

Student Mobility and Educational Outcomes among Ontario Colleges and Universities

Replicating Descriptive Statistics with the Addition of the 2016-17 PSIS Cycle and Non-Imputed College Data

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**Yujiro Sano, PhD
Postdoctoral Research Fellow**

**David Zarifa, PhD
Professor and Canada Research Chair
davidz@nipissingu.ca**

**Department of Sociology
Nipissing University**

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Overview of the Study

Using Statistics Canada's Postsecondary Student Information System, our prior work previously illustrated that tracking students for three years for each cohort and combining six cohorts together (i.e., 2009–11, 2010–12, 2011–13, 2012–14, 2013–15, and 2014–16) may be an efficient approach to understand the various student mobility pathways among university and college students in Northern and Southern Ontario (see Sano, Hillier, and Zarifa, 2020; Zarifa, Sano, and Hillier, 2020). Specifically, we capture seven important pathways taken by students during their first two years of their initial postsecondary enrolment: 1) non-transfer university (NTU); 2) non-transfer college (NTC); 3) university to university (UU); 4) university to college (UC); 5) college to university (CU); 6) college to college (CC); and 7) swirlers. Since its publication, another cycle of the PSIS (i.e., 2016–17) has become available. As such, we update our overall distributions with the new cycle for two important reasons. First, the sample size increases with the addition of students from the 2016–17 cycle (i.e., sample size is 432,280 and 560,200 for the previous and currently analysis, respectively), which allows us to achieve greater statistical power, improving our analytical capacity. Second, due to the technical limitation of the PSIS, our previous analyses required the use of imputed data for many college-level students, especially those at Northern Ontario colleges. In addition to adding the 2016–17 cycle, Statistics Canada's new version of the PSIS provides non-imputed information for the college-level students, which enables us to better observe the transfer pathways that involve college institutions.

Table 1. The PSIS Sample and Subsample Characteristics by Region of Institution, PSIS-T1FF 2009-2017.

	Overall	South	North
Field of study			
Arts/humanities	17.62	17.96	10.87
Health	12.92	12.33	24.45
Natural sciences	25.72	26.11	18.12
Social sciences	38.44	38.92	29.10
Other	5.30	4.68	17.46
Transfer type			
NTU	73.74	73.78	73.02
NTC	16.80	16.84	15.92
UU	1.79	1.76	2.31
UC	2.48	2.45	3.00
CU	2.51	2.50	2.78
CC	1.89	1.88	1.98
Swirlers	0.79	0.78	0.99
Location of school			
South	95.12		
North	4.88		
Registration status			
Full-time	94.18	94.44	89.05
Part-time	5.82	5.56	10.95
Year of enrolment			
2015	14.02	14.03	13.87
2014	14.11	14.10	14.42
2013	14.70	14.67	15.26
2012	13.86	13.88	13.65
2011	13.84	13.85	13.65
2010	13.89	13.86	14.46
2009	15.57	15.61	14.68
Age			
21≤	83.40	84.01	71.50
22≥	16.60	15.99	28.50
Sex			
Men	45.07	45.37	39.07
Women	54.93	54.63	60.93
Parental income			
Lowest	20.00	20.23	15.42
Lower	19.98	20.03	18.97
Middle	19.99	19.77	24.20
Higher	20.01	19.73	25.45
Highest	20.02	20.23	15.96
Family composition			
Couple	87.42	87.55	84.95
Lone	12.58	12.45	15.05
Family size			
≤3	32.35	32.12	36.87
≥4	67.65	67.88	63.13
Total	560,200	532,890	27,310

Results

With these modifications in mind, we briefly discuss our descriptive findings shown in Table 1 and make comparisons to our findings in our previous report (see Zarifa, Sano, and Hillier, 2020). Overall, it is important to note that these new estimates are largely consistent with those that were uncovered in our previous report. This is largely because our modification to the dataset has mostly impacted college-level students in Northern Ontario, which has a little impact on overall sample, due to their relatively small sample size. Reflecting a bit more closely on this change, however, we can observe that the proportion of northern students increases slightly in the current analysis (i.e., 4.88%) in comparison to our estimate in the previous analysis (i.e., 4.49%). Similarly, when we look closer at northern students (see Sano, Hillier, and Zarifa, 2020), it is apparent that the proportion of transfer pathways that involve college institutions such as non-transfer college (15.92% vs. 13.19%), university to college (3.00% vs. 2.10%), college to university (i.e., 2.78% vs. 1.84%), and college to college (i.e., 1.98% vs. 1.42%) has slightly increased in the current analysis in comparison with the previous one. We also find that the proportion of non-transfer university students is smaller in the current analysis (i.e., 73.02% vs. 78.40%). Taken together, these differences suggest that the non-imputed dataset may be better suited for capturing the diverse nature of students' transfer pathways, particularly those in Northern Ontario.

References

Sano, Y., Hillier, C., & Zarifa, D. (2020). *Transfer pathways among Ontario colleges and universities: Northern and southern differences in students who transfer*. Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer.

Zarifa, D., Sano, Y., & Hillier, C. (2020). *Transfer pathways among Ontario colleges and universities: The magnitude of postsecondary transfer types and the characteristics of those who transfer*. Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer.