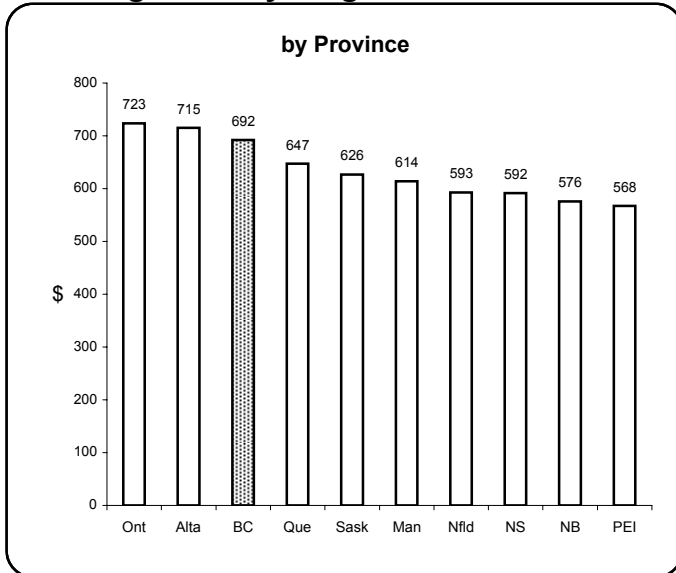
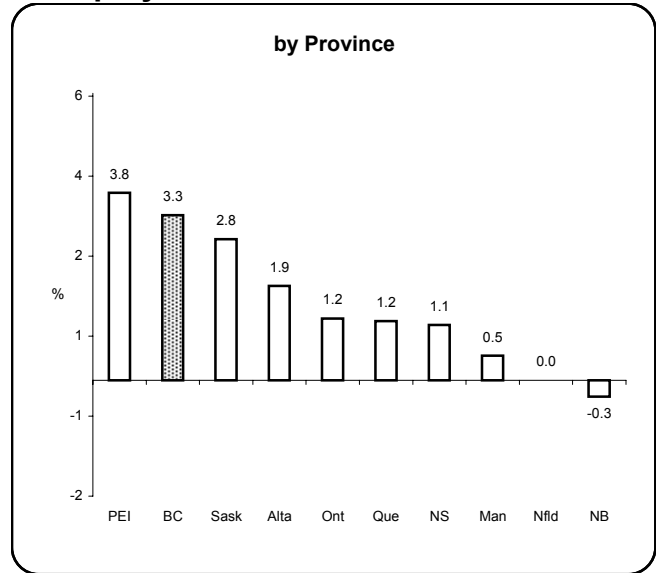


Earnings & Employment Trends ♦ March 2005

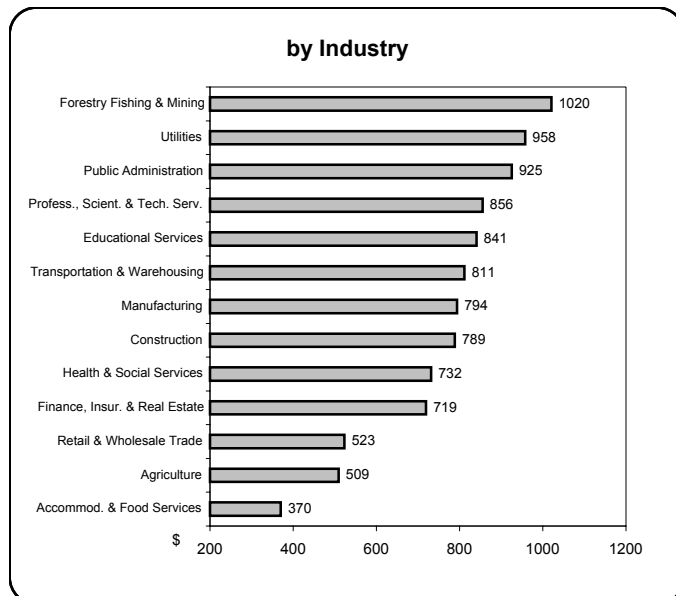
Average Weekly Wage Rate* - March 2005



Employment Growth* - March 2005

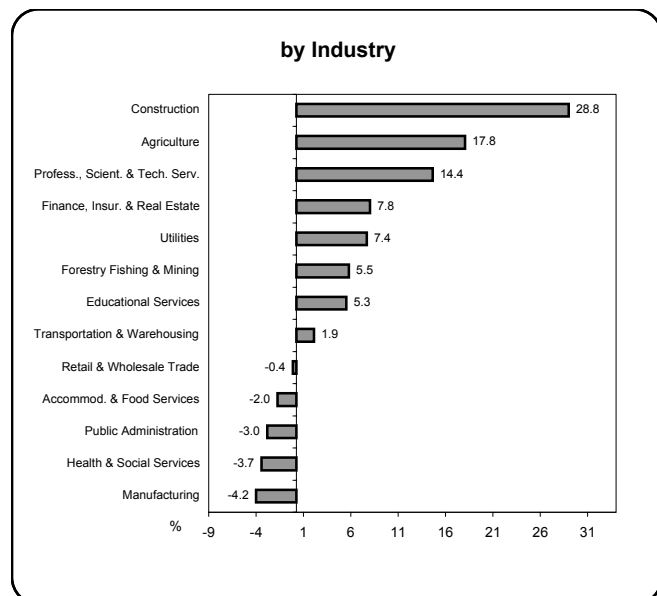


by Industry



* Latest 12 month average

by Industry



* Month over same month previous year (unadjusted)

Prepared by: BC STATS

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey

Feature Article: The Educational Attainment of Aboriginal Peoples: Part II - Post Secondary Completion

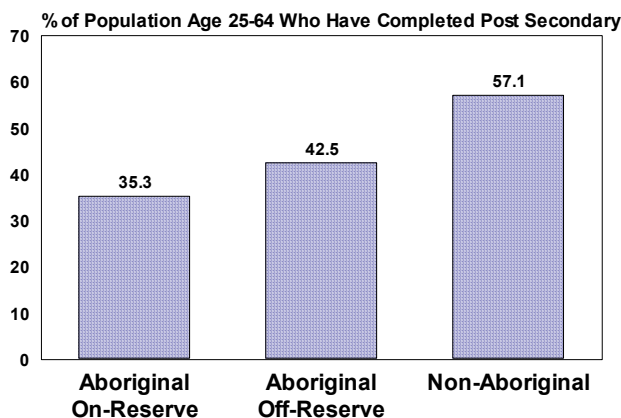
The Educational Attainment of Aboriginal Peoples Part II - Post Secondary Completion

Introduction

In Part I of this article, we looked at the high school graduation rates of on-reserve and off-reserve Aboriginal Peoples using data from the 2001 Census. The data confirmed the well-known fact that Aboriginal Peoples lag far behind the rest of the population in their completion of a high school certificate. In Part II we examine the achievement of Aboriginal Peoples in terms of their participation in, and completion of, post secondary education, once more concentrating on the comparison of the on-reserve and off-reserve populations. Where the numbers are large enough, we will look at the educational profiles in different regions of the province.

Post Secondary Completion Rates

Differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Post Secondary Educational Attainment -- 2001

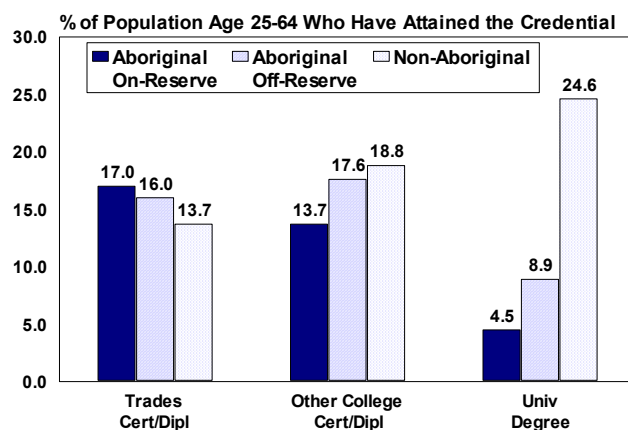


There is a very broad range of programs that fall under the umbrella of a post secondary credential. Included are certificates, diplomas and degrees obtained from public institutions such as colleges, technical institutions (e.g. BCIT), university colleges and

universities or through private institutions. Certificates/diplomas obtained in the trades are also considered a post secondary credential. In BC's public institutions, post secondary accreditation can be in programs varying in duration from three months to four or five years for a first degree and longer still for graduate degrees.

At the aggregate level, 4 out of 10 aboriginals have completed a post-secondary certificate, diploma or a degree. This compares to 6 out of 10 non-aboriginals. As was the case with high school graduation, aboriginals on reserve show a lower level of educational achievement than those living off reserve.

Further Breakout of Differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Post Secondary Educational Attainment 2001



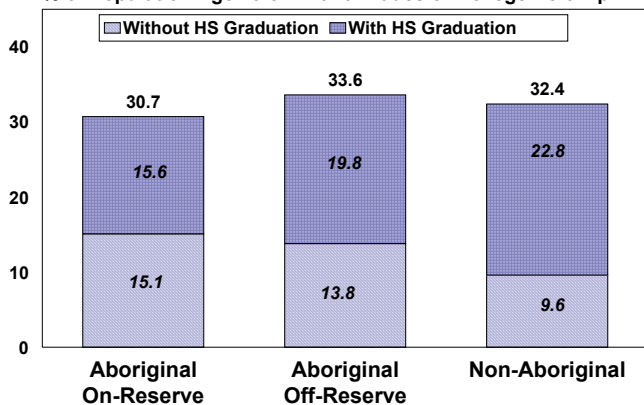
As the chart above shows, when post secondary education is broken out by the different types of credentials, it becomes evident that it is at the university level where Aboriginal Peoples fall considerably short. A non-aboriginal

person is five times more likely to have a university degree than an aboriginal on reserve and almost three times more likely than one living off reserve.

The good news is that in the trade programs, aboriginals, both on and off reserve show a higher proportion of their peoples with credentials than the non-aboriginals. Furthermore, within the college non-trade programs, the figures show that there is not much difference between the off-reserve aboriginals and the non-aboriginals in the proportion of their populations with the credential. In fact, as far as non-university post-secondary credentials are concerned, aboriginals and non-aboriginals appear to have very similar achievement levels.

Aboriginals with a Trades or College Certificate/ Diploma, are more inclined to be in programs that do not require a high school diploma than are non-aboriginals.

% of Population Age 25-64 With a Trades or College Cert/Dipl



However, there does seem to be some quality differences in the certificate/diplomas obtained. Census data show that more aboriginals with a diploma or certificate never completed their high school, particularly among those living on-reserve.

The administrative data of the Colleges, Institutes and University Colleges,

collaborate the Census findings based on the profiles of their students who have completed programs¹. Their data show that on average, between 2001 and 2004, close to one in five aboriginals had not completed high school compared to less than one in ten for non-aboriginals.

This data source shows that in terms of subject matter, aboriginals appear to be in similar programs as non-aboriginals, each having about 30 per cent of their graduates in the Arts and Sciences and 19 per cent in Natural Resources and Construction programs. The most significant differences in profiles are that aboriginals are more heavily concentrated in the Health and Social disciplines (+5%) and under-represented in Business and Computers (-5%).

Certificate, Diploma and Degree Graduates by Program Area			
Colleges & Institutes: 2001-2004 Average			
Program Area of Completers	Per Cent Distribution		
	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Diifference
Arts & Sciences	29.4	30.2	-0.8
Health, Social and Related	25.0	20.8	4.2
Natural Resources and Construction	19.0	18.8	0.2
Business & Computers	15.4	20.0	-4.6
Rec Tourism & Hospitality	7.3	5.7	1.6
Visual & Performing Arts	3.9	4.5	-0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	

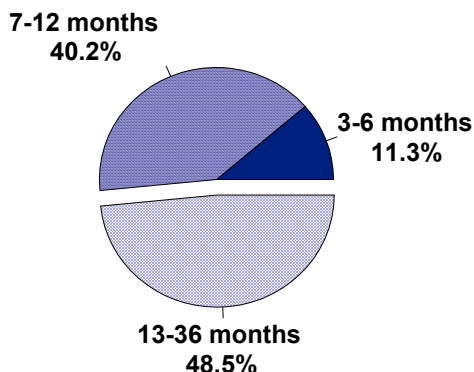
While the subject matter profiles of the two groups are similar, there is evidence that aboriginals are attaining their

¹ Students who are 'near completers' are also included in the database.

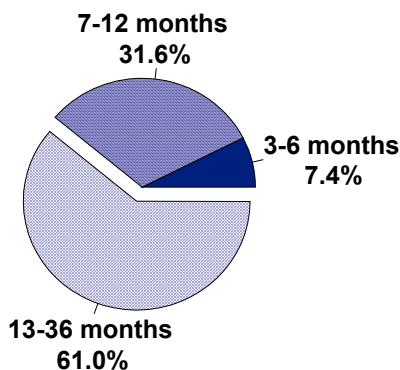
credentials in shorter programs across all disciplines than are non-aboriginals. The pie charts below show that more than one-half (52%) of aboriginal graduates have a credential in a program of less than one year duration compared to only 39 per cent of non-aboriginal graduates.

**Certificate and Diploma Graduates
by Length of Program
Colleges & Institutes
2001-2004**

Programs Completed by Aboriginals



Programs Completed by Non-Aboriginals

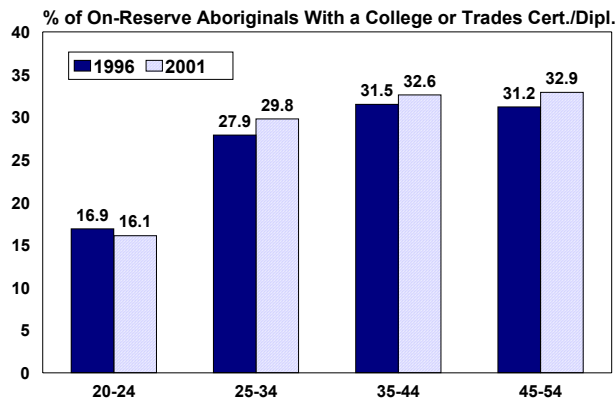


Source: College and Institutes Student Outcomes Database 2001 - 2004

But despite that, many aboriginals are attaining post secondary credentials and as the next chart shows, their achievements in this area have been

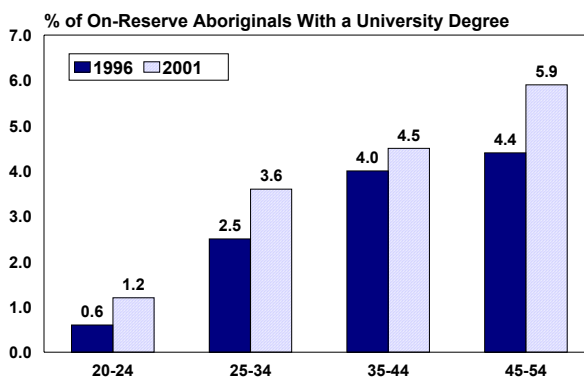
improving over time. While it is only meaningful to show changes over time for aboriginals living on-reserve², the trends in their communities likely reflect what is happening among all aboriginals. In 2001, each of the adult age groups had improved their education status from five years earlier.

Over the five year period, 1996 - 2001, a slightly higher proportion of Aboriginal Peoples Living On-Reserve attained a College or Trades Certificate/ Diploma.



Where the most promising changes have occurred is in the increase in Aboriginal Peoples who graduated with university degrees. This is the area where they are most severely under-represented.

Between 1996 and 2001, there was a significant increase in the proportion of Aboriginals On-Reserve who had University Degrees.

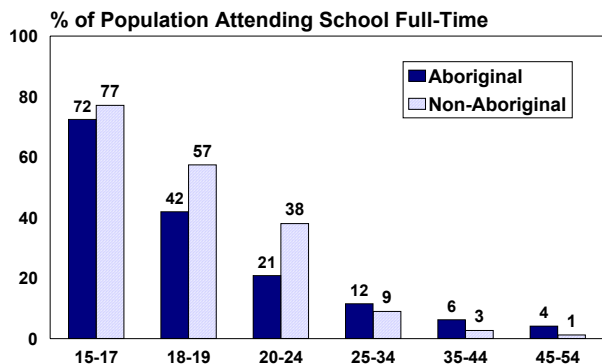


Although the numbers are small, the proportion of reserve youth, age 20-24, with a university degree doubled in five

² See the explanation of why in the footnote on page 2 of Part I of this article.

years. And overall, there were approximately 300 more aboriginals on reserve with degrees in 2001 than there were in 1996, which represents a 50 per cent increase. The chart also points out that in the aboriginal community the older age groups are better educated than their younger counterparts. This does not reflect a reduced tendency for the young to go to school than the previous generations, but instead points to the trend towards aboriginals returning to school later in life and attaining credentials. This pattern is in contrast to non-aboriginals who are far more inclined to complete their education before the age of 25.

It is during young adulthood (age 18-24), a time when the Non-Aboriginal population is completing high school and attaining post-secondary credentials, when the Aboriginal population really falls behind in educational achievement.*



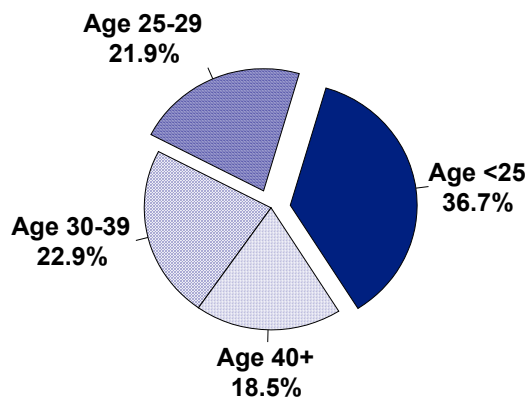
* Data from the BC K-12 Public School System show that the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal grade completion rates start to increase radically in Grade 11.

For aboriginals age 25+, their full-time school attendance rate is almost double that of their non-aboriginal counterparts. Note how aboriginals school attendance rates drop off very gradually from age 20 onward.

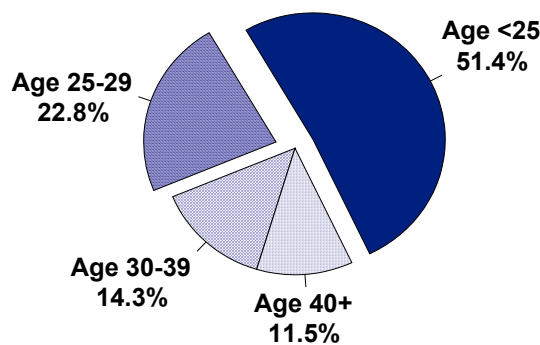
This difference in the profiles of school attendance by age between aboriginals and non-aboriginals is also evident in the College and Institutes data.

Age Profiles of College & Institute Graduates 2001-2004

Age of Aboriginal Graduates



Age of Non-Aboriginal Graduates



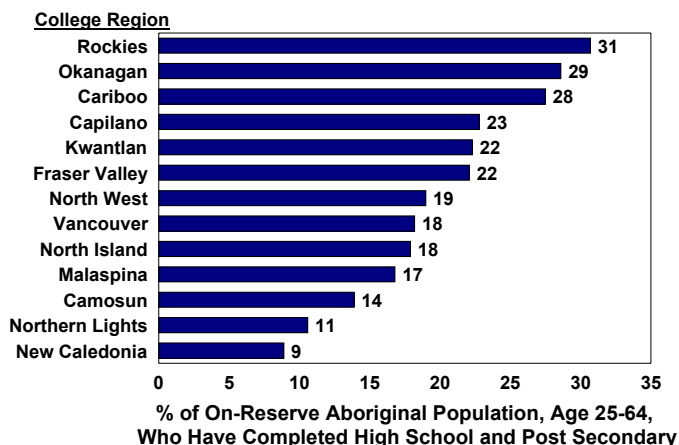
Source: College and Institutes Student Outcomes Database 2001 - 2004

In recent years, close to 40 per cent of aboriginal college graduates are age 30+. This bodes well for future outcomes of the post-secondary achievements of aboriginals. When only the young are bettering the education levels of their elders, improvements at the aggregate will take a long time to work their way through. When all age groups are improving as is the cast in the aboriginal communities, the overall education level

should show significant of improvement over the next ten years.

Regional Comparisons

Among the Reserve populations, the southern and central interior First Nations are the best educated.



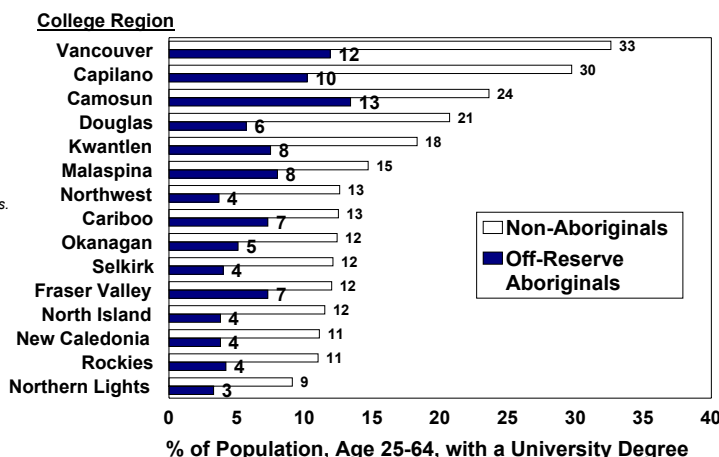
Note: The numbers are too small in the Selkirk and Douglas College Regions to produce reliable estimates.

The regional profile of post secondary attainment is very similar to that for high school completers as explained in Part I. Once more, Vancouver Island reserve populations show relatively low education levels. For Camosun (Greater Victoria) and Malaspina (Duncan, Nanaimo and Powell River) it is difficult to explain why this is the case because most of the reserves in these two regions, particularly the large reserves, have easy access to College campuses. For the North Island, as well as the mainland northern regions of Northern Lights (Northeast) and New Caledonia (Fraser/Fort George), the low proportion of the reserve populations with Post Secondary credentials is understandable -- many of the reserves are not within commuting distance of a College.

As for the off-reserve aboriginal population, not surprisingly, relatively fewer of them have a university degree than the rest of the population living in the same region. But the next chart shows that their university attainment levels by region track those of non-

aboriginals fairly closely. For example, the high demand for university trained workers in Greater Vancouver and Greater Victoria attract skilled workers to the regions so the affluent residential areas in Vancouver, Capilano (North and West Vancouver) and Camosun have the best educated aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations in the province.

The regional pattern of the educational attainment of off-reserve aboriginals follows fairly closely that of non-aboriginals.



The regions that stand out as having more equitable education attainment between off-reserve aboriginals and non-aboriginals are Fraser Valley, Cariboo, Malaspina and Camosun.

Between now and 2010, the provincial government plans to expand the availability of degree programs in the regions and increase the number of seats in the Colleges. Also, web-based distant education programs continue to proliferate as delivery technologies advance. Both factors will open up education opportunities in rural areas, brightening the educational prospects for Aboriginal Peoples. One of the greatest challenges that face Aboriginal Peoples today is keeping their young in school to complete their high school enabling them to take advantage of new opportunities in the post secondary education system.