Mind the Gaps

A Demographic Data Collection Exercise at a Canadian Charity

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Cover photo by Jean-Philippe Asbo

Contents

Executive Summary

This project was conducted for the AFP Fellowship in Inclusion and Philanthropy. The project focused on a demographic collection exercise of all employees within an unnamed organization, the first of its kind for the Canadian charity.

The survey was conducted over a two-week period, with 80% of all employees represented within its results. There was a 78% response rate from all non-supervising staff and 80% representation of all managers within the organization.

The results show a largely homogenous workforce with some representation of diversity across select identity markers, as well as overwhelming gaps in representation in others.

There was some feedback provided by participants and others regarding shortcomings in the phrasing of certain questions, which will benefit future versions of this data collection exercise.

Recommendations for the future are to 1) regularly conduct a demographic survey exercise to provide comparisons to the baseline data, 2) grow efforts to increase representation of marginalized groups in the recruitment process, 3) institute a mentor or ally program for new staff, 4) pay attention to common experiences of existing diverse groups in the workforce, and 5) embrace a 'decent work' mindset to provide a positive and meaningful experience for all employees.

Overall, this project has shed light on the makeup of **ORGANIZATION's NAME** workforce, with an opportunity for the organization to improve its efforts towards diversity, equity and inclusion.

Project Background and Rationale

A lot of organizing and work around the concepts of diversity, equity and inclusion had already occurred within the organization. This included internal taskforces, evaluations, and toolkits prepared for use. However, the work was intermittent and largely completed in the distant past.

The organization had been experiencing a renewed desire to explore issues of inclusion and oppression within its culture. Staff recommended the need for a data collection process that would allow employees to submit their feedback on representation and inclusion, providing a starting point to address troubling issues.

Additionally, employees at the organization had never been asked to self-identify their intersectional identities and there was a need to collect such baseline data to create benchmarks for the future.

The goal of this project was to provide some basic answers to questions around representation, particularly around what identities are well-represented within the organization's workforce and to illustrate existing gaps.

For the purposes of this report, the organization's identity and any relevant elements have been anonymized, using replacement terms marked in **bolded purple**.

Project Development

The organization had already begun the process of engaging an external consultant in conversations and trainings around anti-oppression in the workplace.

The fellow worked alongside the consultant to develop a demographic survey, to collect basic statistics on identity representation within the workforce.

The fellow prepared a series of 16 questions for a demographic survey, informed by similar survey exercises conducted within the nonprofit and government sectors, as well as dialogue with the expert consultant.

A final draft of questions were reviewed by the consultant and executive director of the organization. Once approved, questions were uploaded into a digital format survey, administered by the consultant.

Employees at the organization were invited to participate in the demographic survey, and another qualitative engagement survey collecting workplace experiences around inclusion and oppression. Both surveys were open for a two-week window from January to February 2019.

Each survey functioned separately, in that data from the demographic survey could not be connected to the engagement survey.

The fellow provided some input on the development of the qualitative engagement survey but was not involved in any data review or reporting of said questionnaire. As such, this project report focuses solely on the results of the demographic survey.

Results

The respondents to the demographic survey represented 80% of the total number of employees at the organization. What follows are visual representations of the results based on the questionnaire.

Age

Age groups 26-35 and 46-55 each represent nearly a third of the respondents, followed by age groups 36-45 and 55-65.
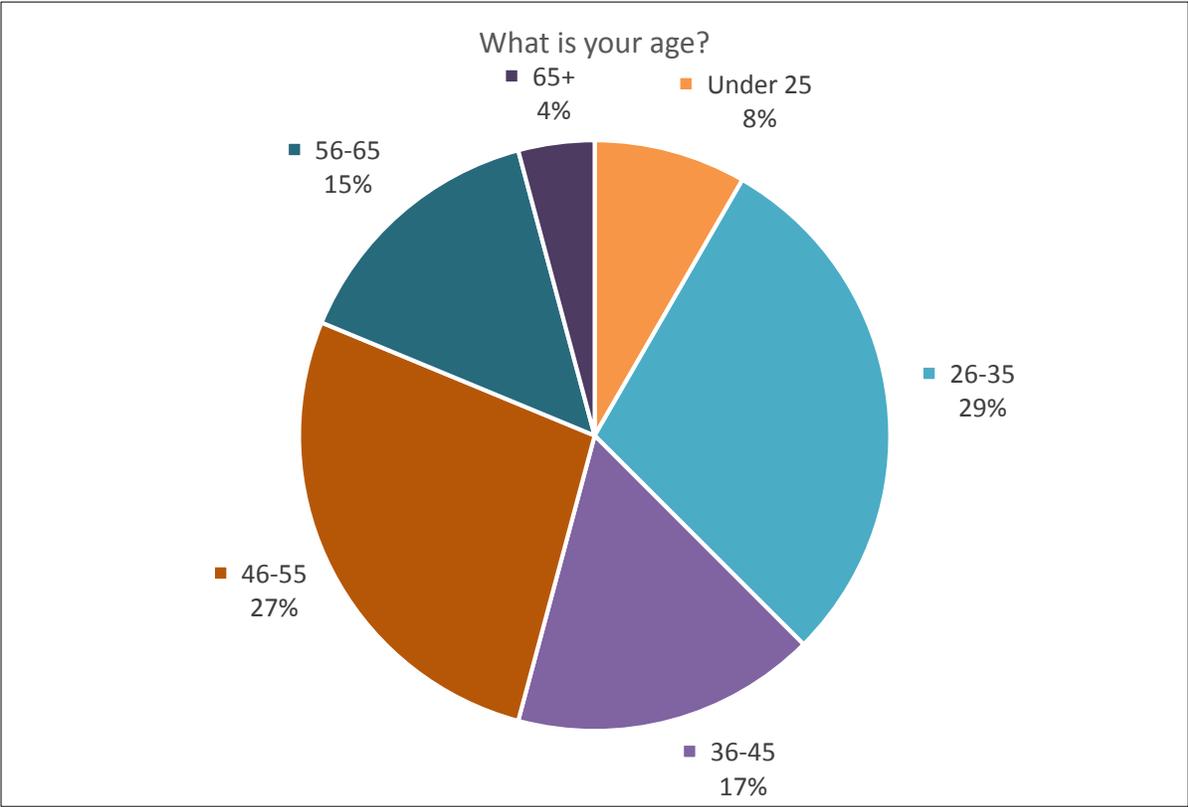
Employment status

More than two-thirds of respondents indicated being on a permanent basis with the organization, either full-time or part-time (69%), followed by nearly a third of respondents employed on a temporary or contract basis (27%).

What is the status of your employment at **ORGANIZATION NAME?**

- Other 4%
- Permanent part-time 13%
- Temporary full-time (contract) 27%
- Permanent full-time 56%
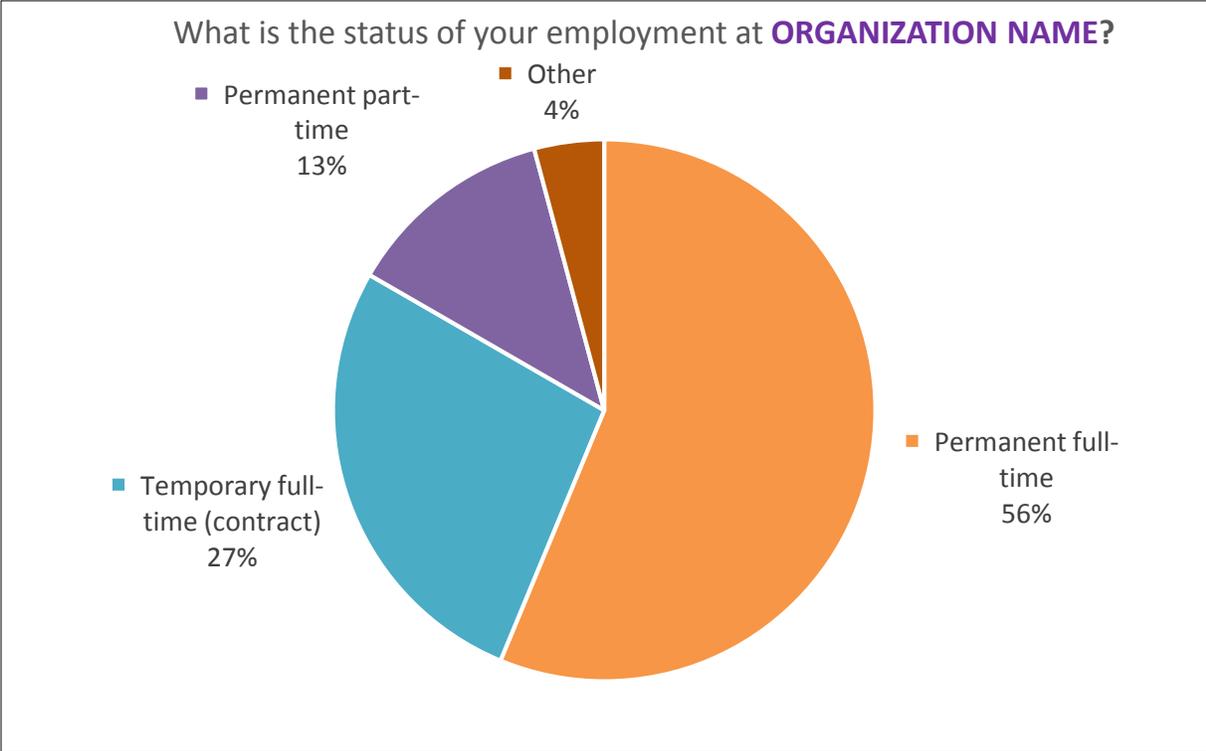
Employment Group

The ratio of staff to managers within the respondents was approximately 5:1. This is consistent with the actual ratio of staff to managers within the organization.

Additionally, respondents represented 80% of total managers at the organization and 78% of all staff, interns, trainees and apprentices at the organization.

What is your employment group at at **ORGANIZATION NAME**?

- Prefer not to answer
  2%
- Management (supervises one or more staff)
  17%
- Staff, interns, trainees, apprentices (does not supervise others)
  81%
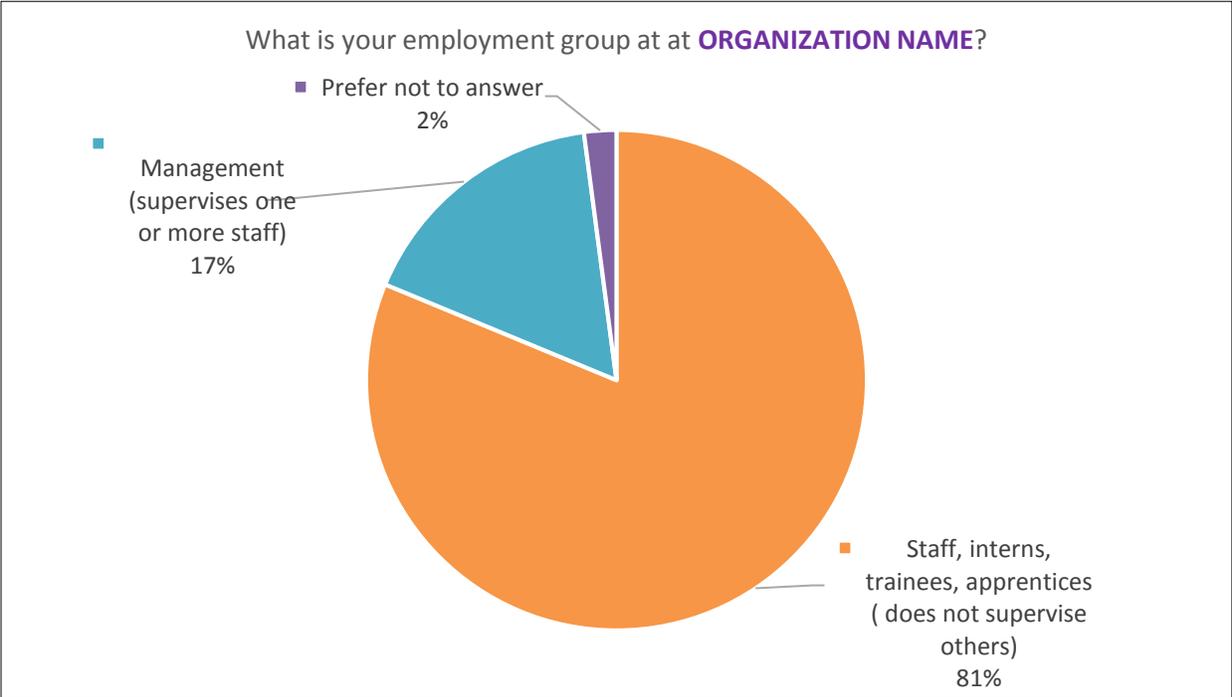
Years at Organization

Employees working at the organization for less than a year, and those working between 11-20 years, each represent approximately a third of the respondents.

How long have you worked at at **ORGANIZATION NAME**?

- 31-40 years 2%
- 21-30 years 8%
- Less than a year 29%
- 11-20 years 36%
- 1-5 years 19%
- 6-10 years 6%
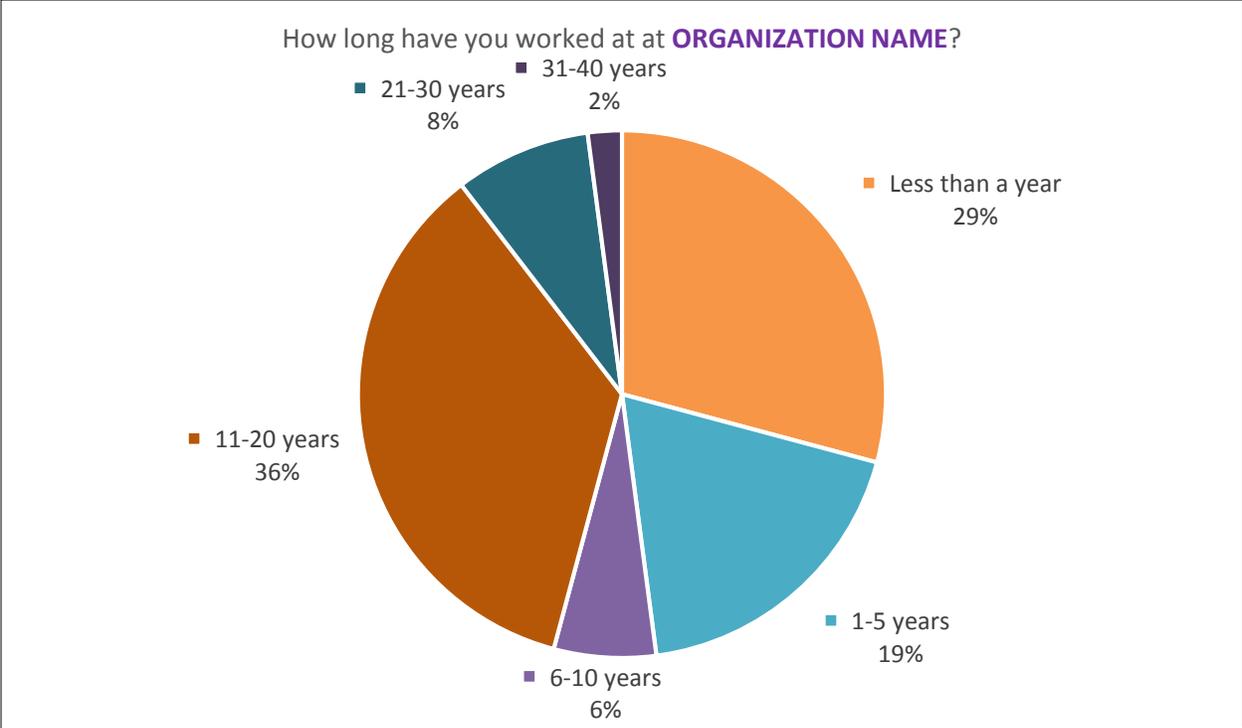
Gender Identity

Almost all respondents described their gender identity as female or male (96%). A small percentage of respondents chose to identify themselves as genderqueer/gender non-conforming/gender variant or not answer at all (4%).

What option best describes your gender identity?

- Genderqueer/ Gender non-conforming/ gender varient 2%
- Prefer not to answer 2%
- Male 23%
- Female 73%
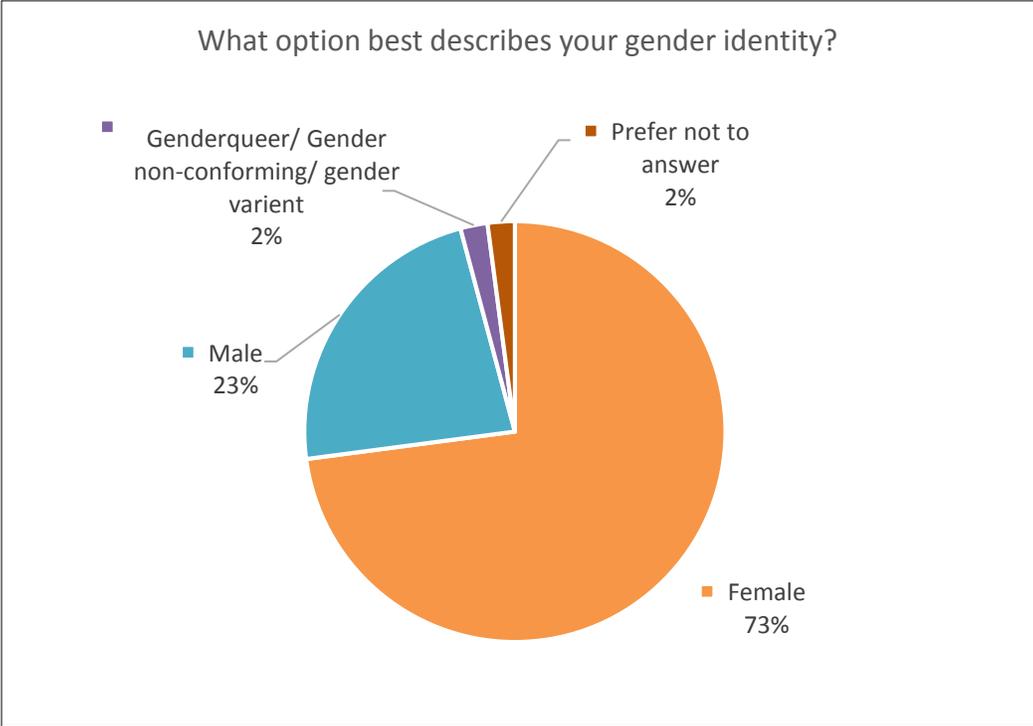
Sexual Orientation

A majority of respondents described their sexual orientation as heterosexual, with some representation of more identities.

What option best describes your sexual orientation?

- Queer, 4%
- Lesbian, 2%
- Pansexual, 4%
- Prefer not to answer, 10%
- Bi (Bisexual), 10%
- Heterosexual, 69%
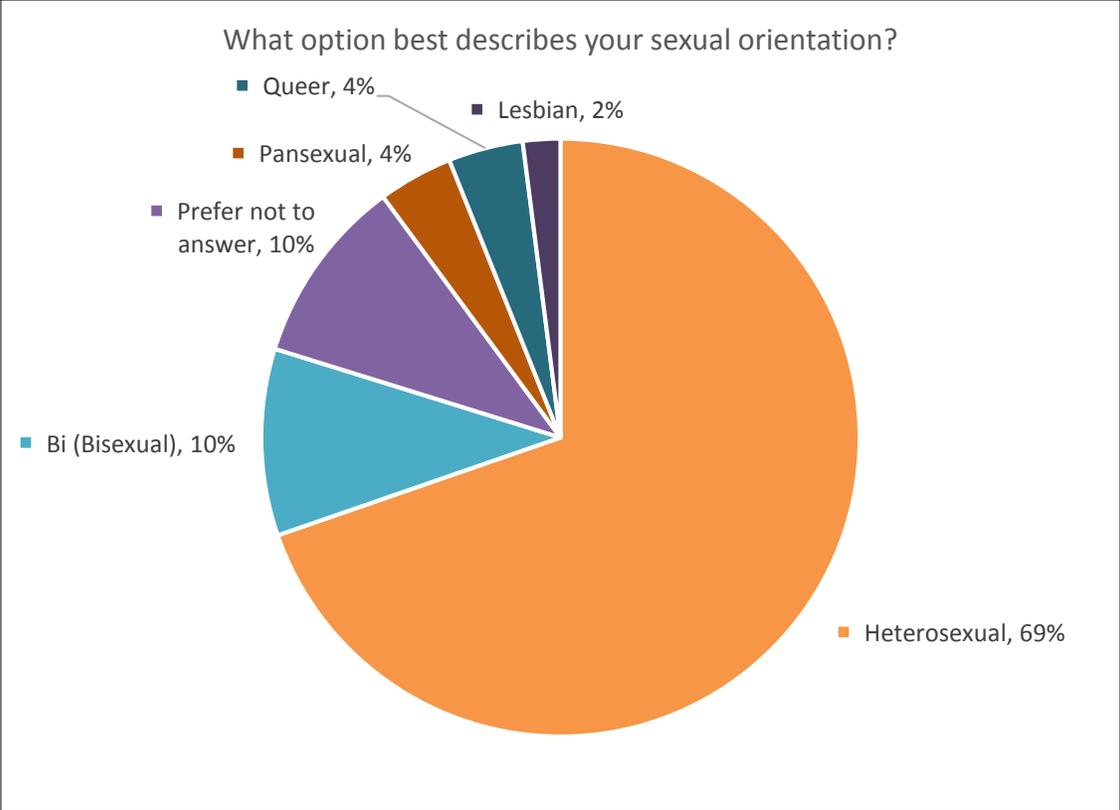
Ability

Thirteen percent of respondents reported identifiyng as a person with a disability.

Do you identify as a person with a disability?

- Yes 13%
- Prefer not to answer 6%
- No 81%
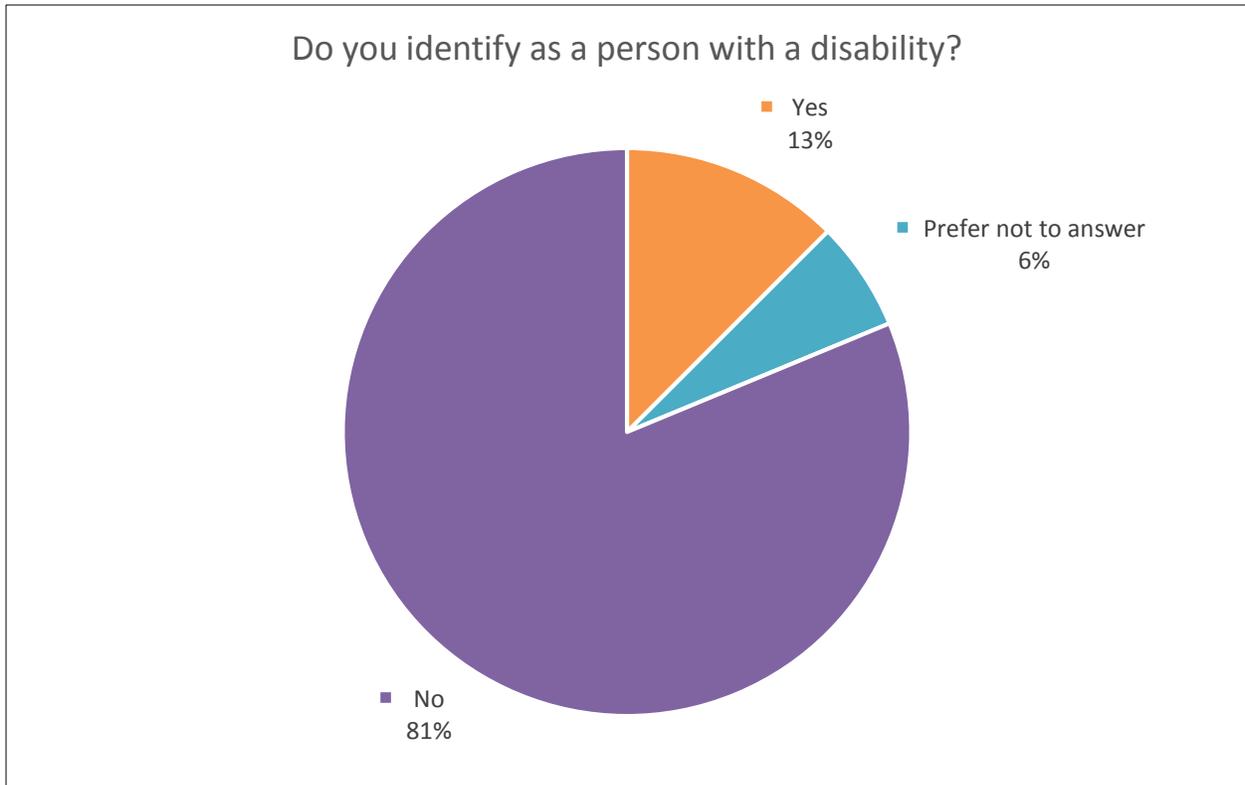
Religion and Spirituality

More than one-third of participants chose a response indicating that they do not identify as religious or spiritual. Participants had the option to choose multiple responses.

What option best describes your religious or spiritual affiliation/practice? (multiple responses)

Response	Percentage
Not religious or spiritual	35%
Spiritual	19%
Muslim	13%
Catholic / Roman Catholic	8%
None of the above	8%
Prefer not to answer	8%
Other denomination of christianity	4%
Buddhist	2%
Christian Orthodox	2%
Hindu	2%
Jewish	2%
Protestant	2%
Wiccan/Pagan	2%
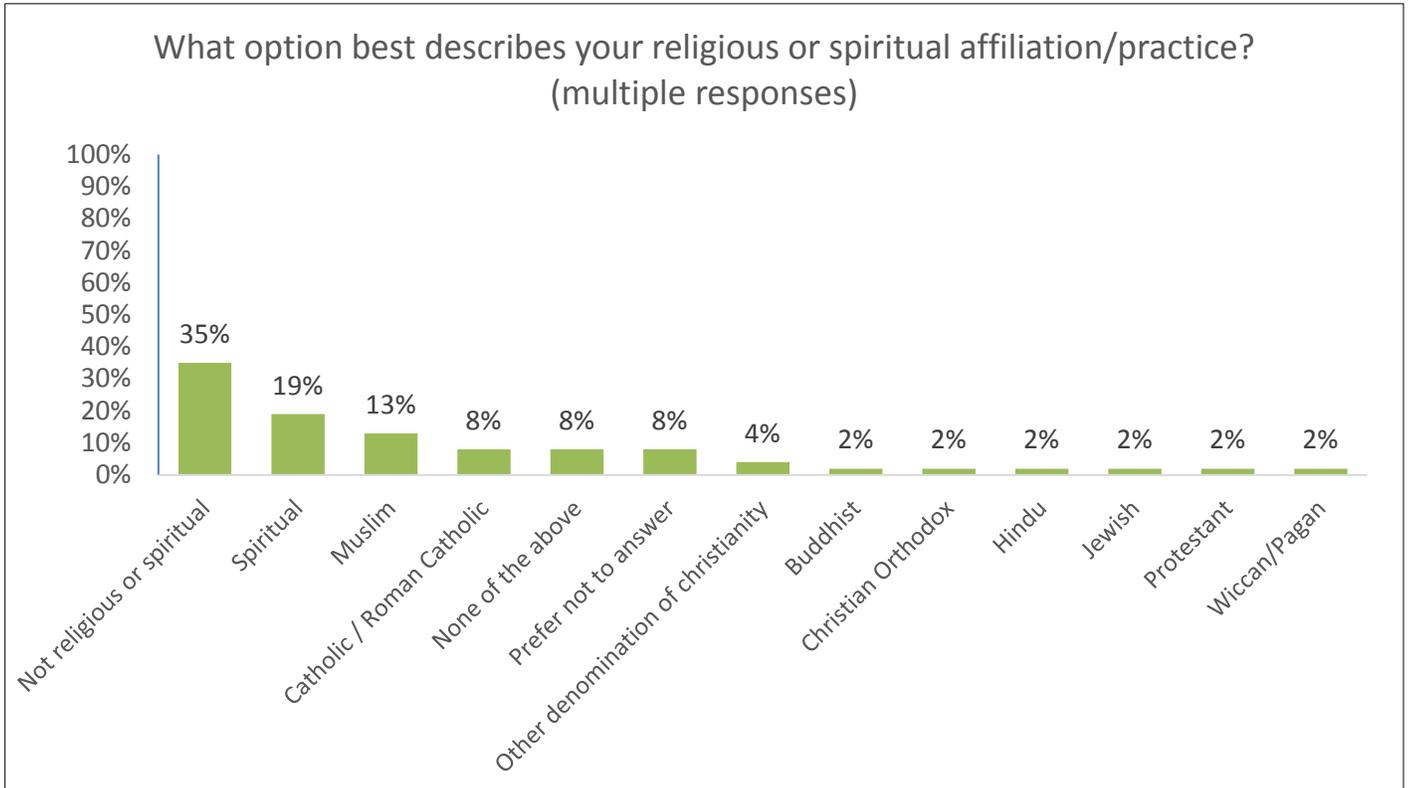
Language

All respondents indicated communicating in English regularly, with some minor representation of more languages.

What option best describes the language you use to communicate regularly?
(multiple responses)

Language	Percentage
English	100%
French	6%
Other	4%
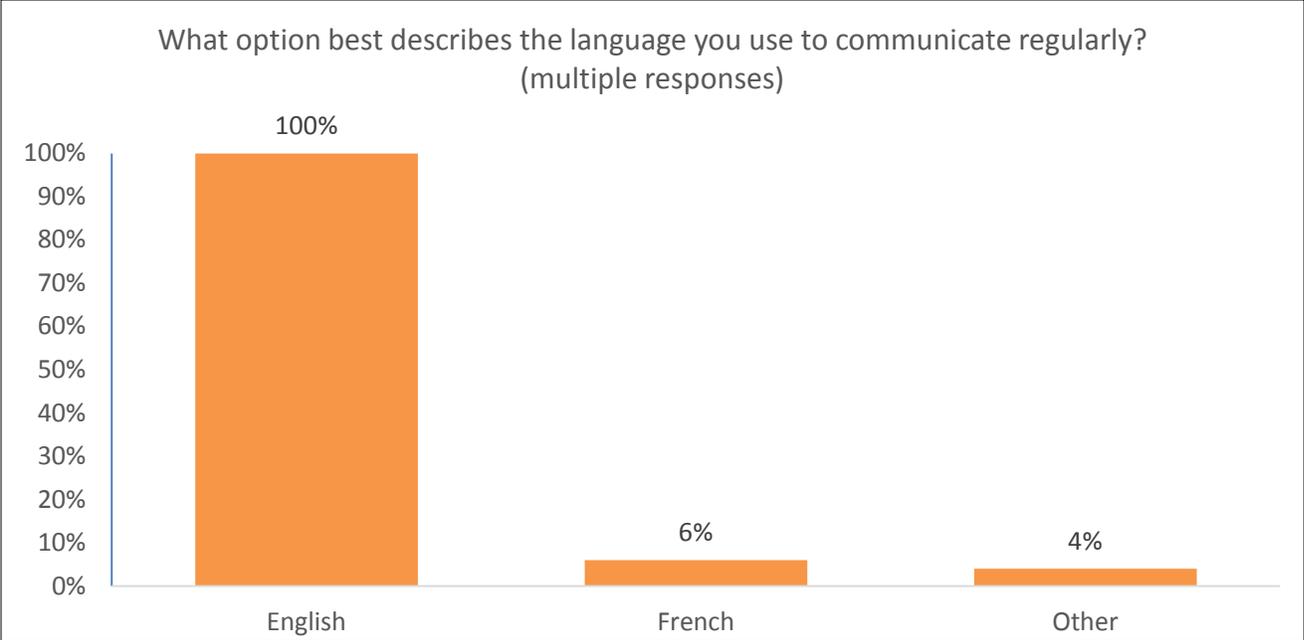
Indigenous Identity and Membership

Zero percent of participants responded as identifying as part of the First Peoples of Canada.

Do you identify as part of the First Peoples of Canada?

- Prefer not answer
  2%

- No
  98%
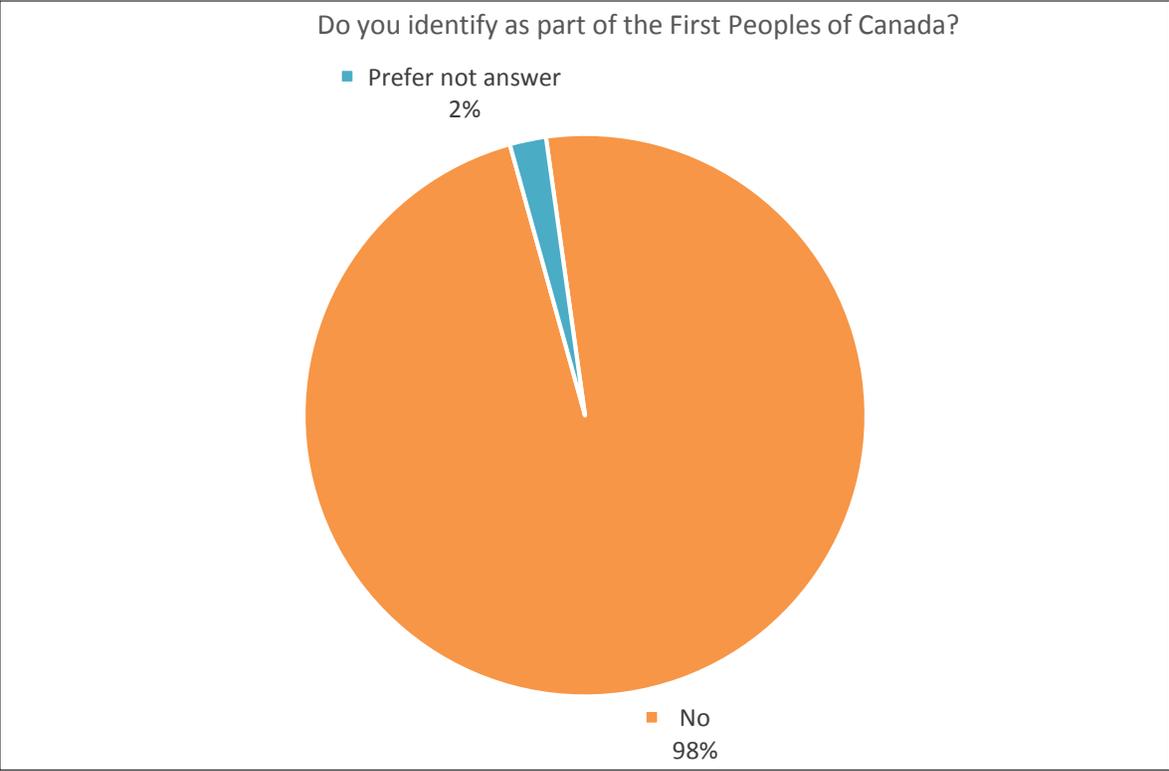
A follow up question (if yes were to be selected in the above question), gave respondents the option to identify or name their membership, such as First Nations, Métis or Inuit.

Zero respondents received this follow up question, as none selected 'yes' to the one above.

Racialized groups / Visible Minorities

More than half of participants chose a response indicating that they do not identify as a member of a racialized group. Participants had the option to choose multiple responses.

Do you self identify as a member of a racialized group/visible minority?
(multiple responses)

- No, I do not identify as a member of a racialized group: 54%
- South Asian: 13%
- Black: 8%
- Other: 6%
- Prefer not to answer: 6%
- West Asian/Arab: 6%
- European descent: 4%
- Mixed Race / Origins: 4%
- East Asian: 2%
- Southeast Asian: 2%
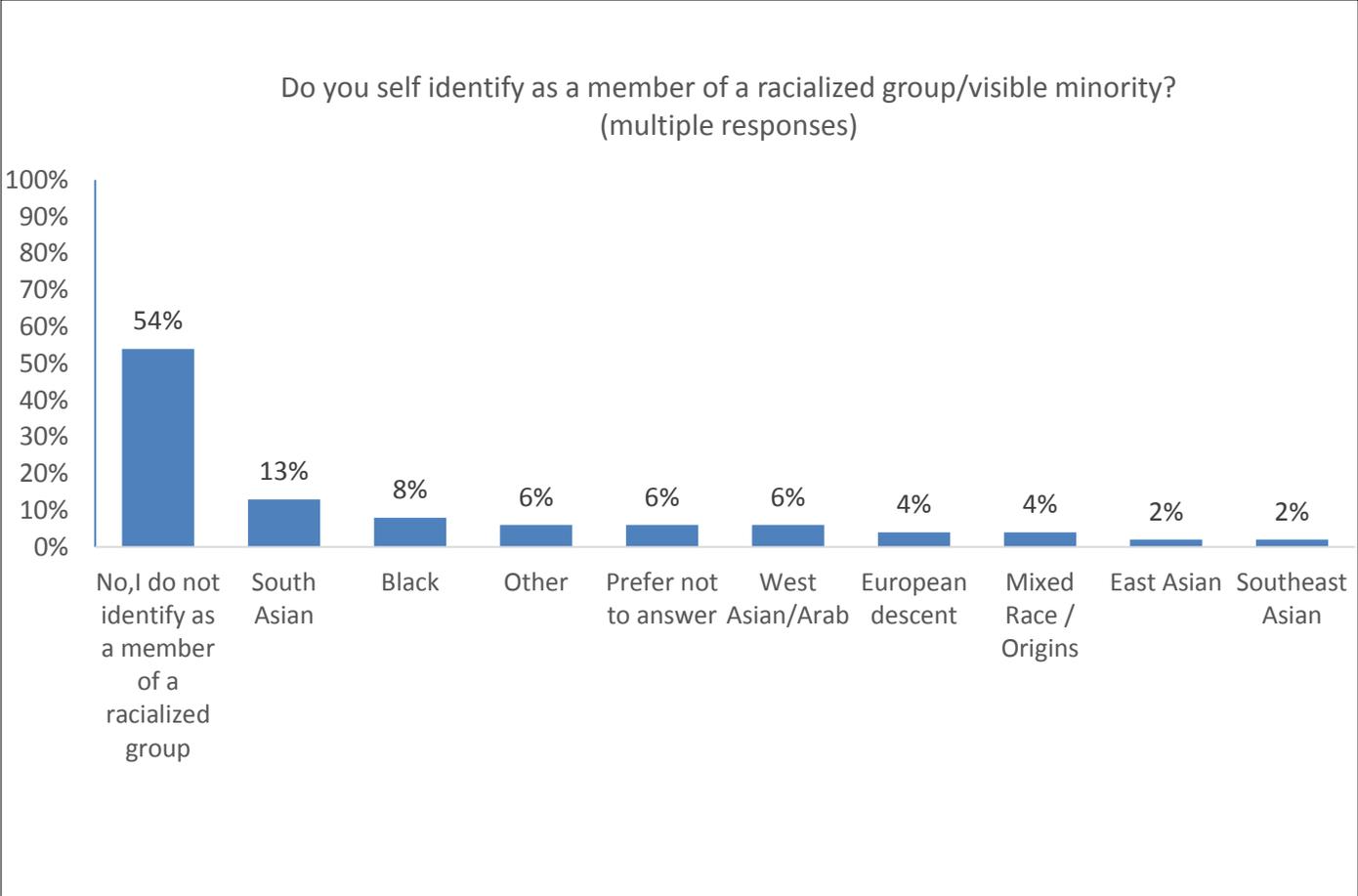
Status in Canada

An overwhelming percentage of respondents described their status in Canada as citizen, with a small percentage describing as permanent residents.

How would you describe your status in Canada?

- Prefer not to answer 2%
- Permenant Resident (or application in process) 4%
- Citizen 94%
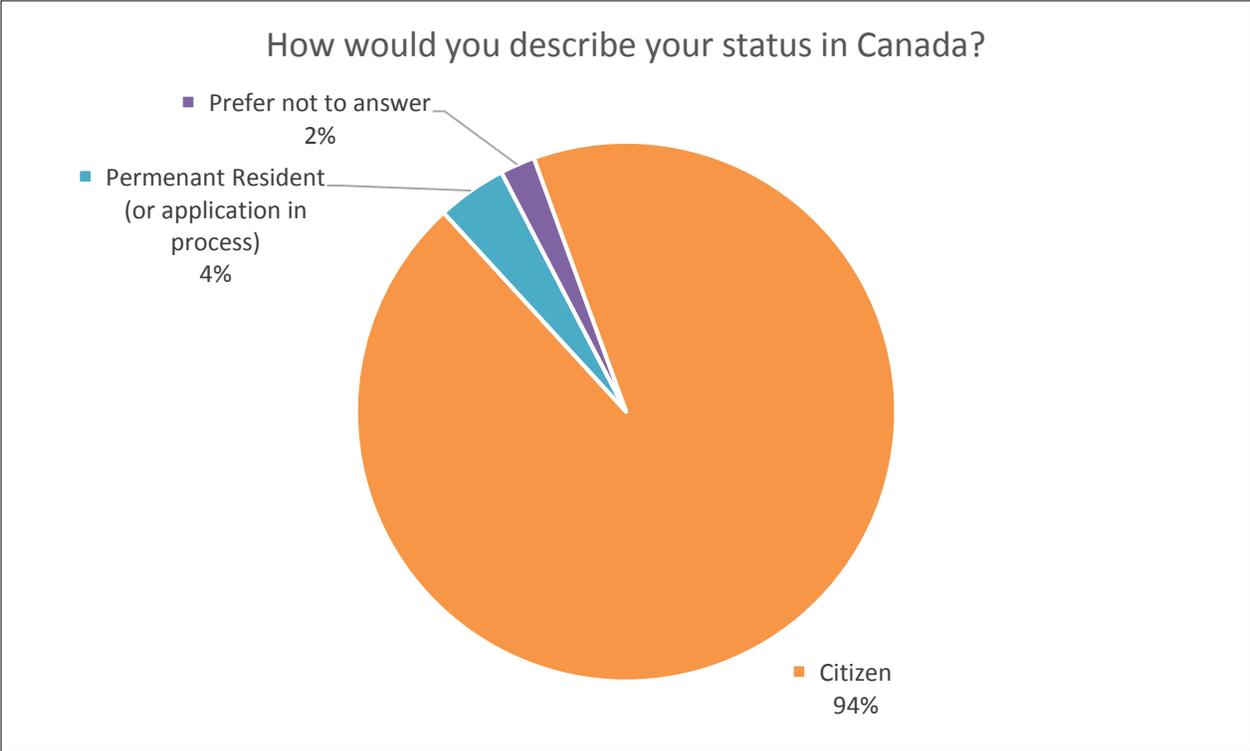
Formal Education

More than 90% of respondents reported having some kind of formal post-secondary education, with nearly half having a graduate degree from a university.

What is the highest level of formal education you completed?

- None of the above 2%
- College Certificate 2%
- College Diploma 2%
- College Degree 4%
- High school 4%
- University Graduate Degree 44%
- University Undergraduate Degree 42%
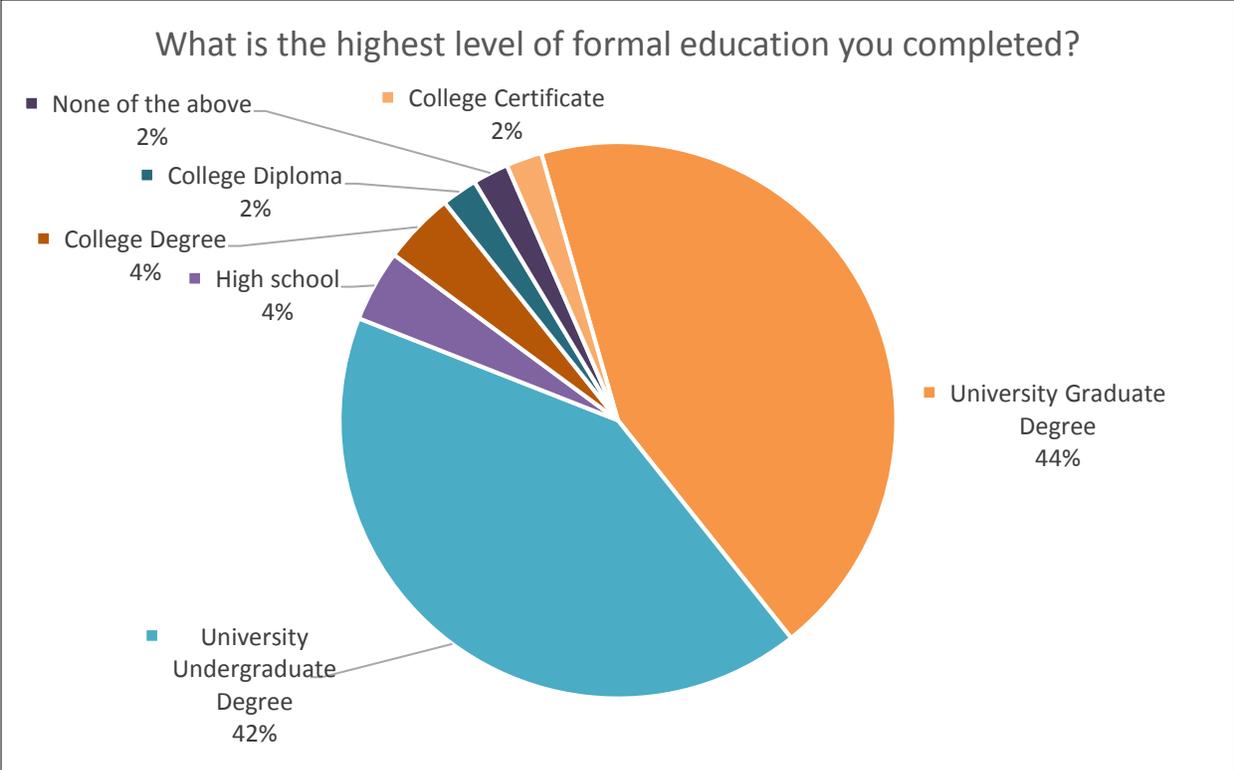
Dependents

Slightly more than half the number of respondents report having a dependent of some kind.

Would you identify as having dependents?
(elder family members, children, other)

Yes
52%

No
48%
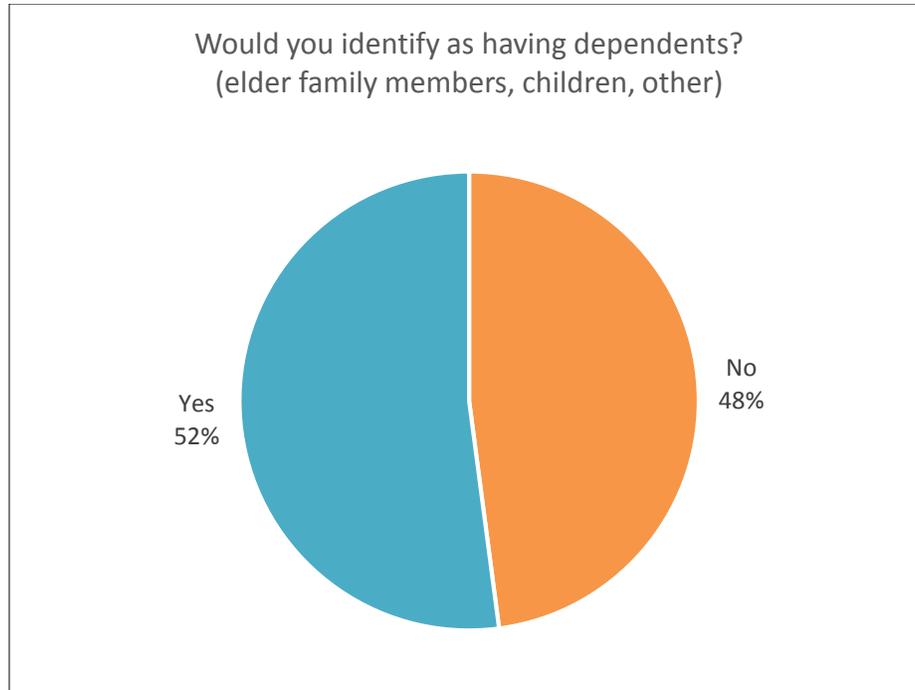
Other identities

Participants were asked a final question: "Is there any other part of your social location/identity that we missed in this survey and that you would like to be captured? Please be specific."

Of the responses that were received, the most common was a desire to express 'class identity' or socio-economic status.

Shortcomings & Learnings

There were a few shortcomings pointed out in the demographic survey, after its launch.

1. Misrepresentation of identities within survey

Following the launch of the survey, a few individuals voiced dissatisfaction or frustration around the wording of questions and/or responses, particularly around gender and racial identities.

> **QUESTION #5 - Gender identity**
> Feedback was submitted that in providing a separate option for non-cisgender identities (trans, genderqueer, Two-Spirit) but failing to provide a 'cisgender' option, the survey positioned cis identities as the norm and while otherizing non-cisgender identities. It was recommended that a better approach would be to provide two questions: one around gender identity (female/male/non-binary/Two-Spirit/other), and one around trans identity and experience (trans/cis/other).
>
> An employee also came forward to indicate that they did not feel that their identity was included in the gender identity question, and that the option of 'other' was not sufficient.
>
> **QUESTION #12 Racialized group/visible minority**
> Several participants provided feedback that this question was confusing, as the question began asking 'do you identify…', implying the need to respond with either a 'Yes' or 'No'. However, there were several responses of racial identities provided, along with a 'no' option but no 'yes' option.
>
> **QUESTION #10: Indigenous self-identification**
> It was pointed out that the phrase 'First Peoples of Canada' was problematic. It was recommended that a better encompassing term would be "Indigenous peoples". Additionally, the second part of the term ("of Canada") was also seen as problematic, as some individuals may not see their identity as being 'of Canada' but of their still sovereign and self-determining Indigenous nation(s).

These errors were largely due to the lack of wider consultation in the survey development process. The survey could have benefited from the expertise of **ORGANIZATION WORKING GROUP** and expertise within the staff unit, especially those working regularly in the respective subject areas.

2. Request for greater privacy
Also following the launch of both surveys, there was an expression from employees that it was not appropriate for the fellow to be privy to the data collected in the qualitative engagement survey.

This request was respected, and as a result, the fellow did not view the information collected in qualitative survey or engage in any analysis or reporting from said data set.

Recommendations

1. **Improve and conduct the demographic survey regularly**

   i) Execute the demographic survey on a yearly interval

   The data collected in this first exercise is most valuable when it acts as a baseline against which future metrics can be compared. As the organization increases its efforts in diversity, equity and inclusion, it should continue to track representation amongst employees, and act to fill the identified gaps. The recommended interval time is one year.

   ii) Develop future surveys with adequate consultation of expertise from both within and outside of the organization

   Future iterations of the demographic survey should tap into the in-house expertise, including expert staff and **ORGANIZATION WORKING GROUP**. This will ultimately lead to a more inclusive process and final product.

   An alternative would be to consider commissioning an appropriate external party on a regular basis to provide this service. Several professional consultants and groups offer these services, including the [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion](#).

   iii) Include questions around socio economic status or class identity in future surveys

   With several respondents mentioning that this was part of their identity that was not captured, the inclusion of such identity markets bears consideration in future versions of this demographic survey.

2. **Work towards greater representation of diverse and marginalized communities in recruitment processes**

   i) Increase tactics to grow the diversity of the candidate pool

   The organization is already engaging in methods to grow diversity in candidate pools, such as by posting job openings with community agencies for foreign-trained professionals. More attention needs to be paid to increasing Indigenous representation within the organization. Some potential agencies for support could include:
   - [Indigenous Careers](#) (formerly Inclusion Network) – a national network of Indigenous candidates and employers

- [First Nations Jobs Online](#) – an online recruitment platform
- [Lynx Indigenous Career Connection](#) – an online job board for post-secondary students and recent graduates

More potential job sites include:
- [Workink.com](#) – a job site for Canadians with disabilities via the [Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW)](#)
- [Pride at Work Canada](#) – a national organization offering job posting and support for organizations wishing to build workplaces regardless of gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation

ii) Increase tactics to reduce bias in the hiring process

The organization is already engaging in training methods around diversity and inclusion, as well as emotional intelligence. It is recommended that all hiring committees receive a brief but mandatory training on recognizing and reducing implicit bias. Some options include:
- Producing (or commissioning) a brief virtual implicit bias training module that all hiring committee members should complete before engaging in the hiring process
- Using tools like the [Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT)](#)

3. Consider instituting a mentor/ally program in the onboarding process

Pairing new hires with a current employee can help new staff orient themselves within the organization. It is recommended that new hires are connected with a mentor outside of their department, with a formal relationship for a minimum of six months.

4. Pay ongoing attention to common experiences of diverse groups within the workforce.

i) Paying close attention to wage equity gaps

Wage equity has been long documented across gender and racial identities in both for profit and non-profit sectors. The organization should pay regular attention or engage in a formal review to combat potential wage inequity across gender, race and other identities.

ii) Ensuring adequate services for individuals with disabilities

With more than 10% of respondents reporting having a disability, the organization should be mindful of accommodating services for staff who have identified needs for support, as well as encouraging staff who have not yet identified to speak with their supervisors about support.

iii) Ensuring that mandatory or important work experiences take into consideration conflicting priorities of employees. These could include:

- Not scheduling significant meetings on religious holidays that are not marked as statutory holidays in Canada (e.g. Eid)
- Refraining from scheduling important conversations early or late in the day, when employees are not able to be present due to caretaking of dependents

5. **Embrace a Decent Work mindset to address and reduce gaps in equity**

   The organization would benefit from championing the concept of decent work – a commitment to fair, stable and productive workplaces. Several resources are available through the [Ontario Nonprofit Network](#), including:
   - A Decent Work evaluation [checklist](#)
   - 121 Decent Work [ideas](#)
   - A defined benefit [pension plan](#) and more

Conclusion/Final Thoughts

This fellowship project has provided **ORGANIZATION NAME** with the opportunity to look inward at the demographic make-up of its employees. The study, although requiring improvements in future iterations, has shed some light on the gaps that exist within the makeup of the workforce. Moving forward, the organization has an opportunity to engage in new or improved strategies as outlined above, to close these gaps, and provide a meaningful employment experience for those in its care.

Appendix A – Demographic Survey Questions

Welcome Message:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. The demographic survey is the first of its kind for **ORGANIZATION NAME**. It is focused on collecting basic demographic data. You will later be linked to a qualitative survey that collects your lived experiences in the workplace.

It is important to note that the data from these two surveys are not linked. That is, we will not be able to make connections between the demographic data and qualitative answers submitted.

This survey is for all employees at **ORGANIZATION NAME**. Further data collection may occur with board members, volunteers and members at large at a future time.

There are 16 questions in this survey. All questions in this section are listed as required to ensure a consistent sample size for all responses. However, every question has a 'prefer not to answer' option available. For clarification on definitions, please refer to glossary of terms & references by entering this link.

*required questions

1. What is your age? *

- ☐ Under 25
- ☐ 26-35
- ☐ 36-45
- ☐ 46-55
- ☐ 56-65
- ☐ 65+
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

2. What is the status of your employment at ORGANIZATION NAME? *

- ☐ Temporary part-time (on contract)
- ☐ Temporary full-time (on contract)
- ☐ Permanent part-time
- ☐ Permanent full-time
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

3. What is your employment group at ORGANIZATION NAME? *

☐ Staff, including interns, trainees, apprentices (does not supervise others)

☐ Management (supervises one or more staff)

☐ Prefer not to answer

4. How long have you worked at ORGANIZATION NAME? *

☐ Less than 1 year

☐ 1-5 years

☐ 6-10 years

☐ 11-20 years

☐ 21-30 years

☐ 31-40 years

☐ 40+ years

☐ Prefer not to answer

5. What option best describes your gender identity? *

☐ Female

☐ Male

☐ Genderqueer / Gender non-conforming / Gender varient

☐ Trans

☐ Two-Spirit

☐ Prefer not to answer

6. What option best describes your sexual orientation? *

☐ Heterosexual

☐ Gay

☐ Lesbian

☐ Queer

☐ Bi (Bisexual)

☐ Pansexual

☐ Asexual

☐ Prefer not to answer

☐ Other *(opportunity to name)*

7. Do you identify as a person with a disability? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

☐ Other *(opportunity to name)*

8. What option best describes your religious or spiritual affiliation/practice? *
(multiple responses permitted)

☐ Buddhist

☐ Catholic/Roman Catholic

☐ Protestant

☐ Christian Orthodox

☐ Other denomination of Christianity

☐ Hindu

☐ Jewish

☐ Muslim

☐ Sikh

☐ Wiccan/Pagan

☐ Spiritual

☐ Not religious or spiritual

☐ None of the above

☐ Prefer not to answer

9. What option best describes the language you use to communicate regularly? *
(multiple responses permitted)

☐ English

☐ French

☐ Other *(opportunity to name)*

10. Do you identify as part of the First Peoples of Canada? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

11. If you selected yes, please specify:
(multiple responses permitted)

☐ First Nations

☐ Inuit

☐ Métis

- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other *(opportunity to name)*

12. Do you self-identify as a member of a racialized group/visible minority? Please choose the option that best represents you.*
(multiple responses permitted)

- ☐ Black (e.g. African, African American/Canadian, Caribbean)
- ☐ East Asian (e.g. Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Polynesian)
- ☐ European descent (e.g. Greece, Portugal, Spain)
- ☐ Indigenous to Turtle Island
- ☐ Mixed Raced/Origins
- ☐ South Asian (e.g. Indian, Sri Lankan, Pakistani)
- ☐ Southeast Asian (e.g. Burmese, Cambodian, Filipino, Malaysian, Vietnamese)
- ☐ West Asian/Arab (e.g. Iranian, Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian, Turkish)
- ☐ No, I do not identify as a member of a racialized group
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Other *(opportunity to name)*

13. How would you describe your status in Canada? *

- ☐ Citizen
- ☐ Permanent resident (or application in process)
- ☐ Temporary resident (or application in process)
- ☐ Refugee claimant (or application in process)
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

14. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? *

- ☐ High school
- ☐ College certificate
- ☐ College diploma
- ☐ College degree
- ☐ University undergraduate degree
- ☐ University graduate degree
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ None of the Above

15. Would you identify as having dependents? (elder family members, children, other) *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

16. Is there any other part of your social location/identity that we missed in this survey and that you would like to be captured? Please be specific. *

(open text box)

Closing Message:

Thank you so much for participating in this demographic survey. Please return to email to complete second survey on staff experiences. If you have any questions, please feel free to connect with **FELLOW CONTACT** or **EXTERNAL CONTACT**.

Appendix B: Glossary of Terms & References used in Demographic Survey

Definition of Terms
The following definitions were adapted from a number of sources, as referenced below.

Bisexual (Bi) - A person who is emotionally, physically, spiritually and/or sexually attracted to people of more than one gender, though not necessarily at the same time.

Disability - The concept of disability has evolved over the past three decades, moving from a more medical model to a social one. Under the medical model, this term refers to a limitation or loss of physiological abilities, whether apparent or not. These can be physical, cognitive, learning, and visual disabilities. Under the social model, disability is identified as a disadvantage or a restriction of activity caused by systemic barriers, negative attitudes and exclusion by society.

First Nation - This term became common use in the 1970s to replace the word "Indian." Although the term First Nation is widely used, no legal definition exists. The term has also been adopted to replace the word "Band" in the naming of communities. Many people today prefer to be called "First Nations" or "First Nations People" instead of "Indians." The term First Nation includes all Indigenous people who are not Inuit or Métis, regardless of their legal status under the *Indian Act*.

Gay – A person whose enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attractions are to people of the same gender. The word can refer to men or women, although some women prefer "lesbian." Sometimes used as an umbrella term for the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Queer) community.

Gender Identity: Refers to each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is a person's sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. For most people, their sex and gender identity align. For some, it does not. A person may be born male but identify as a woman, or born female but identify as a man. Other people may identify outside the categories of woman/man, or may see their gender identity as fluid and moving between different genders at different times in their life.

Genderqueer/Gender Non-conforming/Gender Variant - Individuals who do not follow gender stereotypes based on the sex they were assigned at birth. They may identify and express themselves as "feminine men" or "masculine women" or as androgynous, outside of the

categories "boy/man" and "girl/woman." People who are gender non-conforming may or may not identify as trans.

Heterosexual - A person who has romantic or sexual attractions to people of another gender.

Inuit - the Indigenous Peoples of Arctic Canada who live primarily in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and northern parts of Labrador and Québec. The word Inuit means "people" in the Inuit language – Inuktitut. The singular of Inuit is Inuk. Their traditional languages, customs and cultures are distinctly different from those of the First Nations and Métis.

Lesbian - A woman who is emotionally, physically, spiritually and/or sexually attracted to women.

Métis - The Métis are a distinct Indigenous people with a unique culture, language, and heritage. Their ancestral homeland includes Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and the Northwest Territories. The term is used broadly to describe people with mixed First Nations and European ancestry who identify themselves as Métis, distinct from First Nations people, Inuit or non-Aboriginal people

Queer - Formerly derogatory slang term used to identify LGBT people. Some members of the LGBT community have embraced and reinvented this term as a positive and proud political identifier when speaking among and about themselves.

Trans/Transgender - Umbrella term that describes people with diverse gender identities and gender expressions that do not conform to stereotypical ideas about what it means to be a girl/woman or boy/man in society. "Trans" can mean transcending beyond, existing between, or crossing over the gender spectrum. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, transsexual, cross dressers or gender non-conforming (gender variant or gender queer). Trans identities include people whose gender identity is different from the gender associated with their birth-assigned sex. Trans people may or may not undergo medically supportive treatments, such as hormone therapy and a range of surgical procedures, to align their bodies with their internally felt gender identity

Two-Spirit - term used by Indigenous people to describe from a cultural perspective people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or intersex. It is used to capture a concept that exists in many different Indigenous cultures and languages. For some, the term Two-Spirit describes a societal and spiritual role that people played within traditional societies, such as: mediators, keepers of certain ceremonies, transcending accepted roles of men and women, and filling a role as an established middle gender.

References

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http://www.the519.org/education-training/glossary

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The Government of Canada- Employee Self Identification Form
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https://www.ictinc.ca/resources

Statistics Canada: The evolution of disability data in Canada: Keeping in step with a more inclusive Canada
https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2018003-eng.htm

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