


Citizenship and Immigration Canada / Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada



Citizenship

Citizenship Knowledge Test Analysis

Canada

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Background

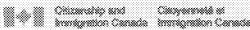

- The introduction of a new citizenship knowledge test in March 2010, caused a sharp decline in the overall test pass rates, which went from 96% in 2008 to 83% in 2011.
- As a result, concerns have been expressed by the media and stakeholders about the lower pass rates and, in particular, the citizenship preparation needs of certain vulnerable groups. Another concern expressed was that the knowledge test may be creating a barrier to naturalization or may delay the decision to naturalize for certain demographic groups because of difficulty in learning the content and concepts in the citizenship study guide.
- As a result, CIC undertook various statistical analyses to identify vulnerable groups who may face difficulties in successfully completing the written citizenship knowledge test. However, the analyses conducted all had their respective limitations which limited the confidence we could associate to the findings.
- As a result, CIC recently conducted a multivariate regression analysis on citizenship knowledge test results to estimate the effect of applicant characteristics and to identify which characteristics are associated to failing the written citizenship knowledge test.

Overview of the Regression Analysis

- The objective of the regression analysis was to clearly identify applicant characteristics that are associated with the low pass rate of the written citizenship knowledge test.
- The sample of the analysis comprised of applicants for Canadian citizenship aged between 18 and 54 years, who wrote the citizenship knowledge test in 2011. Where an applicant wrote the test more than once in 2011, only the results of the first test are included.
- The multivariate regression analysis looked at the effect of the following variables: gender, country of birth, marital status at application, mother tongue, immigration category, age at landing, age at test, educational attainment at landing and official language ability at landing. The effect of each of these variables is estimated by holding all other variables in the model constant.

Analysis Results: Applicant Education

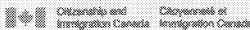

- The results of the regression analysis indicated that education is the most important factor in predicting test results. Previous analyses conducted also pointed to this same conclusion.
- Overall, the test pass rates increase with the educational attainment of applicants.
- Furthermore, educational attainment has an impact on the effect of other applicant characteristics (variables); the effect of other variables is much larger for applicants with low educational attainment than for those with high educational attainment. This will be further developed when exploring the other variables.
- To sum up, education is the predominant factor that impacts tests pass rates, having not only a direct effect but also influencing the effects of other applicant characteristics.

Analysis Results: Applicant Education

Applicant Educational Attainment	Predicted Pass Rate Difference (with respect to reference category)
Bachelor's Degree or Above	Reference category
Secondary or Less	Pass rates 19.6 percentage points below Bachelor's Degree category
Trades / Non-university Diploma	Pass rates 7.5 percentage points below Bachelor's Degree category
Master or Doctorate	Pass rates 2.8 percentage points above Bachelor's Degree category

- The predicted test pass rate of applicants with the highest education level at landing (Masters or Doctorate) is approximately 22 percentage points higher than applicants with the lowest education level at landing (secondary or less).
- The predicted test pass rate of applicants with a Bachelor degree at landing is about 8 percentage points higher than applicants with a trades certificate or non university diploma at landing.

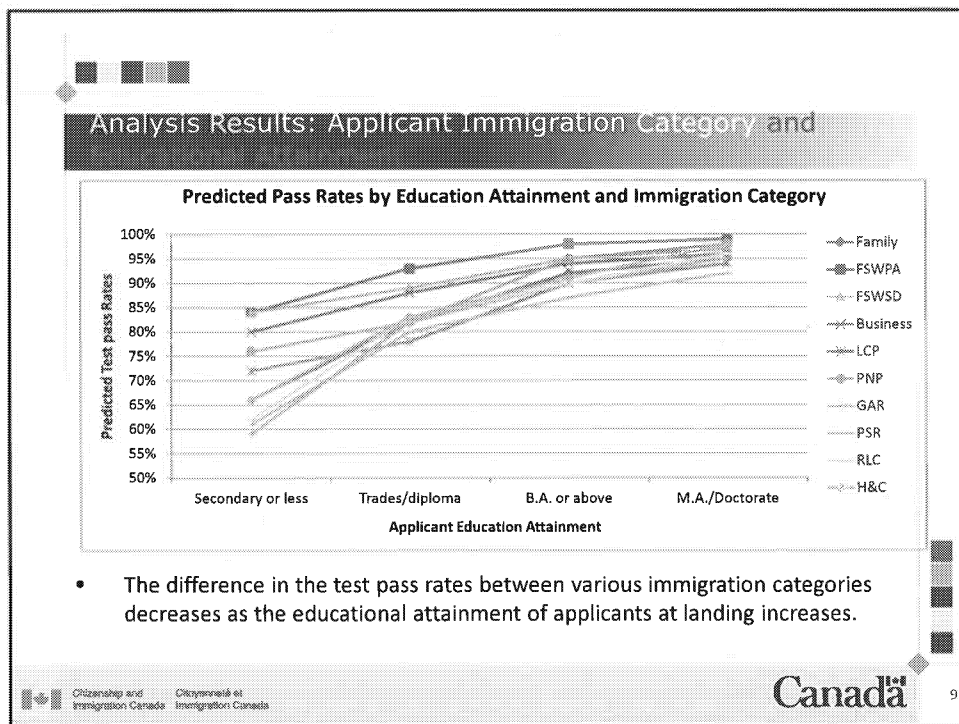



Analysis Results: Applicant Immigration Category

- Immigrants from the economic immigration categories obtain the highest citizenship test pass rates.
- Conversely, immigrants from the refugee immigration categories obtain the lowest test pass rates, especially the Government Assisted Refugees and Privately Sponsored Refugees categories.
- Overall, the difference in the predicted pass rates between the highest scoring category (Federal Skilled Workers) and the lowest scoring category (Government Assisted Refugees) is about 17 percentage points.

Analysis Results: Applicant Immigration Category

Applicant Immigration Category	Predicted Pass Rate Difference (with respect to reference category)
Family	Reference category
Federal skilled worker principle applicant (FSWPA)	Pass rates 12.4 percentage points above the family category
Federal skilled worker spouse and dependant (FSWSD)	Pass rates 9.5 percentage points above the family category
Business	Pass rates 8.0 percentage points above the family category
Live in care givers (LCP)	Similar to family immigration category
Provincial nominee program (PNP)	Pass rates 4.8 percentage points above the family category
Government assisted refugees (GAR)	Pass rates 4.4 percentage points below the family category
Privately sponsored refugees (PSR)	Pass rates 3.3 percentage points below the family category
Refugees landed in Canada (RLC)	Pass rates 1.4 percentage points below the family category
Humanitarian and Compassionate (H&C)	Similar to family immigration category

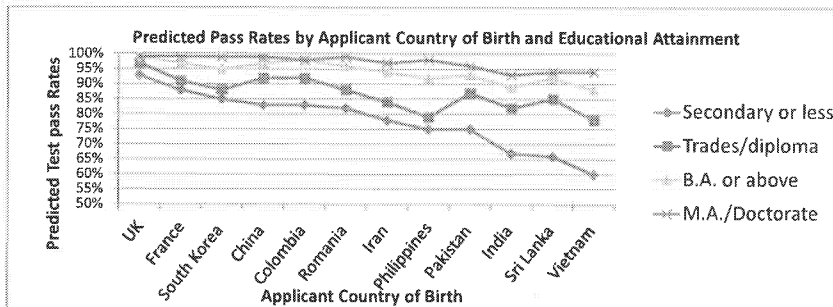


Analysis Results: Applicant Country of Birth

Applicant Country of Birth (top 10)	Predicted Pass Rate Difference (with respect to reference category)
United Kingdom (UK)	Reference category
India	Pass rates 17.2 percentage points below the UK average
China	Pass rates 6.2 percentage points below the UK average
Philippines	Pass rates 14.3 percentage points below the UK average
Pakistan	Pass rates 11.9 percentage points below the UK average
United States of America (USA)	Similar to the UK
Iran	Pass rates 10.2 percentage points below the UK average
South Korea	Pass rates 5.1 percentage points below the UK average
Colombia	Pass rates 6.2 percentage points below the UK average
Romania	Pass rates 8.1 percentage points below the UK average
Sri Lanka	Pass rates 17.0 percentage points below the UK average
Vietnam	Pass rates 21.2 percentage points below the UK average

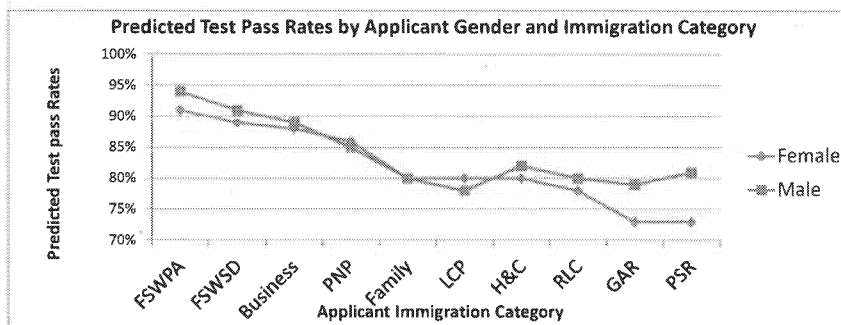
Analysis Results: Applicant Country of Birth and Educational

- Applicants from countries of birth with the lowest predicted test pass rates, have the lowest rates in all education categories. However, the gap between applicants from countries with a high test pass rate and applicants from countries with a low test pass rate diminish as applicants' educational attainment increases.
- In addition, the differences in the predicted test pass rates between education categories is larger for the countries with the lowest test pass rates.



Analysis Results: Gender

- Overall, the analysis shows a small gender difference in the predicted test pass rates, with women scoring 1.5 percentage points below men.
- However, there is a significant variation of gender difference according to immigration category. Namely, the predicted test pass rate of women is at least 6 percentage points below men among government assisted refugees and privately sponsored refugees.



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Analysis Results: Other Applicant Characteristics

- The analysis showed modest differences in pass rate with respect to applicants' age at the test, age at landing, self-reported official language knowledge and mother tongue. The effect of these variables is less prominent than educational attainment, immigration category or country of birth.
- Similarly to the effect of immigration category and country of birth variables, analysis shows that differences in test pass rates with respect to applicant age or language ability are most pronounced for applicants that have lower educational attainment.
- There are little differences in predicted test pass rates with respect to applicant age or language ability for applicants that have high educational attainment.



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Conclusion

- Applicant educational attainment is the most important predictor of the citizenship test pass rate.
- Education attainment not only has the biggest impact on test pass rates, it also has an impact on the pass rate differences observed with respect to other variables, most notably applicant immigration category and country of birth.
- The results of the analysis could serve in developing policies, activities, or materials geared towards helping the vulnerable populations identified. To that effect, results of the analysis could be used to target assistance to groups that have more difficulty obtaining Canadian citizenship.