THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES IN CANADA:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE 2001 ABORIGINAL PEOPLES SURVEY (APS)

By

Carly Anna Liebrecht

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Of

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ABSTRACT

Educational inequality is experienced by Aboriginal peoples and is long-standing. On average, the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples is significantly lower than for non-Aboriginal people. As a result, there is a large gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people at every level of educational attainment. Despite efforts to address this inequality, obstacles continue to prevent Aboriginal peoples from completing secondary school and achieving higher levels of schooling. Academics and policy makers have failed to uncover the causes of educational inequality despite decades of effort and observation. This thesis addresses this gap by using the 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey to identify the factors contributing to the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

The results of this study find that receiving financial assistance for post-secondary education is the single most important factor contributing to educational attainment. Surprisingly, the majority of Aboriginal students with treaty status who are entitled to funding for post-secondary education do not receive it; a breach of the governments' treaty obligations. There are also non-Status Aboriginal peoples who would benefit from greater access to funding outside of treaty obligations. This study also reveals that educational attainment is unequally distributed among Aboriginal peoples. Women and those without treaty status have the highest educational attainment. This research illustrates the need for increased funding for post-secondary education for all Aboriginal students, and initiatives to improve secondary school completion rates.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Recently, the University of Manitoba opened 'Aboriginal House'. This new facility was constructed to make Aboriginal students feel more welcome at university, increase participation in post-secondary education and prepare Aboriginal students for successful careers. This new facility includes access programs, a student centre and is staffed by Elders. The facility will also provide advice and support, and a positive learning environment for Aboriginal students while respecting culture and heritage. Even the design and architecture of Aboriginal House is constructed based on Aboriginal values, perspectives of the earth, and the medicine wheel (University of Manitoba, 2008). Aboriginal House was created to ease the transition from public school to university. It is evident that Aboriginal peoples value post-secondary education, contrasting the myth that few Aboriginal peoples aspire to higher schooling.

There are several myths pertaining to the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples which are based on blatant racism, including lower levels of intelligence, laziness, and lack of ambition in pursuing and obtaining education (see Ponting, 1998). Another popular myth is that all Aboriginal peoples in Canada receive free post-secondary education. Throughout this thesis, obstacles preventing Aboriginal peoples from obtaining higher levels of education are discussed and analysed, and all of these myths regarding Aboriginal peoples' education are dismissed as a result of the careful analysis of national data.

1.1.1 *Traditional Aboriginal Education*

Many Aboriginal peoples value traditional Aboriginal ways of knowing and learning over the mainstream Euro-Canadian dominated education system. Given the history behind the education of Aboriginal peoples and the genocide associated with it, Euro-Canadian forms of education have not been embraced. The 'dominant' system is long considered as a form of assimilation by many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people alike.

The Euro-Canadian conception of education greatly contrasts the traditional Aboriginal view, where education and the way of learning was seen as an informal, natural process integrated into daily activities and culture. Members of the community were the 'teachers' and the community and the natural environment was the 'classroom' (Armstrong, 1987:14; Kirkness, 1992:5). "Learning and teaching in the traditional view ensures cultural continuity and survival of the mental, spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of the cultural unit and of its environment, the individual, the family, the community and the people as a whole" (Armstrong, 1987:14). As a result, the measure of greatest success among Aboriginal peoples is: "how much service have I rendered to my people?"(Kirkness, 1992:6). This view has been at odds with how the colonial imposed system rewards its pupils.

Aboriginal education is defined by a holistic approach that prepares students for life (Hanohano, 1999). Holistic refers to the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical aspects of human beings and Aboriginal peoples' relationship to the Creator and the environment (Hanohano 1999; Antone, 2003:8). Central to their teaching was culture

and the belief in the sacred, the Great Spirit (Kirkness, 1992; Hanohano, 1999). Thus, the religious basis of education also differs from the colonial-imposed approach which currently de-emphasizes any religion.

Children learn traditional values such as humility, honesty, courage, kindness and respect which overlap with the Euro-Canadian system. Traditional education is inextricably linked with economics, and learning was for survival. Traditional learning is based on life-skills and living off what the environment offers to ensure independence and self-reliance. "Through observation and practice, young children learned the art of hunting, trapping, fishing, food gathering and preparation, child rearing, farming and building shelters" (Kirkness, 1992:6). These lessons are reinforced through storytelling, cultural rituals and recreation, and through Elders, who are seen as the keepers and teachers of Aboriginal cultures (Kirkness, 1992; Armstrong, 1987; Hanohano, 1999; Hampton, 1995). Today, few of these values and lessons are part of the curriculum or are relegated to historical discussion.

Aboriginal literacy is different than the Euro-Canadian concept of literacy. Aboriginal literacy is more than just the development of skills used in the reading and writing process. Aboriginal literacy does not just concentrate on the mental aspects, but is "part of everyday life, involving relationships between self, community, nation, and creation with a focus on words, language, listening, and comprehension". Aboriginal literacy is not individualization; it is about relationship and reflects a way of life (Antone, 2003:9). The Aboriginal concept of literacy reflects the traditional way of knowing and learning.

The traditional Aboriginal way of knowing and learning is not valued by society, and may be one reason explaining the large numbers of Aboriginal peoples who leave high school without a diploma. Since the education system excludes their cultures, values and beliefs, schooling has become irrelevant. Until this value system genuinely incorporates Aboriginal beliefs into the curriculum, Aboriginal peoples want their knowledge, values and beliefs to be seen as equal to that of mainstream knowledge (Assembly of First Nations, 2005; Battiste, 1998; Kirkness, 1992; Hanohano, 1999; Assembly of First Nations, 1988).

1.1.2 *Aboriginal Peoples and Education Today*

Despite the obstacles and exclusion they face in the colonial school system, the participation and completion rates of secondary school for Aboriginal peoples is increasing. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, less than 5% of Aboriginal peoples graduated from high school (Kirkness, 1992; Frideres & Gadacz, 2005). In 1981, 29% of Aboriginal peoples aged 15 and over completed high school (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). By 2006, 56.3% of those aged 15 and over completed high school (Statistics Canada, 2008b). Various programs and initiatives have been implemented to increase secondary school completion, including Children of the Earth High School in Winnipeg-an alternative school where students learn traditional and contemporary teachings. Another example of a recent initiative to increase secondary school completion for Aboriginal students is a cash incentive offered by Long Plain First Nation to students for attendance and a bonus when they receive a high school diploma. The money for this incentive program is provided by the band (Winnipeg Free

Press, 2008). These programs illustrate the value of education and the desire for Aboriginal students to complete secondary school.

Aboriginal university students also desire to complete their programs of study to help their communities (Ponting & Voyageur, 2005:429). As a result, post-secondary credentials are valued and pursued by Aboriginal peoples, and are necessary to fulfill leadership roles and self-government, to become politicians and political activists, and to participate in the labour market and economy. Aboriginal students are now studying in a vast array of academic disciplines including medicine, law, education, social work, and the natural and social sciences (Newhouse et al., 2005:11; Assembly of First Nations, 2005; Hampton, 1995). There are thousands of Aboriginal professionals who have gained post-secondary credentials and workplace experience in mainstream and Aboriginal communities. These professionals are moving into decision-making positions and effecting change. Over the next few decades, current students will be moving into leadership positions and "they are well educated, [and] determined to achieve a better world for themselves and for their children" (Newhouse et al., 2005:4). Furthermore, "First Nations leaders wish their people to be more integrated into the mainstream economy" and Aboriginal peoples are aware of the increasing need for academic credentials to achieve this goal (Voyageur, 2001:103).

This desire to participate in the post-secondary Canadian education system illustrates that like all cultures, Aboriginal cultures are not static; Aboriginal ways of knowing can be successfully combined with other forms of knowledge. Newhouse et al.

describes the combination of traditional Aboriginal knowledge with modern and mainstream Western forms.

> "The members of this highly educated group have a different understanding of the world than those who came before them. They are now imbued with a sense of the fundamental conditions of modern Aboriginal society; that is, they have developed a post-colonial consciousness...It is a society that is pulling together the knowledge creating the wealth to effect changes in Canada and in Canadian governments' treatment of Aboriginal peoples" (Newhouse et al., 2005: 4).

Modern Aboriginal society is "confident, aggressive, assertive, determined, and desirous of creating a new world from both Aboriginal and Western ideas" (Newhouse et al., 2005:5).

Education is important in achieving occupational and social success, and has a significant influence on lifestyle and life chances. Yet for a variety of reasons, not all Canadians are able to use the educational system effectively. Aboriginal peoples in particular are excluded from participating in education because of its failure to include Aboriginal peoples and for a host of other reasons (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:107). As a result, there is a gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people at every level of educational attainment. When compared to the national averages, the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples is significantly lower.

According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, school attendance and completion continues to increase. Despite these advances however, 34% of Aboriginal peoples aged 25 to 64 do not complete high school. The corresponding figure for the total Canadian population is 15% (Statistics Canada, 2008a). As a result, many

Aboriginal peoples leave the school system without the necessary skills for employment. As the educational attainment level rises, the gap between Aboriginal peoples and non-Aboriginal Canadians increases since they leave school lacking the skills necessary to obtain skilled jobs and incomes.

Over the past ten years, the number of Aboriginal peoples attending and completing post-secondary education programs has increased (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). There are now over 30,000 Status Indian students attending post-secondary institutions (Frideres & Gadacz, 2008:122; Newhouse et al., 2005:11). Approximately 44% of the Aboriginal population between the ages of 25 and 64 have attained a post-secondary credential by 2006, compared to 60% of the total population. Most of the increase in post-secondary schooling is in non-university certificates and trades. An estimated 14% have trade credentials, 19% have a college diploma and 8% have a university degree (Statistics Canada, 2008a). Although more Aboriginal peoples are attending university, the proportion completing university programs remains small. By 2006, 8% of Aboriginal peoples aged 25 to 64 had graduated from university, compared with 23% for non-Aboriginal people (Statistics Canada, 2008a). In short, Aboriginal peoples have seen significant gains in their education but not enough to match national averages.

While there have been gains in educational attainment, these gains remain modest. Obstacles continue to prevent many Aboriginal peoples from achieving higher levels of education. There are other issues still to be resolved, such as adequate financing, recognition of treaty rights to post-secondary education, and the extension of

funding to Métis and other Aboriginal students who are currently excluded from post-secondary benefits. As acknowledged by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996:88) "[t]he challenge over the next 20 years will be to find adequate support for the large numbers of youth who will require post-secondary education in order to become productive in the labour force".

The education gap of Aboriginal peoples is linked in turn with both employment and income problems (Wotherspoon, 2002:8). In 2001, the average income for the Canadian population was just over $24,000 per year, while for Aboriginal peoples it was nearly $17,000[1] (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:98). Partially as a result of lower school completion rates, Aboriginal peoples, even in urban areas, endure higher rates of unemployment than non-Aboriginal people (14.8% and 6.3 % respectively). Those who leave school have few employment options. In 2006, the unemployment rate for Aboriginal peoples with less than high school education stood at 22.5%, compared with 7.5% for university graduates (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:139; Statistics Canada, 2008d). For non-Aboriginal people, the unemployment rate for those who have less than high school education is 10.4%, compared with 4.6% for university graduates (Statistics Canada, 2008d). In addition to high levels of unemployment, the rate of dependency on social assistance is high among those with low levels of education (Ponting, 1997:101). With rates nearly three times the national average, unemployment is a major cause of poverty and powerlessness (Fleras & Elliott, 2007:172; Statistics Canada, 2008c).

[1] More recent income figures based on the 2006 Census are not be available until December 9, 2008.

To summarize, even though Aboriginal youth are staying in school longer, the majority are still leaving before completing high school. As a result, the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in terms of high school completion has narrowed only slightly. Those who complete higher education are part of a select group (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:141). Little seems to have been done to redress this inequality in any significant manner (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:130). As a result, Aboriginal peoples do not have equal opportunity in educational attainment. What academics and policy makers have failed to study is the factors that influence successful school completion among Aboriginal Peoples.

1.1.3 *Contributions of This Study*

This study uses the 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) to outline the factors contributing to the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. This study is worth pursuing for several reasons. First, most studies focus on comparing Aboriginal peoples to non-Aboriginal people. Second, since many Aboriginal peoples in Canada have the Constitutional right to education through various treaties, it is important that the federal government continue to abide by these treaty obligations. Through treaties, the federal government is obligated to provide funding for educational facilities and opportunities, and this funding is important in obtaining access to education (Henderson, 1995:246). Third, not only is equal access to education at all levels a treaty right, but it is a human right as well. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is being ignored, and Aboriginal peoples experience discrimination on part of the Canadian government as a result.

Fourth, discrimination and educational inequality continue to exist in relation to non-Aboriginal people. Issues related to racism and discrimination are barriers to educational attainment. According to The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996), Aboriginal students who participate in Canada's mainstream education systems regularly encounter racism, which is expressed not only in interpersonal exchanges, but also through the denial of Aboriginal values, perspectives and cultures in the curriculum and the institutional setting. Attitudes, policies, and practices in schools, such as assessment and streaming procedures, and standardized testing greatly affect Aboriginal students' opportunities for higher education (Henry and Tator, 2006:207). Racism and discrimination of various forms produce barriers which restrict the educational advancement of Aboriginal peoples (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:114).

Fifth, the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples is important because of the growing importance of acquiring higher levels of education in order to gain adequate employment. Finally, the Aboriginal population is young and growing, particularly the number of those that will soon be reaching the age for post-secondary education and/or employment (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1993; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007). According to the 2006 Census, 61.6% of the Aboriginal population is under 35 years of age, with the largest of all age groups (29.7%) being those who are 14 years old and younger (Statistics Canada, 2008e). These demographic trends highlight the importance of strategic policy interventions to increase access to post-secondary education now (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1993).

The results of this analysis may be used in identifying effective or required policies and programs to reduce or eliminate educational inequality. Since few studies have utilized the APS, particularly in regard to educational attainment, this study aims to better understand the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

As previously mentioned, many of the traditional teachings and ways of knowing are not valued by the larger Canadian society and are not captured in this study. For this reason, the results of this study should be considered in this context. The intention of this thesis is not to disregard Aboriginal ways of knowing and learning, it is just not measured in this study since the Aboriginal Peoples Survey failed to acknowledge forms of Aboriginal ways of knowing.

This study focuses on Aboriginal peoples living off-reserve, since the majority of Aboriginal peoples live off-reserves, (Statistics Canada, 2006) and those living off-reserves have greater access to education. Colonialism theory and human capital theory are used to interpret the findings, and other forms of capital are addressed. These are discussed in chapter two.

1.2 Terminology Used in This Thesis

Unlike other groups in Canadian society, Aboriginal peoples are subject to many legal classifications. A brief review of these terms is needed before proceeding. The term "Aboriginal peoples" is used throughout this thesis as it is the most inclusive term, since it refers to all Aboriginal peoples in Canada collectively, regardless of their separate origins and identities. As a result, Mohawks are not distinguished from Cree even though they represent very distinct cultures. The Assembly of First Nations

(2008a), and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) (2003) defines Aboriginal peoples as all of the original peoples of Canada and their descendants. The *Canadian Constitution* recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples — North American Indians, Métis and Inuit, each with their own legal status. These are three separate peoples each with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs, and these differences also exist within these three groups. Although "Aboriginal peoples" does not differentiate the various ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups that comprise Aboriginal peoples, I am limited by how Statistics Canada collected and collated the data.

While the term "North American Indian" is highly contested, again, it is the term which is used by the federal government and Statistics Canada. "North American Indian" collectively describes all Aboriginal peoples in Canada who are not Métis or Inuit. "North American Indians" are one of the three peoples recognized as Aboriginal in the Canadian Constitution, along with Métis and Inuit (Assembly of First Nations, 2008a; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2003). Unfortunately, there is no other term available to use which refers to this specific group of Aboriginal peoples (North American Indians) who are not Métis or Inuit. Three categories apply to North American Indians: "Status Indians", "non-Status Indians" and "Treaty Indians" (Assembly of First Nations, 2008a). While Aboriginal peoples have also been referred to as "First Nations", some Aboriginal peoples have adopted the term "First Nation" to replace the word "band" in the name of their community. Many bands prefer to be known as "First Nations" (Assembly of First Nations, 2008a; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2003). Statistics Canada also

uses the term "First Nation" to refer to those who are band members (Statistics Canada, 2007:10).

The term "Status Indian" is also used throughout this thesis to refer to those who are registered under the *Indian Act*. Status Indians are entitled to certain rights and benefits under the law (Assembly of First Nations, 2008a; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2003). While the term "Status Indian" is the same as "Registered Indian", "Status Indian" is more commonly used and more recognizable to the non-Aboriginal Canadian population. "Non-Status Indian" refers to an Aboriginal person who is not registered under the *Indian Act*. This may be because these individuals either lost their status or because their ancestors were members of bands without recognized treaties (Assembly of First Nations, 2008a). Of the 1,172,790 people who reported identifying with an Aboriginal group in 2006, 623,780 (53.2%) are Status Indians (Statistics Canada, 2008f).

Band membership involves a variety of rights and privileges with respect to an individual's band of origin. Some urban Aboriginal peoples are registered and are not band members, while some are band members but are not registered. The complex mixture of legal categories that has emerged has created additional inequalities for Aboriginal peoples. Status Indians living on-reserve have access to federally funded programs not available to urban Aboriginal peoples. In turn, Status Indians in urban areas have access to some federally funded programs that other Aboriginal peoples do not (Peters, 1998:242). This creates a top-heavy bureaucracy that is difficult to navigate and provides unequal opportunities available to urban and rural Aboriginal peoples.

The remainder of this thesis is organized over four additional chapters. Chapter two explains the theoretical approaches that are used to inform this research, beginning with colonialism theory, and then explains human capital theory, while referencing other forms of capital that apply to this study. Chapter two then discusses the research question in more detail, while highlighting the importance of this study, followed by a review of the existing literature on Aboriginal peoples and education. Chapter three describes the methodology of this study, including the sampling method, description of the sample, method of data analysis, and ethical considerations. Chapter four discusses the findings of this study. Chapter five is the concluding chapter, which highlights the significant findings, and discusses the implications of this study.

CHAPTER 2: THEORY and LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter outlines the theoretical approaches used to address the research question, namely colonialism theory and human capital theory. Other forms of capital that apply to this study are also addressed, including cultural and linguistic capital, and social capital. This chapter then discusses the research question in detail, along with the hypotheses and importance of this study. It concludes with an overview of the existing literature on Aboriginal Peoples and education.

2.1 Theory

2.1.1 *Colonialism Theory*

Theories of colonialism represent one of the most widely employed approaches to the explanation of inequalities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in education and in other spheres of social life (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:25). Colonialism has shaped the organization of our society and set in motion a number of factors that propelled Aboriginal peoples to the margins of our society (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:6). Proponents of this theory recognize that much of the conflict Aboriginal peoples experience is rooted in colonialism. A central component of this theoretical perspective focuses on the persisting inequality of the power and resource distribution associated with racial or ethnic subordination (Feagin & Booher-Feagin, 2007:29). This racially-based inequality emphasizes economic stratification and power issues, the role of coercion, segregation, colonization, and institutionalized discrimination in keeping groups on the bottom rungs of the societal ladder.

Governments play a central role in the oppression and exploitation of minorities (Feagin & Booher-Feagin, 2007:52).

Access to education and the outcomes of schooling affect the life chances of Aboriginal peoples in the colonial model (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:115). Colonization in Canada is a long-term effort by the government that takes various forms, and differs in time, by geography and by band. Due to their economic and social suppression, Aboriginal peoples had no control over their education. Under this system, the goals of schooling for the Aboriginal population are intended to serve the needs of the colonizer, not the colonized. Historically, the main goal was to assimilate Aboriginal peoples, and education was considered to be one of the most effective means of achieving this (Perley, 1993:121). The introduction of residential schools enabled colonial authorities to subject Aboriginal children to near total control (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:115).

> "The colonial model's depiction of the school system as an instrument of domination presents a sharp contrast to human capital theory's claim that schooling is a vehicle for social mobility. The analysis of education as a tool for colonization demonstrates that schooling does not exist solely for economic purposes, showing that formal education can be used to suppress as well as nurture the development of human resources" (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:115).

The education of Aboriginal peoples' in Canada today is a direct result of the colonization process. There are many ways in which colonialism in the education system remains apparent. Residential schools played an important role in the colonization process, and the effects of the residential school system are still felt today. Negative

opinions, distrust, and lack of support towards education is a result, which in turn contributes to difficulty in school and lower levels of educational attainment. Many Aboriginal peoples still live on reserves, where they have limited access to schools since the government fails to make sufficient educational facilities available. Furthermore, the government does not provide adequate financial support for post-secondary educational opportunities. Most Aboriginal peoples do not have control over Aboriginal education since they lack self-government. Racism and the notion of inferiority still exist. Aboriginal peoples' traditional ways of knowing and learning are devalued and seen as inferior and therefore, they are excluded from the mainstream education system. Many Aboriginal peoples are still limited to unskilled labour and seasonal work which require little education. As a result of colonialistic attitudes and practices that continue today, Aboriginal peoples are still viewed as inferior and experience inequality in education.

Frideres & Gadacz (2005) consider the process of colonization in seven parts. The first concerns the incursion of the colonizing group into a geographical area. This occurred at the arrival of Europeans in large numbers during the conquest of North America. Later was the development of reserves where Aboriginal peoples were segregated. The second attribute of colonization is its destructive effect on the indigenous group. In Canada, European colonizers attempted to destroy Aboriginal peoples' political, economic, kinship, and, in most cases, religious systems. Education played a large role in achieving this (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:2; Perley, 1993:121). The development of the residential school system served to assimilate Aboriginal peoples

and annihilate their cultures, languages, religion and ways of life. The effects of the residential school system are still apparent in Aboriginal peoples' education today.

The third and fourth aspects of colonization are in the interrelated processes of external political control and Aboriginal economic dependence. Aboriginal self-government was prevented, leaving them in powerless positions. Aboriginal peoples were excluded from participating in the mainstream Canadian economy. Aboriginal peoples were exploited by Europeans, by being limited to providing unskilled, seasonal work. The residential schools also served to ensure that Aboriginal peoples were limited to unskilled seasonal work by restricting the amount and type of education provided. In addition, the federal government discourages the economic development of reserves. As a result, Aboriginal peoples remain economically dependent on the larger society (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:4).

The fifth attribute of colonization is the provision of low-quality social services for the colonized people in areas such as health and education. Inadequate provisions of health and social services is indicated by the low health status, the low educational status, and the extensive welfare dependency of Aboriginal peoples (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:5; Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:8). In the past, the residential school system provided low quality, limited education to Aboriginal students. Aboriginal peoples were only provided with elementary levels of education. They were prohibited from attaining higher levels of education, particularly post-secondary levels. Today, the government continues to inadequately provide educational facilities on reserves, and provides

limited funding for post-secondary educational opportunities. This system maintains social and economic inequality.

The sixth and seventh aspects of colonization relate to social interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and refer to racism and the establishment of a colour-line. Ideologies of biological superiority and inferiority emerge to justify and perpetuate the exploitation of Aboriginal peoples and their resources, to break down their resistance to exploitation, and to deter them from becoming full members of Canadian society (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:5; Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:8). These notions combine to reduce the life chances of Aboriginal peoples and prevent them from attaining higher levels of education. These colonialist enterprises continue to exist today and serve to perpetuate inequalities faced by Aboriginal peoples.

From the time that colonial education was first forced on to Aboriginal peoples, as a group they have had difficulty in school. Colonial education still exists today, and some Aboriginal students continue to have difficulty in school. Evidence of this inequality is seen in higher dropout rates and lower educational attainment (Perley, 1993:118). These low levels of education are passed on between generations, a trend that also occurs among non-Aboriginal people. Apathy was Aboriginal peoples' most frequent reaction to colonial schools. They consider schooling to be irrelevant to their needs since schooling was designed and intended to de-legitimate their cultures and ways of life to introduce a non-Aboriginal culture, a form of genocide. Hostility was also frequent, as parents were often opposed to their children being sent to these schools. Finally, colonial education was perceived as a threat to their societies' continuing

existence. Low educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples can therefore be seen as a reaction to these practices of marginalization and genocide (Perley, 1993:121).

The poor academic performance exhibited by some Aboriginal students is also a reflection of their colonized status in Canadian society. The education system adopted by the dominant group has not been designed to allow the colonized Aboriginal members to succeed in that system and at times it has served to assimilate or annihilate their cultures and ways of life. It is argued that colonial education has actually contributed to the underdevelopment of Aboriginal societies (Perley, 1993:125). Colonial education provided only limited years of low-quality education to Aboriginal peoples, and consisted of domestic and vocational skills. This limits Aboriginal peoples to unskilled labour and seasonal work, increases welfare dependency and prevents them from successfully participating in the mainstream economy.

Despite its advantages as a theory, colonialism offers an incomplete or inadequate explanation of Aboriginal peoples' education and social circumstances in several respects. This approach is best understood as a model, rather than a theory, enabling us to gain a simplified summary of the factors that have produced ongoing inequalities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Once we begin to move beyond this 'shorthand' or vantage point, we must incorporate into our thinking complex interrelationships that cannot fully be included in a colonization framework. It is necessary to understand the historical dynamics that represent significant changes in the nature of colonizing processes over time; strategies of resistance and decolonization among Aboriginal peoples; variations of diversity and change within both Aboriginal and

non-Aboriginal populations; and broader social, economic, and policy frameworks within which these relationships take place. Education has been reassessed more recently in terms of its role and potential for processes of decolonization (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:26). Examples of decolonizing education include Aboriginal controlled schools, and Aboriginal curriculum, language, culture, and Aboriginal teachers. Furthermore, in reviewing colonialism, although it describes historical relationships and macrosystemic relationships well, it does not provide a good direction for local advocacy positions (Perley, 1993:125).

Despite these limitations, colonialism is still a good perspective for explaining educational inequalities of Aboriginal peoples. Colonial education continues today and plays a large role in limiting educational attainment. It is argued that it is not possible to develop an adequate understanding of Aboriginal education and future prospects without sensitivity to colonialism which examines the points where people's lives, identities, options, and choices intersect with social, economic, political, and historical forces (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:29). The inequalities confronting Aboriginal peoples are the direct legacy of colonialism, and they continue to suffer the consequences (Fleras & Elliott, 2007:177). While most Canadians dismiss colonialism as an unfortunate relic of the past, colonialistic attitudes and practices continue to be a reality for Aboriginal peoples at present, particularly in regard to educational inequality (Fleras & Elliott, 2007:186; Hare & Barman, 1998:337). The history of colonial control over Aboriginal education continues to exist and exert its influence over Aboriginal peoples.

2.1.2 *Human Capital Theory*

Human capital theory is a second theory used to interpret the results of this thesis. Human capital theory is an economic model that tries to explain the motivation to undertake further educational and vocational training. It "refers to the acquired skills, knowledge, and abilities of human beings. Underlying the concept is the notion that such skills and knowledge increase human productivity, and that they do so enough to justify the costs incurred in acquiring them" (Hornbeck & Salamon, 1991:3). The theory is predicated on two beliefs. Expenditures (ie. time, tuition fees and effort) on improving human capabilities, such as education, can be considered as investments yielding a positive rate of return. The future income generated justifies the amounts spent on these investments in the short-term (Hornbeck & Salamon, 1991:3; Schultz, 1971:35). This is because what individuals lose in income as they acquire skills and training is gained by higher income and higher status jobs. Prospects for large future earnings play a strong motivating role. In sum, human capital is acquired by means of investing in oneself (Schultz, 1971:48) and the incentive is that a well paying job is obtained in the end. Human capital theory conceptualizes education as an investment which produces a future return for the individual and for society (Hornbeck & Salamon, 1991:7). Individuals benefit through higher income and higher status employment. Societies benefit from having a skilled labour force.

Human capital theory is linked to the status attainment model in sociology. The status attainment model is based on a meritocratic system in which individuals achieve jobs and rewards primarily on the basis of merit. Social status is acquired by individual

effort through competition in an open labour market. Status differences exist because individuals vary in their abilities and motivation to do high level and sometimes stressful employment. This model assumes that all individuals get the same opportunities for education and employment. Therefore, if the opportunities are the same, outcome is determined solely by the effort and talent of the individuals. Failure therefore, is due solely to individuals applying the inappropriate amount of effort to attain adequate skills.

This model views the effects of ascribed characteristics as insignificant since society is deemed to operate as a meritocracy. It would be illogical if a society was organized in a way that privileged certain people because of their ascribed characteristics; productivity would decrease. Accordingly, characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, and identity should have little influence on life outcomes (Duncan, 1961; Blishen, Carroll & Moore, 1987). The status attainment model acknowledges that inequalities do exist, but they can be overcome with determination and effort by individuals to attain credentials needed for employment. The difficulty with this model is that it fails to recognize the systemic barriers that disregard Aboriginal peoples. Racism and government control limit their opportunities for educational and occupational attainment. Despite its limitations, however, human capital theory can be used to explain the organization of Canadian society. If society was not loosely organized in this manner, few people would aspire to higher education and training.

The general social and economic success of any group depends upon the ability of its members to compete on an equal basis with other individuals (Wotherspoon &

Satzewich, 2000:114). The optimal level of human capital investment cannot be achieved without significant involvement of the public education system (Hornbeck & Salamon, 1991:5). Elementary and secondary schools have the primary responsibility for producing a capable work force in this perspective (Hornbeck & Salamon, 1991:3). It is the role of the government to ensure the system is accessible to everyone and is adequately funded. Ideally, in democratic societies such as Canada, all young people receive equivalent education at the primary and secondary levels. To achieve this goal, human capital theory assumes the school system is regulated, not discriminatory, and is free and accessible to all citizens. The educational system is assumed to be the main instrument for acquiring the knowledge and skills that will ensure full and equal participation in Canadian society. This means that those with good skill sets who work hard will succeed. Personal income, social connections and ascribed characteristics should not have an influence on future attainment. Under this system, cultural, linguistic or religious background should also have negligible effects. However, there is a significant difference between how the system works ideally and how it actually works in practice.

Significant evidence demonstrates that educational institutions have maintained a system of structured inequality based on race (Henry & Tator, 2006:200). One example of how the education system works in practice and contributes to inequality is the practice of streaming, where students are placed into various programs and subject areas based on an objective assessment of their 'ability'. High functioning students are streamed into university preparation courses, while those with less talent are sent into

technical/vocational level streams or non-academic streams. This early streaming prevents some students from gaining the secondary credits necessary for higher education upon completion of high school. Streaming is supposed to promote students on an equitable basis, but it remains discriminatory. Educational discrimination is a systemic political problem. Streaming is not random; it is conducted through labelling and based on gender, ethnicity and class. Girls and boys are streamed into particular programmes and subjects. Many racialized groups who have been determined to have lower than average educational attainment continue to be streamed into less advanced programmes. As a result, students from working-class backgrounds fare much worse than middle- and upper-class students, having lower grades, higher drop-out rates and poorer employment opportunities (Curtis, Livingstone & Smaller, 1992). Students from working-class and poor families are labelled as 'slow learners' in elementary school and streamed into 'dead-end' programmes that encourage many of them to drop-out and become excluded from post-secondary education (Curtis, Livingstone & Smaller, 1992). Aboriginal peoples are often streamed based on their racialized status and socioeconomic status. Aboriginal peoples are labelled as 'bad' students since they are seen as 'stupid' and 'incompetent' and are more likely to be placed into lower streams, receiving lower training and levels of education, that result in low-paying jobs. In this way, streaming can have devastating social and economic consequences.

Within human capital theory, income inequality among racialized groups is explained as a result of differences in education (Schultz, 1971:29). Low earnings of racial minorities reflect the failures in investing in human capital rather than on the

system itself (Schultz, 1971:44). Aboriginal peoples' low socioeconomic status is viewed by some as a product of cultural barriers to their educational success. The education and social systems are regarded as fundamentally sound, while reasons for educational failure are individual, such as language, genetic endowment, lifestyle or culture (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:114). In reality, there are systemic barriers in the education system preventing Aboriginal peoples from competing equally with non-Aboriginal people.

The human capital perspective has frequently identified Aboriginal peoples as an underutilized part of the labour force. Canadian society would be more prosperous if Aboriginal peoples could participate as equals in the economy. As the Aboriginal population grows, increasing demands for education systems are made to ensure that Aboriginal peoples are qualified and prepared to enter into the labour market. A common assumption within the human capital approach is that when appropriate forms of education and training are widely available, labour markets can absorb the available human capital while an expanding general pool of knowledge and talent will induce further technological development and economic growth. This is how the Canadian labour market is currently designed- with significant numbers of skilled professionals accompanied by service/support workers. In the case of Aboriginal peoples, like others, the attainment of high levels of educational credentials is believed to exert a strong influence on reducing or even removing gaps in employment and income relative to the non-Aboriginal population (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:19). In short, if the system is

working optimally, growth in the labour market means growth in employment and in the economy without inequality of any groups of people.

Despite the notion that education and economic success should be linked, a human capital approach to education and economic success has limitations. The primary inadequacy of the theory is its assumption of a discrimination- and barrier-free labour market. The theory is premised upon the notion that, with equitable opportunities and resources to promote educational attainment, the most capable persons, regardless of social background, will be available to fill positions requiring skill and qualifications. Such an assumption, however, fails to recognize the importance of structural factors and barriers which systematically restrict educational and occupational opportunities for large segments of the population (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:114; Wotherspoon, 2004:27). These barriers include poverty, racism and sexism. Furthermore, education and training require financial and personal resources which are not available to many people, such as single parents or the poor, even in a supposedly free education system (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:114). Ascribed barriers, such as racial or sexual discrimination can limit the returns on human capital investment by keeping certain classes of workers from acquiring the jobs or the salaries to which they would otherwise be entitled. Critics of the human capital theory have argued that the approach tends to overlook this point; that it ignores or at least downplays the disadvantages that these individuals must overcome in order to be successful in the labour market (Hornbeck & Salamon, 1991:9).

Furthermore, human capital theory tends to offer a description of an 'ideal' state rather than an explanation of social reality. Substantial evidence runs contrary to, or at least makes questionable, the assumption of a meritocratic social structure in which educational achievement and individual effort, and not one's social origins, account for social success or failure. Even when there is a clear relationship between educational achievement and occupational attainment, it is necessary to consider whether schooling reinforces or eradicates social inequalities already in existence. Opportunities for social advancement may be restricted even if we assume that there is an open, fair, and meritorious process by which individuals are allocated to social positions (Wotherspoon, 2004:28). As a result of these limitations, it is argued that the human capital approach serves as a convenient, but incomplete, explanation for Aboriginal peoples' relative lack of economic success (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:114).

Despite these limitations, human capital theory is still a useful and important perspective to consider in this thesis. It describes how the economy works fundamentally. Education is an investment which produces future returns for individuals and society. Formal education has an important role to play in developing the human capital that is needed by individuals and jurisdictions to compete in the knowledge economy (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:79). Increased human capital will reduce or remove inequalities in education, employment and income in the long-run. Where human capital theory is inadequate in explaining the educational inequalities and barriers for Canada's Aboriginal peoples, colonialism addresses some of these inequalities.

2.1.3 *Other Forms of Capital*

There are other forms of capital that apply to educational attainment, which include cultural and linguistic capital, and social capital and can augment the human capital approach to education.

Cultural capital is proficiency in and familiarity with dominant cultural codes and practices, which include linguistic styles, aesthetic preferences, and styles of interaction (Murphy-Kilbride, 2000:5). Bourdieu states that cultural capital consists of familiarity with the dominant culture in a society (Bourdieu, 1973:80; Sullivan, 2001:893). One of the three forms that cultural capital can exist is in the *institutionalized* state which takes the form of educational qualifications and the credentialing system (Dumais, 2002:46; Bourdieu, 1986). The school system rewards students who have cultural capital; the ultimate reward is a form of educational credentials (Dumais, 2002:54; Bourdieu, 1973; Grayson, 2008). In short, those with cultural capital that most closely match that of dominant society will have an 'easier' educational experience.

Linguistic capital is a component of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1973:80; Sullivan, 2001:893; Grayson, 2008:130). Linguistic capital is the ability to understand and use the scholarly language found in the educational setting (Sullivan, 2001:893; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). At any level of schooling, it is difficult for students with limited linguistic capital to understand the 'convoluted' language of their teachers or instructors. Educational success therefore, increases as you become more familiar with scholarly language (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977:73; Grayson, 2008:131).

The education system assumes that everyone has linguistic and cultural capital since it is the responsibility of parents to introduce their children to these forms of capital (Bourdieu 1973: 80). The education system simply reinforces these two types of capital. The possession of linguistic and cultural capital varies with social class and ethnic/national affiliation. Cultural capital then, is comprised of linguistic and cultural competence and a broad knowledge of culture that belongs to members of the majority classes, and is found much less frequently among other classes. This makes it very difficult for students without superior linguistic or cultural capital to succeed in the education system (Bourdieu, 1973; Dumais, 2002:44; Sullivan, 2001:893; Grayson, 2008; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977:73). In sum, academic success is directly dependent upon linguistic and cultural capital. Aboriginal peoples' cultures and languages are different from the mainstream and are devalued. As a result, Aboriginal peoples have low cultural and linguistic capital and in turn, tend to have lower educational success.

Social capital refers to the resources based on group membership, relationships, or social networks. Bourdieu defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986:51). In other words, this network is the product of investment aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term (Bourdieu, 1986:52). In reference to education, social capital is the network of support for individuals. These groups or networks may have various beliefs and values regarding schooling and educational attainment. As a result, educational attainment

depends upon the extent of social capital, and upon how the group the person belongs to values schooling (the support for obtaining educational credentials a person receives or lack of).

Aboriginal peoples have less social capital than non-Aboriginal people. They generally have less social support for obtaining education, and this lack of support may come from the negative experiences of colonial education. In addition, Aboriginal peoples' social networks are not as economically lucrative. As a result, the lack of social capital negatively influences educational attainment.

The role of social, cultural and linguistic capital cannot be ignored when considering educational attainment of any group of people. Cultural capital, linguistic capital, and social capital address the issue of power and structure in society, while human capital theory virtually ignores this issue. In human capital theory, individuals are solely responsible for their educational attainment and the failure to succeed is a result of low levels of effort, engagement and achievement. Conversely, social, cultural and linguistic capital theories argue that there are institutional barriers that influence an individual's life chances. These barriers prevent minority group members from fully utilizing their educational attainment to locate high waged employment. In Canadian society, individuals who are members of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic, migrant, age, religion and disabled minority groups are those most likely to experience challenges in having their educational credentials equally recognized in the labour force. This is because various institutions covertly and systematically discriminate against them. As a result, members of these groups tend to have less cultural, linguistic and social capital.

This in turn negatively affects individual life chances. Despite this difference, cultural, linguistic and social capital contribute to the explanation of how various forms of capital influence educational attainment by adding to human capital theory. While cultural, linguistic and social capital does contribute to educational attainment, this study is unable to measure these forms of capital because of limitations in the dataset.

To summarize, both theories, despite their limitations, provide important contributions to the analysis of Aboriginal peoples' education in Canada. While the theories represent completely different paradigms (human capital theory is a structural functionalist perspective while the colonial model is part of the conflict perspective), they complement each other. Colonialism theory rejects the existence of a meritocratic society and illustrates how education was, and continues to be used to dominate, marginalize, and suppress Aboriginal peoples. It explains the inequalities that Aboriginal peoples experience in the education system and highlights the covert institutionalized barriers that prevent them from achieving academic success. Human capital theory is also important since obtaining higher educational credentials is an investment that generally increases economic well-being and social mobility. It also explains how the education system should work ideally (a system based on equality and meritocracy), and explains the motivations behind the pursuit of higher education. While our society is designed and operates along a human capital framework, it does not mean that it is the best system. Where human capital theory is inadequate in explaining the educational inequalities and barriers for Canada's Aboriginal peoples, colonialism addresses these inequalities by taking a more critical approach including an Aboriginal focus and

experiences. These two theories address Aboriginal peoples' education in Canada. Colonialism theory explains the educational experience of Aboriginal peoples and their exploitation by the Canadian government, and human capital theory explains the meritocratic nature of educational attainment in Canadian society.

The next section discusses the research question, hypotheses, and study justification.

2.2 Research Question and Hypotheses

2.2.1 *Research Question*

This study addresses the following question: what factors contribute to the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada? Along the way, this thesis examines several secondary questions. (1) Is there a gendered component to educational attainment? (2) Does having recognized status influence educational attainment? (3) What factors most influence educational attainment?

2.2.2 *Hypotheses*

H^1 - Women will have higher levels of educational attainment than men. Previous literature (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:118; Statistic Canada, 2008a; Hull 1990) indicates that the proportion of Aboriginal women with post-secondary education is increasing, and they are more likely to have post-secondary education than Aboriginal men.

H^2- Non-Status Indians will have higher levels of educational attainment than Status Indians. Previous literature and studies (Santiago, 1997; Statistics Canada, 2003a) indicate that Status Indians are less likely to complete secondary and post-secondary

education. In addition, colonial control over education is not as extensive against non-Status Indians.

2.2.3 *Justification of Study*

There are many factors that contribute to the educational experiences of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. First, the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples is important because of the long established and continuing educational inequality experienced by Aboriginal peoples. Second, and most importantly, Aboriginal peoples in Canada have the right to education through treaties. These treaty rights are entrenched in the *Canadian Constitution*. Along with the right to education, is the duty of the federal government to provide funding for education (Henderson, 1995:255). The intent of the treaties guarantee an education to Aboriginal peoples equal to that of Canadian society (Stevenson, 1991:229). The circumstances and effects of treaties and funding for education are discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Equality in education is also a human right. As a result, Aboriginal peoples experience discrimination on behalf of the Canadian government.

The growing importance of obtaining higher levels of education for employment is an additional reason for this study. Post-secondary education, is becoming more important in obtaining employment opportunities than before, for all Canadians. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1993:19) identified education as "the single most important issue facing Aboriginal people[s]". Obtaining educational credentials increases an individual's economic well-being, social mobility and quality of life (Ponting, 1997:98).

Changing demographics is another issue worth considering. The numbers of Aboriginal youth and young adults will increase over the next fifteen years. This means more Aboriginal peoples will be of school age than ever before. As larger numbers of young Aboriginal peoples reach the age for post-secondary education and employment, post-secondary education and job opportunities must be more accessible (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:8). Accessibility is needed to create a more equitable society. As a result of this demographic growth, the number of working-aged Aboriginal peoples is expected to represent close to 70% of the Aboriginal population by 2016 (Norris, 1998:225). As a result, "[t]he next generation should have the chance to break the cycle of poverty that has confined Aboriginal people[s] to the margins of Canadian society. Post-secondary education is a critical link in the chain of transformation" (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996:90).

As illustrated by human capital theory, education is an investment for individuals and society. Obtaining educational credentials increases an individual's economic well-being, social mobility and quality of life. Education reduces unemployment and poverty along with associated problems, such as health and crime for example. Formal education is one of the major factors which impact an individual's life chances, especially the chances of breaking out of the grip of colonialism and multi-generational welfare dependency (Ponting, 1997:98). Furthermore, education is a vital tool that contributes to self-worth and self-determination (Hare & Barman, 1998:355). Increased

educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples should therefore reduce or remove inequality in education and income compared to non-Aboriginal Canadians.

Aboriginal peoples' education is an investment for Canadian and Aboriginal society. New prospects for economic and political advancement for Aboriginal peoples is linked to the attainment of formal education (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:112). To implement self-government, Aboriginal professionals will be needed. Preparing Aboriginal peoples to assume the complete range of responsibilities associated with self-governance must be recognized as a top priority in post-secondary education (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). These interrelated processes of external political control and Aboriginal economic dependence are the third and fourth aspects of colonization. Education then, is an investment which benefits the individual, Aboriginal communities, and Canadian society as a whole.

Previous research examines the extent of inequality in the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples by making comparisons to non-Aboriginal people (Santiago, 1997; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2005; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007). Other studies focus on reserves or rural areas since they have the greatest barriers (Ross, 1991; Hull, 1990). Early school leaving and drop-out rates are a common analysis (Kehoe & Echols, 1994; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2005; Gilbert et al, 1993). Determinants of educational attainment generally focus on the educational system itself. Schooling practices and policies, curricula, personnel/teachers, culture conflict with the education system, racism and discrimination, and other in-school factors are frequently analysed (Wotherspoon &

Schissel, 1998; Kirkness, 1992; Kehoe & Echols 1994; Richards & Vining, 2003). The history or colonization of education (particularly residential schools) is also prevalent (Perley, 1993; Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003; Kirkness, 1992; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2005).

This study is not about examining the scope of educational inequality between Aboriginal peoples and the non-Aboriginal population. The purpose of this study is to understand the educational attainment among various groups of Aboriginal peoples and the causes and factors contributing to their educational success. It identifies and examines ascribed factors (such as gender, age, Indian Status, and Aboriginal identity) and attained factors (such as geography, income, and financial assistance) contributing to the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples. By identifying the factors that contribute to educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, the most effective and required policies and programs can be implemented to reduce or eliminate educational inequality. This thesis also gives clarity to myths about Aboriginal peoples and education. The information is collected from Aboriginal peoples themselves from a wide range of age cohorts using the 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. Few studies have utilized the APS, particularly in regard to educational attainment. The APS is a rich source of information on Aboriginal peoples, containing detailed information and covers topics that cannot be found anywhere else (Statistics Canada, 2006). As a result, this study aims to better understand the educational context for Aboriginal peoples.

An overview of the existing literature on Aboriginal peoples and education is provided next. It serves to contextualize my study and to identify how the results can be used to address various gaps in our understanding of education and Aboriginal peoples.

2.3 Literature Review

Research on Aboriginal peoples and educational attainment is large, one of the most predominant concerns of social scientists, policy analysts and governments. Most research however, compares educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples with non-Aboriginal people. It does not examine the factors explaining educational success.

> "Although it is possible for individuals from any given social background to achieve educational success (or failure), there are relatively stable patterns, reflecting such social characteristics as gender, race, class, family support, and religion, that typify achievement and contribution to the likelihood that some people are more likely than others to realize their educational ambitions and to convert their training and credentials into enhanced prospects in other areas of their lives" (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:5).

The 'at-risk' label has been frequently used to categorize learners who have a higher propensity to drop-out of high school or to those exhibiting problems later in life as a result of their failure to complete their education and training. While definitions and characteristics vary, those most likely to be considered 'at risk' include: visible minorities, persons living in poverty, residents of inner-city and less developed rural regions, those who do not speak the dominant school language fluently, single-parent families, and Aboriginal peoples. In addition to being identified as a 'high-risk' group in their own right, Aboriginal peoples tend to have a much higher than average likelihood

of being in several other 'risk' categories simultaneously (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:128). It is important to acknowledge that many persons who are designated 'at-risk' or who leave high school early, do eventually return to school and experience subsequent educational success. In fact, higher than average segments of the Aboriginal population are returning to school or entering post-secondary programs later in life (Statistics Canada, 2003a:18; Santiago, 1997). Among those aged 25 to 29, 14% of off-reserve Aboriginal peoples attended school full-time compared with 11% of the total non-Aboriginal population. Similar trends are found among those aged 30 to 34, where the percentages were 10% for the off-reserve Aboriginal population and 5% for others (Statistics Canada, 2003a:18).

Policy analysts have identified in-school factors (practices and policies, curriculum and racism), educational governance and resources (organization, administration, and financing of education) and community factors (participation and involvement in schools by parents, Elders and other community members) as determinants of educational success among Aboriginal students (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:132; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). The involvement of Aboriginal Elders to serve as role models can decrease racism since their presence contributes to understanding of cultural plurality. The prevalence of factors among the Aboriginal population, such as higher than average rates of poverty, accidents, disease, injury, incarceration, lone-parent family structures, and limited access to housing, child care, and other vital services, contribute to reduced prospects for education, employment, and income (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:112). If human

capital theory worked the way it is supposed to, these factors would not matter, only individual merit would.

2.3.1a *Factors Contributing to the Educational Attainment of Aboriginal Peoples*

This section examines factors related to the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples as it is the focus of this thesis. This section discusses gender, status, treaty rights to education, Aboriginal identity, and the history of Aboriginal education including residential schools.

Between 1996 and 2001, the number of Aboriginal men and women with less than high school education decreased[2]. During this time, there were also significant increases in the share of Aboriginal women with post-secondary education as compared to Aboriginal men. The modal education category for Aboriginal men is lower than a high school diploma. This is one of the least educated groups in Canadian society. In general, educational success is higher among women than it is among men (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:118), but women remain behind non-Aboriginal people. Women are more likely than men to have graduated from high school. There are, however, some success stories among Aboriginal peoples. In regard to post-secondary education, Aboriginal men are more likely than women to have trade qualifications (20% versus 12%, respectively). Aboriginal women however, are considerably more likely than men to have college diplomas (18% versus 11%) or university degrees (9% versus 6%). Overall, Aboriginal women (35.9%) are more likely

[2] Because of changes in the questions, comparisons between 2001 and 2006 Census are not possible for high school education, only comparisons for university degrees can be made.

than men (33.0%) to have post-secondary credentials (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:118; Hull, 1990:5; Statistics Canada, 2008b).

Status Indians tend to drop-out of school earlier than other school leavers. Generally, Status Indians have lower levels of education than non-Status Indians. Status Indians are more likely than non-Status Indians to end schooling before grade nine and are therefore, less likely to complete secondary school (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:132; Statistics Canada, 2008a). With respect to post-secondary education, one study finds that Status Indians are more likely to attend trade and non-university programs than non-Status Indians, and are also less likely to complete their post-secondary programs (Santiago, 1997). Statistics Canada (2008a) finds that non-Status Indians are more likely to have trade school (14% and 13% respectively), and non-university credentials (20% and 19% respectively) as their highest level of schooling. The differences between Status and non-Status Indians disappear with university education. Statistics Canada finds that the percentages of those with university credentials are the same for Status and non-Status Indians (4% for 'below Bachelor's level' and 9% for any university degree for both groups). The federal government acknowledges responsibility for providing services and programs but only for Status Indians and the Inuit which means non-Status Indians, Métis and other non-recognized groups may be left behind.

Education at all levels is widely regarded as a treaty right, as recognized in the *Canadian Constitution*. All the numbered treaties promised support for education in perpetuity. Unfortunately, there is not enough money allocated to education to honour existing treaty commitments. The federal government asserts that it cannot fund such

educational success, and has begun to advance the idea of post-secondary education as a privilege. However, it is further argued that post-secondary education is not a 'privilege' as it is an expected part of a meritocratic society functioning under human capital theory, nor is it free, since Aboriginal peoples' lands financed their education (Henderson, 1995:255; Stevenson, 1991:229). Due to the lack of funding, many students who reside off-reserves do not receive post-secondary education funding to which they are entitled. Treaty nations argue that every member should be entitled to the benefits, regardless of their place of residence. Federal government policy has contributed to post-secondary education funding for Aboriginal students who have status under the *Indian Act*, whether or not they have treaty entitlements (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996) but have not assumed that all Treaty Aboriginal peoples receive adequate educational funding. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, federal government funding capped post-secondary education funds at a time of increasing demand, which resulted in a waiting list of qualified Aboriginal students seeking post-secondary education (Ponting, 1997:100; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). The Assembly of First Nations (2008b) estimates that 10,000 Aboriginal students who are eligible and hoping to attend post-secondary education are on waiting lists because of under-funding. The inadequacy of education funding was one of the most pressing concerns Aboriginal youth and many leaders brought before the Commission (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

How does educational attainment differ by Aboriginal identity? Métis are most likely to have a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling (24%), followed by

North American Indian (20%) then Inuit (13%). This pattern is generally found in all levels of educational attainment. Half (50%) of Métis have completed post-secondary education, followed by 42% of North American Indians, and 36% of Inuit. Overall, Métis are more likely to have completed high school and any type of post-secondary education, followed by North American Indian, then Inuit (Statistics Canada, 2008a; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:115). As a result, Métis have the highest levels of education, followed by North American Indians, then Inuit.

2.3.1b *Residential Schools and the History of Aboriginal Peoples' Education*

The history of education and the legacy of residential schools in Canada is imperative and has a significant influence on the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada today. The residential school system played an important role in colonialism, and colonial education continues today. As a result, colonialism theory also helps us understand the history of Aboriginal peoples' education and the residential school system. It is because of this great importance and effect that residential schools and the history of Aboriginal peoples' education is discussed.

Residential schools were established in Canada starting in the 1890s. Since that time, over 150,000 Aboriginal children attended these schools until 1973 (Assembly of First Nations, 2008c). At its peak, there were 82 Indian Residential Schools (IRS) operating in Canada (Assembly of First Nations, 2008d). Residential schooling is a result of colonialism and was designed to assimilate Aboriginal children into a Euro-Canadian culture and economic system by removing any traces of their language and culture (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:35; Hare & Barman, 1998:331).

The federal government and the churches were responsible for the implementation and administration of the residential schools; Aboriginal communities were not consulted nor were they expected to participate in any meaningful way (Milloy, 1999:59). These schools were off-reserve boarding institutions that provided training for boys and girls, under the supervision of non-Aboriginal teachers isolated from the 'influence of their parents'. Under these conditions, the children would "imperceptibly acquire the manners, habits and customs of civilized life" (Milloy, 1999:13). Parents were persistently reluctant to send their children to the schools. An amendment to the *Indian Act* in 1920 made it mandatory for every child between the ages of 7-15 to attend these schools, with penalties of fines or imprisonment for non-compliance (Milloy, 1999:70).

The conditions of the residential schools were atrocious. Children were forbidden to speak their language and received harsh punishment if caught. They were isolated from their parents and siblings. Only basic education was provided, focusing on domestic skills and religion. Aboriginal children spent little time in the classroom since they were expected to carry out chores and participate in student labour to help keep the schools running (Milloy, 1999:66). This emphasis on vocational skills and on moral training contributed to the children's academic failure, since the children were barely being educated in ways that would allow them to participate in Canadian society as equals (Hare & Barman, 1998:337).

Students were overworked, underfed, and inadequately clothed. They were housed in unsanitary quarters, since they were badly built and ill-maintained. Aboriginal

children suffered the consequences of poor nutrition, which included vast amounts of disease and death. There was a lack of adequate medical services and tubercular disease became epidemic (Milloy, 1999:52). As a result, children in the schools were dying in large numbers. At the time, few non-Aboriginal people cared to question these practices.

Abuse was a persistent phenomenon which consisted of emotional, physical, and sexual torture. As a result, hundreds of children ran away. Runaways often died or were injured along the way home (Milloy, 1999:140). Some children even tried to escape from the conditions within the schools through suicide (Milloy, 1999:288). As a result of the conditions of residential schools, it has been estimated that 50% of the children did not survive (Milloy, 1999:51).

Although residential schools no longer exist, their legacy endures. The policies and practices of residential schools have had a devastating effect on individuals, families, and communities. For many families, negative attitudes toward schools today are grounded in their own experience or that of parents and grandparents who attended these institutions (Hare & Barman, 1998:331). It is hardly surprising that residential school survivors would be reluctant to send their own children to schools controlled by the government that had previously tried to annihilate them. In 1991, Statistics Canada estimated that there were approximately 105,300 former residential school children survivors. By 2004, that number had dropped to approximately 87,500 (Assembly of First Nations, 2008d) as more succumbed to early deaths.

The legacy of the residential schools is one of cultural conflict, alienation, poor self-conception and lack of preparation for independence, for jobs, and for life in general (Kirkness, 1992:12). As a consequence of the residential school history, education is feared, and this distrust is manifested in the high absenteeism rates of their children and, in some communities, in their own lack of support for their children's schooling (Ponting, 1997:98). The experiences and conditions of the residential school system directly contributes to lower levels of education obtained by Aboriginal peoples.

The federal educational system left the average Aboriginal student with only seven years of formal education (Henderson, 1995:254). In a society premised on human capital, this meant continued exploitation. Aboriginal students were long prohibited by law from going beyond the elementary grades (Hare & Barman, 1998:338). Aboriginal students did not start receiving any financial assistance for post-secondary education from the Indian department until the late 1950s. There were no funds available for this purpose (Stevenson, 1991:225). Furthermore, it was not until the 1960s that Aboriginal peoples were given the right to leave the reserve, and obtain formal post-secondary education (Lanceley, 1991:236). Until 1968, those who attended post-secondary institutions automatically lost their Indian Status, and were forbidden to live with their families on reserves. They were exiled to remote rural residences and their right to associate culturally with their people was denied (Henderson, 1995:255; Stevenson, 1991:225). These measures served to prevent any desires on the part of Aboriginal students to attain higher levels of education with federal support (Stevenson, 1991:226).

Considerable attention has been given to residential schools because they represent an important era in Aboriginal history which provides an understanding of the issues that confront Aboriginal peoples today (Hare & Barman, 1998:344).

2.3.2 *Factors Contributing to the Educational Attainment of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal People*

What characteristics influence a high level of education? These include: income, health, financial assistance, family status and obligations, geographic location, age, mobility, housing conditions, and racism, which are discussed here.

Income is strongly associated with academic results for everyone, regardless of their Aboriginal heritage. As a social group who occupy a generally disadvantaged socio-economic position, Aboriginal peoples face several obstacles to educational success (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:139). Students from low-income families are less likely to complete secondary school, since they are twice as likely to drop-out of high school than children from higher income families (Ross, 1991:1; Hull, 1990:5). For Aboriginal students, poverty has a greater influence on dropping-out of high school (Ross, 1991:9). Living in low-income circumstances impedes school readiness of children, reduces the likelihood of attending university and increases the likelihood of living in low-income circumstances as an adult (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:15). Furthermore, poverty increases the risk of hunger and nutritional disorders, low self-esteem, ill health, attention deficits, and repeated school absences, among other problems. These, in turn, contribute to low educational achievements and increased chances of dropping-out of school. Poor economic status is also associated with weaker

preparation before entering school, less support for students in school, and disruptions such as hunger, family violence, and mobility. Low socio-economic status is also more strongly associated with poor educational outcomes than any other variable (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:134).

Poor health, frequently the result of poverty, is also a strong contributor to low educational attainment among all children. Because of health problems, there is a fairly predictable path leading to poor school performance, failure and dropping-out. In some cases poor health and diseases lead to extended and recurrent absences from school. Inadequate diets lead to a lack of attention and an inability to concentrate, which causes students to fall behind in their studies, become disinterested, and possibly drop-out (Ross, 1991).

The number of Aboriginal students living in families receiving financial assistance has more than quadrupled since 1981 to an estimated 25,000 in 2000 (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:107). The matter of financial assistance has a significant influence on individuals' chances of attending and completing post-secondary educational studies. Since most Aboriginal students do not come from socio-economic backgrounds where their parents can contribute financially, they have to rely on student loans to finance their education which is a serious deterrent for many potential students (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). The federal government has been the most important source of financial assistance for Status Indian and Inuit students but does not provide enough financial support. In some instances, Métis organizations, provincial governments and corporate donors have established bursaries and scholarships, but

these are minimal relative to tuition and living costs and generally less than what Status Indian and Inuit students are entitled to. For Métis and Aboriginal peoples without strong ties to their communities of origin, funding is limited and rarely available. Most must take out loans to pay for their education (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

Other issues, external to funding, can also negatively affect educational attainment. Competing priorities like child care and family obligations on a limited budget interfere with the time and energy that an individual has to devote to educational studies (Calliou, 1997:232; Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:139). A majority of Aboriginal students have family responsibilities and many —mostly women — are single parents. Of all Aboriginal single parents, 81.6% are women and 18.4% are men. As a result, reliable child care and other support services are often essential to a student's academic success (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Statistics Canada, 2004). Discrimination on the basis of race and youth combined with early parenthood is often overlooked in schools. Incidentally, young mothers bear the brunt of such animosity, much more so than young fathers (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:83).

In terms of geographic location, the more isolated the place of residence, the greater its negative effect on education. The highest educational levels are found among people living in large cities (Hull, 1990:7). Many students live in remote or isolated areas that require them to relocate for education programs even at the secondary level of education; this may not be feasible if a person has family responsibilities and financial

obligations. Many Aboriginal students simply cannot relocate to the urban centres for education opportunities, therefore many rural or reserve students are disadvantaged as a result (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). On average, 26% of those living in an urban area, and 25% of those living in a rural area had completed high school nationally (Statistics Canada, 2008b). Approximately one-quarter (26%) of the Canadian population aged 25 to 64 living in an urban area in 2006 have a university degree. This is more than twice the proportion of 11% among those living in rural communities (Statistics Canada, 2008b). There are also differences in educational attainment among on and off-reserve areas for Aboriginal peoples. For those living on-reserve, 50% have less than high school diploma, 15% have a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling, and 4% have a university degree. For those living off-reserve, 30% have less than high school diploma, 24% have a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling, and 9% have a university degree (Statistics Canada, 2008a). In short, compared to non-Aboriginal people, Aboriginal peoples have lower levels of education.

Those who are younger are more likely to complete secondary school than those who are aged 45-64 (Statistics Canada, 2008b; Santiago, 1997). Aboriginal students who are enrolled in post-secondary studies are older than non-Aboriginal students. Approximately half of Aboriginal students are at least 25 years of age, compared with the national median age of between 20 and 21 (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). Age differences can be found among the type of post-secondary education (trade qualifications vs. university for example) (Statistics Canada, 2008a; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:117). The

proportion of Aboriginal peoples with post-secondary credentials is noticeably higher among the younger cohorts, as compared with those aged 55 to 64. However, in comparing those aged 54 and younger, those who are older have higher levels of education. In other words, as age increases so does levels of educational attainment up to the 55-64 age group (Statistics Canada, 2008a; Statistics Canada, 2008b; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007). It is important to note that this age trend is found among all Canadians, since post-secondary education has increased in all demographic categories over the past four decades (Statistics Canada, 2008a; Statistics Canada, 2008b). There are improvements in the educational attainment of younger age groups, regardless of ethnicity (Santiago, 1997:5).

Aboriginal peoples are highly mobile. Reasons for migrating to cities are numerous, but often reflect a combination of 'push' factors (lack of resources, opportunity, or excitement) and 'pull' forces (employment, education, and lifestyle) (Fleras & Elliott, 2007:174). Status Indians, young adults, and women are the most mobile. Participation in, and completion of post-secondary education is a factor that is associated with geographical movement (Norris, 1998:184). Among Status Indians, migrants were almost twice as likely as non-migrants to be attending school (Ponting, 1997:94). This migration pattern to the cities is also seen among non-Aboriginal people, just not to the same extent (Statistics Canada, 2008a).

Inadequate housing conditions have an adverse influence on the life chances of Aboriginal individuals. Overcrowding[3] constitutes a significant interference with a

[3] Crowding is defined as 1.0 or more people living per room.

student's ability to concentrate on his/her studies, which in turn can produce poor academic performance and either dropping-out of school or not being admitted to post-secondary institutions (Ponting, 1997:97; Ross, 1991:14). There is evidence to suggest that overcrowding is also a significant issue for Aboriginal students. In all regions of the country, the homes of Aboriginal peoples in non-reserve areas are more crowded than the homes of non-Aboriginal Canadians. Seven percent of the total Canadian off-reserve population live in crowded conditions. Among Aboriginal peoples in off-reserve areas, the proportion is 17% (Statistics Canada, 2003a:24).

As previously discussed, several factors have contributed to many young Aboriginal peoples leaving the school system early. The most common reason that young Aboriginal peoples aged 15 to 19 dropped out of secondary school was that they were bored. One-fifth (20%) reported this reason. Approximately 15% said they left school because they wanted to work. Among women in this age group, one-quarter (25%) additionally cited pregnancy or the need to care for children as a reason for dropping-out of school (Statistics Canada, 2003a:18; Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:97). Family responsibilities and finances topped the list of reasons among the Aboriginal off-reserve population for not finishing post-secondary studies. Family responsibilities were cited by 24% of individuals aged 25 to 44, while 22% of people cited financial reasons. These reasons differed among men and women in both age groups (Statistics Canada, 2003a:19).

A growing body of evidence from racial-minority students, parents, teachers, and academics document the influence of racism experienced by both racial-minority

educators and students (Henry & Tator, 2006:225; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). Racism limits the academic progress and restricts the life chances of students. For minority students, schools and the university can be excluding, non-supportive, and even hostile environments, where professors and fellow students express racist attitudes and opinions (Henry & Tator, 2006:226; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

The effect of racism is much different for Aboriginal peoples than for other marginalized groups. Aboriginal students face considerable discrimination. They are exposed daily to direct discrimination from teachers and other students, and repeatedly encounter negative stereotypes and racism that further contributes to difficulties in achieving positive self-esteem and greater levels of educational and occupational success. Lower marks and a tendency to drop-out at an early age is a common result (Frideres & Gadacz, 2005:113; Ponting, 1998:280).

To summarize, key determinants of educational success and failure among Aboriginal peoples, derived from the literature, are in relation to five themes – culture, personnel, resources, governance, and community linkages (Wotherspoon & Schissel, 1998:6).

> "Aboriginal students want to do well, and have high aspirations that require educational success, but they face continual reminders that their participation in schools may often be somewhat fragile as they are confronted with situations at home, in their communities, and at school that may lead to lowered performance and expectations, withdrawal, or failure" (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:104).

The next chapter describes the methodology of this study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used in this research. The first section discusses the sampling method, followed by a description of the sample used in this study. In the third section, the data analysis and technique is explained, followed by the operationalization of variables used in the analyses. The chapter concludes by addressing and discussing the ethical considerations of this research.

3.1 Sampling Method

The source of data for this thesis is the 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. The Aboriginal Peoples Survey is a post-censal survey, meaning that respondents were identified and selected based upon their responses to the 2001 Census. Individuals included in the APS target population are those who indicated any of the following identities in the Census: that they are an Aboriginal person (that is, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit); that they are a member of an Indian Band/First Nation; that they are a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian; or that they have Aboriginal ancestry (Statistics Canada, 2006:6). The unit of analysis is the individual and all members of selected households were interviewed. Proxy-reporting was allowed only in special circumstances (Statistics Canada, 2003b:29).

Data collection for the Aboriginal Peoples Survey's took place between September 2001 and June 2002. The survey used both a personal interview and telephone interview approach. Collection for the 2001 APS was conducted in two phases: Phase I focuses on the Aboriginal identity population. This consists of persons who consider themselves to be of Aboriginal heritage. Phase II focuses on people who

reported that they had Aboriginal ancestry, but who did not report an Aboriginal identity[4]. Phase II respondents were not used in this study, since these individuals do not consider themselves to be Aboriginal persons. Two sample designs were used in Phase I, one for Aboriginal peoples living "on-community" and another one for Aboriginal peoples living "off-community". "Off-community" consists of all non-reserve rural and urban areas (Statistics Canada, 2003b:12). The APS "on-community" data was collected through personal interviews, and the APS "off-community" data was collected mostly though telephone interviews. The Phase II sample relied strictly on telephone interviewing (Statistics Canada, 2003b:29).

The Aboriginal Peoples Survey is a probabilistic survey, which means that a random sample was selected from the respondents from the 2001 Census to represent the target population. The average length of the APS interview was 30 minutes for the core portion[5]. In addition to being conducted in English and French, interviews were administered in several Aboriginal languages. The total response rate of the Aboriginal Peoples Survey was 84.1% (Statistics Canada, 2006:7). However, since the Aboriginal Peoples Survey is post-censal, if the community or individual did not respond to the 2001 Census, then it was not possible to include them in the APS (Statistics Canada, 2003b:35). Out of the 145 First Nations communities selected for the APS, 22 are not included, either because survey collection was not permitted or was interrupted before it could be completed (Statistics Canada, 2003b:35).

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[4] The phase II group report that they do not consider themselves to be an Aboriginal person, but they do have ancestors who are Aboriginal. These people are excluded from this study, as they consider themselves as non-Aboriginal people.

[5] Some respondents also completed a Métis or Arctic supplement if applicable.

3.2 Description of Sample

The 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) is intended to collect data on the lifestyles and living conditions of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. This is the second time the Aboriginal Peoples Survey has been conducted by Statistics Canada; the first time was Fall 1991 (Statistics Canada, 2006:2). The primary objective of the 2001 APS is to provide data on the social and economic conditions of Aboriginal peoples and to learn more about their health, language, employment, income, schooling, housing, and mobility (Statistics Canada, 2006:4).

While the APS collects data from child, adult, on- and off-reserve Aboriginal peoples, this study focuses on the information from the adult core questionnaire that is administered to the adult population aged 15 years old and over living off reserves. There are several reasons why the off-reserve adult population is the best population sample to address my research question. First, 80% of Aboriginal peoples live off-reserve (Statistics Canada, 2006:3). Second, the off-reserve population includes a wider range of Aboriginal identities including Métis, Inuit, and those without official Indian Status. These characteristics are important in this analysis, as they provide a more holistic picture of the Aboriginal population. Third, there is a much greater access to all levels of education for Aboriginal peoples living off-reserve. Finally, a significant number of reserves did not participate in this research, making that part of the sample less representative.

There are several limitations of this sample. First, on-reserve Aboriginal peoples, those who have some of the greatest barriers in obtaining education are excluded from

the study. Second, the APS interviewed residents of private dwellings in the ten provinces and three territories. All residents of collective dwellings (including lodging or rooming houses, hotels, motels, tourist homes, nursing homes, hospitals, staff residences, communal quarters (military camps), work camps, prisons, missions, group homes and so on) were excluded from the survey. These may also be individuals who experience significant barriers in educational attainment. In short, my study may over-estimate educational attainment. Third, in terms of geography, the province the respondent lives in is not provided in the public-use data, in order to maintain confidentiality (Statistics Canada, 2006:12). The geography indicator is limited to identifying main census metropolitan areas (CMA), other urban, other rural, and Arctic areas. As a result, provincial comparisons in educational attainment cannot be conducted. Finally, Aboriginal ethnic group ancestries cannot be disaggregated, as this data is not available[6]. Since this is a quantitative study, Aboriginal peoples are grouped into North American Indian, Métis, or Inuit (multiple variants of these three or 'other' are the only other categories). The government also groups Aboriginal peoples into Status and non-Status Indians. It is important to note that these are the political categorizations of Aboriginal peoples, which would explain why government conducted research uses these categories.

Despite these limitations, the off-reserve adult Aboriginal population is the best population sample to analyse to determine the factors contributing to the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Most importantly, those living in rural areas

[6] For example, differences between Samson Cree and Sioux cannot be compared.

will have similar barriers as those living on-reserve in regard to access to education (although not of the same magnitude) (Statistics Canada, 2008b).

While the total number of people participating in the APS off-reserve adult survey is 29,592, the number of people included in this analysis is 15,745[7]. In this analysis, 45.2% (N=7,124) are male and 54.8% (N=8,621) are female. Approximately forty percent (41.3%) are Status Indians (Treaty/Registered) (N=6,507) while 56.1% are non-Status Indians (non- Treaty/Registered) (N=8,826)[8]. Just over forty percent (43.6%) are North American Indian (N=6,867), 40.9% are Métis (N=6,440), and 8.5% are Inuit (N=1,331)[9].

The dependent variable used to measure educational attainment in the present study is highest level of schooling (HLOS). The possible values range from 'no schooling' (N=95) to 'university degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level' (N=186) as the highest level of educational attainment.

Bivariate analyses with the main independent variables indicate that, the modal category of highest level of education is less than a high school diploma (N=4,530), followed by some post-secondary education (N=2,983). Table 3.1 outlines the distribution of cases along the dependent variable.

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[7] Certain respondents in the APS did not self-identify as an Aboriginal person (that is North American Indian, Métis or Inuit), yet they were included in the Aboriginal Peoples Survey. This could be because while they did not consider themselves to be an Aboriginal person, they may have Aboriginal ancestors, be a Treaty or Registered Indian or a member of a band or First Nation. Since these people do not consider themselves to be an Aboriginal person, they are excluded from this analysis, as their experiences with education may be more similar to those of the non-Aboriginal population and not that of Aboriginal peoples (N=3,489). The remainder of those excluded belong to the 15-24 (N=7,630) and 55 and over age groups (N=3,984). The younger group is excluded because they are most likely to still be in school. The older group is excluded because of their overall number in the study.

[8] The remaining respondents are missing as status was unknown or not stated.

[9] The remaining respondents reported other and/or multiple identity.

Table 3.1: Highest Level of Schooling

Highest Level of Schooling	%	N
No Schooling	0.6%	95
Less than High School diploma	**29.7%**	**4,530**
High School diploma	14.1%	2,145
Some post-secondary	19.6%	2,983
Diploma or certificate from trade school	12.7%	1,938
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	15.7%	2,388
University certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level	1.7%	259
Bachelor's degree	4.7%	717
University degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level	1.2%	186
Total	100%	15,241

There are gender differences in levels of education. Nearly fifteen percent (14.2%) of men (N=983), and 13.9% are women (N=1,162) have a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling. Women are more likely to have some post-secondary education (21.7% vs. 17.0% for men) and a certificate, diploma or degree from any post-secondary institution than men, with the exception of trade school credentials where 17.1% are men (N=1,181) and 9.1% are women (N=757). In regard to status, of those with a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling, 15.1% are non-Status Indians (N=1,295) and 12.4% are Status Indians (N=782). Non-Status Indians are more likely to have a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree (with the exception of a

Bachelor's degree). Generally, Status Indians have lower levels of education than non-Status Indians. A test of significance indicates that gender and status have a significant relationship with highest level of schooling[10].

In regards to Aboriginal identity, of those with a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling, 17.2% are Métis (N=1,069), 12.5% are North American Indian (NAI) (N=829) and 8.0% are Inuit (N=103). Overall, Métis are more likely to have completed any type of post-secondary education, followed by North American Indian, then Inuit. However, at the Bachelor's level, those who are North American Indian are slightly more likely (4.9%) then Métis (4.7%) to have achieved this as their highest level of schooling,[11] while Inuit are further behind. Table 3.2 outlines the distribution of highest level of schooling by gender, status and Aboriginal identity.

[10] Gender and status have significance levels $p<0.01$.
[11] At all university levels, the figures for Métis and North American Indian are almost tied.

Table 3.2: Highest Level of Schooling by Gender, Status, and Aboriginal Identity

	Gender		Status		Identity		
Highest Level of Schooling	Male	Female	Status	Non-Status	NAI	Métis	Inuit
No Schooling	0.8%	0.5%	0.4%	0.8%	0.5%	0.3%	3.2%
Less than High School diploma	33.1%	26.9%	32.1%	28.2%	30.6%	25.7%	47.8%
High School diploma	14.2%	13.9%	12.4%	15.1%	12.5%	17.2%	8.0%
Some post-secondary	17.0%	21.7%	22.6%	17.4%	22.4%	17.3%	15.8%
Diploma or certificate from trade school	17.1%	9.1%	11.1%	13.9%	11.3%	14.5%	10.8%
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	12.1%	18.6%	13.8%	17.0%	14.8%	17.2%	11.7%
University certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level	1.3%	2.1%	1.6%	1.8%	1.7%	1.9%	1.4%
Bachelor's degree	3.3%	5.8%	4.9%	4.6%	4.9%	4.7%	1.2%
University degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level	1.1%	1.3%	1.0%	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%	0.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total N	6,906	8,335	6,289	8,567	6,646	6,221	1,295

Those with less than a high school diploma have low incomes. Nearly 43% (42.5%) earn 'less than $5,000' (N=1,013). A majority (15.0%) of those with a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling earn $20,000-$20,999 (N=371). A majority of those with post-secondary credentials have incomes of $40,000 or more (with the exception of 'diploma or certificate from other non-university institution'). Generally, those with higher levels of income have higher levels of education[12].

When comparing age, the majority (33.6%) of those without high school diplomas are older, between the ages of 45-54 (N=1,277). Of those with high school

[12] Table A.1 in the appendix outlines the distribution of highest level of schooling by income.

diplomas, 15.0% are aged 25-34 (N=849), 14.2% are aged 35-44 (N=818), and 12.6% are aged 45-54 (N=487). Those with diplomas or certificates from trade school are most likely (14.2%) to be 45-54 years old (N=540). Those with a diploma or certificate from another non-university institution are most likely (17.1%) to be younger, aged 35-44 (N=988). Those with a Bachelor's degree are most likely (5.0%) to be even younger, aged 25-34 (N=281)[13].

In regards to geographic indicator, those with a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling are most likely (14.8%) to be living in other urban area (N=608), followed by 14.7% living in census metropolitan areas (N=764), and 14.5% living in other rural area (N=660). Generally, individuals with any type of post-secondary education are most likely to be living in CMA, followed by other urban area, then other rural area[14]. Overall, those living in a CMA have the highest levels of education[15].

3.3 Data Analysis

Ordinary least squares regression analysis is used to determine the factors contributing to the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Main independent variables used include gender, status, age, Aboriginal identity, total income and geographic location. Other variables included in the analyses are mobility, received financial assistance, reasons why respondents did not continue or finish school (high school and/or post-secondary school), family status, overall health status, and residential school experience.

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[13] Table A.2 in the appendix outlines the distribution of highest level of schooling by age group.
[14] The remaining respondents live in the 'Arctic' region.
[15] Table A.3 in the appendix outlines the distribution of highest level of schooling by geographic area.

Four models are constructed: (1) Female Status, (2) Female non-Status, (3) Male Status, and (4) Male non-Status respondents. These are used to test the hypotheses discussed in chapter two. There are three main reasons for creating these four models: (1) previous literature indicates that gender and status have significant influences on educational attainment among Aboriginal peoples (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007; Hull, 1990; Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000; Santiago, 1997; Statistics Canada, 2008b). (2) Univariate analyses in this study illustrate significant differences between gender and status in educational attainment. (3) Status is controlled in order to deal with the interaction with 'Aboriginal identity population by group'.

3.4 Operationalization of Variables

a) Highest Level of Schooling

The dependent variable used to measure educational attainment in this analysis is highest level of schooling (HLOS). The values range from 'no schooling' (HLOS=1), 'less than high school diploma' (HLOS=2), 'high school diploma' (HLOS=3), 'some post-secondary' (HLOS=4), 'diploma or certificate from trade school' (HLOS=7), 'diploma or certificate from other non-university institution' (HLOS=8), 'university certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level'(HLOS=9), 'Bachelor's degree' (HLOS=10), 'university degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level' (HLOS=11). According to Statistics Canada, highest level of schooling refers to the highest certificate, diploma or degree completed based on a hierarchy according to the order above, which is generally related to the amount of time spent 'in-class'. Each person is classified according to the highest level completed. For post-secondary schooling, a university education is considered to

be a higher level of schooling than a college education, while a college education is considered to be a higher level of education than in the trades (Statistic Canada, 2008b).

b) Gender

Gender (IDQ02Sex) is included since there are gender differences in educational attainment. In this study, gender is a control variable, which has values of male (IDQ02Sex=1) and female (IDQ02Sex=2).

c) Registered Indian Status

Status (Treaty/Registered) is included since Status Indians have entitlements and financial assistance provided to them in regard to education as part of their treaties. In this study status is also a control variable, which has values of 'yes' (IDQ03TRT=1), 'no' (IDQ03TRT=2), and 'don't know' (IDQ03TRT=3).

d) Aboriginal Identity Population by Group

The variable Aboriginal identity population by group (IDENTGM) is included since educational attainment varies among Aboriginal identity. Statistics Canada and the government recognize three main groups of Aboriginal peoples: North American Indian (NAI), Métis, and Inuit. As a result, the groups of identities provided in the APS include: 'Non-Inuit (Arctic only)' (IDENTGM= 0), 'Single identity: North American Indian' (IDENTGM= 1), 'Single identity: Métis' (IDENTGM= 2), 'Single identity: Inuit' (IDENTGM= 3), 'Multiple identity: North American Indian and Métis' (IDENTGM= 4), 'Other multiple identity' (IDENTGM= 5), 'Other (unspecified) Aboriginal identity population'

(IDENTGM= 8) and 'not part of Aboriginal identity population' (IDENTGM=9)[16]. Three dummy variables were created for Aboriginal identity population by group (IDENTGM) to use in the regression analysis; one for North American Indian (IdentityD1NAI=1; else=0), which combines 'Non-Inuit (Arctic only)' and single NAI; one for Métis (IdentityD2Metis=1; else=0); and one for Inuit (IdentityD3Inuit=1; else=0).

e) Total Income

Total income is included since this is an important factor contributing to educational attainment, particularly with post-secondary education. Total income is a categorical variable and is defined as: 'less than $5,000' (TOTINCC=1), '$5,000 - $9,999' (TOTINCC=2), '$10,000 - $14,999' (TOTINCC=3), '$15,000 - $19,999' (TOTINCC=4), '$20,000 - $29,999' (TOTINCC=5), '$30,000 - $39,999' (TOTINCC=6), and '$40,000 or more' (TOTINCC=7).

f) Age

Age is included in this analysis since younger people have higher levels of education than those who are older. Respondents aged 15-24 and 55 and over are excluded from the analysis, leaving those aged 25-54. This is done for two reasons. Those aged 15-24 may still be in school, and as a result it is premature to measure their highest level of education. The 25-54 age group is commonly the most active in the labour market. Although they may return to school as adults, they are not as likely to be in school as those who are younger. According to the APS, 17% of those aged 25-34 are

[16] 'Other (unspecified) Aboriginal identity population' indicates that a person has not identified as Aboriginal but has reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian or a member of an Indian Band or First Nation. 'Non-Inuit' refers to any response other than 'Single identity: Inuit' in the Arctic region. Those who indicated that they are 'not part of Aboriginal identity population' are excluded from this study.

currently attending school, compared to 65% for those aged 15-19. Furthermore, those who are 55 years old and over would have had a much different educational experience, especially with increase in likelihood that they may have attended residential or industrial schools. The educational attainment of this age group, regardless of ethnicity, would be much different for those belonging to the younger age cohorts, as completing high school and/or achieving post-secondary credentials was much less common and necessary as it is now. Age group is recoded to include the 25-34 age group (AGEGRP=1), the 35-44 age group (AGEGRP=2), and the 45-54 age group (AGEGRP=3)[17].

g) Geographic Indicator

The geography indicator (GEO) is included since it is suggested that access to education at all levels varies in proximity to cities. Categories for geographic indicator provided in the APS include census metropolitan areas 'CMA' (GEO=1), 'Arctic' (GEO=2), 'Other rural' (GEO= 3), and 'Other urban' (GEO=4)[18]. Three dummy variables were made for Geography indicator (GEO) to use in the regression anlaysis; one for 'CMA' (GEOD1cma=1; else =0), one for 'rural' (GEOD2rural=1; else=0) and one for 'other urban' (GEOD3urban=1; else=0).

h) Mobility

Mobility is included in the analysis given that there is a relationship between mobility and educational attainment. Furthermore, Aboriginal peoples tend to be more

[17] Raw age is not available in this data set.

[18] A CMA (Census Metropolitan Area) is an area consisting of one or more adjacent municipalities situated around a major urban core with a population of at least 100,000. 'Arctic' refers to the area covered by the four Inuit regions as defined by the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. An urban area is an area with a population of at least 1,000 and no fewer than 400 persons per square kilometre. Territory outside urban areas is classified as rural.

mobile than the average Canadian population. The variable 'number of times moved in the past five years' (G02MOVES) is used to measure mobility. This does not include moves within the same city, town or community. The values include 'none' (G02MOVES =0), 'one' (G02MOVES =1), 'two' (G02MOVES =2), 'three' (G02MOVES =3), 'four' (G02MOVES =4), and 'five or more' (G02MOVES =5).

i) Census Family Status

Family status is included in this analysis since family support (such as having a spouse) can contribute to educational attainment. Also, being a single-parent can be a barrier in educational attainment. The categories for census family status (CFAMST) include 'common-law partner' (CFAMST=2), 'Child' (CFAMST=4), 'Husband or wife' (CFAMST=5), 'Lone parent' (CFAMST=6), and 'Not a member of census family' (CFAMST=10). A census family is composed of a married couple or two persons living common-law, with or without children, or of a lone parent living with at least one child in the same dwelling. A person can be a spouse, a common-law partner, a lone parent, a child or a non-family person (Statistics Canada, 2006). Family status was dummy coded into 'lone parent' (lone parent =1; else=0) and 'spouse' (spouse=1; else=0). Spouse was created combining 'husband or wife' (CFAMST=5) and 'common-law partner' (CFAMST=2).

j) Self-Reported Health Status

Overall self-reported health status is included in this analysis given that having poor health can be a barrier to educational attainment. The categories for health (E01HLTH) include 'Excellent' (E01HLTH=1), 'Very good' (E01HLTH=2), 'Good'

(E01HLTH=3), 'Fair' (E01HLTH=4), and 'Poor' (E01HLTH=5). This variable is recoded to reverse the order of the values assigned to the responses, so that high scores indicate excellent health (5) and low scores indicate poor health (1).

k) Reasons Why Respondents Dropped-Out of Secondary School

Variables 'A14' are the reasons why respondents did not continue secondary school. The reasons include: 'not continued school because of work' (A14_WRK), 'not continued school because of personal reasons' (A14_PER), 'not continued school because of problems with school' (A14_SCH), 'not continued school don't know' (A14_R09), 'not continued school refused' (A14_R10), and 'not continued school because of other reasons' (A14_R11). 'Work' reasons include wanting to or having to work. 'Personal' reasons include pregnancy/taking care of children, problems at home and/or needing to help at home. 'School' reasons include being bored with school, courses too hard/bad results, and/or no school available/accessible. Each respondent is able to select all reasons that applied. These responses were combined to create an index. Using an index increases statistical reliability and validity, since the measure can account for multiple reasons and since adding the items makes the variable have the same properties as a continuous level variable. This new variable for the index (New A14) is called 'number of reasons given why respondents dropped out of high school' and has a range of 0 -4 as the number of possible reasons given why the respondent did not complete secondary school. Approximately half (48.0%) of the respondents gave no reasons (N=7,553) (meaning they completed high school), 46.9% gave one reason

(N=7,385), 4.8% gave two reasons (N=760), 0.3% gave three reasons (N=46) and 0.0% gave four reasons (N=1).

l) Reasons Why Respondents Quit Post-Secondary School

Variables 'A30B' are the reasons why respondents did not complete post-secondary school. These variables include: 'not finished post-secondary school because of personal reasons' (A30B_PER), 'not finished post-secondary school because of problems with school' (A30B_SCH), 'not finished post-secondary because of work'(A30B_WRK), 'not finished post-secondary don't know'(A30B_R07), 'not finished post-secondary because of other reasons' (A30B_R08). 'Personal' reasons include family responsibilities, financial reasons, too old or too late now, and/or homesick. 'School' reasons include lost interest/lack of motivation, courses too hard/bad results. 'Work' reasons include got a job, had to work and/or wanted to work. Each respondent is able to select all reasons that applied. These variables are each turned into a dummy variable, and used in the regression analysis, since an index that was created for these variables was not normally distributed, and therefore unable to be used in the final models.

m) Received Financial Assistance for Post-Secondary School

'Received financial assistance' (FINASSIS) is included in the analysis as this can have a strong influence on whether an individual is able to attend post-secondary school. Received financial assistance is recoded to include the 'missing' cases (FINASSIS=98) as 'no' (FINASSIS=2) since this is a skip question in the questionnaire. This

variable is also dummy coded in order to use it in the regression analysis (FINASSISRD=1 'yes'; else=0).

n) Residential School Experience

The variable 'Residential school experience' (res.exp.) was created by combining the variables 'ever been a student at a residential school' (A35RES) and having a 'family member ever a student at a residential school (FAMRES). A respondents' residential school experience or having a family member who was a residential school student is included in the analysis since this may influence educational attainment. Respondents who were students at a residential school and/or had a family member that was a student at a residential school, have 'residential school experience' (res.exp.=1). Respondents who were not students at a residential school and who did not have a family member who was a residential school student, do not have 'residential school experience' (res.exp.=0)[19].

3.5 Ethical Considerations

As with any study, ethical considerations are paramount. When conducting research, it is critical that researchers recognize the power dynamics embedded in the relationship with those who are participating in the research. As a result, all stages of the research should include consultations with Aboriginal peoples, since they live the experiences, and it empowers them to become active participants in the research (Kirby & McKenna, 1989:105). Furthermore, partnerships are a way of decolonizing research. Partnerships with communities can ensure that goals are relevant to their needs and

[19] Table B.1 in the Appendix lists the variables used in the analyses and their descriptions.

hence research projects will benefit them (Bouma, Ling & Wilkinson, 2008:24). Researchers need to be concerned with gathering information that will help us explore and transform current relations of inequality (Kirby & McKenna, 1989:104).

Consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal peoples on the content for the APS was conducted by Statistics Canada. An Implementation Committee (IC) was created consisting of representatives from national Aboriginal organizations, federal departments, provinces and territories (Statistics Canada, 2006:4). The Aboriginal organizations include: the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Métis National Council, National Association Friendship Centres and Native Women's Association of Canada and initially, the Assembly of First Nations (Statistics Canada 2003a:34). While the Implementation Committee was more successful this time compared to the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, a number of bands still did not participate in the APS.

Another way of decolonizing research is to include indigenous knowledge and values. The relationship between 'Western knowledge' and 'Aboriginal ways of knowing' should be equal. Researchers need to respect the knowledge of Aboriginal peoples, and must acknowledge this in analysis and reporting (Bouma, Ling & Wilkinson, 2008:25). For this reason, this thesis should not be considered as a "complete" measure of the education of Aboriginal peoples. Much of the traditional teachings and ways of knowing are not valued by the larger Canadian society and are not captured in this study. For this reason, the results of this study should be considered in this context.

Research ethics need to go beyond issues of individual consent and confidentiality. Respect for and protection of the rights, interests and sensitivities of the people being studied must be paramount. All participants must be treated fairly and equally. Aboriginal peoples are the exclusive owners of their cultural and intellectual property. They have the right to protect and to control distribution of their knowledge. Researchers must respect the power of Aboriginal communities and individuals to refuse research (Bouma, Ling & Wilkinson, 2008:24-27).

The Aboriginal Peoples Survey is conducted by the government, which knowingly adopts policies that were historically and are currently the cause of marginalization of Aboriginal peoples. Although they collaborated with Aboriginal organizations in designing the Aboriginal Peoples Survey, the government has too much power and is not respectful enough in conducting their research. Rights, interests, and sensitivities of Aboriginal peoples are not respected. Aboriginal peoples are not seen as equal, nor is the 'Aboriginal way of knowing'. Despite their efforts, the government still does not adequately adhere to the ethical guidelines of conducting research about Aboriginal peoples as researchers should. However, this is a great improvement over other forms of research that have been conducted in the past. The APS remains the best data set available to measure the educational performance of Aboriginal peoples on a large scale.

While a quantitative research study typically does not discuss the researchers' positionality, as quantitative research requires objectivity, it is important to address this given the nature and topic of this study. Aboriginal peoples are the most marginalized in

Canadian society. I am not an Aboriginal researcher; I am a female Graduate student. As a result, I do not have a complete understanding of Aboriginal ways of knowing, and do not personally experience racism. This positionality does not allow me to fully embrace Aboriginal perspectives. I can endeavour, as an ethical researcher, however, to include Aboriginal perspectives as appropriate, and to understand the unequal power relations between myself as researcher and Aboriginal peoples as respondents to a survey which was conducted by a self-serving government with a questionable track-record in relations with Aboriginal peoples. In other words, the unequal power relations between the government and Aboriginal peoples and my positionality as a non-Aboriginal researcher examining the data may not be a "true" reflection of the attitudes that Aboriginal peoples may have towards education in Canadian society. I keep these thoughts in mind as I describe the results of the analysis. A good follow-up study would be inclusive of Aboriginal ways of knowing and would likely follow a qualitative methodology in order to obtain a more valid representation of Aboriginal peoples and their evaluation of the education system in Canada.

Throughout this research, I will follow the ethical guidelines, be respectful and be aware of the power differentials that exist as I am not an Aboriginal person. Judgements will not be made of Aboriginal peoples when the results are discussed, and Aboriginal perspectives are included. I would also like to acknowledge that this thesis will not be able to solve the inequality in education among Aboriginal peoples in Canada in its own right. However it is with hopes that it will provide enough information to be able to aid in identifying appropriate policies, programs and recommendations for

future research to help reduce or eliminate educational inequality experienced by Aboriginal peoples, as this is the purpose of this thesis. The following chapter discusses the results of this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

It is necessary to understand the distribution of the independent variables before proceeding to the statistical analysis. This chapter discusses the profiles of each of the four populations: Status women, non-Status women, Status men, and non-Status men. The next section outlines the development of the statistical models, followed by an analysis of the results. It concludes with a discussion. Implications and other recommendations are discussed in chapter five.

4.1 Population Profile

This section discusses the profiles of all four populations based on univariate analyses. The profiles provide a context for understanding the demographic issues defining Aboriginal peoples and with which to situate the quantitative models. Tables 4.1 through 4.7 outline the demographic details.

4.1.1 *Female Status Profile*

The extent of residential school experience and history among Status women is significant. Of the female Status population (N=3,808), 15.8% were former students at a residential school and another 59.4% had at least one family member that was a student at a residential school (*see table 4.1*). The modal category for highest level of schooling is less than a high school diploma (30.6%). Approximately twelve percent (12.3%) have a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling (*see table 4.6*). In regard to secondary school, 2.5% are currently attending high school, 55.7% have completed secondary school (42.8% have graduated from high school and 12.9% have completed high school through GED), and 27.7% dropped-out (*see table 4.2)*. Of those that did not

complete secondary school, the majority (89.7%) dropped-out because of personal reasons, such as child or family responsibilities (*see table 4.3)*. Over half of Status women (54.8%) have attended post-secondary institutions. Of those that went to post-secondary school, 19.3% are currently attending, 54.0% have completed their studies and 24.4% quit (*see table 4.4)*. Approximately one-quarter (23.8%) of Status women have some post-secondary schooling as their highest level of education. Of those who obtained post-secondary credentials as their highest level of schooling, the majority (16.2%) have a diploma or certificate from other non-university institution (*see table 4.6*). Of those that did not complete post-secondary school, the majority (58.3%) left because of personal reasons such as family, financial etc. (*see table 4.5).*

Of those who went to post-secondary school, 66.6% applied for financial assistance, with 63.3% receiving full or partial assistance (or 95% of those that applied). The majority (59.7%) received their financial assistance from INAC or band/DIAND (*see table 4.4*) rather than student loans or other forms of assistance.

Almost all (90.9%) Status women are members of a band or First Nation[20]. The majority (83.9%) are North American Indian (NAI), 9.8% are Métis, 0.3% are Inuit, and 6.0% have multiple Aboriginal identities. The modal category for age is 25-34 years old (38.3%) and the majority live in CMAs (39.0%). Over half (57.7%) have a spouse[21] and 26.6% are single parents. Nearly all (92.5%) speak English as their first official language.

Nearly one-third (31.0%) of Status women rate their overall health as 'very good'. The modal income category is less than $5,000 (N=20%), and the median income

[20] Note that band membership is self-reported in this survey.
[21] Spouse refers to husband/wife or common-law marriage.

is $10,000-$14,999. Over half (54.3%) are employed, 9.9% are unemployed, and 33.7% are not in the labour force. Two-thirds of Status women (65.5%) have not moved in the past 5 years, with 4.1% moving frequently (four times or more) in the past five years. Table 4.7 illustrates the demographic information for all four populations.

4.1.2 *Female Non-Status Profile*

The extent of residential school experience among non-Status women is less than among Status women. Of the female non-Status population (N=4,599), 4.3% were students at a residential school and 25.7% have at least one family member who has had this experience (*see table 4.1)*. Like Status women, the modal category for highest level of schooling is less than a high school diploma (24.1%). Fifteen percent (15.0%) have a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling (*see table 4.6*). Regarding secondary school, 1.4% are currently attending high school, 61.1% have completed secondary school (50.7% have graduated from high school and 10.4% have completed high school through GED), and 23.1% dropped-out (*see table 4.2)*. Of those that did not complete secondary school, the majority (84.1%) left because of personal reasons (child or family responsibilities) (*see table 4.3)*. Over half (58.4%) have attended post-secondary school. Of those that went to post-secondary school, 14.4% are currently attending, 63.1% completed their studies and 22.3% quit (*see table 4.4)*. Twenty percent (20.0%) of non-Status women have some post-secondary schooling as their highest level of education. Of those who completed their post-secondary schooling, the majority (20.7%) have a diploma or certificate from other non-university institutions (*see table*

4.6). Of those that did not complete post-secondary schooling, most (54.1%) quit because of personal reasons (*see table 4.5).*

Of those that went to post-secondary school, 56.4% applied for financial assistance for post-secondary education, and 52.9% received financial assistance (or 93.7% of those that applied). The majority (58.2%) received their financial assistance through a loan rather than band funding (*see table 4.4*).

Few (6.0%) non-Status women are members of a band or First Nation. The majority (62.4%) are Métis, 17.5% are North American Indian (NAI), 14.1% are Inuit, and 6.0% have multiple Aboriginal identities. The modal category for age is 35-44 years old (37.6%) and the majority live in CMAs (32.7%). The majority (65.3%) have a spouse and 20.6% are single parents. Nearly all (89.0%) speak English as their first official language.

Most (33.7%) non-Status women rate their overall health as 'very good'. The modal income category is $20,000-$29,000 (18.3%), and the median income is $15,000-$19,999. Most (66.0%) are employed, 7.8% are unemployed, and 24.7% are not in the labour force. The majority of non-Status women (72.0%) have not moved in the past 5 years, with 2.7% moving four times or more during that time period (*see table 4.7*).

4.1.3 *Male Status Profile*

Like their Status female counterparts, residential school history is strong. Nearly 2,700 (14.6%) of all Status males were students at a residential school with 53.7% having at least one family member having a similar history (*see table 4.1*). The modal category for highest level of schooling is less than a high school diploma (34.1%), and 12.6% have a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling (*see table 4.6*). Very few (1.9%)

are currently attending high school, 48.1% have completed secondary school (38.5% have graduated from high school and 9.6% have completed high school through GED), and 32.5% dropped-out (*see table 4.2)*. Of those that did not complete secondary school, almost everyone (94.1%) quit because of work reasons (*see table 4.3)*. Regarding post-secondary education, half (51.1%) have attended a post-secondary institution. Of these, 13.1% are currently attending, 57.4% completed their studies and 27.3% quit (*see table 4.4)*. Twenty percent (20.8%) have some post-secondary schooling as their highest level of education. Of those obtaining post-secondary credentials, most (16.0%) have a diploma or certificate from trade school (*see table 4.6*). Of those that did not complete post-secondary schooling, a majority (39.9%) quit because of personal reasons (*see table 4.5).*

Of those that went to post-secondary school, 51.5% applied for financial assistance for post-secondary education, and 47.9% received financial assistance (or 93.6% of those that applied). The majority (51.2%) received their financial assistance from INAC or band/DIAND funds (*see table 4.4*) rather than student loans or other forms of assistance.

Nearly all (87.6%) Status men are a member of a band or First Nation. The majority (82.4%) are North American Indian (NAI), 12.0% are Métis, 0.4% are Inuit, and 5.2% have multiple Aboriginal identities. The modal category for age is 25-34 years old (39.9%) and the majority live in CMAs (34.2%). Most (63.1%) have a spouse and 6.5% are single parents. Almost everyone (89.9%) reports English as their first official language.

Most (31.7%) Status men rate their overall health as 'very good'. The modal income category is $40,000 or more (24.1%), and the median income is $20,000-$29,999. Most (65.4%) are employed, 13.3% are unemployed, and 19.5% are not in the labour force. The majority (63.9%) did not move in the past 5 years, and 4.1% moved four times or more in the past five years (*see table 4.7*).

4.1.4 *Male Non-Status Profile*

Mirroring the pattern seen among women, fewer non-Status men have a residential school history. Of the male non-Status population (N=4,227), only 4.9% were students at a residential school and 22.5% had at least one family member with a similar history (*see table 4.1*). Like the other three groups, the modal category for highest level of schooling is less than a high school diploma (32.5%). Approximately fifteen percent (15.2%) have a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling (*see table 4.6*). In regard to secondary school, only 0.6% are currently attending high school, 51.2% have completed secondary school (42.3% have graduated from high school and 8.9% have completed high school through GED) and 32.0% dropped-out (*see table 4.2)*. Of those that did not complete secondary school, nearly all (93.3%) left because of work (*see table 4.3)*. Half (49.9%) of non-Status men have attended post-secondary school. Of those that went, only a few (8.4%) are currently attending, most (68.8%) completed their studies and 21.3% quit (*see table 4.4)*. Almost fifteen percent of non-Status men (14.5%) have some post-secondary schooling as their highest level of education. Of those who completed their post-secondary programs, the majority (17.9%) have a diploma or certificate from trade school (*see table 4.6*). Of those that did not complete

post-secondary school, the majority (37.8%) left because of personal reasons (*see table 4.5).*

Of those that went to post-secondary school, 43.5% applied for financial assistance, and 40.8% received financial assistance (or 93.7% of those that applied). The majority (52.4%) received their financial assistance through a loan (*see table 4.4*).

Few (6.5%) non-Status men are members of a band or First Nation. The majority (62.5%) are Métis, 17.1% are North American Indian (NAI), 15.2% are Inuit, and 5.2% have multiple Aboriginal identities. The modal category for age is 35-44 years old (38.9%) and the majority live in CMAs (30.6%). Most (67.8%) have a spouse and few (4.9%) are single parents. Almost everyone (88.4%) reports English as their first official language.

Most (34.4%) non-Status men rate their overall health as 'very good'. The modal income category is $40,000 or more (30.1%), and the median income is $20,000-$29,999. Most (74.3%) are employed, 11.1% are unemployed, and 13.2% are not in the labour force. The majority (74.2%) have not moved in the past 5 years with few (2.8%) moving four times or more during that time (*see Table 4.*7).

4.1.5 *Overall Population Profile*

In comparing the education of the four different groups, Status women were most likely to have been students at a residential school. Status women were also most likely to have a family member who with a similar history. As a result, they have the most 'residential school experience'. Table 4.1 illustrates residential school experience for each of the four groups.

Table 4.1: Residential School Experience by Gender and Status

	Female Status	Female Non-Status	Male Status	Male Non-Status
Student at a residential school	**15.8%**	4.3%	14.6%	4.9%
Family member a student at a residential school	**59.4%**	25.7%	53.7%	22.5%
Residential school experience	**60.5%**	26.5%	54.8%	23.6%
Total N	3,808	4,599	2,699	4,227

Note: 'Residential school experience' is a derived variable. Please see 'operationalization of variables' section in Chapter 3: Methodology for more information.

Status Indians are more likely to be currently attending high school, particularly women[22]. Women are more likely than men to complete secondary school, and non-Status Indians are more likely than Status Indians to complete secondary school. Women are more likely than men to have completed secondary school through GED, and Status Indians are more likely than non-Status Indians to complete secondary school through GED. Status men are the least likely to complete secondary school overall. These findings are consistent with previous literature and studies (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:132; Santiago, 1997; Hull, 1990). Table 4.2 outlines secondary schooling by gender and status.

[22] Recall that respondents are aged 25 and over.

Table 4.2: Secondary Schooling by Gender and Status

	Female Status	N	Female Non-Status	N	Male Status	N	Male Non-Status	N
Did not Complete High School	27.7%	1,055	23.1%	1,062	**32.5%**	877	32.0%	1,352
Completed High School (total)	55.7%	2,121	**61.1%**	2,809	48.1%	1,298	51.2%	2,167
Graduated High School	*42.8%*	*1,631*	*50.7%*	*2,332*	*38.5%*	*1,038*	*42.3%*	*1,790*
Completed GED	*12.9%*	*490*	*10.4%*	*477*	*9.6%*	*260*	*8.9%*	*377*
Currently Attending High School	2.5%	94	1.4%	64	1.9%	51	0.6%	25
Missing people	*14.1%*	*538*	*14.4%*	*664*	*17.5%*	*473*	*16.2%*	*683*
Total N	100%	3, 808	100%	4,599	100%	2,699	100%	4,227

Note: (1) Respondents who were currently attending high school were excluded from the 'did not complete high school' analysis.
(2) The 'missing people' are respondents missing from all variables included in the chart combined. This number is derived from adding together those respondents who have completed high school (total), those who are currently attending high school, and those who have not completed high school, minus from the total N.

Of those with incomplete secondary schooling, women are most likely to give personal reasons for dropping-out and men are most likely to give work related reasons. Non-Status Indians are more likely than Status Indians to indicate problems with school as primary reasons for dropping-out. Women are more likely than men, particularly Status women, to give other reasons for quitting school. Table 4.3 shows the various reasons given for dropping-out of secondary school by gender and status.

Table 4.3: Reasons Respondents Dropped-Out of Secondary School by Gender and Status

	Female Status	N	Female Non-Status	N	Male Status	N	Male Non-Status	N
Dropped out of high school because of:								
Work	37.3%	394	47.2%	501	**94.1%**	825	**93.3%**	1,270
Personal	**89.7%**	946	**84.1%**	893	29.2%	256	23.6%	300
School	39.5%	417	42.9%	456	39.7%	348	42.9%	580
Other reasons	21.9%	231	20.3%	216	19.6%	172	16.5%	223
Don't Know	13.5%	142	14.3%	152	12.7%	111	11.5%	156
Refused	2.7%	28	2.4%	25	1.0%	9	1.4%	19
Total N	204.6%	3,808	211.2%	4,599	196.3%	2,699	189.2%	4,227

Note: (1) Respondents who were currently attending high school are excluded from this analysis.
(2) Since respondents are allowed to state all reasons that applied, column percentages are greater than 100%.

Women are more likely than men to attend post-secondary school; non-Status women are the most likely, and non-Status men are the least likely to attend. Non-Status Indians are more likely to complete post-secondary schooling than Status Indians, with non-Status men being the most likely to complete of all four groups. Status men are least likely to complete post-secondary schooling of all four groups. These findings

are consistent with previous literature and studies (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007:118; Hull, 1990:5; Santiago, 1997).

Of those attending post-secondary school, women are more likely than men to apply for and receive financial assistance for their post-secondary education. Status Indians are more likely than non-Status Indians to apply for and receive financial assistance. Status Indians are most likely to receive their financial assistance from INAC or band/DIAND. Non-Status Indians are most likely to receive their financial assistance through a loan. Here, the myth that all Aboriginal peoples receive funding for education is discounted, since non-Status Indians are most likely to receiving their financial assistance through a loan. Of those that received their financial assistance through a grant, bursary or scholarship and through 'other' means, the majority are non-Status Indians. Table 4.4 outlines financial and other characteristics of post-secondary education for each of the four groups.

Table 4.4: Financial and Other Characteristics of Post-Secondary Education by Gender and Status

	Female Status	N	Female Non-Status	N	Male Status	N	Male Non-Status	N
Did Not Attend Post-Secondary school	41.6%	1,586	38.6%	1,776	45.9%	1,239	47.2%	1,997
Went to Post-secondary school	54.8%	2,085	**58.4%**	2,686	51.1%	1,379	49.9%	2,108
Completed post-secondary school	*54.0%*	*1,126*	*63.1%*	*1,694*	*57.4%*	*792*	***68.8%***	*1,451*
Quit post-secondary school	*24.4%*	*509*	*22.3%*	*599*	***27.3%***	*376*	*21.3%*	*450*
Currently attending post-secondary school	*19.3%*	*403*	*14.4%*	*338*	*13.1%*	*181*	*8.4%*	*177*
Missing	*2.3%*	*47*	*0.2%*	*5*	*2.2%*	*30*	*1.5%*	*30*
Total	*100%*	*2,085*	*100%*	*2,686*	*100%*	*1,379*	*100%*	*2,108*
Applied for financial assistance for post-secondary school	**66.6%**	1,388	56.4%	1,515	51.5%	705	43.5%	918
Received financial assistance for post-secondary school	**63.3%**	1,319	52.9%	1,420	47.9%	660	40.8%	860
Total		2,085		2,686		1,379		2,108
Type of financial assistance:								
INAC or Band/DIAND	**59.7%**	787	6.3%	89	**51.2%**	338	5.6%	48
Grant, bursary or scholarship	13.8%	182	24.9%	353	15.0%	99	22.2%	191
Loan	30.1%	397	**58.2%**	827	27.4%	181	**52.4%**	451
Other	14.5%	191	26.6%	378	20.3%	134	32.8%	282
Total		1,319		1,420		660		860
Total N		3, 808		4,599		2,699		4,227

Note: (1) Respondents who are currently attending post-secondary school are excluded from analyses pertaining to completion.
(2) Completion and current attendance, and financial assistance information are calculated of those that went to post-secondary school.
(3) Type of financial assistance received is calculated of those that received financial assistance. Total percent for type of financial assistance received exceeds 100% since some respondents received assistance from more than one provider.

Of those not completing post-secondary schooling, the most common reason for quitting reported by all four groups is personal, with the highest percentages found among women. Status Indians are more likely than non-Status Indians to give personal reasons. Men are more likely than women to quit post-secondary schooling because of work, with Status men being the most likely to give this reason. Men are also more likely than women to quit because of problems with school, with Status men being the most likely. Table 4.5 shows the various reasons given for quitting post-secondary school by gender and status.

Table 4.5: Reasons Respondents Quit Post-Secondary School by Gender and Status

	Female Status	N	Female Non-Status	N	Male Status	N	Male Non-Status	N
Quit post-secondary School because of:[2]								
Work	5.1%	26	7.7%	46	12.2%	46	11.1%	50
Personal	**58.3%**	297	**54.1%**	324	**39.9%**	150	**37.8%**	170
School	11.2%	57	11.9%	71	19.7%	74	17.6%	79
Other reasons	20.0%	102	18.5%	111	18.9%	71	22.9%	103
Don't Know	3.7%	19	8.0%	18	4.3%	16	5.6%	25
Total N[1]	98.3%	509	100.2%	599	95.0%	376	95.0%	450

Note: (1) Respondents who were currently attending post-secondary school are excluded from this analysis. (2) Respondents were allowed to state all reasons that applied.

In examining highest level of schooling, men are more likely than women to have quit high school before graduating. Status Indians are more likely than non-Status Indians to report a high school diploma as their highest level of schooling. Men and non-Status Indians are more likely than women and Status Indians to have a high school

diploma as their highest level of schooling. Status Indians are more likely than non-Status Indians to have some post-secondary education as their highest level of schooling, with Status women being the most likely of all. These findings are consistent with the literature and previous studies (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007; Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000; Santiago, 1997).

Of those obtaining a post-secondary credential, men and non-Status Indians are more likely to have a diploma or certificate from a trade school. Women and non-Status Indians are more likely to have a diploma or certificate from other non-university institutions. This finding pertaining to status is consistent with the findings of Statistics Canada (2008a). It should be noted that some of the previous literature is contradictory. Santiago (1997) finds that Status Indians are more likely to attend trade and non-university programs. Conversely, Statistics Canada (2008a) finds that non-Status Indians are more likely to have trade school and non-university credentials. Women are more likely than men to have university credentials. Status women are the most likely to obtain Bachelor's degrees while non-Status women are the most likely to attain a post-graduate degree. Overall, women have higher levels of education than men and non-Status Indians have higher levels of education than Status Indians. This is consistent with existing literature and other studies (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007; Hull, 1990; Statistics Canada 2008a). Table 4.6 outlines the distribution of cases along the dependent variable by gender and status.

Table 4.6: Highest Level of Schooling by Gender and Status

	Female Status	Female Non-Status	Male Status	Male Non-Status
No schooling	0.2%	0.6%	0.6%	**0.9%**
Less than High School diploma	30.6%	24.1%	**34.1%**	32.5%
High School diploma	12.3%	15.0%	12.6%	**15.2%**
Some post-secondary	**23.8%**	20.0%	20.8%	14.5%
Diploma or certificate from trade school	7.6%	10.3%	16.0%	**17.9%**
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	16.2%	**20.7%**	10.6%	12.9%
University certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level	**2.0%**	**2.0%**	1.0%	1.4%
Bachelor's degree	**6.1%**	5.7%	3.3%	3.4%
University degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level	1.1%	**1.5%**	0.8%	1.3%
Total N	3,671	4,462	2,618	4,105

In comparing the demographic information of the four different groups, Status Indians are most likely to be a member of a band or First Nation; with the highest percentage among Status women. Status Indians are most likely to be North American Indian (NAI). Non-Status Indians are most likely to be Métis. Those who are Inuit are most likely to be non-Status, and those who have a multiple Aboriginal identity are more likely to be female.

Status Indians are younger, since the modal category for age is 25-34 years old, and the modal category for age for non-Status Indians is 35-44 years old. Status men are the youngest of all four groups, while non-Status men are the oldest.

While all four groups are most likely to live in CMAs, the highest percentage was among Status women. Status Indians are more likely than non-Status Indians to be living in smaller geographic areas outside the cities and Arctic, where the majority are non-Status Indians. Of those living in other urban areas, the highest percentage is among Status women. Of those living in rural areas, the highest percentage is among Status men. Men are more likely than women to be living in a rural area.

Non-Status Indians are more likely to have a spouse, with Status men being the most likely of all. Women and Status Indians are much more likely than men and non-Status Indians to be a single parent.

For Status women, the modal income category is 'less than $5,000'. The modal income category for non-Status women is '$20,000-$29,999'. For men, regardless of their status, the modal income category is $40,000 or more. As a result, overall, men have higher incomes than women, and non-Status Indians have higher incomes than Status Indians.

Non-Status Indians are more likely to be employed; with non-Status men the most likely. Men are more likely than women to be unemployed, while women are more likely to not be in the labour force. Status Indians are more likely to be unemployed and to not be in the labour force than are non-Status Indians.

Nearly all of the four groups report English as their first official language; the highest percentage being among Status women. Status Indians are more likely than non-Status Indians to speak English as their first official language. Of those speaking French, they are more likely to be non-Status Indians.

The majority of all four groups rate their overall health status as 'very good'. Of these, non-Status Indians are more likely than Status Indians to rate their health as 'very good'. In analysing the mean health for all four groups, men have a higher mean than women; Status women having the lowest mean, and Status men having the highest.

Status Indians move more frequently than non-Status Indians, regardless of gender. Non-Status men are most likely to have remained in the same residence for four years or more. In analysing the mean for mobility, Status women moved the most, and non-Status men moved the least. These findings are consistent with the literature on mobility (Norris, 1998:184). Table 4.7 shows the demographic information for all four groups.

Table 4.7: Demographic Information by Gender and Status

	Female Status	N	Female Non-Status	N	Male Status	N	Male Non-Status	N
Band Member	90.9%	3,461	6.0%	227	87.6%	2,365	6.5%	276
NAI	83.9%	3,194	17.5%	803	82.4%	2,225	17.1%	721
Métis	9.8%	372	62.4%	2,869	12.0%	323	62.5%	2,643
Inuit	0.3%	12	14.1%	650	0.4%	10	15.2%	644
Multiple Identity	6.0%	230	6.0%	227	5.2%	141	5.2%	219
Age: 25-34	38.3%	1,458	37.3%	1,716	39.9%	1,077	34.4%	1,456
35-44	37.6%	1,433	37.6%	1,727	36.8%	992	38.9%	1,643
45-54	24.1%	917	25.1%	1,156	23.3%	630	26.7%	1,128
Geographic Area:								
CMA	39.0%	1,485	32.7%	1,502	34.2%	923	30.6%	1,293
other urban	29.8%	1,135	25.9%	1,193	29.5%	796	24.5%	1,036
rural	29.3%	1,114	27.7%	1,273	33.8%	912	30.1%	1,274
Arctic	1.9%	74	13.7%	631	2.5%	68	14.8%	624
Family status:								
Spouse	57.7%	2,196	65.3%	3,003	63.1%	1,704	67.8%	2,865
Single parent	26.6%	1,014	20.6%	946	6.5%	176	4.9%	207
other	15.7%	598	14.1%	650	30.3%	819	27.3%	1,155
1st official Language:								
English	92.5%	3,521	88.9%	4,087	89.9%	2,427	88.4%	3,738
French	7.1%	271	10.1%	463	9.3%	252	10.5%	442
Health status:								
"Very Good"	31.0%	1,180	33.7%	1,551	31.7%	855	34.4%	1,454
Income:								
Less than $5,000	20.0%	761	15.4%	709	16.6%	447	11.7%	493
$5,000-$9,999	16.5%	629	13.4%	615	12.4%	334	9.1%	386
$10,000-$14,999	14.5%	551	14.0%	643	10.6%	286	8.9%	376
$15,000-$19,999	11.0%	419	11.8%	544	8.1%	219	7.8%	330
$20,000-$29,999	15.9%	606	18.3%	841	13.7%	369	16.4%	694
$30,000-$39,999	11.0%	417	12.7%	585	14.1%	380	15.6%	659
$40,000 or more	10.9%	415	14.1%	649	24.1%	650	30.1%	1,272
Labour force activity:								
Employed	54.3%	2,068	66.0%	3,042	65.4%	1,764	74.3%	3,141
Unemployed	9.9%	378	7.8%	357	13.3%	359	11.1%	471
Not in labour force	33.7%	1,283	24.7%	1,138	19.5%	525	13.2%	560
Mobility:								
Zero moves	65.5%	2,493	72.0%	3,313	69.3%	1,871	74.2%	3,138
4 or more	4.1%	156	2.7%	126	4.1%	112	2.8%	118
Total N		3,808		4,599		2,699		4,227

4.2 Model Development

This section discusses variables that were considered for inclusion in the regression analyses, but had to be discarded for various reasons. This is expected since secondary data, while possessing many advantages, has several disadvantages. The primary disadvantages are that the survey did not contain certain questions pertaining to the research question. Therefore, some variable were not asked, while other variables are not collected in a form that is useful for statistical analysis.

a) Band Membership

Band membership was considered for the analyses since band membership also involves a variety of rights and privileges with respect to education. Unfortunately, this variable is not normally distributed and could not be statistically adjusted to correct for this. Band membership is also correlated with status. Since the Status/non-Status differentiation is the most important to maintain, as it most directly affects access to education and funding due to treaty rights.

b) First Official Language Spoken

First official language is also discarded since speaking English or French contributes to an individual's educational attainment (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:128). The literature indicates that students living in households where an Aboriginal language is spoken are less likely to complete secondary school than other Aboriginal students (Santiago, 1997:3; Henry & Tator, 2006:205). Unfortunately the data available in the PUM data file does not distinguish between the over 53 languages spoken by Aboriginal peoples. The other problem with this indicator is that over 90% of

respondents indicate that English is their first language, so the variable acts as a constant and cannot be used in this analysis.

In order to improve the collection of information on language in the future, it is recommended that all of the Aboriginal languages are included in the survey. The APS does not even have speaking 'an Aboriginal language' as a first official language as an option, as the variable is limited to 'English', 'French', 'both' or 'neither'.[23]

c) Labour Force Activity

Labour force activity was also considered since time devoted to working can affect educational attainment. Having to work is a common reason for quitting school. Labour force activity is highly correlated with income in this dataset, and had to be excluded as a result. Following the literature and standard statistical procedure, I used income as a predictor. Furthermore, not completing secondary and/or post-secondary education because of work is captured in two variables measuring the reasons respondents did not continue or complete their schooling. As a result, labour force activity is partially captured in this analysis.

d) Financial Assistance for Post-Secondary School

Applying for financial assistance and type of financial assistance received were also considered, however, these variables were highly correlated with each other and with receiving financial assistance. Receiving financial assistance is the strongest indicator of the three, and was included in the analyses.

[23] Table B.2 in the Appendix list the variables that were considered for the analyses and their descriptions.

e) Living in Crowded Households

A 'crowding' variable was created using the number of people per household and the number of rooms per household, based on Statistics Canada's definition of crowding. However, since only 14.5% of the sample population lived in 'crowded' conditions, this variable was not normally distributed and the variable was excluded from the models as a result[24].

4.3 Results

This section discusses the regression analysis results for the four models.

4.3.1 *Female Status*

For Status women, receiving financial assistance for post-secondary education has the largest effect on highest level of schooling (β=.474), followed by total income (β= .207). All four models have strong R^2, with the best model fit for Status women (R^2=.427). Knowing the values of the independent variables, we are able to improve our accuracy of predicting highest level of schooling for Status women by 42.7%.

Weaker but still statistically significant predictors of educational attainment for Status women include: age, having North American Indian (NAI) identity, health status, number of reasons given for dropping-out of high school, reasons for quitting post-secondary school, living in a CMA, rural and urban areas, and number of times moved. These variables are discussed in greater detail on page 103.

Since receiving financial assistance is the strongest indicator of educational success, it is illustrative to examine its relationship further. Table 4.8 outlines the

[24] Various methods to accommodate this variable were attempted. Squaring, square roots and logarithms were applied to correct for abnormalities.

distribution of cases for highest level of schooling by those that received financial assistance for Status women. Of those that received financial assistance for post-secondary schooling, the majority (42.5%) have some post-secondary schooling (N=561). Of those who have trade school credentials, 11.3% received financial assistance (N=149). Of those that have non-university credentials, 26.2% received financial assistance (N=346). Of those that have university credentials, 19.9% received financial assistance (N=263).

Table 4.8: Highest Level of Schooling by Financial Assistance for Status Women[1]

Highest Level of Schooling	Received Financial Assistance	
	Yes	No
Some post-secondary	42.5%	53.7%
	561	36
Diploma or certificate from trade school	11.3%	17.9%
	149	12
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	26.2%	20.9%
	346	14
University certificate, diploma or degree	19.9%	7.5%
	263	5
Total	1,320	67
Total N		3,671

Note: (1) The relationship between highest level of schooling and financial assistance is statistically significant at $p<0.01$.(2) Two cases were removed due to small cell sizes.

Generally, as income increases so does education. Table 4.9 outlines the distribution of cases of highest level of schooling by income for Status women. Of those having less than a high school diploma, the majority (46.5%) have incomes of 'less than $5,000' (N=341). Of those that have a high school diploma as their highest level of education, the majority (15.5%) have incomes between '$20,000-$29,999' (N=90). Of

those who have earned university credentials, the majority have incomes of '$40,000 or more' (N=138). In short, this table confirms an hypothesis of human capital theory that higher levels of education result in higher incomes.

Table 4.9: Highest Level of Schooling by Income for Status Women[1]

	less than $5,000	$5,000-$9,999	$10,000-$14,999	$15,000-$19,999	$20,000-$29,999	$30,000-$39,999	$40,000 or more
Less than High School diploma	**46.9%**	40.1%	34.6%	31.7%	24.1%	15.6%	7.6%
High School diploma	11.6%	11.2%	13.7%	13.4%	**15.5%**	11.1%	8.9%
Some post-secondary	22.6%	23.2%	**27.1%**	23.2%	24.6%	25.9%	20.1%
Diploma or certificate from trade school	5.4%	7.1%	7.1%	**11.3%**	8.8%	7.7%	7.4%
Diploma or certificate from non-university institution	9.8%	13.8%	13.0%	16.4%	20.3%	**23.7%**	21.6%
University certificate, diploma or degree	3.7%	4.7%	4.5%	4.1%	6.9%	16.0%	**34.3%**
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total N	734	608	532	397	582	405	403
							3,661

Note: (1) The relationship between highest level of schooling and income is statistically significant at $p<0.01$.

4.3.2 *Female Non-Status*

Knowing the values of the independent variables, we are able to improve our accuracy of predicting highest level of schooling for non-Status women by 39.0% (R^2=.390). Receiving financial assistance for post-secondary school has the largest effect on highest level of schooling (β=.449) for non-Status women.

Weaker but still statistically significant predictors of educational attainment for non-Status women include: age, income, having Métis identity, health status, number of reasons given for dropping-out of high school, reasons for quitting post-secondary school, living in a CMA, being a single parent, and number of times moved. These are discussed in greater detail on page 103.

Similar to Status women, most non-Status women received financial assistance for their post-secondary schooling. Table 4.10 outlines the distribution of highest level of schooling by those that received financial assistance for non-Status women. Like Status women, receiving financial assistance is the strongest predictor of educational success. Of those receiving financial assistance for post-secondary schooling, the majority (35.1%) have non-university credentials (N=500). Of those that have some post-secondary schooling as their highest level of education, 30.1% received financial assistance (N=428). Of those that have trade school credentials, 15.2% received financial assistance (N=216). Of those that have university credentials, 19.4% received financial assistance (N=276).

Table 4.10: Highest Level of Schooling by Financial Assistance for Non-Status Women

Highest Level of Schooling	Received Financial Assistance	
	Yes	No
Some post-secondary	30.1%	52.7%
	428	49
Diploma or certificate from trade school	15.2%	8.6%
	216	8
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	35.1%	29.0%
	500	27
University certificate, diploma or degree	19.4%	9.8%
	276	9
Total	1,420	93
Total N		4,462

Note: (1) The relationship between highest level of schooling and financial assistance is statistically significant at $p<0.01$. (2) Six cases were removed.

4.3.3 *Male Status*

Like the female Status and non-Status counterparts, receiving financial assistance for post-secondary also has the greatest effect on highest level of schooling (β=.426) for Status men. This is followed by the number of reasons given for dropping-out of secondary school (β= -.245). Knowing the values of the independent variables, we are able to improve our accuracy of predicting highest level of schooling by 33.3% (R^2=.333).

Weaker predictors of educational attainment for Status men are slightly different than for women and include: age, income, reasons for quitting post-secondary school, living in a CMA and urban areas, having a spouse and having residential school experience, which are discussed in greater detail on page 103.

Table 4.11 outlines the distribution of highest level of schooling by those receiving financial assistance among Status men. Of those who received financial assistance for post-secondary schooling, the majority (43.3%) have not completed post-secondary schooling (N=286). Of those who have trade school credentials, 22.4% have received financial assistance (N=148). Of those who have non-university credentials as their highest level of education, 21.8% received financial assistance (N=144). Of those having university credentials, 12.4% have received financial assistance (N=82).

Table 4.11: Highest Level of Schooling by Financial Assistance for Status Men

Highest Level of Schooling	Received Financial Assistance	
	Yes	No
Some post-secondary	43.3% 286	63.6% 28
Diploma or certificate from trade school	22.4% 148	13.6% 6
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	21.8% 144	18.2% 8
University certificate, diploma or degree	12.4% 82	4.5% 2
Total	661	44
Total N		2,618

Note: (1) The relationship between highest level of schooling and financial assistance is statistically significant at $p<0.01$. (2) Two cases were removed.

In examining the number of reasons given for dropping out of high school for Status men, of those with less than a high school diploma, the majority (29.1%) provide only one reason for quitting (N=762). Table 4.12 outlines the distribution of highest level of schooling by the number of reasons given for dropping out of high school for Status men. Few provide more than one reason.

Table 4.12: Highest Level of Schooling by Number of Reasons for Dropping-Out of High School for Status Men

Highest Level of Schooling	Number of Reasons 1	2 or more
Less than High School diploma	762	109
High School diploma	66	11
Some post-secondary	226	21
Diploma or certificate from trade school	210	22
Certificate, diploma or degree other than trade school	98	14
Total N	1,362	177
		2,618

Note: The relationship between highest level of schooling and number of reasons for dropping-out of high school is statistically significant at $p<0.01$.

4.3.4 *Male Non-Status*

The trend indicating the importance of receiving financial assistance continues for non-Status men. Receiving financial assistance for post-secondary has the greatest effect on highest level of schooling (β=.430), followed by the number of reasons given for not finishing secondary school (β= -.237). Knowing the values of the independent variables, we are able to improve our accuracy of predicting highest level of schooling by 37.8% (R^2=.378) for non-Status men.

Weaker predictors of educational attainment for non-Status men include: age, income, health status, reasons for quitting post-secondary school, living in a CMA and urban areas, having a spouse, number of times moved, and having residential school experience. These variables are discussed in detail on page 103.

Table 4.13 outlines the distribution of cases of highest level of schooling by those who received financial assistance. Of those who receiving financial assistance, the majority (28.5%) obtain non-university credentials as their highest level of education (N=246). Of those who have incomplete post-secondary schooling, 25.9% have received financial assistance (N=223). Of those that have trade school credentials, 27.0% received financial assistance (N=233). Of those that have university credentials below Bachelor's level, 2.8% received financial assistance (N=24). Of those who have university credentials, 18.3% have received financial assistance (N=158)[25].

Table 4.13: Highest Level of Schooling by Financial Assistance for Non-Status Men

Highest Level of Schooling	Received Financial Assistance	
	Yes	No
Some post-secondary	25.9%	42.1%
	223	24
Diploma or certificate from trade school	27.0%	31.6%
	233	18
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	28.5%	19.3%
	246	11
University certificate, diploma or degree	18.3%	7.1%
	158	4
Total	860	57
Total N		4,105

Note: (1) The relationship between highest level of schooling and financial assistance is statistically significant at $p<0.01$. (2) Three cases were removed.

[25] Table A.4 in the appendix outlines the distribution of financial assistance by highest level of schooling for the gender and status groupings.

Of those with less than a high school diploma, the majority (28.2%) gave one reason for quitting secondary school (N=1,156). Table 4.14 outlines the distribution of cases of highest level of schooling by the number of reasons given for dropping-out of high school for non-Status men.

Table 4.14: Highest Level of Schooling by Number of Reasons for Dropping-Out of High School for Non-Status Men

Highest Level of Schooling	Number of Reasons 1	2 or more
Less than High School diploma	1,156	154
High School diploma	116	10
Some post-secondary	240	32
Diploma or certificate from trade school	328	39
Certificate, diploma or degree other than trade school	159	24
Total N	1,999	259
		4,105

Note: (1) The relationship between highest level of schooling and number of reasons for dropping-out of high school is statistically significant at $p<0.01$.

4.3.5 *Multivariate Analysis*

This section begins with a brief discussion on the strength of the four models. Table 4.15 shows the regression coefficients for all four models.

Table 4.15: Regression Coefficients Table, Four Models

	Female Status		Female Non-Status		Male Status		Male Non-Status	
Variable	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
(Constant)	1.373**	.395	2.399**	.368	1.319**	.439	1.733**	.382
Age	.283**	.047	.237**	.044	.427**	.056	.324**	.045
Income	.279**	.018	.232**	.017	.145**	.020	.169**	.017
Identity: NAI	-.383*	.148	-.174	.154	.010	.189	-.054	.167
Identity: Métis	-.235	.180	-.366**	.139	.198	.219	-.223	.152
Identity: Inuit	-.777	.615	-.481	.276	.523	.683	-.210	.287
Health status	.122**	.033	.102**	.032	.053	.040	.088**	.033
Reasons Drop-out	-.928**	.064	-.952**	.062	-1.002**	.071	-1.029**	.058
Quit PS personal	-1.493**	.129	-1.531**	.127	-1.170**	.178	-1.222**	.168
Quit PS school	-1.123**	.280	-1.289**	.262	-1.258**	.250	-1.131**	.242
Quit PS work	-1.591**	.408	-.997**	.322	-1.137**	.314	-.830**	.307
Quit PS unknown	-1.474**	.478	-1.918**	.513	-1.385*	.540	-1.112**	.425
Quit PS other	-1.302**	.211	-1.035**	.212	-1.093**	.252	-.973**	.213
Geo: CMA	.944**	.254	.628*	.250	.634*	.265	.724**	.258
Geo: rural	.827**	.255	.343	.252	.372	.265	.284	.256
Geo: urban	.876**	.255	.467	.252	.532**	.266	.583*	.260
Single parent	-.144	.113	-.285*	.115	.026	.179	.117	.166
Spouse	.060	.101	.167	.099	.254**	.096	.287**	.080
Financial Assist.	2.692**	.079	2.658**	.074	2.482**	.102	2.805**	.085
Times Moved	.111**	.032	.101**	.035	.046	.039	.184**	.036
Res. Experience	-.066	.074	.143	.077	.202*	.087	.314**	.083
R^{2**}	.427		.390		.333		.378	
N	3,808		4,599		2,699		4,227	

Note: ** Indicates statistically significant p<0.01
*Indicates statistically significant p<0.05

All four models have strong R^2, with the best model fit for Status women. Knowing the values of the independent variables, we are able to improve our accuracy of predicting highest level of schooling for Status women the most (R^2=.427), followed by non-Status women, (R^2=.390), non-Status men (R^2=.378) and Status men (R^2= .333).

Receiving financial assistance has the highest influence on highest level of schooling of all the variables in the models for all four groups. Non-Status men who receive financial assistance are most likely to benefit (B=2.805) followed by Status women (B=2.692), non-Status women (B=2.658), and Status men (B=2.482). This finding supports the literature linking access to financial assistance and positive educational attainment (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:139; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996), and goes even further by proving that it is the most important factor, the importance of which is discussed in chapter five.

Age is statistically significant and is positively correlated for all four models. As age increases so does education, particularly for men. This is a relationship seen among other groups. Age increases education levels by B=.427 for Status men, B=.324 for non-Status men, B=.283 for Status women, and by B=.237 for non-Status women. As a result, age has a larger effect on schooling for men than women, and has a larger effect for Status Indians than non-Status Indians. This finding is generally consistent with the literature, which finds that those who are older have higher levels of education (Statistics Canada, 2008a; Statistics Canada, 2008b; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007).

Income is statistically significant and is positively correlated with education for all four models. This relationship is in the predicted direction. The effect of income is highest for Status women (B=.279), B=.232 for non-Status women, B=.169 for non-Status men and by B=.145 for Status men. As a result, income has a larger effect on education for women than men, with the greatest influence for Status women. Overall, the trend mirrors what we know about other groups of people. The higher the income, the higher the education (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007; Hull, 1990; Ross, 1991).

In regard to Aboriginal identity only, North American Indian (NAI) is statistically significant for Status women, having a negative correlation. Having a North American Indian identity is a strong negative predictor of (B= -.383). Having Métis identity is statistically significant only for non-Status women. For non-Status women having Métis identity has a negative effect on education. This relationship between identity and education is not statistically significant for men. This finding tends to support existing research, which states that Métis have higher levels of education (Statistics Canada, 2008a; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007). What this finding reveals is that when the identity factors influencing educational attainment are closely examined, it is Métis women who are mostly affected. Identity has no influence on the educational attainment of men. Table 4.16 shows the distribution of highest level of schooling by gender and Aboriginal identity.

Table 4.16: Highest Level of Schooling by Gender and Aboriginal Identity

Highest Level of Schooling	Women			Men		
	NAI	Métis	Inuit	NAI	Métis	Inuit
No Schooling	0.3% 11	0.3% 11	2.9% 19	0.8% 23	0.3% 9	3.4% 22
Less than High School diploma	29.2% 1,147	21.7% 703	45.3% 294	33.0% 963	30.0% 894	50.3% 325
High School diploma	12.1% 474	17.6% 571	7.9% 51	12.9% 377	16.7% 498	8.0% 52
Some post-secondary	24.5% 965	19.2% 623	18.5% 120	19.7% 574	15.1% 451	13.2% 85
Diploma or certificate from trade school	7.8% 306	10.5% 339	7.4% 48	15.9% 463	18.8% 561	14.2% 92
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	16.8% 659	21.3% 692	14.2% 92	12.0% 349	12.6% 376	9.3% 60
University certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level	2.1% 81	2.3% 73	1.7% 11	1.0% 30	1.5% 44	1.1% 7
Bachelor's degree	5.9% 232	5.9% 190	2.0% 13	3.6% 105	3.4% 102	0.3% 2
University degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level	1.5% 58	1.3% 41	0.2% 1	1.1% 31	1.4% 43	0.2% 1
Total % Total N	100% 3,933	100% 3,243	100% 649 8,335	100% 2,915	100% 2,978	100% 646 6,906

Note: (1) NAI is those who have 'North American Indian' identity. (2) The total N for 'highest level of schooling' is 15,241. Of these, 8,835 are women and 6,906 are men. (3) Those who have multiple identity were excluded. As a result, total N for identity does not equal to the total population number.

The number of reasons given for dropping-out of high school is negatively related to educational success. This index has the largest negative influence for non-Status men (B= -1.029), followed by Status men (B= -1.002), non-Status women (B= -.952) and Status women (B= -.928). As a result, as the number of reasons for quitting

increases, the chances of higher educational attainment decrease, especially for men and non-Status Indians. This relationship makes intuitive sense since mounting pressures often cause students to quit school.

In looking at the reasons why respondents did not complete post-secondary studies, all five variables are statistically significant and are negatively correlated for all four models. Quitting post-secondary school because of personal reasons has the greatest negative influence for non-Status women, decreasing their educational attainment by -1.5 (B= -1.531), followed by Status women (B= -1.493), non-Status men (B= -1.222) and Status men (B= -1.002). Non-Status women are more likely to quit school for personal reasons.

Quitting post-secondary school because of problems at school has a significant negative influence for non-Status women, decreasing their highest level of schooling by B= -1.289, followed by Status men (B= -1.258), non-Status men (B= -1.131) and Status women (B= -1.123). Again, this is intuitively true. Those having difficulty at school are most likely to quit.

Quitting post-secondary school because of work influences Status women the most, decreasing their education by B= -1.591, followed by Status men (B= -1.137), non-Status women (B= -.997) and non-Status men (B= -.830). As a result, quitting post-secondary school because of work has a greater influence for Status than non-Status Indians, but the gender effect is mixed.

Quitting post-secondary school because of 'unknown' reasons also has a negative effect on education, affecting non-Status women the most (B= -1.918). Quitting post-secondary school because of 'unknown' reasons has a larger effect on women than men. Quitting post-secondary school because of 'other' reasons has the largest effect for Status women, (B= -1.302)[26]. Quitting because of 'other' reasons has a greater influence on Status Indians than non-Status Indians. Due to the coding of this variable, we are unable to interpret these variables further.

In examining the effects of geography, of the three locations, living in a CMA has the largest effect on educational attainment, followed by living in an urban area, then living in a rural area. Living in a CMA has a positive relationship with education for all four groups. Living in a CMA has the largest effect for Status women, increasing education levels by B= .944, followed by non-Status men (B= .724), Status men (B=.634) and non-Status women (B=.628). Living in a smaller urban area is statistically significant for everyone except non-Status women. Living in an urban area has the greatest influence for Status women, increasing their highest level of schooling by B=.876, followed by non-Status men (B= .583), and Status men (B=.532). Living in a rural area is only statistically significant for Status women, having a positive correlation, which increases their highest level of schooling by B=.827.

These findings are generally consistent with the literature and previous studies showing that those living in the largest cities have the highest levels of education. However, in regard to rural areas, the literature suggests that the more isolated the

[26] Quitting post-secondary school because of 'unknown' reasons and quitting post-secondary school because of 'other' reasons are two separate variables.

residence, the lower the educational attainment given that there are fewer educational facilities and opportunities. The difficulty in attaining higher education among rural residents is that it requires significant life-upheaval. Moving to a new city away from family and social support networks can be difficult and may deter rural residents. Furthermore, the labour market composition of smaller centres means that there are fewer jobs for highly educated workers. Essentially, individuals who wish to live permanently in these rural areas may not want to educate themselves out of the local job market. For these individuals, completing education may be illogical when employment is readily available. This geographic trend is found among the non-Aboriginal population as well. Many rural students are disadvantaged as a result of this relationship, since those in rural areas are less likely to complete secondary school, and less likely to have university degrees (Hull, 1990:7; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Statistics Canada, 2008b). In this regard, my study is inconsistent with the existing literature.

Mobility is positively related to education for everyone except Status men. Mobility has the greatest influence for non-Status men, increasing their educational attainment by B=.184, followed by Status women (B=.111) and non-Status women (B=.101). As a result, mobility has a greater effect for Status women than non-Status women. According to the literature, attending post-secondary school is a factor that is associated with geographical movement. The literature also finds that Status Indians are more likely to move than non-Status Indians, and women are more likely than men to move (Norris, 1998:184; Ponting, 1997).

Being a single parent negatively effects education for non-Status women only (B= -.285). While one would expect that being a single parent should also have a negative correlation for Status women, one explanation for why this tends to effect non-Status women only could be because non-Status women are less likely than Status women to have reliable child-care and other support services. These support services are often vital to a student's academic success (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). Having a spouse has a positive effect on educational attainment for men only, having the greatest effect for non-Status men, which increases their highest level of schooling by B= .287. For Status men, having a spouse increases their highest level of schooling by B=.254. These findings are similar to those of the literature, which states that being a single parent is a barrier to educational achievement (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003; Calliou, 1997), while having a spouse can help increase educational achievement since this increases family support (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003:5).

Health status is statistically significant for all groups except Status men, and is positively correlated with education. The effect of good health is highest for Status women (B=.122), B=.102 for non-Status women, and by B=.088 for non-Status men. As a result, while the effect of health is small, health has the greatest effect for Status women. This finding is similar to the literature with regard to the positive effects of health on education (Ross, 1991; Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003).

Residential school experience has a statistical significance for men only. It has a greater effect on non-Status men, but not in the direction we would expect. It increases

educational attainment by B= .314, and for Status men by B= .202. This finding contradicts the literature which suggests that having residential school experience has a negative effect on educational attainment. The belief is that those who have personal experiences and/or have family members who were students at residential schools, often have negative opinions, including fear and distrust towards the mainstream Canadian education system. These opinions are reflected in lower levels of educational achievement than the non-Aboriginal population (Hare & Barman, 1998:331; Ponting, 1997:98; Kirkness, 1992). One possible explanation for this is that having residential school experience may mean that the respondent is more integrated (see Milloy, 1999), however, the interpretation is likely more complex. For instance, there may be a subset of the Aboriginal population that has attained higher education just to access the levels of power needed to incite change on a social, economic and cultural level. In other words, by "playing the game", highly educated Aboriginal peoples can access the powerful decision-making bodies of our society which would allow them to take positions of authority that can assist them in enacting societal-wide changes that better challenge the power inequalities faced by their people. I discuss this issue in greater detail in the next chapter.

4.3.6 *Summary of Results*

To conclude, the results of the regression analysis of the four models confirms the two hypotheses. One of the major findings is that the most important factor contributing to educational attainment is receiving financial assistance for post-secondary schooling. This highlights the importance of government funding and the

need for the government to continue to fulfill their treaty obligations, along with the need for other sources of post-secondary funding. Another important finding is the positive effect of residential school experience on educational attainment for some Aboriginal students. It is explained as the result of the assimilation that occurred in residential schools, but it also highlights the destructive effect on Aboriginal culture, language and traditional education since in order to succeed, many Aboriginal peoples have been forced to reject their culture and way of life.

The variables predicting highest level of schooling differ by gender. Aboriginal identity only negatively influences highest level of schooling for women. Having a spouse only increases educational attainment for men. Having residential school experience only significantly affects education for men. The variables predicting highest level of schooling also differ by status. Being North American Indian only negatively affects Status women and being Métis only negatively affects non-Status women. Other variables predicting highest level of education are only significant for certain groups. Living in a rural area only affects highest level of schooling for Status women, and living in an urban area does not influence educational attainment for non-Status women. Health status does not affect highest level of schooling for Status men. Being a single parent only negatively influences education for non-Status women. Mobility does not influence highest level of schooling for Status men. The implications of this study are discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the results of this study regarding Aboriginal peoples' educational attainment and the significant findings. The implications of this study are also discussed in greater detail, particularly in regard to treaty rights to education. The chapter then concludes with a brief summary of the implications based on the research results, and provides direction for future research.

This study examines the factors contributing to the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. The educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples is important because it sustains the social and economic inequality they experience in relation to non-Aboriginal Canadians and affects their ability to participate in economic institutions. More importantly, Aboriginal peoples in Canada have the constitutional right to education through treaties. Education is also a human right. Unfortunately, neither guarantees equal participation in society, and the Canadian government has failed to ensure both. Aboriginal peoples continue to face considerable racism and discrimination, which are additional barriers in educational attainment. Attaining higher levels of education is becoming increasingly important in order to obtain adequate employment, so it is imperative that the inequalities faced by Aboriginal peoples are addressed before the gap increases further. Post-secondary credentials are valued and pursued by Aboriginal peoples, are necessary to fulfill leadership roles and self-government, and to successfully participate in the labour market and mainstream economy. Finally, educational attainment is important due to the young and growing

Aboriginal population. If Aboriginal peoples cannot participate equally, social exclusion will increase in the future.

5.1 Discussion

The results of the bivariate analysis confirm previous studies showing that Aboriginal women have higher levels of education than Aboriginal men, and that non-Status Indians have higher levels of education than Status Indians. The majority (29.7%) of Aboriginal peoples, regardless of their gender or status, do not have high school diplomas. Almost two-thirds of Aboriginal women finish high school compared to half of all Aboriginal men. Men however, are more likely than women to obtain credentials from trade school, a trend mirrored in the non-Aboriginal population. Trade qualifications are more attractive to men, which generally yield higher incomes and employment security which may account for some of the gender differences. This trend is also witnessed among non-Aboriginal people especially for university students. In Canada, the majority of university graduates are women; 33% of Canadian women aged 25 to 34 have a university degree, compared to only 25% of Canadian men (Statistics Canada, 2008a). As the results reveal in this study, Aboriginal women are no different in terms of their educational patterns than non-Aboriginal women. The difference is that their educational attainment is significantly lower when compared to non-Aboriginal women.

Results of the bivariate analysis also reveal that non-Status Indians are more likely to complete secondary school than Status Indians. One explanation for this could be because Status Indians are more likely to have lived on reserves where they have

more restricted access to secondary and post-secondary education (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996) even though they may live in urban areas in adulthood. For those living on-reserve, 50% have less than a high school diploma and 4% have a university degree as their highest level of schooling. For those living off-reserve, 30% have less than high school diploma and 9% have a university degree (Statistics Canada, 2008a). As a result, the federal government needs to increase secondary school services on reserves to ensure equal access to education.

Since the highest level of education for the largest number of Aboriginal peoples is less than high school, addressing secondary school completion is important. High school completion is also a prerequisite to attend most post-secondary schools (although there are some exceptions), and obtaining post-secondary credentials is becoming increasingly important to participate in the labour market and economy. As a result, the findings of this thesis support the recent cash incentive initiative on Long Plain First Nation in Manitoba in order to increase secondary school completion.

Incorporating Aboriginal perspectives and ways of knowing and learning into the mainstream education system, and/or having an Aboriginal controlled education system for Aboriginal peoples, such as band controlled schools, may also increase secondary school completion rates. Kleinfeld (1975) finds that when Aboriginal perspectives and ways of learning are used in the classroom, which incorporate culture and are based on appropriate personal relationships, success rates of Aboriginal students also increase. Hampton (1995) identifies many examples of highly-successful Aboriginal-oriented schools. These schools have high success rates in literacy and educational attainment.

Examples include alternative schools like Children of the Earth High School in Winnipeg, where students learn traditional and contemporary teachings, and Joe Duquette High School in Saskatoon (Battiste & Barman; 1995). Schissel and Wotherspoon (2003) also find that educational attainment and success increases when schools embrace programs, practices, and personnel that combine mainstream and Aboriginal -specific sensitivities. These are successful initiatives that could be expanded in order to reduce high school drop-out rates. Initiatives which combine mainstream and Aboriginal perspectives can also increase success in post-secondary education. This is illustrated in the recent 'Aboriginal House' facility at the University of Manitoba, which is designed around Aboriginal culture, perspectives and values to increase participation, support and success in university, and to make Aboriginal students feel more welcome.

Another way to decrease high school drop-out rates is to better incorporate Aboriginal perspectives in curriculum. Aboriginal perspectives and ways of learning should be respected and treated equally with the other values taught in school. Having Aboriginal controlled education systems and incorporating Aboriginal perspectives and ways of knowing and learning into education (and having Aboriginal knowledge equal to that of mainstream knowledge), is also part of decolonizing education. Decolonizing education involves Aboriginal peoples having control of their own education, including schools, and implementing Aboriginal curriculum, languages, cultures, and Aboriginal teachers into the mainstream Canadian education system.

While the results of the bivariate analysis are useful, this thesis goes further, examining the multivariate relationships that influence educational attainment. This

study finds that the three strongest factors influencing the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada are gender, status, and receiving financial assistance for post-secondary education. Other significant variables have a weaker effect on highest level of schooling, which include: age, income, reasons why respondents dropped out of secondary school, reasons why respondents quit post-secondary school, and living in a CMA. These variables influence the educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples, regardless of gender or status and have varying positive and negative effects for each group.

Of all the variables included in the analyses, receiving financial assistance for post-secondary schooling is the most important factor influencing educational attainment, regardless of gender or status. This finding not only supports the existing literature (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000:139; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996), it is one of the first times this aspect has been directly tied to Aboriginal education. A major recommendation of this thesis is to increase financial support for Aboriginal peoples in obtaining higher levels of education, regardless of their status entitlement. Not only is there a need for more funding for Status Indians, but a funding program for non-Status Indians is also necessary. Table 4.4 illustrates the financial assistance characteristics by gender and status.

Women are more likely than men, and Status Indians are more likely than non-Status Indians to receive financial assistance. While nearly all of those who applied for financial assistance received assistance, only half of Aboriginal students ever apply. For Aboriginal women, just over half of post-secondary students applied for financial

assistance (66.6% for Status women and 56.4% for non-Status women), and just under half of all male post-secondary students applied for financial assistance (51.5% for Status men and 43.5% for non-Status men). More importantly, even though the majority of Status Indians receive their financial assistance from the government, just under one third (31.1%) of all Status Indians who attend post-secondary school receive financial assistance for their education from the government. Of all the Status women that attend post-secondary school, 37.7% received financial assistance from the government, while the corresponding figure for Status men is 24.5%. These numbers dispel the myth that all Aboriginal peoples receive free post-secondary education. Since one of the entitlements that Status Indians have is receiving funding for education, particularly for post-secondary studies, we would expect higher rates of application among Status Indians, and more Status Indian students receiving financial assistance. Clearly, this is not the case.

The fact that only half of Aboriginal students who are entitled even apply for post-secondary funding is alarming. This could be because the qualification criteria is more restricted than simply having status, and/or a result of the limited funding allocated for post-secondary education by the government. In addition, frustration with the application process could also be a deterrent to applying. This results in many Aboriginal students not qualifying for funding. It may also be attributed to delays in receiving funding. As previously noted, approximately 10,000 Aboriginal students who are eligible and looking to attend post-secondary education are on waiting lists because of inadequate funding (Assembly of First Nations, 2008b). The result is that Aboriginal

students who are supposed to be receiving funding for post-secondary school are not, and therefore, the government is not fulfilling its treaty obligations; the rights and entitlements of these students are not being honoured and Aboriginal peoples are not gaining equality in the realm of education.

These findings, along with the fact that the federal government is the most important source of financial assistance for all students, including Status Indians, illustrates that the federal government is failing to uphold its treaty obligations in providing funding for post-secondary education. As a result of the significance of receiving financial assistance for post-secondary school, the federal government is advised to increase their post-secondary funding and/or alter their treaty payment arrangements. In addition, because receiving financial assistance is the most important factor influencing educational attainment, regardless of status, funding improvements are needed for non-Status Indians. Despite that fact that non-Status Indians are most likely to get their funding through loans, non-Status Indians are even less likely than Status Indians to receive financial assistance. Many of those students are members of bands that have yet to sign comprehensive treaties. We must consider the effects of cancelling the Kelowna Accord in this context. The Kelowna Accord was developed between Aboriginal leaders and the Canadian government to improve the education, employment, and housing conditions for Aboriginal peoples through government funding and other programs. One of its major outcomes was increased funding and support of educational programs for Aboriginal peoples.

5.1.1 *Aboriginal Women*

Some of the factors influencing education vary by gender. Almost all Aboriginal women reported that they dropped-out of high school due to personal reasons (ie., pregnancy/taking care of children, problems at home, to help at home). As a result, increasing childcare and support services for women who are in high school and in need, could help remove these barriers and increase secondary school completion among Aboriginal women.

In regard to post-secondary education, Aboriginal women are more likely (56.6%) than men (50.5%) to attend post-secondary school. The results of the bivariate analysis reveal that women are more likely than men to complete high school, and to receive financial assistance for post-secondary school so this observation is not surprising. Completing high school and receiving financial assistance are essential first steps to gain access to further education. Non-Status women are more likely to attend post-secondary school than Status women despite having access to less government funding (58.4% and 54.8% respectively). While non-Status women are less likely to receive financial assistance for post-secondary school, they are more likely (61.1%) to complete high school than Status women (55.7%).

Of those attending post-secondary school, Status women are most likely to quit their studies. Non-Status women conversely, are most likely to complete their studies, where they are most likely to obtain other non-university credentials. This might be due to the fact that many non-Status women do not make it to post-secondary education since they may experience more difficulties securing funding. For those who quit post-

secondary school, the results of this study reveal that most leave because of personal reasons (which include family responsibilities, financial reasons, being too old, difficulty being away from home). This is most likely because personal reasons include financial reasons, and finances greatly influence post-secondary attainment. As a result, increased funding for post-secondary school, and better family support/childcare services (since quitting because of family responsibilities is part of personal reasons) may help increase post-secondary completion for Status women.

Women are more likely than men to achieve any type of university credentials as their highest level of education. There are however, status differences between undergraduate and graduate students. Status women are more likely than non-Status women to obtain a Bachelor's degree. Non-Status women are more likely than Status women to obtain graduate degrees or professional degrees. In sum, Aboriginal women have higher levels of education than men, and non-Status women have higher levels of education than Status women.

While Aboriginal women have higher levels of education than Aboriginal men, when we look closer, the barriers in educational attainment are more significant for women. Aboriginal identity only affects women; being North American Indian is only a barrier for Status women, while being Métis is only a barrier for non-Status women. Quitting post-secondary schooling because of personal reasons and because of unknown reasons has a greater negative effect for Aboriginal women than men.

A significant finding of this study for Aboriginal women is in regard to Aboriginal identity and the effect of living in a rural area. Identifying as North American Indian

(NAI) only has a statistically significant effect on the educational attainment of Status women. Among Status women, being North American Indian has a greater negative effect on educational attainment than being Métis or Inuit. Having Métis identity is only statistically significant for non-Status women, also having a negative effect. Essentially, for non-Status women, being Métis has a greater negative effect on education than being North American Indian or Inuit. For Status Indians, the disadvantage is to identify as North American Indian. This is likely because few Métis women have status. This finding supports the existing literature that Métis have higher levels of education, since they are more likely to complete high school and any type of post-secondary education. This is followed by North American Indian, then Inuit (Statistics Canada, 2008a; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2007). In short, funding for post-secondary education among Métis women is important as they are still disadvantaged in educational attainment and access to funding. Current programs fail to recognize the needs of Métis women.

In examining the effect of living in a rural area, this study finds that living in a rural area does not negatively influence higher levels of educational attainment, and therefore does not seem to be a barrier, contrary to our expectations. Living in a rural area affects Status women and education positively. Previous studies found that many rural students are disadvantaged, and have lower levels of educational attainment (Hull, 1990; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Statistics Canada, 2008b). One explanation for the differences in my results could be an increase in distance learning and correspondence courses that are more widely available. Distance-learning

programs help people living in rural areas or on-reserves gain educational credentials without having to leave home, which alleviates many obstacles. Furthermore, there is an increasing desire for this option to become more widely available to further assist remote Aboriginal communities (Ponting & Voyaguer, 2005:430; Voyageur, 2001). As a result, more distance learning programs should be made more widely available to rural and reserve students to increase secondary school completion and participation in post-secondary studies is a recommendation of this thesis. Given the transitory nature of some Aboriginal peoples, this too may be an explanation for this finding. Like other students, many Aboriginal peoples move to cities in order to attend school.

5.1.2 *Aboriginal Men*

Of the main reasons given for dropping out of high school, almost all Aboriginal men quit because they worked (wanted to work or had to work). As a result providing financial assistance for those who are in high school and in need of it, could help remove this barriers and increase secondary school completion among Aboriginal men. Furthermore, if financial assistance is provided for high school students, this might make dropping out of high school in order to work less enticing.

In regard to post-secondary education, Aboriginal men are less likely than women to attend post-secondary school. The results of the bivariate analysis show that Aboriginal men are less likely than women to complete high school and receive financial assistance for post-secondary school. As a result, high school completion and financial assistance for Aboriginal men needs to be improved to increase their post-secondary enrolment rates. In reverse to Aboriginal women, Status men are more likely than non-

Status men to attend post-secondary school (51.1% and 49.9% respectively). Even though they are less likely (48.1%) than non-Status men (51.2%) to complete secondary school, Status men are also more likely to receive financial assistance for post-secondary school. In terms of educational choice, the majority of men seek trade school credentials where high school completion in not always a prerequisite. Of those who do attend post-secondary school, Status men are most likely to quit their studies. Non-Status men, conversely, are most likely to complete their studies, where they are most likely to obtain trade school credentials. For those who quit post-secondary school, like their female counterparts, most quit because of personal reasons (which include family responsibilities, financial reasons, being too old, difficulty being away from home). Again, this is most likely because personal reasons include financial reasons, and finances greatly influence post-secondary schooling. As a result, like Status women, increasing funding for post-secondary school may help improve post-secondary completion for Status men. Additional counselling services may help mitigate personal problems.

Aboriginal men are less likely than women to obtain university credentials. This is most likely because the majority of men who obtain post-secondary credentials choose to attend trades school. Of the men that achieve any type of university credentials, they are more likely to be non-Status Indians. In sum, Aboriginal men have lower levels of education than women, and non-Status men have higher levels of education than Status men.

Another significant finding of this study is the positive influence of having residential school experience on educational attainment for Status and non-Status men. Residential school experience has no adverse effect on the educational attainment of Aboriginal women. This finding contradicts the literature which states that having residential school experience has a negative effect on educational attainment (Hare & Barman, 1998:331; Ponting, 1997:98; Kirkness, 1992; Milloy, 1999). One possible explanation for this finding is that having residential school experience may mean that the individual is more assimilated. Since this finding is explained as the result of the assimilation that occurred in residential schools, this highlights the destructive effect on Aboriginal cultures, languages and traditional education. Another possibility is a limitation of the model. Since this finding is against common sense and the existing literature, there may be other variables or forces that might affect the residential school experience finding in this study that is not included or measured. As a result, recommendations for this finding cannot be made. This is an issue worth pursuing in future research studies.

5.2 Conclusion

To summarize, based on the findings of this study, secondary school completion rates needs to be addressed. In addition, funding for post-secondary education should be increased for both Status and non-Status Indians. Essentially, the government is advised to abide by their treaty obligations, which are to provide funding for educational facilities and opportunities for Status Indians. Funding and programming should be offered to non-Status Indians. "The Government of Canada must commit to

the funding of First Nations education to the degree that the educational gap is rapidly closed and educational outcomes meet and exceed those of the general Canadian population" (Assembly of First Nations, 2005:2).

There are several myths pertaining to Aboriginal peoples and education that have been dismissed as a result of this thesis. One is the myth that all Aboriginal peoples are privileged in receiving free post-secondary education. First, the government provides financial assistance to Status Indians only; this excludes non-Status Indians and Métis. In addition, the results of this study reveal that approximately only one-third (31.1%) of Status Indians who attend post-secondary school actually received funding for their education from the government, and that it is estimated that 10,000 qualified Aboriginal students are on waiting lists for funding. This leaves a significant number of Aboriginal students who are not receiving free post-secondary education. Other myths include low intelligence and lack of ambition in pursuing and obtaining education. Since almost half (44%) of Aboriginal peoples have post-secondary credentials (Statistics Canada, 2008a), it is clear that Aboriginal peoples do not have low intelligence. In addition, Aboriginal peoples do not lack ambition in obtaining education, they simply experience inequality and many more barriers in educational attainment than any other group. Some of these barriers that are identified in this study include: inadequate financial assistance for post-secondary school, being North American Indian, being Métis, less access to educational facilities and opportunities, being a single parent, and racism.

It is important for educators and the general public to be aware of the barriers and experiences of Aboriginal students and to understand why Aboriginal peoples have lower levels of educational attainment than non-Aboriginal people. Educators need to realize that not all Aboriginal peoples value the mainstream Canadian education system because it does not reflect their cultures or way of life, and that Aboriginal peoples' past experiences with education consist of culture and language destruction and assimilation. Furthermore, Aboriginal peoples' traditional ways of knowing and learning are different from that of mainstream Canadian people and are viewed as inferior. As a result, some Aboriginal students experience difficulty in participating in the Canadian education system. School settings that are based on personalized relationships and social harmony that acknowledge cultural differences make a considerable difference (see Kleinfeld, 1975). In addition, because of the history of Aboriginal education, not only do some Aboriginal peoples devalue the Canadian education system, but it is also feared and distrusted.

The implications for colonial theory is that colonial education remains apparent, and Aboriginal peoples continue to face subjugation and isolation. The government continues to play a role in the oppression of Aboriginal peoples. This is evident in treaties being broken. Aboriginal peoples remain economically dependent on the larger society, since poverty continues. In regard to human capital theory, the results of this data analysis challenges human capital theory. This research shows that we do not live in a meritocratic society. Everyone does not get the same opportunities for education and employment. Aboriginal peoples face barriers that limit educational attainment and

employment opportunities. As a result, human capital theory does not work for Aboriginal peoples, and the chances of receiving meaningful employment are decreased. Human capital theory ignores the influence of racism and the institutional barriers that prevent Aboriginal peoples from succeeding.

This study suggests that future research should focus on why non-Status Indians have higher levels of education than Status Indians, especially when Status Indians are entitled to education benefits through treaties that non-Status Indians are not entitled to. Since receiving financial assistance for post-secondary education is the most significant factor, and the inadequacy of financial assistance that is being received by Aboriginal students, particularly Status Indian students, future research and studies should focus on this issue. Future research should focus on secondary school completion, since a significant number of Aboriginal peoples do not complete secondary school. The effectiveness of Aboriginal controlled schools, and/or schools that incorporate traditional Aboriginal ways of knowing and learning should be studied further, since these schools have indicated higher success rates, might help increase secondary school completion and contribute to decolonizing education.

Regarding the data on Aboriginal peoples and education, future research should include living on a reserve as part of the geographic location in the dataset. Aboriginal knowledge and learning perspectives should be measured and incorporated. Aboriginal ethnicity and language should also be included in the dataset. The respondents should be asked whether or not they attended a band controlled school. Finally, parents' educational attainment should be collected. These variables should be measured and

included in the data since these could be factors that contribute to educational attainment among Aboriginal peoples.

Equality in education at all levels is a human right. Aboriginal peoples in Canada also have the right to education through treaties. This treaty right is incorporated into the *Canadian Constitution.* Since Aboriginal peoples in Canada experience inequality in education, their rights are being denied. Through a better understanding of the educational context for Aboriginal peoples, the most appropriate policies and programs can be implemented to reduce or eliminate educational inequality. Essentially, this thesis addresses social inequality in Canadian society by researching the educational inequality experienced by Aboriginal peoples.

Appendix

Appendix Table A.1: Highest Level of Schooling by Income

Highest Level of Schooling	less than $5,000	$5,000-$9,999	$10,000-$14,999	$15,000-$19,999	$20,000-$29,999	$30,000-$39,999	$40,000 or more
No Schooling	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Less than High School diploma	42.5%	38.6%	36.0%	30.9%	26.5%	22.0%	17.0%
High School diploma	13.6%	13.7%	13.2%	14.0%	15.0%	14.1%	14.6%
Some post-secondary	20.2%	20.0%	22.8%	20.8%	20.4%	18.7%	16.1%
Diploma or certificate from trade school	8.6%	11.0%	10.0%	13.0%	13.0%	15.3%	16.6%
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	10.2%	11.6%	13.0%	16.2%	19.2%	19.5%	18.7%
University certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level	0.8%	0.9%	1.1%	1.5%	1.6%	2.2%	3.1%
Bachelor's degree	2.3%	2.6%	2.6%	2.1%	3.6%	6.7%	10.1%
University degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level	0.6%	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	1.3%	3.6%
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total N	2,384	1,948	1,852	1,503	2,481	2,046	2,977
							15,191

Appendix Table A.2: Highest Level of Schooling by Age

Highest Level of Schooling	Age		
	25-34	35-44	45-54
No Schooling	0.4%	0.5%	1.2%
Less than High School diploma	28.2%	28.7%	33.6%
High School diploma	15.0%	14.2%	12.6%
Some post-secondary	24.1%	18.5%	14.5%
Diploma or certificate from trade school	10.7%	13.7%	14.2%
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	14.7%	17.1%	14.9%
University certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level	1.1%	1.8%	2.4%
Bachelor's degree	5.0%	4.4%	4.8%
University degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level	0.8%	1.2%	1.8%
Total %	100%	100%	100%
Total N	5,665	5,772	3,804
			15,241

Appendix Table A.3: Highest Level of Schooling by Geographic Area

Highest Level of Schooling	Geographic Area			
	CMA	urban	rural	Arctic
No Schooling	0.2%	0.4%	0.6%	2.9%
Less than High School diploma	23.2%	25.3%	35.5%	48.7%
High School diploma	14.7%	14.8%	14.5%	8.3%
Some post-secondary	22.2%	21.3%	16.3%	15.6%
Diploma or certificate from trade school	12.3%	13.7%	13.0%	10.2%
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	15.8%	17.1%	15.4%	11.6%
University certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level	1.9%	2.0%	1.3%	1.3%
Bachelor's degree	7.3%	4.5%	2.9%	1.4%
University degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level	2.3%	1.0%	0.5%	0.0%
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total N	5,204	4,110	4,558	1,369
				15,241

Appendix Table A.4: Highest Level of Schooling by Financial Assistance for Gender and Status

Highest Level of Schooling	Female Status		Female Non-Status		Male Status		Male Non-Status	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
High School diploma	0.1% 1	0.0% 0	0.3% 4	0.0% 0	0.2% 1	0.0% 0	0.2% 2	0.0% 0
Some post-secondary	42.5% 561	53.7% 36	30.1% 428	52.7% 49	43.3% 286	63.6% 28	25.9% 223	42.1% 24
Diploma or certificate from trade school	11.3% 149	17.9% 12	15.2% 216	8.6% 8	22.4% 148	13.6% 6	27.0% 233	31.6% 18
Diploma or certificate from other non-university institution	26.2% 346	20.9% 14	35.1% 500	29.0% 27	21.8% 144	18.2% 8	28.5% 246	19.3% 11
University certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level	3.4% 45	4.5% 3	3.0% 43	1.1% 1	1.8% 12	0.0% 0	2.8% 24	1.8% 1
Bachelor's degree	14.1% 186	3.0% 2	13.2% 188	6.5% 6	8.6% 57	4.5% 2	10.9% 94	5.3% 3
University degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level	2.4% 32	0.0% 0	3.2% 45	2.2% 2	2.0% 13	0.0% 0	4.6% 40	0.0% 0
Total	1,320	67	1,424	93	661	44	862	57
Total N		3,671		4,462		2,618		4,105

Appendix Table B.1: Description of Variables Used in Analysis

Variable Name	Variable	Variable Description
HLOSR	Highest Level of Schooling recoded	1=no schooling 2=less than high school diploma 3=high school diploma 4=some post-secondary 7=diploma or certificate from trade school 8=diploma or certificate from other non-university institution 9=university certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level 10=Bachelor's degree 11=university degree, certificate or diploma above Bachelor's level
IDQ06SEX	gender	1=males; 2= females
IDQ03TRT	Treaty or Registered Indian (Status)	1=yes; 2=no
IdentityD1NAI	North American Indian	NAI=1; else=0
IdentityD2Métis	Métis	Métis=1; else=0
IdentityD3Inuit	Inuit	Inuit=1; else=0
TOTINCCR	total Income recoded	1=less than $5,000 2=$5,000-$9,999 3=$10,000-$14,999 4=$15,000-$19,999 5=$20,000-$29,999 6=$30,000-$39,999 7=$40,000 or more
AGEGRPR	age group recoded	1=25-34 2=35-44 3=45-54
GEOD1cma	Census Metropolitan Area	CMA=1; else =0
GEOD2rural	rural area	rural=1; else=0
GEOD3urban	other Urban area	urban=1; else=0
G02MOVESR	number of times moved in past 5 years recoded	0=none 1=one 2=two 3=three 4=four or more times

Table B.1 Continued

LoneParent	Single parent	lone parent =1; else=0
Spouse	Spouse	spouse=1; else=0
E01HLTHR	health status recoded	1=poor 2=fair 3=good 4=very good 5=excellent
A02GRADR	high school graduate? recoded	1=yes; 2=no
A03CGEDR	completed high school equivalency program? recoded	1=yes; 2=no
SATTEND	school attendance	1=not attending 2=attending elem/high school full-time 3=attending elem/high school part-time 4=attending trade school or other non-university full-time 5=attending trade school or other non-university part-time 6=att. trade school or other non-university FT/PT not stated 10=attending university full-time 11=attending university part-time 12=attending university, FT/PT not stated 13=att. Full-time, type of school not stated 14=att. part-time, type of school not stated 98=missing; 99 not stated
A14_WRKd	not continue secondary school because of work	1=yes; 0=else
A14_PERd	not continue secondary school because of home	1=yes; 0=else
A14_SCHd	not continue secondary school because of school	1=yes; 0=else
A14_R09d	not continue secondary school because of don't know	1=yes; 0=else
A14_R10d	not continue secondary school because of refused	1=yes; 0=else
A14_R11d	not continue secondary school because of other	1=yes; 0=else

Table B.1 Continued

NewA14	number of reasons given why respondent dropped out of high school	0=no reasons 1=one reason 2=two reasons 3=three reasons 4=four reasons
A30B_PERd	not finish post-secondary because of personal	1=yes; 0=else
A30B_SCHd	not finish post-secondary because of school	1=yes; 0=else
A30B_WRKd	not finish post-secondary because of work	1=yes; 0=else
A30B_R07d	not finish post-secondary don't know	1=yes; 0=else
A30B_R08d	not finish post-secondary because of other	1=yes; 0=else
FINASSISd	receive any financial assistance for post-secondary schooling	1=yes; 0=else
A35RES	Ever a student at a federal residential school?	1=yes; 2=no; 3=refused 98=missing; 99=not stated or invalid
FAMRES	Family member a student at residential school?	1= at least one family member was a student 2= no family member was a student 98=missing
Res.Exp.	Residential school experience	1=have residential school experience 0=no residential school experience

Appendix Table B.2: Description of Variables Considered for Analysis

Variable Name	Variable	Variable Description
IDQ04BND	member of Band or First Nation	1=yes; 2=no 3=don't know; 99=not stated or invalid
FOL	first official language spoken	1=English 2=French 3=English and French 4=neither English nor French
LFSTATUS	labour force activity	1=employed 2=unemployed 3=not in the labour force 98=missing; 99=not stated or invalid
FINAPPLY	apply for financial assistance for post-secondary schooling	1=yes; 2=no 98=missing; 99=not stated
FINAS_01	receive financial assistance from INAC or band	1=yes; 2=other response(s) to question 98=missing; 99=not stated or invalid
FINAS_02	receive financial assistance from Grant, bursary or scholarship	1=yes; 2=other response(s) to question 98=missing; 99=not stated or invalid
FINAS_03	receive financial assistance from student/personal bank loan	1=yes; 2=other response(s) to question 98=missing; 99=not stated or invalid
FINAS_05	receive financial assistance from other	1=yes; 2=other response(s) to question 98=missing; 99=not stated or invalid
UNITS	number of persons in household	1=one 2=two 3=three 4=four 5=five 6=six or more 8=missing
H01ROOM	total number of rooms in home	2=1 or 2 rooms 3=three rooms 4=four rooms 5=five rooms 6=six rooms 7=seven rooms 8=eight rooms 9=nine rooms 10=ten or more rooms 8=missing; 9=not stated or invalid

Appendix Table C.1: Correlation Matrix for Female Status Model

	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	X11	X12	X13	X14	X15	X16	X17	X18	X19	X20
Age	1.000																			
Income	.034	1.000																		
*NAI	-.068	[-.027]	1.000																	
*Métis	.043	[.008]	-.750	1.000																
* Inuit	[.028]	[-.008]	-.128	[-.019]	1.000															
* CMA	[-.014]	.046	-.062	[.027]	[-.026]	1.000														
*Rural	.052	-.040	[.007]	[.000]	[.005]	-.514	1.000													
* Urban	-.035	-.034	.042	[-.015]	[.015]	-.521	-.419	1.000												
Res.Exp	[-.002]	[.013]	.224	-.207	[-.030]	[-.002]	-.057	.042	1.000											
Fin. As.	-.112	.156	.053	-.065	[-.002]	.050	-.062	[.012]	.141	1.000										
*Parent	-.128	.101	.069	-.080	[-.013]	.093	-.148	.063	.096	.061	1.000									
*Spouse	.057	-.041	-.069	.076	[-.009]	-.148	.199	-.052	-.078	-.078	-.703	1.000								
Mobility	-.132	-.047	.040	[-.023]	[-.007]	[-.007]	-.053	.073	.098	.129	.078	-.103	1.000							
Health	-.205	.206	-.036	.035	-.040	[.002]	[.020]	-.039	-.041	.115	[-.029]	.077	[-.022]	1.000						
Quit High Sch	.102	-.212	.069	-.063	[.000]	-.075	.068	[.012]	.053	-.247	.052	[-.030]	[-.019]	-.219	1.000					
Quit PS-per	[-.026]	[-.013]	[.019]	-.033	[.019]	[.004]	[-.020]	[.022]	.068	.174	.046	-.037	[.026]	[-.011]	[-.022]	1.000				
Quit PS-sch	-.049	[-.002]	[.025]	[-.019]	[-.007]	[.028]	[.000]	[-.029]	[.020]	.067	[-.007]	[.011]	[-.004]	[.009]	[-.007]	.044	1.000			
Quit PS-wrk	[-.001]	[.028]	[.002]	[.005]	[-.005]	[-.014]	[-.004]	[.023]	[.017]	.040	[.001]	[-.013]	[.013]	[.008]	-.039	.047	[-.010]	1.000		
Quit PS-DK	[-.001]	[.013]	[.021]	[-.023]	[-.004]	[.005]	[-.013]	[-.005]	[.021]	.042	[-.009]	[-.015]	[-.004]	[-.023]	[.012]	[-.021]	[-.009]	[-.006]	1.000	
Quit PS-oth	[.003]	[.012]	[.002]	[-.011]	[-.009]	[.027]	[-.028]	[-.012]	[.028]	.094	[-.001]	[-.026]	[.011]	[-.023]	[.009]	.036	[.019]	[-.014]	[-.012]	1.000

All variables significant at the 0.05 level of significance except as indicated by [ ]=not significant.

*Indicates that this is a dummy variable.

N=3,808

Appendix Table C.2: Correlation Matrix for Female Non-Status Model

	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	X11	X12	X13	X14	X15	X16	X17	X18	X19	X20
Age	1.000																			
Income	.033	1.000																		
*NAI	[.011]	-.048	1.000																	
*Métis	[.024]	[.025]	-.592	1.000																
* Inuit	-.057	[.026]	-.187	-.522	1.000															
* CMA	[-.004]	.085	.123	.044	-.257	1.000														
*Rural	.040	-.102	-.044	.222	-.227	-.431	1.000													
* urban	[.014]	[-.007]	[.011]	.130	-.214	-.412	-.366	1.000												
Res.Exp	[.010]	[.012]	[.022]	-.147	.173	-.048	-.046	-.041	1.000											
Fin. As.	-.151	.094	[.015]	.035	-.094	-.067	-.054	.050	.052	1.000										
*parent	-.080	.065	[-.017]	[.004]	[-.009]	-.059	-.074	[.015]	.036	.052	1.000									
*Spouse	.070	-.029	[-.024]	[.010]	.053	-.149	.126	[-.003]	-.033	-.066	-.698	1.000								
Mobility	-.127	-.041	.045	[.018]	-.093	.037	-.040	.076	.043	.136	.033	-.083	1.000							
Health	-.175	.176	-.032	[-.010]	[.057]	[.003]	-.034	[-.013]	-.045	.056	-.109	.135	[-.007]	1.000						
Quit High Sch	-.092	-.190	-.037	-.108	.216	-.126	.035	-.067	.078	-.196	.058	[-.020]	-.070	-.173	1.000					
Quit PS-per	-.037	-.035	[.007]	[-.003]	[-.010]	[.005]	[.002]	[.013]	[.025]	.107	[.000]	[.001]	.039	-.055	[-.005]	1.000				
Quit PS-sch	[-.021]	[-.015]	[.007]	[-.019]	[.005]	[.022]	[.001]	[-.022]	[.007]	.046	[-.016]	[-.005]	[-.003]	[.009]	[.017]	[.021]	1.000			
Quit PS-wrk	[-.012]	[.007]	[.027]	-.042	[.027]	[.017]	[-.019]	[-.006]	.034	[.012]	[-.004]	[-.012]	[.028]	[.005]	[-.006]	[.023]	[-.013]	1.000		
Quit PS-DK	[-.004]	[-.026]	[.008]	[-.016]	[-.005]	[.001]	[-.008]	[.011]	[-.005]	.041	[.028]	[-.027]	[.002]	[-.005]	[-.018]	[-.017]	[-.008]	[-.006]	1.000	
Quit PS-oth	[.005]	[-.006]	[.025]	-.030	[.022]	[-.001]	[-.005]	[-.009]	[.008]	[.020]	[-.010]	[.005]	[-.013]	[-.009]	[.023]	[.012]	.049	[-.016]	[-.010]	1.000

All variables significant at the 0.05 level of significance except as indicated by [ ]=not significant.

*Indicates that this is a dummy variable.

N=4,599

Appendix Table C.3: Correlation Matrix for Male Status Model

	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	X11	X12	X13	X14	X15	X16	X17	X18	X19	X20
Age	1.000																			
Income	.103	1.000																		
*NAI	[-.019]	-.110	1.000																	
*Métis	[.010]	.098	-.799	1.000																
* Inuit	[-.003]	[.025]	-.132	[-.022]	1.000															
* CMA	[-.016]	[-.008]	-.055	.047	[-.005]	1.000														
*Rural	.050	[-.008]	[.000]	[.000]	[-.005]	-.515	1.000													
* urban	[-.032]	[.009]	[.032]	[-.028]	[.014]	-.466	-.462	1.000												
Res.Exp	[-.011]	-.085	.193	-.223	[-.017]	[.005]	-.078	.041	1.000											
Fin. As.	-.125	[.028]	.051	-.038	[-.006]	.051	-.098	.056	.112	1.000										
*parent	[-.006]	[.003]	.059	-.042	[-.016]	[.025]	[-.036]	[.013]	.086	.034	1.000									
*Spouse	.102	.250	-.040	[.036]	[.021]	-.090	.054	[.029]	-.058	-.056	-.346	1.000								
Mobility	-.160	-.074	[.031]	[-.037]	[-.021]	.050	-.090	.062	.100	.127	[-.010]	[-.032]	1.000							
Health	-.193	.163	[-.016]	[.025]	[.015]	[.013]	[-.010]	[-.010]	-.043	.077	[.014]	.057	[.028]	1.000						
Quit High Sch	.124	-.153	.063	-.072	[-.015]	-.095	.137	-.051	[.012]	-.212	[.024]	[-.005]	-.079	-.177	1.000					
Quit PS-per	[-.023]	[.004]	[.010]	[.000]	[-.015]	[.013]	[.011]	[-.026]	.040	.140	[.015]	[-.006]	[.027]	[.005]	-.055	1.000				
Quit PS-sch	[.001]	[-.034]	[.024]	[-.027]	[.027]	[.008]	[-.005]	[.001]	.056	.147	[-.008]	[-.008]	[.020]	-.039	[-.001]	.038	1.000			
Quit PS-wrk	[.006]	[.034]	[.023]	[-.022]	[-.008]	[-.023]	[.009]	[.009]	.048	.071	[-.012]	[-.006]	[.018]	[.015]	[-.019]	[.031]	[-.005]	1.000		
Quit PS-DK	[-.008]	[-.001]	[.010]	[.001]	[-.005]	[-.015]	[.016]	[.003]	[.014]	.057	[-.001]	[-.031]	[.007]	[-.010]	[-.019]	[-.019]	[-.013]	[-.010]	1.000	
Quit PS-oth	[-.019]	[-.007]	[.027]	[-.018	[-.010]	[.028]	-.044	[.000]	.055	.094	[.022]	[-.018]	[.027]	[-.013]	[-.020]	[-.010]	[.029]	[-.022]	[-.013]	1.000

All variables significant at the 0.05 level of significance except as indicated by [ ]=not significant.

*Indicates that this is a dummy variable.

N=2,699

Appendix Table C.4: Correlations Matrix for Male Non-Status Model

	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	X11	X12	X13	X14	X15	X16	X17	X18	X19	X20
Age	1.000																			
Income	.100	1.000																		
*NAI	[.028]	[-.008]	1.000																	
*Métis	.039	.101	-.586	1.000																
* Inuit	-.100	-.143	-.192	-.548	1.000															
* CMA	[.003]	.050	.137	.046	-.261	1.000														
*Rural	.069	[.000]	-.066	.246	-.245	-.436	1.000													
* urban	[.004]	.071	.038	.131	-.225	-.378	-.374	1.000												
Res.Exp	[.000]	-.057	[-.010]	-.174	.239	-.068	-.053	-.065	1.000											
Fin. As.	-.098	.053	[-.008]	[.019]	-.045	.069	-.059	[.027]	.032	1.000										
*parent	[.023]	[-.001]	[.005]	[-.008]	[.017]	[.011]	[-.027]	[.001]	[.017]	[.013]	1.000									
*Spouse	.123	.251	[-.028]	[.019]	[.006]	-.085	.065	[.020]	-.030	-.030	-.329	1.000								
Mobility	-.142	-.031	.045	[.026]	-.094	.034	-.035	.079	[.008]	.135	[-.010]	-.063	1.000							
Health	-.192	.193	[-.027]	[-.011]	[.029]	[-.004]	[-.013]	[-.012]	-.039	.053	-.053	.086	[.008]	1.000						
Quit High Sch	.092	-.176	-.047	-.063	.151	-.140	.076	-.062	.065	-.208	[.027]	[-.009]	-.088	-.146	1.000					
Quit PS-per	[-.015]	[-.017]	[-.003]	[.004]	[-.006]	[.024]	[-.029]	[.018]	.054	.106	[.004]	[-.024]	[.024]	-.066	[-.022]	1.000				
Quit PS-sch	[-.011]	[.013]	[.012]	[-.009]	[-.010]	[.015]	[-.026]	[.023]	[.005]	.065	[.001]	[.002]	[.017]	[.010]	[-.011]	.087	1.000			
Quit PS-wrk	[.000]	[.030]	[.003]	[.003]	[-.004]	[.013]	[.000]	[-.006]	[-.001]	[.026]	[-.025]	[.005]	[.009]	[.025]	[.006]	.044	.033	1.000		
Quit PS-DK	[-.008]	[-.022]	[-.010]	[-.017]	.036	[.029]	-.030	[-.030]	[.025]	.045	[-.018]	-.039	[.016]	[-.014]	[.009]	[-.016]	[-.011]	[-.008]	1.000	
Quit PS-oth	[.002]	[-.002]	[-.002]	[-.023]	[.023]	[-.005]	[.003]	[-.012]	[.021]	.057	.049	[-.019]	[.009]	-.033	[.001]	[.007]	[.024]	[-.003]	[-0.012]	1.000

All variables significant at the 0.05 level of significance except as indicated by [ ]=not significant.

*Indicates that this is a dummy variable.

N=4,227

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