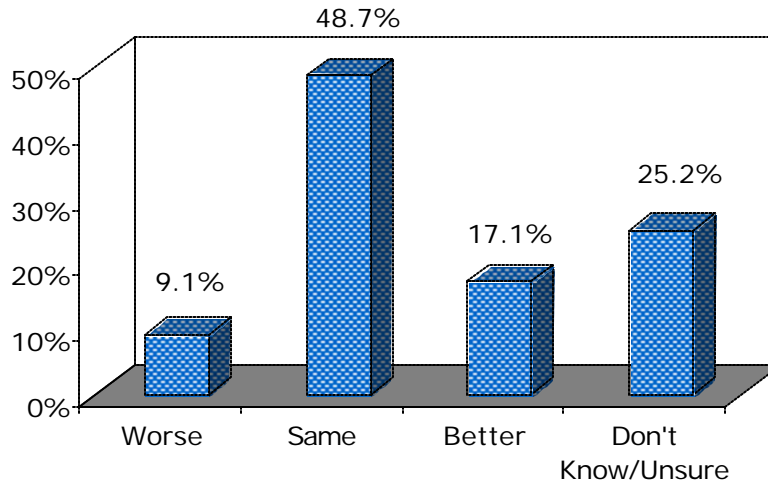
The total sample size and the corresponding margin of error of results were as follows:

Sample size: 1,001 ± 3.1 percent, 19 times out of 20

3 SURVEY RESULTS

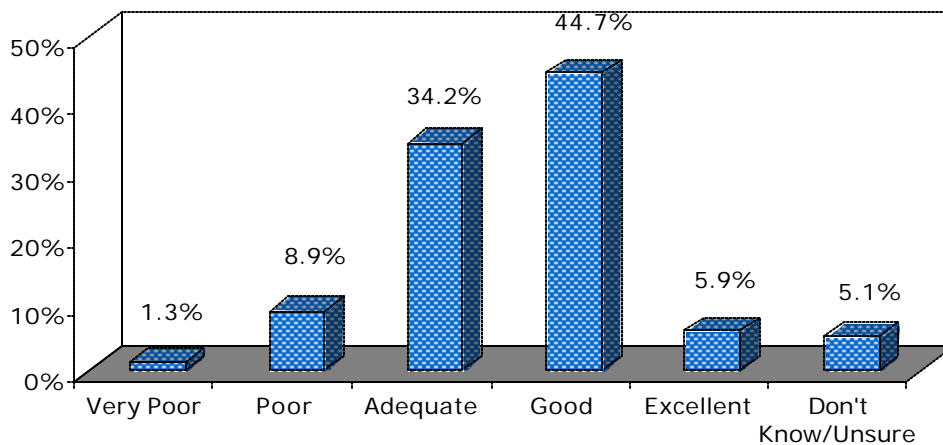
3.1 Quality/Longitudinal Questions

Q1. Compared to the rest of the country, do you think the kindergarten to grade 12 education system in Saskatchewan is...?



Almost half of respondents (48.7%) indicated that the kindergarten to grade 12 education system in Saskatchewan is the **"Same"** as compared to the rest of the country. One quarter of respondents was unable to respond.

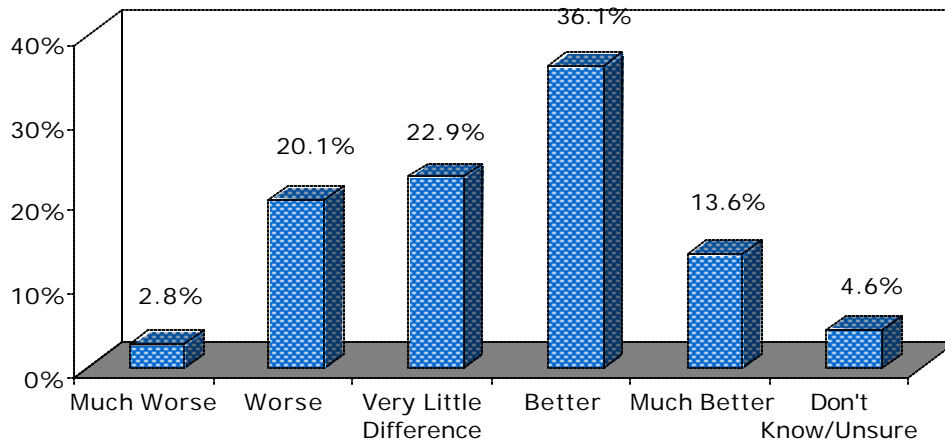
Q2. Do you think the quality of Kindergarten to grade 12 education in Saskatchewan is generally...?



The majority of respondents indicated that the kindergarten to grade 12 education system in Saskatchewan is generally **"Excellent"** or **"Good"** (50.6%). 34.2%

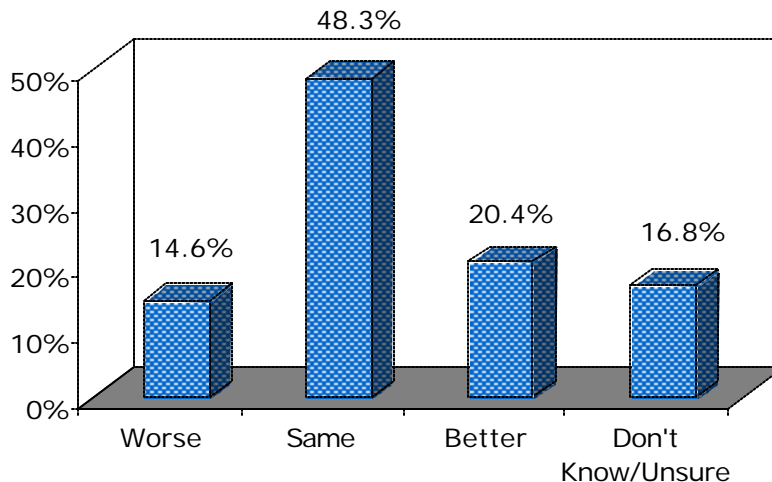
indicated that the system was **"Adequate"** and only 10.2% of respondents stated the system was **"Poor"** or **"Very poor"**.

Q3. When you think of your own school education, do you believe students' education today is...?



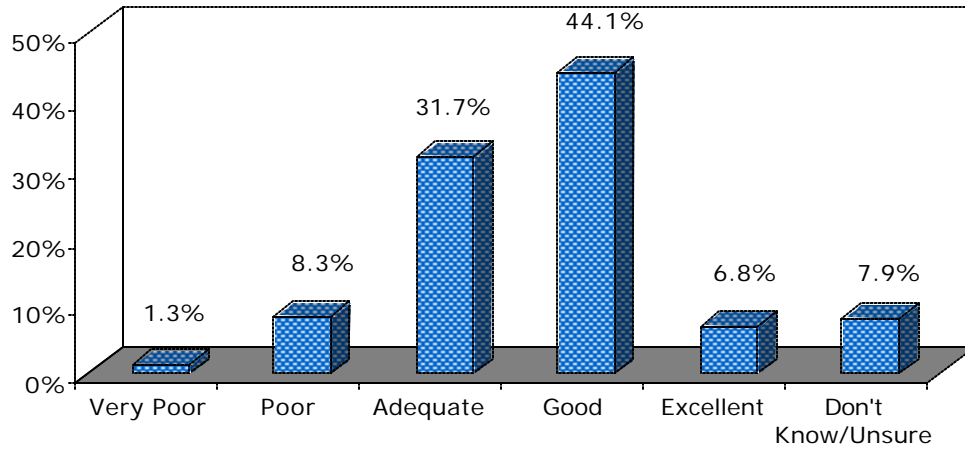
Almost half of respondents (49.7%) stated that compared to their own education, students' education today is **"Better"** or **"Much better"**. 22.9% indicated there was **"Very little difference"** and 22.9% stated that education today is **"Worse"** or **"Much worse"**.

Q4. Compared to the rest of the country, do you think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is...?



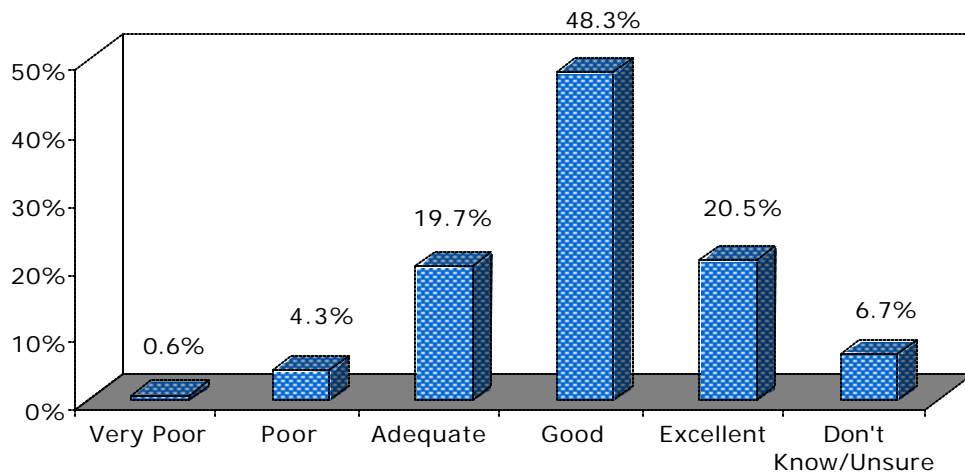
48.3% of respondents indicated that the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is the **"Same"** as compared to the rest of the country.

Q5. Do you think the quality of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training system is generally...?



Just over half (50.9%) of respondents indicated that the quality of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training system is **"Good"** or **"Excellent"**.

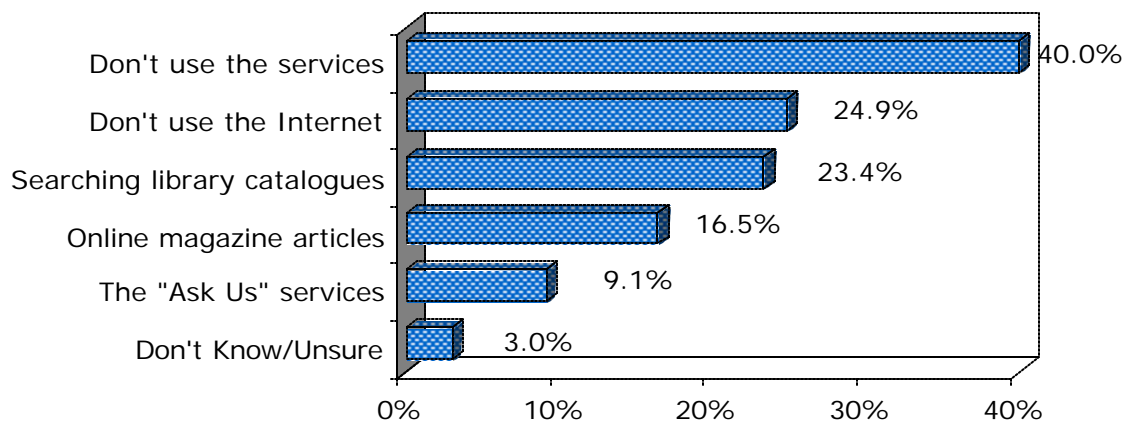
Q6. Do you think the quality of services from your public library system is generally...?



68.8% of respondents indicated that the quality of services from your public library system is generally **"Good"** or **"Excellent"**.

3.2 Provincial Library-related Questions

Q7. What library services have you or your family used over the Internet?

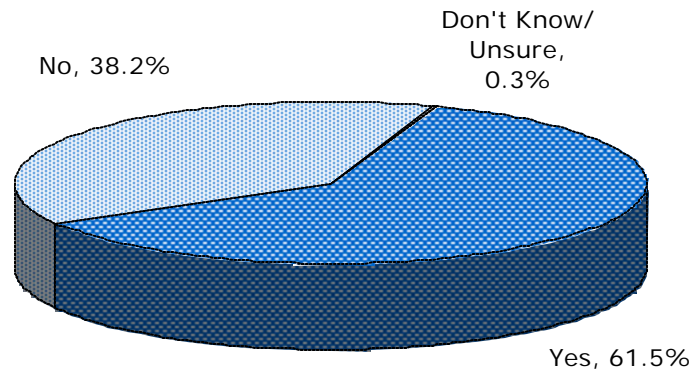


The question was presented as a multiple response question where respondents were able to select any or all of the three Internet services provided.

23.4% of respondents indicated that they or their family have used the Internet for "searching library catalogues", 16.5% have used the Internet to access "online magazine articles", and 9.1% have used the "Ask Us" services via the Internet.

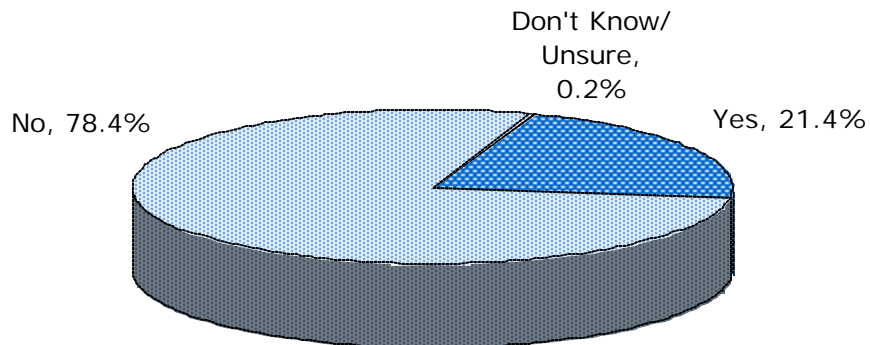
24.9% of respondents indicated that they do not use the Internet and 40.0% indicated they have not used any of the services listed.

Q8. Over the past 12 months, have you borrowed library materials from your local library?



61.5% of respondents indicated that they have borrowed library materials from the local library.

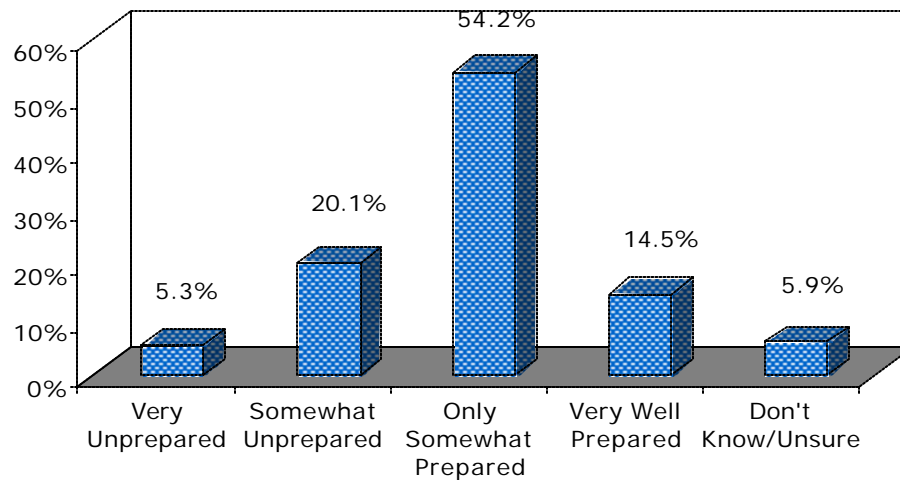
Q9. Over the past 12 months, have you borrowed library materials from a library outside your community?



21.4% of respondents indicated that they had borrowed materials from a library outside the community over the past 12 months.

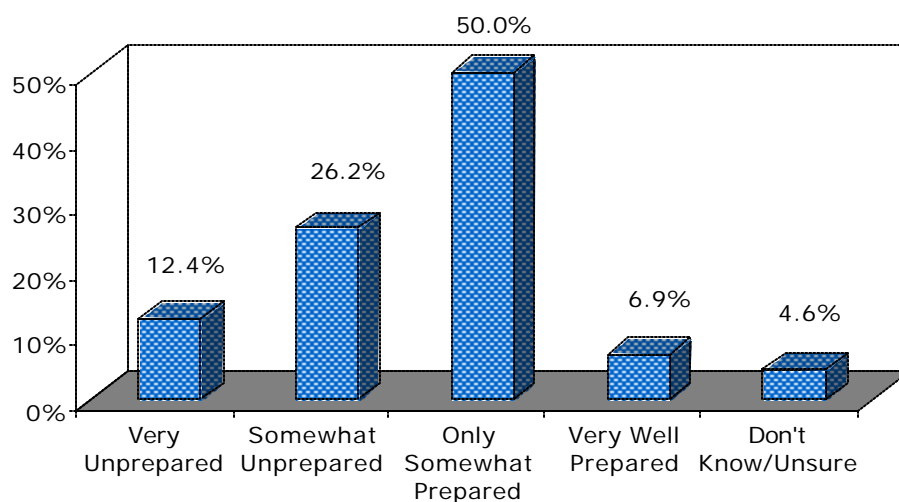
3.3 Curriculum-related Questions

Q10. Which best describes how well prepared you think Saskatchewan high school students are for entering post-secondary institutions such as universities, technical institutes and colleges? Do you think they are...?



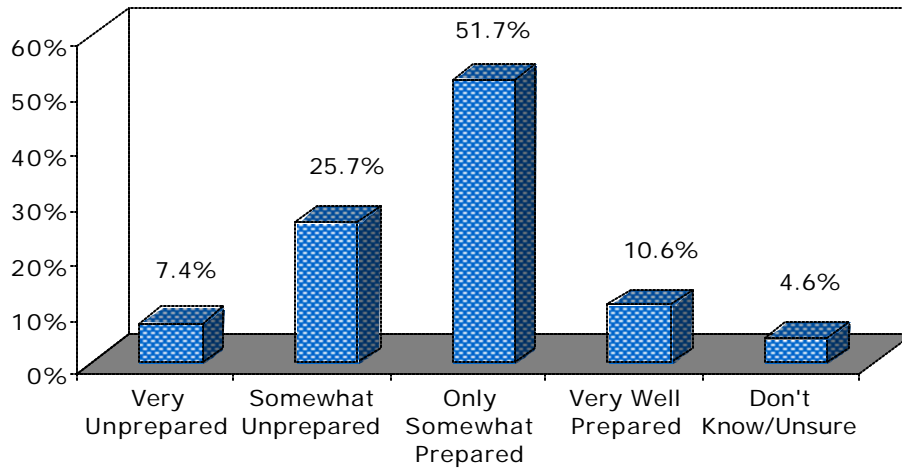
Over half of respondents (54.2%) believed that Saskatchewan high school students were **"Only somewhat prepared"** for entering post-secondary institutions.

Q11. How well prepared do you think high school students are for entering the workforce? Do you think they are...?



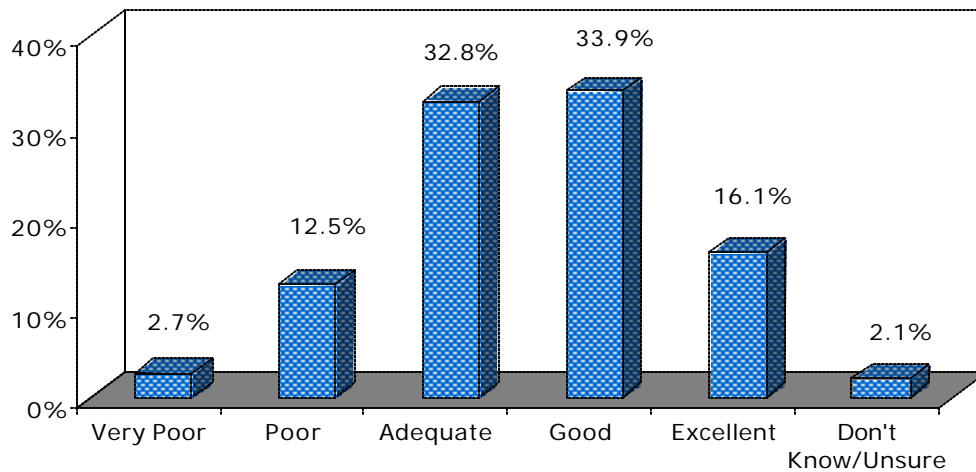
Half of respondents indicated that they believed Saskatchewan high school students were **"Only somewhat prepared"** for entering the work force.

Q12. How well prepared do you think high school students are for participating in family and community life? Do you think they are...?



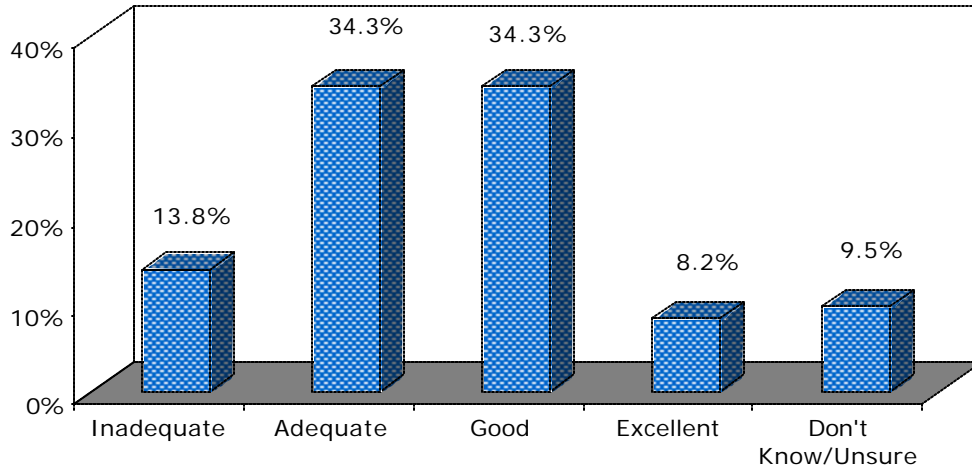
62.3% of respondents felt that students were prepared for participating in family and community life and 33.1% felt students were unprepared.

Q13. How would you rate your level of awareness of what students learn in school?



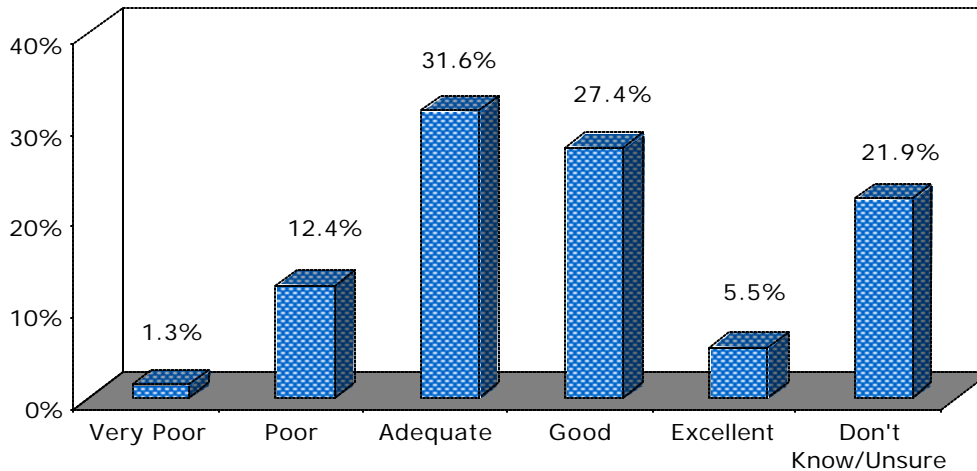
Half of respondents (50%) felt their level of awareness for what students learn in school is "Good" or "Excellent".

Q14. How well does the education system in Saskatchewan meet your needs for providing information about its programs and services? Would you say the system provides...?



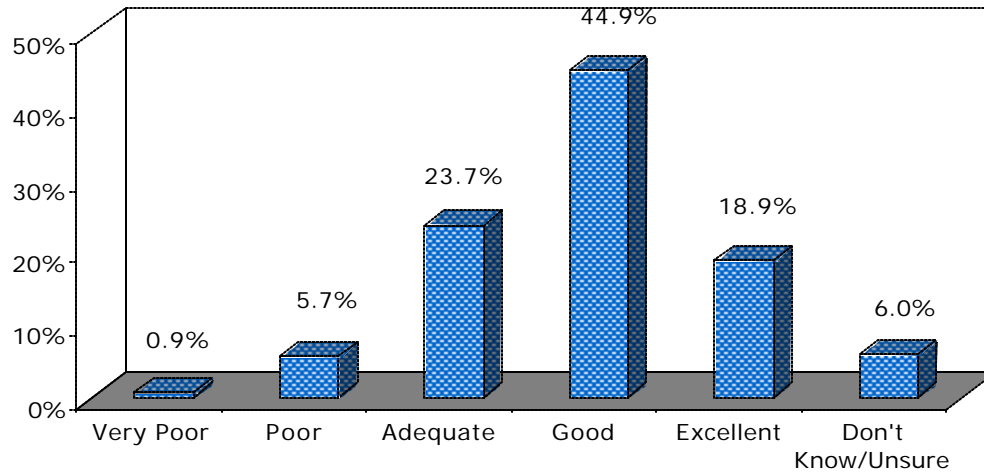
42.5% of respondents felt the education system in Saskatchewan provided **“Good”** or **“Excellent”** information about its programs and services. 34.3% felt the information provided was **“Adequate”** and only 13.8% felt it provided **“Inadequate”** information.

Q15. How well do you believe Saskatchewan’s education system is doing in supporting school library programs?



21.9% of respondents were unable to respond to this question. 32.5% indicated that the Saskatchewan education system is **“Good”** or **“Excellent”** in its support of school library programs.

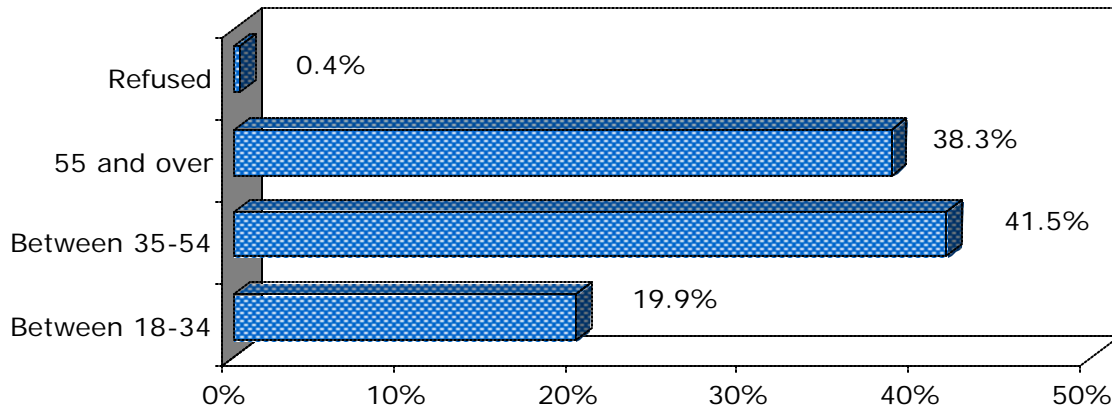
Q16. How well do you believe Saskatchewan's education system is doing in using new technology like computers and the Internet to enhance learning opportunities for students?



63.8% of respondents felt that Saskatchewan education system is doing **“Good”** or **“Excellent”** in using new technology like computers and the Internet to enhance learning opportunities for students.

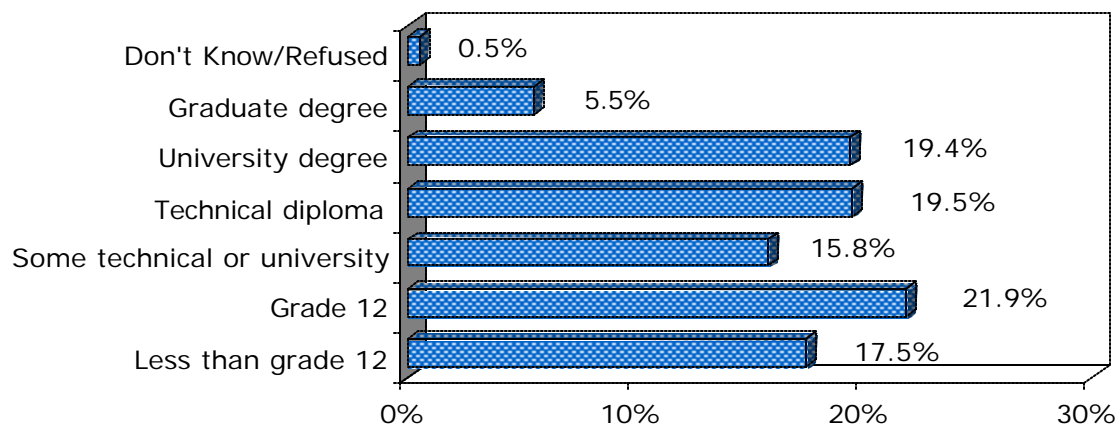
3.4 Demographic Questions

Q17. Which of the following age categories do you fall into? Are you...?



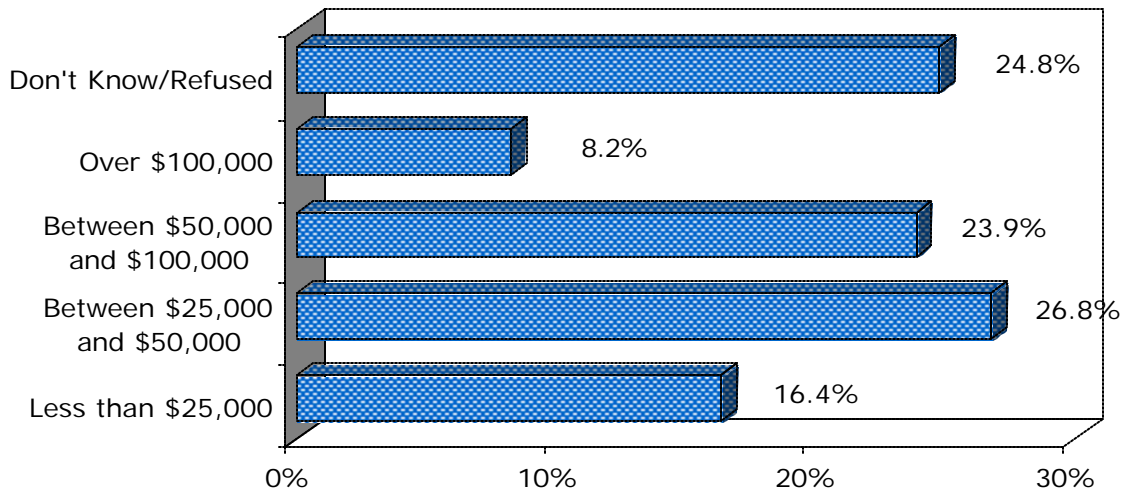
19.9% of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 34, 41.5% between 35 and 54 and 38.3% were 55 years of age or older.

Q18. What is the highest level of education that you have obtained? Is it...?



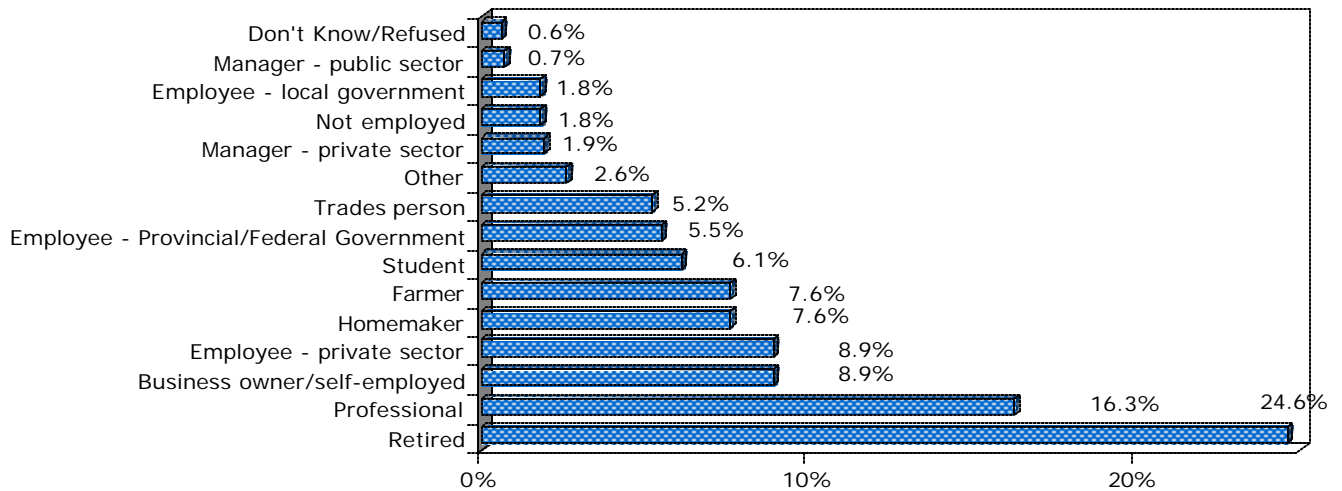
39.4% of respondents indicated they had completed Grade 12 or less. 60.2% of respondents had some or completed post-secondary education.

Q19. In which of the following broad categories does your total household income before taxes fall? Is it...?



24.8% of those surveyed would not or could not respond to this question. 43.2% of those surveyed indicated an income level of less than \$50,000 while 32.1% indicated an income level of greater than \$50,000.

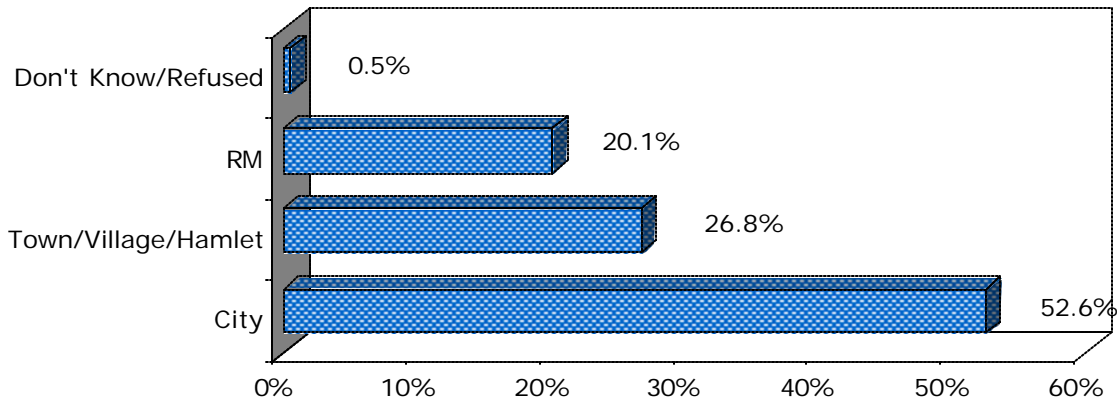
Q20. Which category best describes your occupation? Are you...?



The top three occupations mentioned were:

- Retired (24.6%),
- Professional (16.3%), and
- Business owner/self-employed, Employee-private sector (8.9%)

Q21. Do you currently reside in a...?



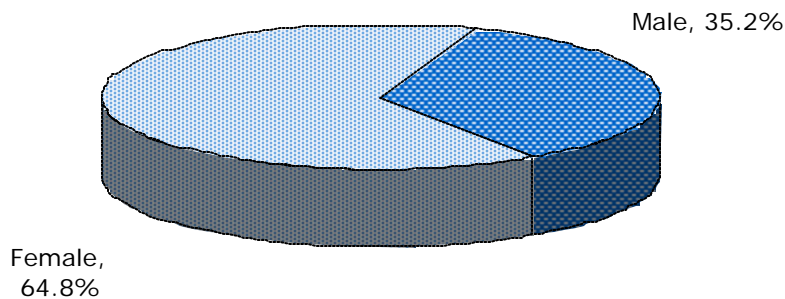
52.6% of respondents indicated they lived within a city. 46.9% indicated other areas.

Region.

The following table represents the geographic distribution of the sample for this survey. Each area is clearly defined based on postal codes and represents the total population of Saskatchewan +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.

Region	#	%	Postal Codes
Saskatoon	220	22.0%	S7H S7J S7K S7L S7M S7N S7S S7T S7V
Regina	189	18.9%	S4L S4N S4P S4R S4S S4T S4V S4X S4Y
Moose Jaw	34	3.4%	S6H S6J
Prince Albert	29	2.9%	S6V S6X
South East	176	17.6%	S0A S3N S0G S2V S4H S4A S0C
South Central	34	3.4%	S0H
South West	86	8.6%	S0L S9H S0N
Central	83	8.3%	S0K
North East	45	4.5%	S0P S0E
North Central	47	4.7%	S0J
North West	58	5.8%	S0M S9X S9V S9A
	1001	100.0%	

Gender.



64.8% of respondents were female and 35.2% were male.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of the responses to the survey, the major findings are as follows:

- When asked to compare Saskatchewan's kindergarten to grade 12 system and post-secondary education and training system to those in other parts of the country, almost half of respondents indicated that the systems were the same.
- Half of respondents indicated that the quality of kindergarten to grade 12 education system in Saskatchewan is good or excellent. 10.2% indicated it was poor or very poor.
- Almost half of respondents indicated that compared to their own education, students' education today is better to much better.
- Almost half of respondents indicated that the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is the same as compared to the rest of the country.
- Just over half of respondents indicated that the quality of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training system is good to excellent.
- Almost 7 out of 10 respondents indicated that the quality of services from your public library system is generally good to excellent.
- The percentage of respondents that indicated they or their family have used the Internet for the following library services are:
 - Searching library catalogues – 23.4%
 - Accessing online magazine articles – 16.5%
 - Using the "Ask Us" service – 9.1%
- 61.5% of respondents have borrowed library materials from their local library and 21.4% had borrowed from a library outside of their community.
- Half of respondents felt their level of awareness for what students learn in school is good to excellent.
- 42.5% of respondents felt the education system in Saskatchewan provided good or excellent information about its programs and services.
- 32.5% of respondents felt the Saskatchewan education system is good or excellent in its support of school library programs. 21.9% were unable to respond to the question.
- 63.8% of respondents indicated that the Saskatchewan education system is doing good to excellent in using new technology like computers and the Internet to enhance learning opportunities for students.

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE - 2005



Saskatchewan Learning Poll – January 2005

Good afternoon/evening, my name is _____ I am calling from Pulse Research Ltd., a Saskatchewan based market research firm, and we are calling on behalf of Saskatchewan Learning. We are randomly calling Saskatchewan households to discuss opinions on the education system in Saskatchewan. The questions will take about 5 minutes. Would you have that time now to answer some questions for me?

YES => Continue

NO => Try to find a better time to call back otherwise THANK and TERMINATE

Just to confirm, are you a Saskatchewan resident, 18 years of age or older?

YES => Continue

NO => Ask to speak to someone in the household over 18.

This survey is being conducted in accordance with federal legislation concerning personal information. Your telephone number was obtained as part of a random sample drawn from a published directory. Our client will receive only the analyses of all the information from all the surveys we complete. No personal information that can identify you as an individual will be provided to anyone.

Quality/longitudinal Questions

Q1. Compared to the rest of the country, do you think the kindergarten to grade 12 education system in Saskatchewan is...?

1. ...Worse
2. ...Same
3. ...Better
4. Don't Know/Unsure

Q2. Do you think the quality of Kindergarten to grade 12 education in Saskatchewan is generally ...?

1. ...Very Poor
2. ...Poor
3. ...Adequate
4. ...Good
5. ...or Excellent?
6. Don't Know/Unsure

Q3. When you think of your own school education, do you believe students' education today is...?

1. ...Much Worse
2. ...Worse
3. ...Very little difference
4. ...Better
5. ...or Much Better?
6. Don't Know/Unsure

Q4. Compared to the rest of the country, do you think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is ...

1. ...Worse
2. ...Same
3. ...Better
4. Don't Know/Unsure

Q5. Do you think the quality of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training system is generally ...

1. ...Very Poor
2. ...Poor
3. ...Adequate
4. ...Good
5. ...or Excellent?
6. Don't Know/Unsure

Q6. Do you think the quality of services from your public library system is generally ...?

1. ...Very Poor
2. ...Poor
3. ...Adequate
4. ...Good
5. ...or Excellent?
6. Don't Know/Unsure

Provincial Library-related questions

Q7. What library services have you or your family used over the Internet? (Please read options 1 – 3, CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE)

1. ...Searching library catalogues,
2. ...Online magazine articles,
3. ...the "Ask US" services,
4. No services
5. Don't use the Internet
6. Don't use the service
7. Don't Know/Unsure

Note: "Ask Us" service is the libraries online question and answer service.
Online magazines can be searched, read, or printed online.

Q8. Over the past 12 months, have you borrowed library materials from your local library?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know/Unsure

Q9. Over the past 12 months, have you borrowed library materials from a library outside your community?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know/Unsure

Curriculum-related questions

Q10. Which best describes how well prepared you think Saskatchewan high school students are for entering post-secondary institutions such as universities, technical institutes and colleges? Do you think they are...?

1. ...Very unprepared,
2. ...Somewhat unprepared,
3. ...Only somewhat prepared, or
4. ...Very well prepared.
5. Don't Know/Unsure

Q11. How well prepared do you think high school students are for entering the workforce? Do you think they are ...?

1. ...Very unprepared,
2. ...Somewhat unprepared,
3. ...Only somewhat prepared, or
4. ...Very well prepared.
5. Don't Know/Unsure

Q12. How well prepared do you think high school students are for participating in family and community life? Do you think they are ...?

1. ...Very unprepared,
2. ...Somewhat unprepared,
3. ...Only somewhat prepared, or
4. ...Very well prepared.
5. Don't Know/Unsure

Q13. How would you rate your level of awareness of what students learn in school?

1. ...Very poor,
2. ...Poor,
3. ...Adequate,
4. ...Good, or
5. ...Excellent awareness.
6. Don't Know/Unsure

Q14. How well does the education system in Saskatchewan meet your needs for providing information about its programs and services? Would you say the system provides...?

1. ...Inadequate information,
2. ...Adequate information,
3. ...Good information, or
4. ...Excellent information about its programs and services?
5. Don't Know/Unsure

Q15. How well do you believe Saskatchewan's education system is doing in supporting school library programs?

1. ...Very Poor
2. ...Poor
3. ...Adequate
4. ...Good
5. ...or Excellent?
6. Don't Know/Unsure

Q16. How well do you believe Saskatchewan's education system is doing in using new technology like computers and the Internet to enhance learning opportunities for students?

1. ...Very Poor
2. ...Poor
3. ...Adequate
4. ...Good
5. ...or Excellent?
6. Don't Know/Unsure

Demographic Questions

I am now going to ask you a few demographic questions that will help classify your responses. Once again, your responses will be kept confidential. If there is a question you are not comfortable answering, just let me know.

Q17. Which of the following age categories do you fall into? Are you...

1. ...Between 18-34,
2. ...Between 35-54, or
3. ...Between 55 and over?
4. Refused

Q18. What is the highest level of education that you have obtained? Is it

1. ...Less than grade 12,
2. ...Grade 12,
3. ...Some technical or university,
4. ...Technical diploma,
5. ...University degree, or
6. ...Graduate degree?
7. Don't Know/Refused

Q19. In which of the following broad categories does your total household income before taxes fall? Is it...

1. ...Less than \$25,000,
2. ...Between \$25,000 and \$50,000,
3. ...Between \$50,000 and \$100,000,
4. ...Over \$100,000?
5. Don't Know/Refused

Q20. Which category best describes your occupation? Are you...

1. ...Retired,
2. ...Student,
3. ...Homemaker,
4. ...Not employed,
5. ...Farmer,
6. ...Professional,
7. ...Trades person,
8. ...Business owner/self-employed,
9. ...Employee – private sector,
10. ...Employee – local government
11. ...Employee – Provincial/Federal Government
12. ...Manager – private sector
13. ...Manager – public sector
14. ...Other?
15. Don't Know/Refused

Q21. Do you currently reside in a ...

1. ...City,
2. ...Town/Village/Hamlet,
3. ...RM,
4. Don't know/Refused

Could I please get your first name in case my supervisor need to call back to confirm that this survey was actually completed and conducted according to directions?

Record first name. _____

Note: If they ask for additional information about being called back, you can tell them: This is a quality control measure to ensure that our company's surveyors have not made up the answers on their completed surveys. We will verify a few answers to ensure the survey was conducted according to directions and ask if the surveyor acted in a friendly and professional manner.

That is all the questions I had. Thank you very much for participating in our survey. Have a good day/afternoon!

Record the following:

Gender. From voice:

1. Male
2. Female

ID#: Record ID # listed on the call sheets.