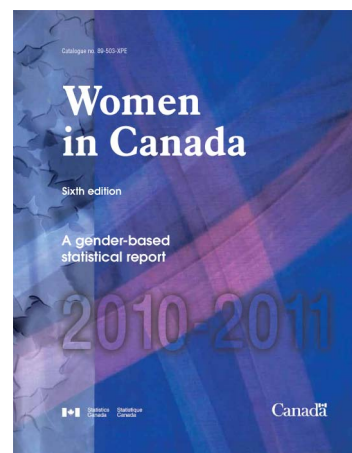


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by Martin Turcotte

December 2011



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Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report

Women and Education

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

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- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
- 0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
- 0^S value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
- P preliminary
- r revised
- x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
- E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published

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Women and Education

by Martin Turcotte

Introduction

Women have progressed considerably in terms of education and schooling over the past few decades. Just 20 years ago, a smaller percentage of women than men aged 25 to 54 had a postsecondary education. Today, the situation is completely different. Education indicators show that women generally do better than men. This gap in favour of women is even noticeable at a young age, since girls often get better marks than boys in elementary and secondary school.

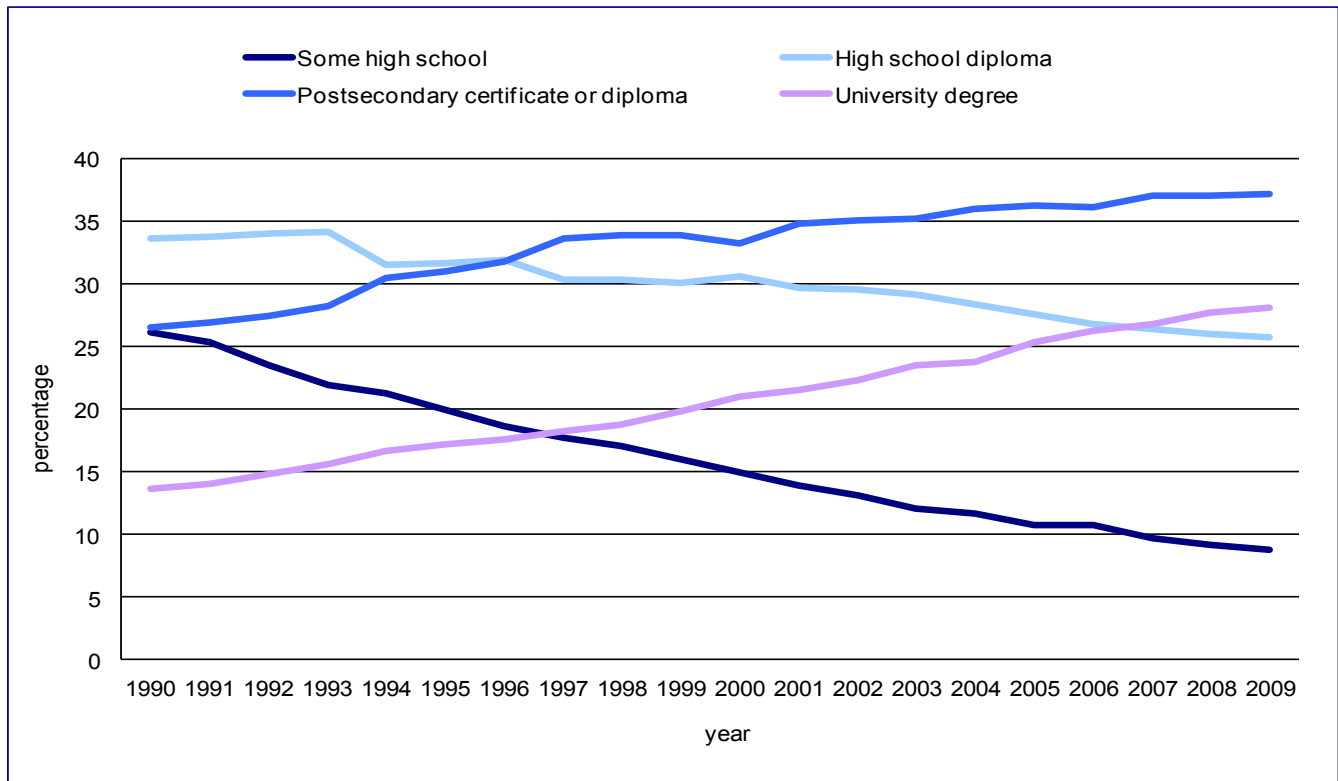
As well, more girls than boys earn their high school diploma within the expected timeframe and girls are less likely to drop out. More women than men enrol in college and university programs after completing their high school education. A greater percentage of women leave these programs with a diploma or degree. Despite all that, certain challenges persist: women's employment earnings are on average still lower than men's, even when they have the same education level (see the chapter on the economic well-being of women).

In this chapter, we will examine various education indicators. First we will present a general profile of women's education, showing how the situation of women changed over time compared to that of men. Then we will look at more detailed data on different steps along the pathway from elementary and secondary school to university.

Evolution of schooling from 1990 to 2009

In 1990, about one-quarter of women aged 25 to 54 had not earned a high school diploma and only 14% of them had a university degree (Chart 1).

Chart 1
Distribution of women aged 25 to 54, by highest level of educational attainment, Canada, 1990 to 2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1990 to 2009.

Two decades later, the situation had completely changed. The proportion of women aged 25 to 54 with a bachelor or postgraduate university degree had more than doubled, reaching 28% in 2009. The proportion of women who had not completed high school dropped considerably, from 26% in 1990 to 9% in 2009 (Chart 1). The proportion of men who had not completed high school had dropped as well. However, their participation rate in university education had not increased as quickly as that of women. As a result, a smaller proportion of men than women had a university degree in 2009, the opposite of the situation in 1990 (Table 1).

Table 1
Distribution of women and men, by age group and highest level of educational attainment, Canada, 1990 and 2009

Highest level of educational attainment	25 to 34				25 to 54			
	1990		2009		1990		2009	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	percentage							
0 to 8 years	3.9	4.6	1.4	1.5	8.6	9.0	2.2	2.7
Some high school	15.5	17.9	5.2	8.0	17.5	18.0	6.6	9.2
High school diploma	27.3	23.0	15.0	19.3	25.4	20.0	19.4	19.7
Some postsecondary	9.9	9.7	7.4	8.2	8.2	8.1	6.3	6.5
Postsecondary certificate/diploma	28.3	29.3	36.7	37.0	26.6	27.8	37.2	36.8
University degree	15.0	15.6	34.3	26.0	13.7	17.1	28.1	25.1
	thousands							
Total population	2,466	2,469	2,265	2,280	6,016	6,014	7,262	7,256

Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1990 and 2009.

Reflecting the fact that more women than men are now in university, the gender-based differences were even more pronounced among young adults. In 2009, 34% of women aged 25 to 34 had at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 26% of men (Table 1).

Provincial variations by level of educational attainment

In all provinces, most women aged 25 to 54 had completed at least high school (Table 2). This proportion reached a peak in British Columbia and Ontario where, respectively, 93% and 92% of women had at least a high school diploma. Even though the difference with the other provinces was relatively low, it is in Newfoundland and Labrador (86%) and Quebec (89%) that women in this age group were less likely to have earned their high school diploma.

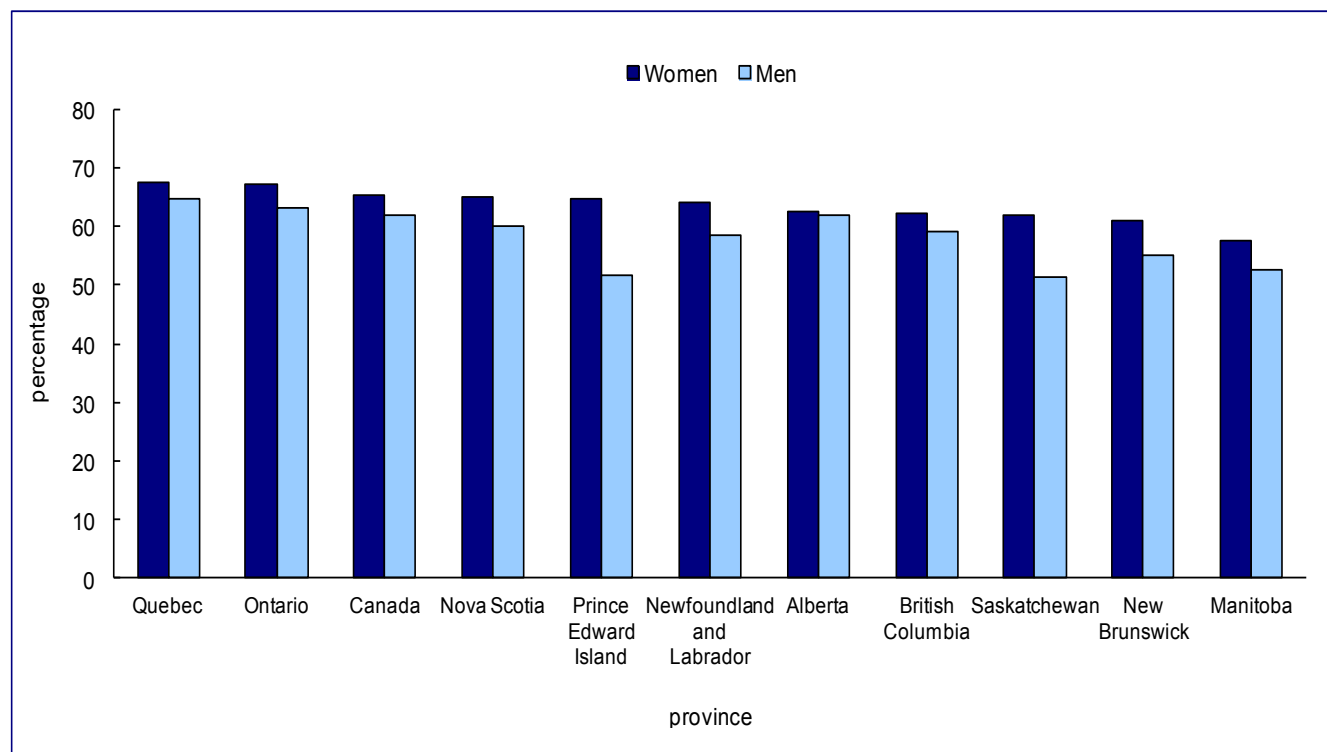
Table 2
Distribution of women and men aged 25 to 54, by province and highest level of educational attainment, 2009

Province	0 to 8 years		Some high school		High school diploma		Some postsecondary		Postsecondary certificate or diploma		University degree	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	percentage											
Canada	2.2	2.7	6.6	9.2	19.4	19.7	6.3	6.5	37.2	36.8	28.1	25.1
Newfoundland and Labrador	4.2	6.2	10.2	11.0	16.9	17.5	4.6	6.6	44.4	43.6	19.7	15.0
Prince Edward Island	1.7	5.4	8.5	14.8	18.7	21.3	6.5	7.2	41.8	35.4	22.8	16.2
Nova Scotia	1.6	3.6	9.0	12.7	17.8	17.0	6.4	6.4	40.0	39.2	25.2	21.0
New Brunswick	2.9	5.5	7.0	9.9	22.0	22.8	7.3	6.5	38.9	37.7	22.0	17.6
Quebec	3.1	4.2	8.4	10.8	15.8	14.8	5.4	5.5	41.4	41.9	26.0	22.8
Ontario	2.0	2.1	5.7	7.8	19.7	20.6	5.4	6.2	36.3	34.8	30.9	28.5
Manitoba	2.9	2.9	7.6	12.6	23.0	22.6	8.8	9.4	33.4	32.8	24.3	19.8
Saskatchewan	1.3	2.1	5.6	11.4	23.5	27.6	7.4	7.2	39.1	34.1	23.0	17.4
Alberta	1.4	1.8	7.3	9.3	21.7	20.6	7.1	6.2	35.9	38.5	26.8	23.6
British Columbia	1.6	1.6	5.0	7.7	21.7	22.6	9.4	9.0	32.8	32.5	29.5	26.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2009.

The differences between provinces were somewhat more pronounced when looking at the proportion of people completing postsecondary studies. Women in Quebec and Ontario were most likely to have earned a postsecondary degree (Chart 2). Yet this was also the case for men in these two provinces. In Quebec, students who want to go to university must earn a CEGEP (college) diploma; this requirement has an impact on postsecondary education completion rates.

Chart 2
Percentage of women and men with a postsecondary degree, by province, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2009.

As well, the difference between women and men varied noticeably from one region to another. For example, in Alberta, a very similar proportion of women and men aged 25 to 54 had completed high school (63% and 62%, respectively). In Prince Edward Island, the proportions were 65% of women and 52% of men.

At the university level, Ontario had the highest proportion of graduates among women aged 25 to 54 in 2009, namely 31% (Table 2). In Newfoundland and Labrador, this proportion was 20%. It should be noted that university graduates living in a given region were not necessarily born there. In fact, some regions of the country can attract university graduates born elsewhere or who received their education in another region or province.

Elementary and secondary school

Recent studies have demonstrated that, during their first years at school and even earlier, young girls do better than boys (see text box). At age 15, slight differences between boys and girls are also noticeable in the test results measuring various skills. Although girls do better than boys in reading, they do slightly less well in mathematics (Table 3).

We also see the same types of gaps within the adult population. In fact, in 2003, the last year for which data on the adult population are available, women aged 16 to 65 did better than men in comprehension and interpretation of prose (Table 4). Thus, 40% of women were at the low level of competence in reading, compared with 44% of men (namely 4,227,800 women aged 16 to 65 at the low level of competence versus 4,698,600 men in the same age group). However, women did not fare as well as men did in numeracy.

Table 3
Test results of 15-year-old girls and boys in the Program for International Student Assessment, Canada, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2009

Field of study	2000		2003		2006		2009	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
	average result							
Sciences – Overall	531	529	516	527	532	536	526	531
Reading	551	519	546	514	543	511	542	507
Mathematics	529	539	530	541	520	534	521	533

Note: The results represent boys' and girls' averages on a scale where the average is 500 points for the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This way, the results of the different countries can be compared with each other and to the average for all the countries.

Sources: Program for International Student Assessment, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2009.

Table 4
Literacy results, men and women aged 16 to 65 years, Canada, 2003

Literacy	Women	Men
	average result	
Prose scale	284	278
Document literacy	279	282
Numeracy	265	280
Problem resolution scale	274	273

Note: The results represent the averages on a scale of 0 to 500.

Source: Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, 2003.

These differences between women and men may indicate different gender-based preferences and interests. Also, differences in occupational choices, course enrolment and training can lead to differing pathways over the lifespan that influence the development and maintenance of skills in specific domains".¹

1. Statistics Canada and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2005. *Learning a Living: First Results of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey*.

Girls aged 5 and 9: Readiness to learn and elementary school results

Readiness to learn at age 5

In 2006, Statistics Canada presented the results of an extensive study to determine how ready 5-year-olds were to learn when starting elementary school.² They compared boys and girls on 11 measurements, including language and communication skills, academic skills, self-regulation of learning, self-control of behaviour as well as social competence and independence.

In general, the study found that 5-year-old girls exceeded boys of the same age in terms of readiness to learn. Girls scored higher than boys in communication skills, attention, self-control of behaviour and independence in dressing. However, boys ranked higher than girls with respect to curiosity.

For example, the average score of 5-year-olds for independence in dressing was 82. Girls on average scored 87 and boys 78. For the attention rating, girls got 9.3, compared with 8.5 for boys. In terms of curiosity, the study found that 67% of boys often showed curiosity, versus 48% of girls.

Despite these differences, the study showed that girls and boys begin school with equivalent skills in several areas (vocabulary understood by the child, work effort, co-operative play and independence in cleanliness).

Nine-year-olds at school

Another study by Statistics Canada, measuring the outcomes of 9-year-olds during their transition from primary to junior grades, was published in 2009.³ One of the reasons for looking at the school outcomes of children at this particular age is that “between the primary and junior levels the academic program changes from one focused on developing basic literacy, numeracy and other skills to a subject-based curriculum which assumes that these skills are in place”⁴. Students who have not acquired these skills before the start of the junior years may experience academic difficulties later on.

The study showed that 9-year-old girls and boys were no different in terms of success in mathematics in Grades 3 or 4. However, girls did better than boys when it came to attention. In general, girls were more likely to perform better in reading and written work. On a scale of 0 to 10 measuring attention, girls scored on average 7.5 and boys, 6.7.

When parents were asked how they would assess their 9-year-old’s academic performance, 80% of them felt that their daughter did well or very well, compared with 69% for the boys. The difference between boys and girls was especially significant in written work: 71% of parents stated that their daughter had good or very good performance. In comparison, only 54% of parents felt that their son did well in their written work.

Since they generally experienced fewer difficulties, girls (19%) were less likely than boys (24%) to receive tutoring or extra help to overcome academic difficulties.

2. Statistics Canada. 2006. “Study: Readiness to learn at school among five-year-old children, 2002/2003,” *The Daily*, November 27, 2006.

3. Statistics Canada. 2009. “Study: Canadian nine-year-olds at school, 2006/2007,” *The Daily*, September 25, 2009.

4. Thomas, Eleanor M. 2009. “Canadian Nine-year-olds at School”, *Research paper — Children and Youth Research Paper Series*, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 89-599.

High school graduation and dropping out

A larger proportion of girls than boys earn their high school diploma within the expected timeframe. In 2006, 84% of 19-year-old women had a high school diploma, compared with 77% of men in the same age group (Table 5).⁵ There was a smaller difference for 25-year-olds. In 2006, 90% of women and 86% of men aged 25 had a high school diploma.

Table 5
Percentage of people who earned a high school diploma, by age and province or territory, 2006

Province or territory	18 years		19 years		20 years		25 years	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	percentage							
Canada	65.8	58.3	84.0	77.4	86.5	81.2	90.2	86.1
Newfoundland and Labrador	60.0	51.1	83.1	75.6	80.7	79.1	88.0	82.7
Prince Edward Island	70.2	52.3	87.5	80.8	89.6	78.2	92.4	83.2
Nova Scotia	54.8	44.4	84.6	76.8	88.6	81.4	90.4	85.1
New Brunswick	60.6	51.7	86.7	77.9	89.0	83.4	91.1	85.1
Quebec	79.0	68.0	83.6	75.0	86.4	77.8	90.1	84.6
Ontario	62.9	55.2	84.8	77.8	88.3	83.3	92.0	88.9
Manitoba	55.3	48.2	77.9	72.4	78.3	73.8	83.7	79.1
Saskatchewan	50.5	44.2	75.5	71.6	78.9	77.0	84.8	81.4
Alberta	61.8	59.0	82.1	77.5	81.8	79.1	86.2	82.9
British Columbia	68.1	64.1	88.6	84.4	90.6	86.8	92.5	88.6
Yukon Territory	63.1	48.2	74.4	76.3	91.8	83.1	79.2	87.0
Northwest Territories	41.3	28.3	61.8	53.8	60.5	55.2	73.2	75.8
Nunavut	14.6	13.6	22.7	21.7	27.4	21.3	52.0	47.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

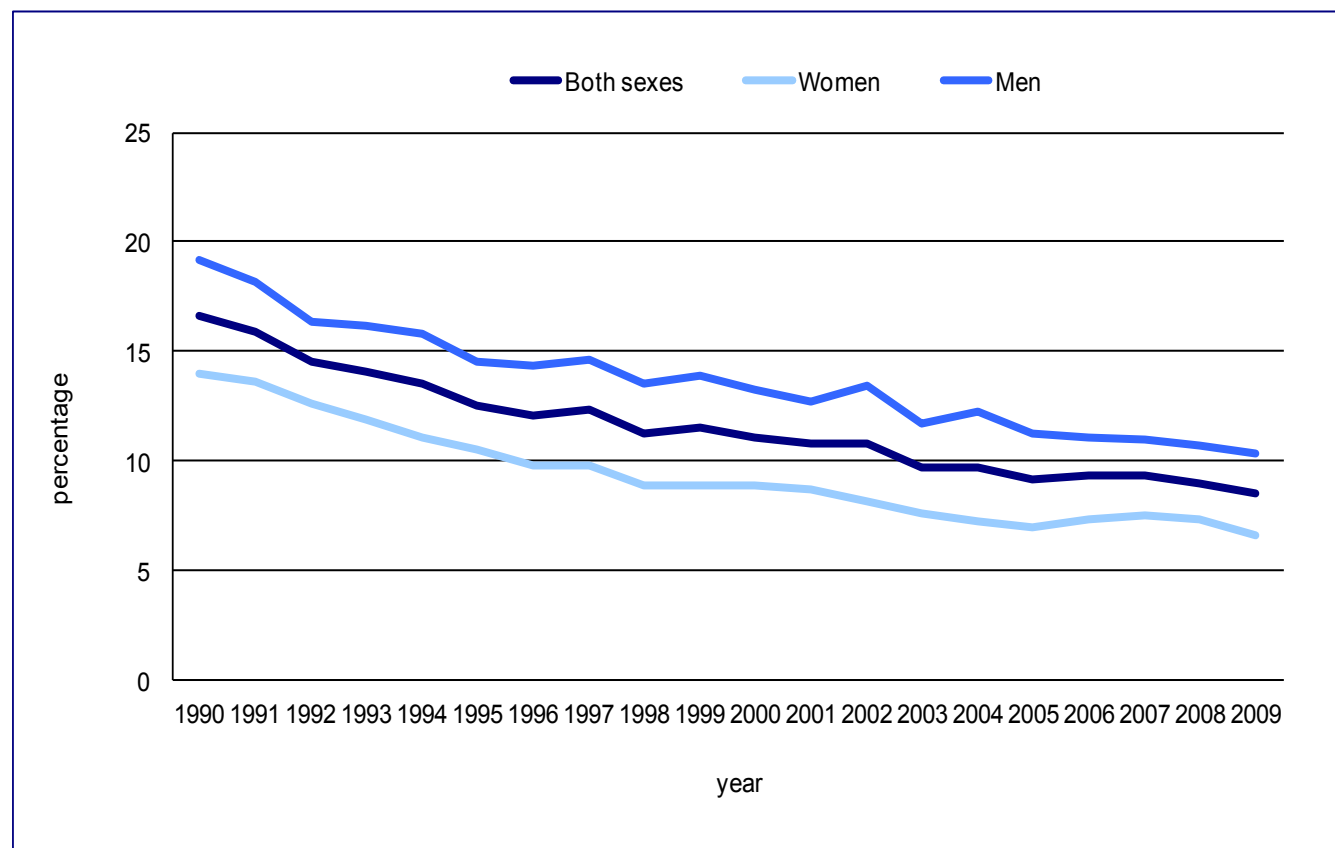
People who drop out of high school might try and earn their diploma later by returning to school as an adult. One way to measure the drop-out rate is to consider a dropout to be a 20- to 24-year-old who has not finished high school and is not currently going to school.⁶

In the last 20 years, dropout rates have been decreasing among women and men (Chart 3). In 1990, the dropout rate was 14% for women aged 20 to 24 and 19% for men of the same age group. In 2009, about 7% of women and 10% of men were dropouts, in other words, they were not attending school and did not have a high school diploma.

5. Even with provincial differences between school systems, a person who has not failed a year should have a high school diploma by age 19.

6. These rates are calculated by looking at school attendance during the months of the school year, namely September to April.

Chart 3
Dropout rates of men and women aged 20 to 24, Canada, 1990 to 2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1990 to 2009.

According to a Statistics Canada study, the prevailing reasons for dropping out are school-related for both boys and girls.⁷ However, other factors also played a considerable role and the study showed that reasons for dropping out vary by gender. Among certain young men, the desire to work was an important factor, whereas pregnancy and caring for children were reasons mentioned by a number of young women. In general, girls exhibit a higher level of commitment to school than boys (interest in learning, respect for rules and obligations), which helps explain why they are less likely to drop out than their male counterparts.⁸

At the provincial level, Newfoundland and Labrador and New Brunswick have shown the most progress (Table 6). In these two provinces, dropout rates for women in 1990 exceeded 15% and were among the highest in the country. In 2009, these rates were among the lowest (about 5% in both provinces).

7. Statistics Canada. 2002. *In and out of High School: First Results from the Second Cycle of the Youth in Transition Survey*, Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics, Catalogue no. 81-595-MIE2004014, research paper.

8. Statistics Canada. 2002. *At a Crossroads: First Results for the 18 to 20-year-old Cohort of the Youth in Transition Survey*, Catalogue no. 81-591-XIE.

Table 6
High school dropout rates, by province, 1990, 2000 and 2009

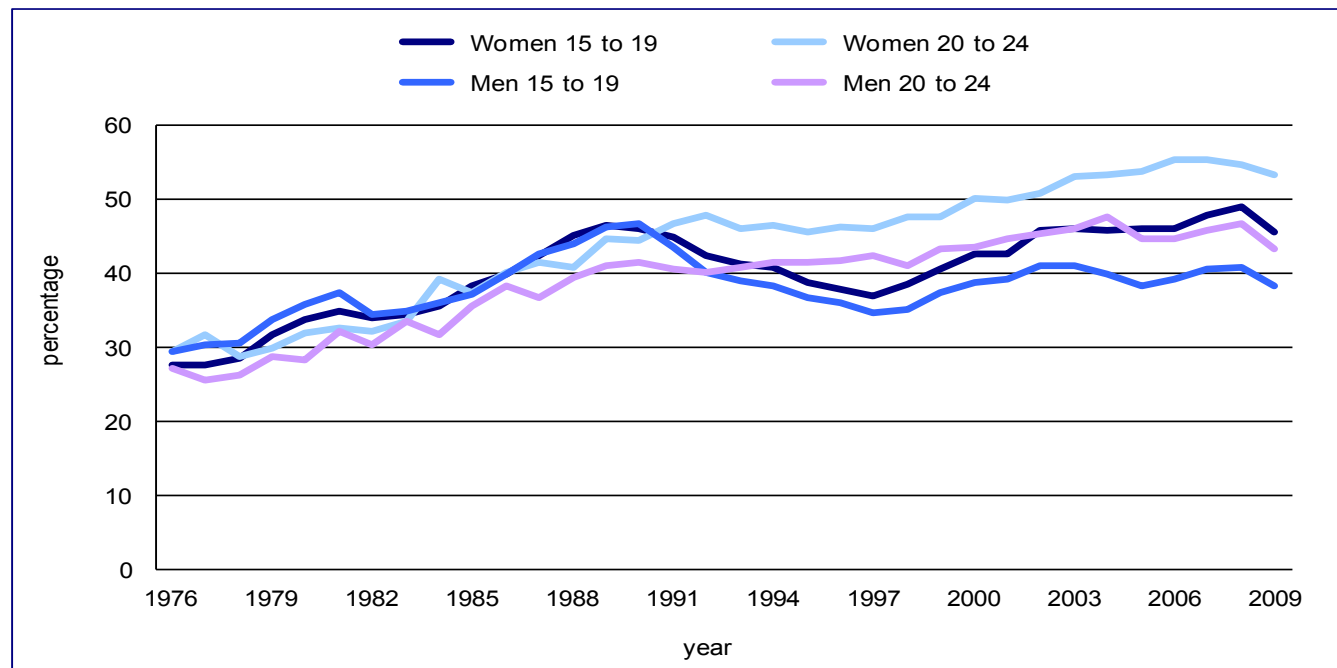
Province	Women			Men		
	1990	2000	2009	1990	2000	2009
	percentage					
Canada	14.0	8.9	6.6	19.2	13.2	10.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	15.9	6.1	5.1	26.3	11.6	7.5
Prince Edward Island	13.4	7.0	6.3	26.9	15.9	9.6
Nova Scotia	15.1	8.3	9.4	23.1	13.2	10.0
New Brunswick	15.2	8.7	5.0	19.3	14.5	11.3
Quebec	14.4	10.1	8.3	21.1	17.2	13.9
Ontario	13.4	8.1	5.1	18.1	10.6	9.3
Manitoba	13.7	12.4	9.3	20.8	16.5	12.4
Saskatchewan	17.0	9.7	8.3	19.3	12.7	11.4
Alberta	15.1	9.0	8.6	19.1	14.9	10.4
British Columbia	12.6	8.2	5.6	15.7	10.5	7.0

Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1990, 2000 and 2009.

Paid work during high school

If we look at the change in labour market participation over a long period (namely holding a job or looking for one), we see an almost steady rise in the participation rate of full-time students aged 20 to 24 (29% in 1976, versus 53% in 2009) (Chart 4). Among those aged 15 to 19, the trend was somewhat different, as the participation rate dropped during the 1990s and then increased.

Chart 4
Participation rates of full-time students, by age group, Canada, 1976 to 2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 to 2009.

Students who work a few hours per week while going to school are not necessarily exposed to greater risks of failing. Although working full time can be more problematic, this reality affects only a minority of students. In 2009, 1% of full-time students aged 15 to 19 were working full time, a percentage that does not vary by gender (Table 7).

Table 7
Full-time students holding a full- or part-time job, by age group, Canada, 2009

Job	15 to 19			20 to 24		
	Both sexes	Women	Men	Both sexes	Women	Men
	percentage					
Total — Employment Rate	34.1	38.5	29.6	44.6	49.4	38.9
Working full-time	1.0	0.9	1.2	5.7	5.1	6.4
Working part-time	33.1	37.7	28.5	38.9	44.4	32.5
	thousands					
Population	1733.2	872.9	860.3	783.3	421.9	361.4
Employment ¹	591.2	336.3	255.0	349.1	208.6	140.5

1. Full-time and part-time.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2009.

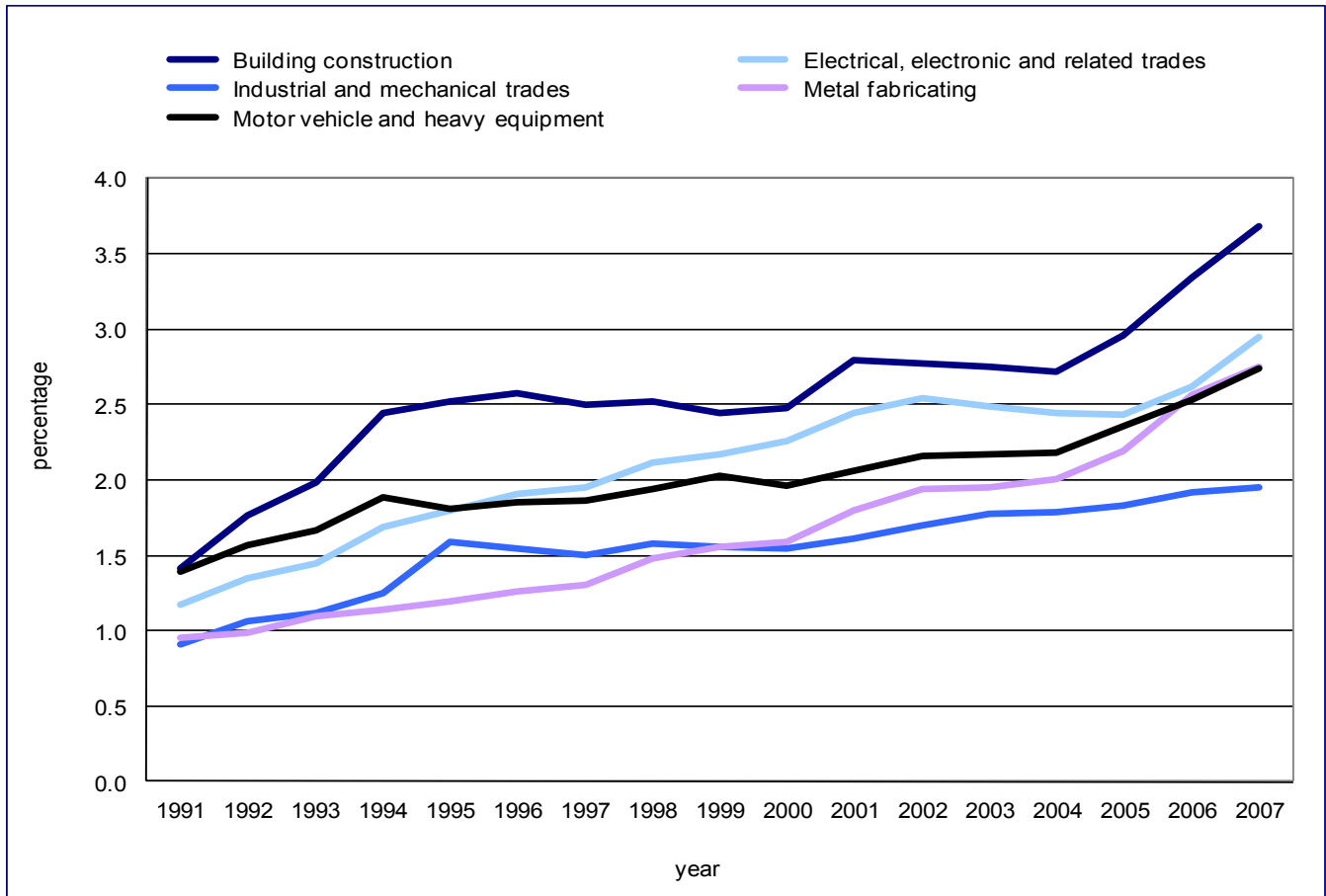
Even so, female students were more likely than their male counterparts to work part time. For example, 38% of full-time female students aged 15 to 19 were working part time, compared to 28% of men in the same age group. A similar difference was seen among those aged 20 to 24.

Trade schools and registered apprenticeship training programs

Registered apprenticeship training programs include six major trade groups: building construction, electrical, electronic and related trades, food and services, industrial and related mechanical trades, metal fabricating, and motor vehicle and heavy equipment. The only one of these trade groups in which women are a majority is food and service trades (with women accounting for 65% of enrolments in 2007, up from 50% in 1991).

However, women are definitely in the minority in all the other registered apprenticeship training programs like building construction or electrical and electronic trades. For example, the percentage of women enrolled in building construction programs was 3.7% in 2007, a slight increase over the 1.4% in 1991 (Chart 5). A similar increase in female enrolments is common to most of the other non-traditional programs.

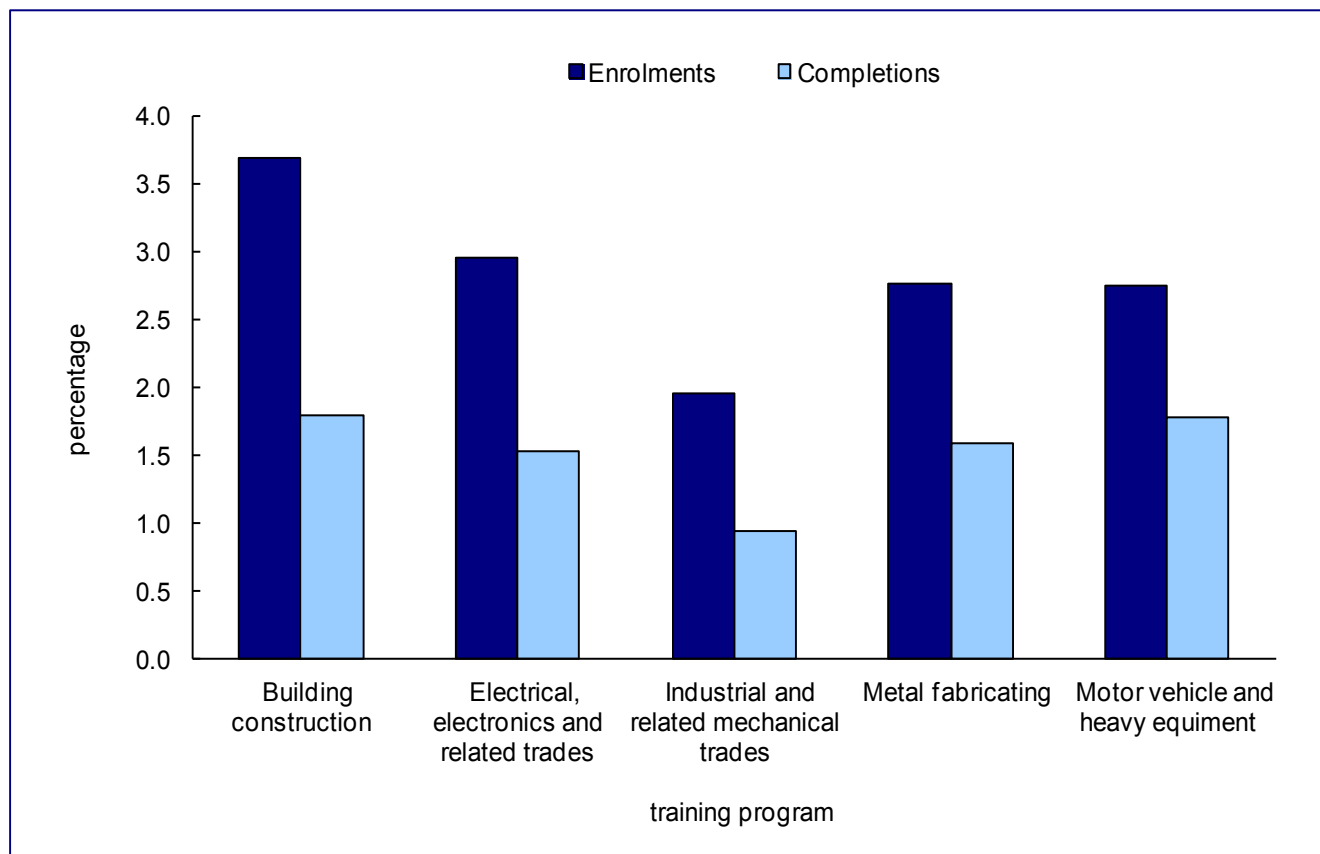
Chart 5
Women in registered apprenticeship training programs, by non-traditional trade group, Canada, 1991 to 2007



Sources: Statistics Canada, Registered Apprenticeship Information System, 1991 to 2007.

Despite the increased number of women in registered apprenticeship training programs, many of them drop out and do not earn their certificate. In 2007, although women accounted for 3.0% of enrolments in training programs for electrical, electronic and related trades, they accounted for only 1.5% of all completions in these fields of study (Chart 6).

Chart 6
Women among enrolments and completions in registered apprenticeship training programs, by non-traditional trade group, Canada, 2007



Source: Statistics Canada, Registered Apprenticeship Information System, 2007.

College studies

Since women are more likely than men to earn a high school diploma, it is not surprising to find that they also account for the majority of enrolments in college programs (Table 8). The proportion of women is even greater among graduates. In 2006/2007, women accounted for 56% of college enrolments and 59% of graduates. In the most popular college program, namely humanities, the difference between enrolments and graduates was even more pronounced: women accounted for 57% of enrolments, but 62% of graduates.

Table 8
Women among enrolments and graduates of the various college programs,
Canada, 2000 to 2007

College program	Enrolments			Graduates		
	2000/2001	2003/2004	2006/2007	2000/2001	2003/2004	2006/2007
	percentage					
Total — College programs	55.7	55.7	55.5	59.3	60.0	59.2
Personal improvement and leisure	54.0	63.1	68.1	70.0	84.8	88.7
Education	88.3	84.8	84.3	91.8	88.8	86.5
Visual and Performing Arts and Communication Technology	61.3	61.6	62.1	62.0	61.1	64.0
Humanities	58.3	58.0	57.2	62.4	62.7	62.2
Social and Behavioural Sciences, Law	78.6	78.1	80.1	79.3	80.5	82.1
Business, Management and Public Administration	64.3	61.5	60.6	71.6	69.0	66.1
Physical and Life Sciences, and Technologies	53.1	49.8	53.1	59.2	52.3	54.3
Mathematics, Computer and Information Sciences	27.6	22.3	23.6	33.2	26.2	23.4
Architecture, Engineering and Related Services	14.6	13.2	13.4	16.5	15.2	14.0
Agriculture, Natural Resources and Conservation	38.8	38.9	39.5	40.2	44.1	41.4
Health, Parks, Recreation and Fitness	82.9	82.7	81.5	84.3	84.6	83.7
Personal, Protective and Transportation Services	41.1	39.2	39.2	41.2	42.1	40.0
Other instructional programs	57.5	55.4	48.7	50.0	52.7	56.9

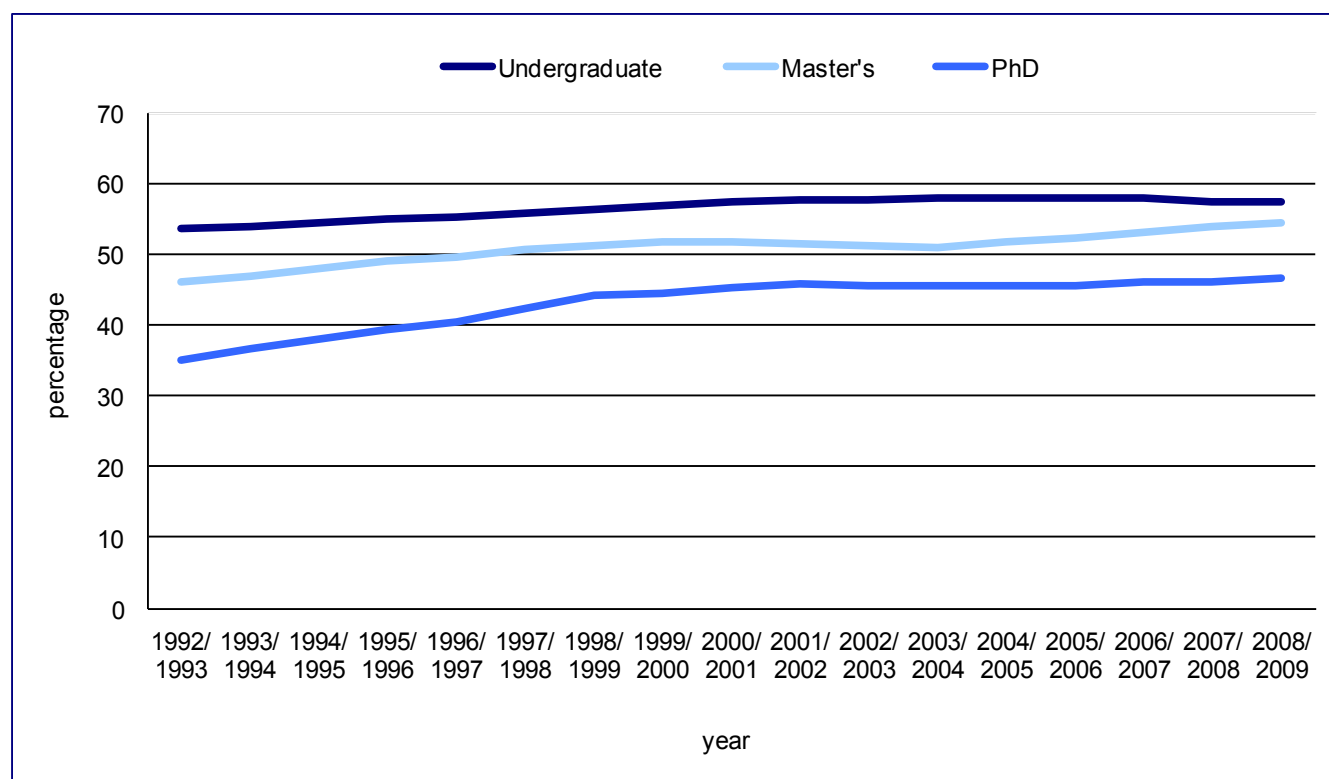
Sources: Statistics Canada, Postsecondary Student Information System, 2000/2001 to 2006/2007.

The proportion of women among both enrolments and completions varied greatly from one college program to another. For example, women made up 87% of graduates in education programs and accounted for 84% of those in the field of health, parks, recreation and fitness. The two fields in which the smallest proportion of women were recorded were mathematics, computer and information sciences (23% of graduates), and architecture, engineering and related services (14% of graduates). In these two fields, the share of women graduates was lower in 2006/2007 than it had been in the early 2000s.

University studies

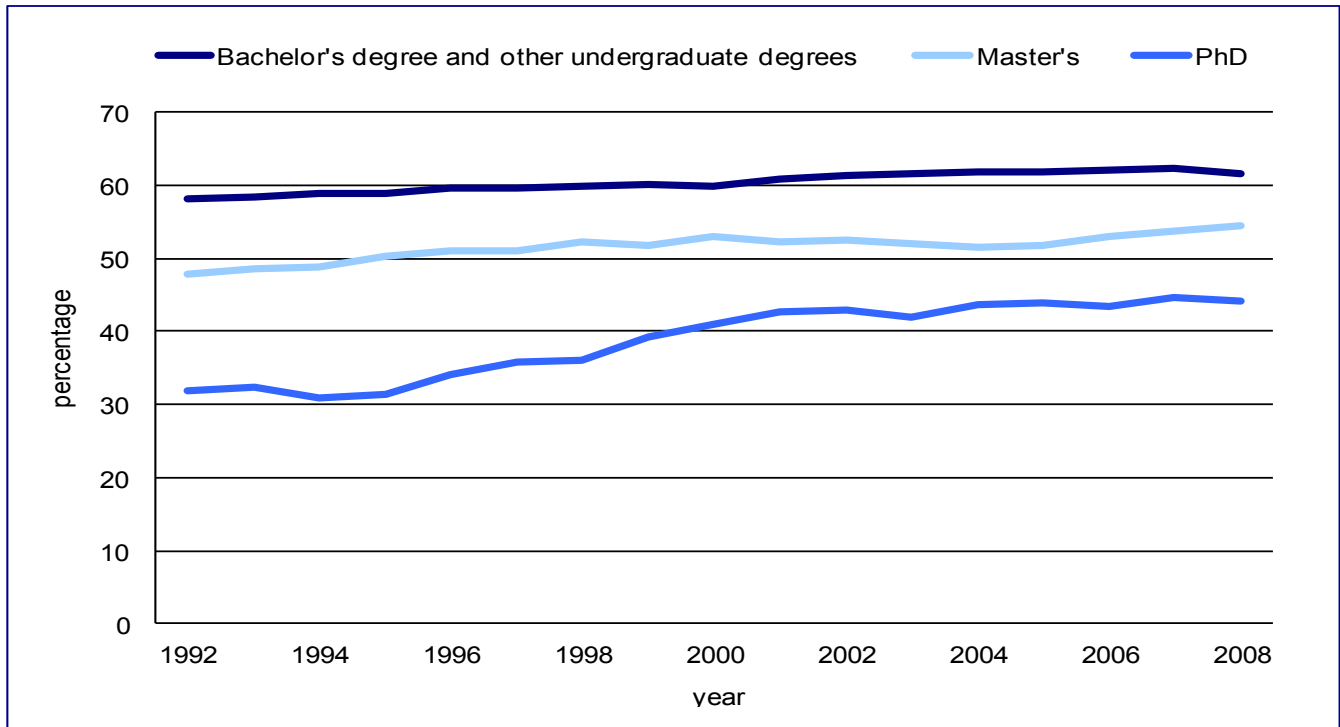
Since the early 1990s, women have made up the majority of full-time students enrolled in undergraduate university programs (Chart 7). The proportion of women among students enrolled in undergraduate programs has never reached or exceeded 60%. However, their percentage among graduates has risen above this threshold since 2001. In 2008 for example, 62% of all university undergraduates were women (Chart 8).

Chart 7
Percentage of women among full-time university enrolments, by program level,
Canada, 1992/1993 to 2008/2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, Post-Secondary Student Information System, 1992/1993 to 2008/2009.

Chart 8
Percentage of women among university graduates, by program level, Canada, 1992 to 2008



Sources: Statistics Canada, Post-Secondary Student Information System, 1992 to 2008.

The proportion of female Master's graduates is also increasing: in 1997, it passed the 50% mark and in 2008, reached 54%. At the PhD level, although female students remain in the minority, their proportion has increased even more than in the other two postsecondary levels. In 1992, 32% of all graduates with a PhD were women, a proportion that climbed to 44% in 2008 (Chart 8).

Women and university programs

Like at the college level, women and men tend to choose different university programs (Table 9). In 2008, women accounted for over three out of four graduates in education and in health sciences programs. In humanities, in visual and performing arts and communications technologies, as well as in social and behavioural sciences and law, roughly two out of three graduates were women.

Table 9
Percentage of women among university graduates, by field of study, Canada, 1992 and 2008

Field of study	1992	2008
	percentage	
Total — Instructional programs	56.4	60.0
Architecture, engineering and related services	17.5	22.2
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	35.2	30.4
Personal, protective and transportation services	18.2	44.9
Business, management and public administration	51.4	53.0
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	36.7	55.9
Physical and life sciences, and technologies	45.6	57.3
Humanities	63.7	64.3
Visual and performing arts and communication technology	65.9	66.5
Social and behavioural sciences, law	59.3	67.0
Other instructional programs	73.6	69.4
Education	72.6	76.1
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	68.0	77.0

Sources: Statistics Canada, Postsecondary Student Information System, 1992 and 2008.

The scenario was completely different for the architecture, engineering and related services program, where only 22% of graduates were women in 2008 (up from 18% in 1990). In the mathematics, computer and information sciences programs, 30% of graduates were women, down from 35% in 1990. The proportion of women graduates increased in all the other university programs, except the residual category “Other instructional programs”.

Studying part time at university

In the early 1990s, women were more likely than men to study part time at university. In 1992/1993, 33% of women undergraduates were studying part time, compared with only 24% of men (Table 10). In 2008/2009, this difference had nearly disappeared at the undergraduate level, with 20% of the women studying part time compared with 18% of the men.

Table 10
Percentage of university students enrolled part-time, by level of program, Canada, 1992/1993 and 2008/2009

Sex	Undergraduate		Master's		PhD	
	1992/1993	2008/2009	1992/1993	2008/2009	1992/1993	2008/2009
	percentage					
Women	32.7	20.3	44.0	30.3	19.7	6.2
Men	24.4	18.3	37.1	26.7	15.1	5.8

Sources: Statistics Canada, Postsecondary Student Information System, 1992/1993 and 2008/2009.

Employment earnings of women and men by level of schooling

Even though women are more likely than men to go to college or university, they do not necessarily end up with higher employment earnings than men when they enter the job market.⁹ In 2005, young women aged 25 to 29 with full-year, full-time work were earning 85 cents for each dollar earned by their male counterparts (Table 11).

Table 11
Employment income in 2005, by age group and educational attainment, Canada

Educational attainment	25 to 29			30 to 34			35 to 39		
	Women	Men	ratio	Women	Men	ratio	Women	Men	ratio
	dollars	dollars		dollars	dollars				
Total	32,084	37,684	0.85	36,891	46,709	0.79	38,799	51,579	0.75
No certificate, diploma or degree	20,574	30,610	0.67	22,639	35,159	0.64	24,391	38,457	0.63
High school diploma or equivalent	26,000	33,567	0.77	29,768	40,245	0.74	32,000	44,668	0.72
Registered apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma	24,741	37,788	0.65	27,152	43,487	0.62	29,642	47,680	0.62
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma or university certificate or diploma below bachelor level	31,251	39,199	0.80	34,957	48,000	0.73	38,121	52,936	0.72
University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	40,441	45,291	0.89	47,573	58,140	0.82	52,941	65,166	0.81
Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry	47,464	47,000	1.01	54,467	58,362	0.93	62,317	70,000	0.89
Masters/doctorate	43,086	44,850	0.96	53,064	61,816	0.86	60,342	72,201	0.84

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Employment earnings differed between women and men according to their level of schooling. For example, women aged 25 to 29 with a graduate or professional degree (Master's or PhD) and with full-year full-time work were earning 96 cents for each dollar earned by their male counterparts in 2005. Among those women with a bachelor's degree, this ratio was 89 cents. However, young women with a registered apprenticeship certificate or a trade school certificate were earning only 65 cents for each dollar earned by their male counterparts (Table 11). The trade programs most often chosen by women, such as hair-dressing, lead to lower-paying jobs than the ones favoured by men, such as building construction or electrical, electronics and related trades.

Among women aged 25 to 29 who graduated from university, employment earnings were generally to men's advantage (Table 12). For example, among graduates in business, management and public administration, the median earnings of men with full-year full-time work was \$46,500, compared to \$41,700 for women (a ratio of 0.90). The fields of "Physical and life sciences, and technologies" and "Health, parks, recreation and fitness" were the two exceptions to this wage premium for men. In the latter case, women aged 25 to 29 were earning \$1.07 for each dollar earned by men in the same age group who had studied in the same field.

9. See also the chapter on economic well-being, particularly the text box on differences in wage gains between women and men.

Table 12
Median earnings of full-time, full-year employees, university graduates, by field of study and age group, Canada, 2006

Field of study	25 to 29					30 to 34				
	Distribution		Median income			Distribution		Median income		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	ratio	Women	Men	Women	Men	ratio
	percentage		dollars			percentage		dollars		
Education	9.5	2.3	41,154	43,174	0.95	10.7	3.4	47,561	52,916	0.90
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	4.6	4.1	30,530	33,496	0.91	3.6	3.7	39,041	40,482	0.96
Humanities	5.4	3.3	34,407	36,304	0.95	5.7	3.8	41,392	47,200	0.88
Social and behavioural sciences and law	15.9	6.9	38,402	41,448	0.93	16.8	8.3	47,303	56,000	0.84
Business, management and public administration	27.9	17.2	41,728	46,539	0.90	27.9	17.3	50,250	64,833	0.78
Physical and life sciences and technologies	4.2	3.5	37,677	36,827	1.02	4.0	3.8	46,647	55,182	0.85
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	3.7	11.0	44,745	47,987	0.93	4.1	8.9	53,090	62,227	0.85
Architecture, engineering and related services	4.3	37.0	47,977	52,175	0.92	4.3	36.1	55,027	65,281	0.84
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	1.9	3.3	41,162	45,355	0.91	1.7	3.3	47,506	56,278	0.84
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	16.9	4.4	49,969	46,872	1.07	16.6	5.2	55,650	58,666	0.95
Personal, protective and transportation services	5.8	7.0	38,200	45,135	0.85	4.8	6.4	55,000	66,612	0.83

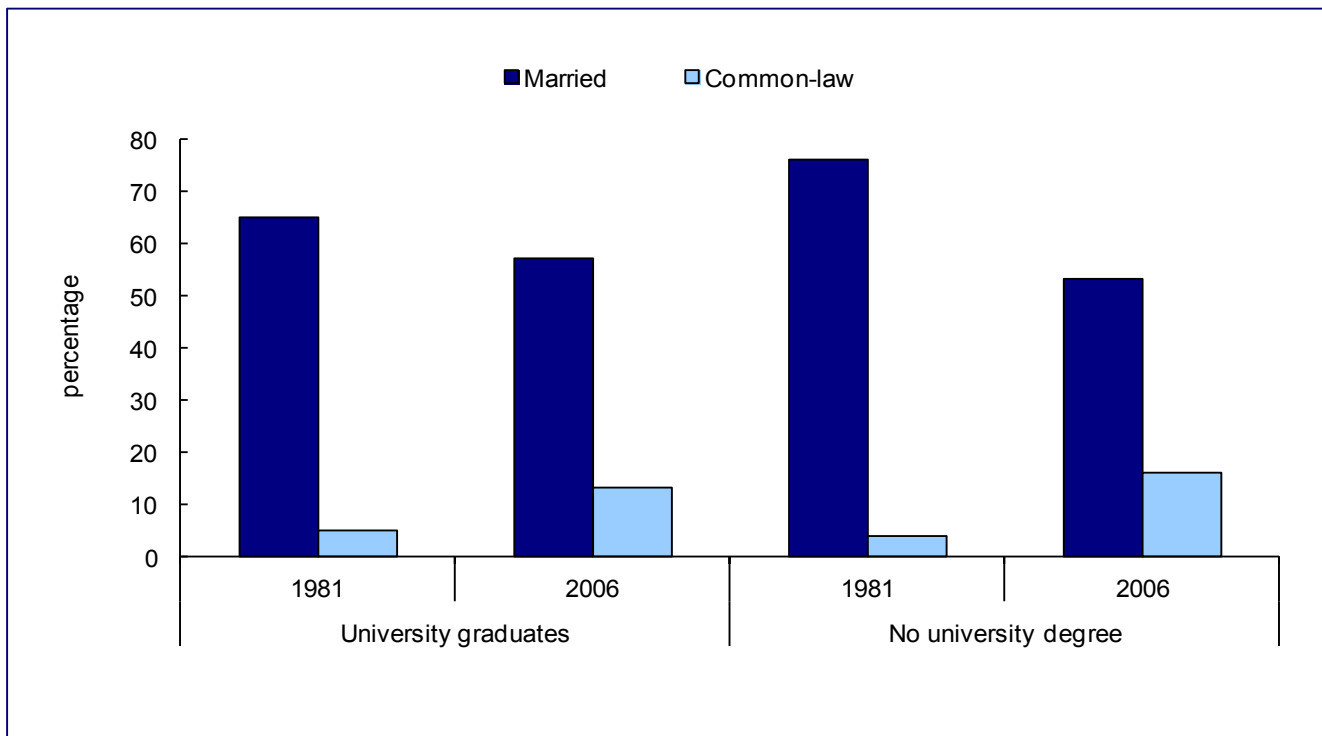
Note: Full-year employees: self-employed workers are excluded from this table. University graduates include persons with a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Female university graduates and marriage¹⁰

In 1981, women aged 25 to 49 who were university graduates were less likely to get married than those who were less educated. This is no longer the case today. Since 2001, there has even been a positive relationship between having a university education and the likelihood of being married. As a result of a significant decrease in the number of married women among less-educated women, women aged 25 to 49 with a university degree were more likely to be married in 2006 than those who were less educated (57% and 53%, respectively) (see the chart below). Although women with a university degree were somewhat less likely to live common-law, they were still more likely to live as part of a couple than those who were not graduates.

Percentage of women who are married or in a common-law union aged 25 to 49, by graduation from university, Canada, 1981 and 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1981 and 2006.

When both spouses have the same education level, for example a university degree, this is called educational homogamy. Due to the rapid growth in the proportion of female university graduates, men with a university degree had more opportunities of finding a spouse with a degree in 2006 than in 1981. Thus in 2006, among married men with a university degree, 67% of them had a spouse with the same level of education as they had, whereas that proportion was only 38% in 1981.

For their part, married women with a university degree aged 25 to 49 had continued their high tendency towards educational homogamy. In 2006, the educational homogamy rate of women with a university degree was 64%, compared to 67% 25 years before.

10. Martin, Laetitia and Feng Hou. 2010. "Sharing their lives: women, marital trends and education", *Canadian Social Trends*, no. 90 (winter), Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008-X.

Women in the field of education

Women increasingly make up the majority of workers in education-related occupations. Therefore, young people are much more likely to have female teachers and professors throughout their academic career. The proportion of women is especially high at the elementary and preschool levels, where they make up 84% of the teaching staff (slightly up from 81% in 1996) (Table 13). In 1996, among secondary school teachers, there was near parity in terms of the representation of women and men. This is decreasingly the case because, in 2006, 57% of secondary school teachers were women.

Table 13
Women in teaching-related professions, Canada, 1996 and 2006

Profession	2006			1996	2006
	Total	Women	Men	Women	
	number			percentage	
Total — All teachers	667,990	435,820	232,170	61.8	65.2
Professors and teaching assistants at the university and postsecondary level	125,410	57,680	67,725	39.3	46.0
University professors	56,895	22,150	34,750	33.8	38.9
Teaching and research assistants at the postsecondary level	68,515	35,535	32,975	48.6	51.9
Teachers at the college level and in vocational schools	103,200	54,755	48,445	51.6	53.1
Teachers at the college level and other upgrading program instructors	103,200	54,755	48,445	51.6	53.1
Teachers at the secondary, primary and preschool levels and guidance counsellors	439,375	323,380	115,995	68.7	73.6
Teachers at the secondary level	161,095	92,295	68,805	50.6	57.3
Teachers at the primary and preschool levels	261,675	218,740	42,935	81.2	83.6
Guidance counsellors and educational counsellors	16,605	12,350	4,255	64.4	74.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

While women are also the majority among high school and college teachers, the situation is completely different at the university level. In 2006, the proportion of female university professors reached 39%, compared to 34% 10 years earlier (Table 13).

Participation in job-related studies or training programs

It is increasingly common for employees to be asked to upgrade their occupational knowledge and skills by taking job-related training. In 2008, 36% of people aged 25 to 64 had participated in job-related studies or training, an increase from 30% in 2002. These proportions were about the same for both women and men.

There was a difference between women and men in terms of the support they received from employers. In 2008, 46% of female workers had received support from their employer while taking a training or education program, a proportion that reached 55% among men (Table 14).

Table 14
Participation in job-related studies or training programs, Canada, 2002 and 2008

Participation	Both sexes		Women		Men	
	2002	2008	2002	2008	2002	2008
	percentage					
Proportion of Canadians aged 25 to 64 who took job-related studies or training						
Total — Studies or training	30.1	36.0	30.2	35.9	29.9	36.2
Studies	8.2	8.1	8.9	8.7	7.6	7.6
Training	24.6	30.6	24.5	30.1	24.7	31.2
Proportion of persons who received support from an employer from among working Canadians aged 25 to 64 who took a formal education program ¹	52.0	49.9	48.0	46.0	56.5	54.6

1. In 2002, represents activities undertaken from January to December 2002. In 2008, represents activities undertaken from July 2007 to June 2008.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2003 Adult Education and Training Survey; and 2008 Access and Support to Education and Training Survey.