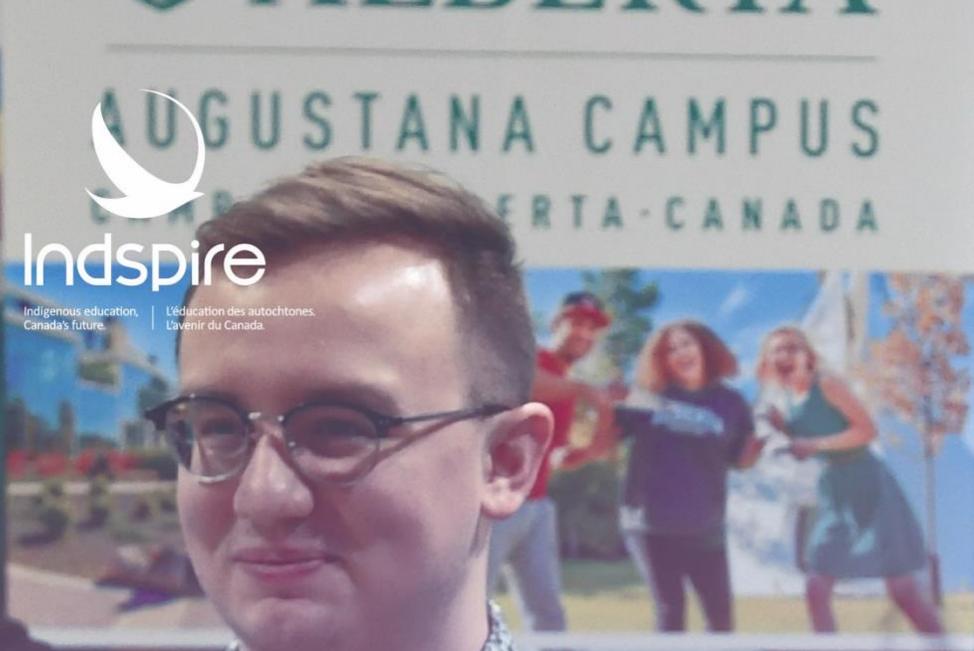




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Reciprocity in Terms of Post-Graduate Employment for Building Brighter Futures (BBF) Applicants

By Felicia Sinclair



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Introduction

In early 2020, Indspire deployed the National Education Survey (NES) to over 14,000 past Building Brighter Futures (BBF) recipients, over 5,700 of whom responded. An analysis of the NES data was performed to assess the tendency for Indigenous graduates to gravitate toward employment within the not-for-profit sector, within an Indigenous community, or within both areas, called *reciprocal motivation* in this report. The areas of employment for those who were engaged in reciprocal work were also examined. Indigenous students' employment in the non-profit sector demonstrates a motivation toward reciprocity in terms of the employment they sought following graduation.

We performed this analysis in an effort to examine if there exists a tendency to give back to the community through the employment that students pursued after graduation. Examining reciprocal motivation can provide insights into the reciprocal tendencies of post-graduation BBF recipients – and understanding this motivation will highlight and explore the multiple levels of community impact that supporting an Indigenous post-secondary student can achieve.

Of the total number of respondents who gained employment following graduation, an analysis of that proportion of respondents was conducted to investigate if there exists a tendency toward reciprocity in terms of employment sought out following graduation. Furthermore, a cross-analysis of the proportion of respondents gainfully employed in a charitable organization was also performed to determine how many of those respondents chose employment within the Indigenous community.

For the purposes of this investigation, not-for-profit was self-reported and synonymous with charitable organizations.

Summary of Key Findings

Reciprocity through Employment

The analysis of the employment outcomes for post-graduate BBF recipients revealed an 85% employment rate following graduation. Amongst the employed post-graduates, 29% of these survey respondents indicated that they were employed within the Indigenous community. Additionally, it was observed that 20% of employed graduates were working within the not-for-profit sector; nearly half of these individuals were employed by a not-for-profit organization that operated within the Indigenous community. Comparatively,

Imagine Canada reports that 11% of the Canadian population is employed within the not-for-profit sector (Barr & Lasby, 2018). This finding is also inline with a report by the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, which stated that there are a disproportionate number of Indigenous people working within not-profit agencies over any other employment sector (BCAAFC, 2011). The results from this investigation are outlined in Table 1 and visualized in Figure 1. Reciprocity trends in terms of employment for the post-graduate BBF recipients can be seen in Figure 2 below.

Table 1. National Education Survey data analysis investigating trends toward reciprocity via post-graduate employment trends for BBF applicants (n= 1918).

Reciprocity in Terms of Post-Graduate Employment for BBF recipients		
Number of graduates	2,251	100%
Number of employed graduates	1,918	85%
Employed within the Indigenous community	564	29%
Employed by a not-for-profit organization	384	20%
Employed by a not-for-profit organization within the Indigenous community	190	10%

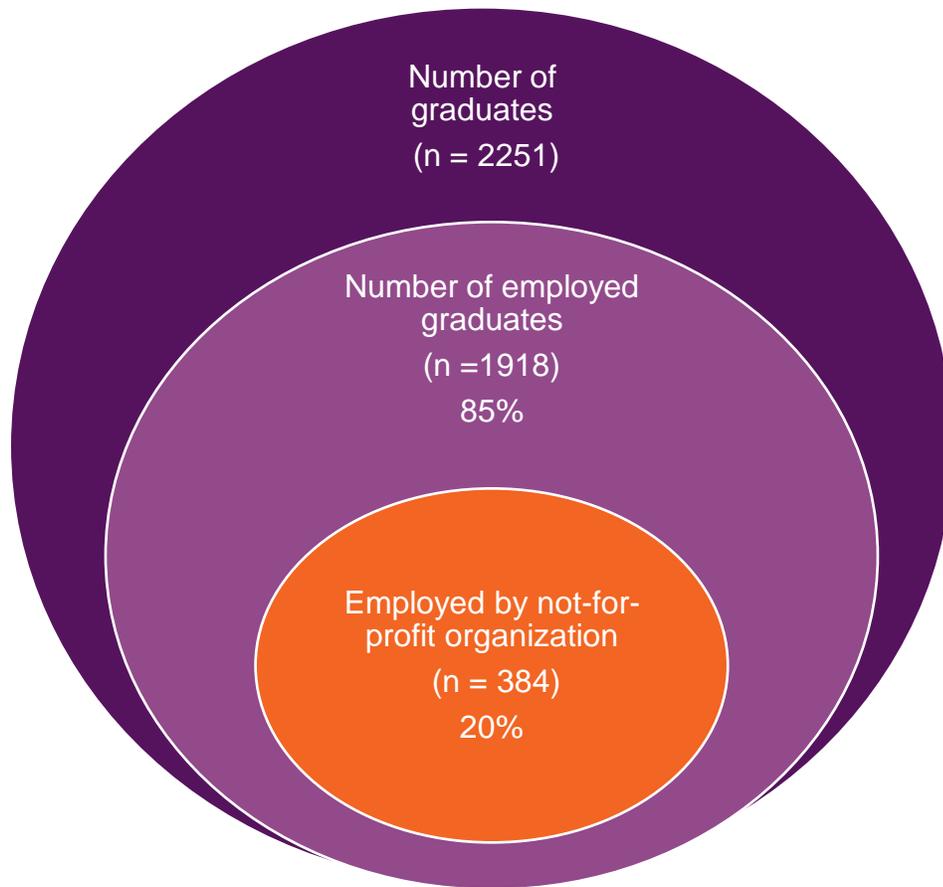


Figure 1. National Education Survey data analysis displaying number of employed BBF applicants following graduation in the not-for-profit sector.

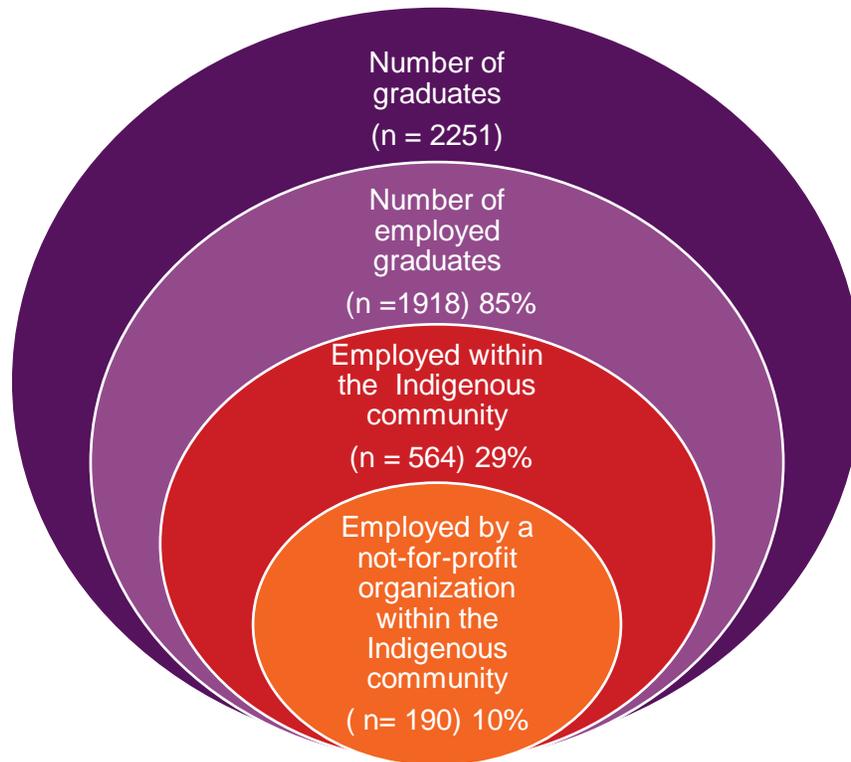


Figure 2. National Education Survey data analysis displaying number of employed BBF applicants following graduation in the not-for-profit sector within the Indigenous community.

Employment by Industry

Further examination of those employed within the Indigenous community, the not-for-profit/charitable sector, or both revealed two major trends. Many of the respondents pursued employment within the education services or healthcare and social services sectors.

Of the 564 BBF recent graduates employed within the Indigenous community, 126 (22%) were employed within the education services sector and 136 (24%) were employed within the healthcare and social assistance sector.

Of the 384 BBF recent graduates employed within the charitable sector, 88 (23%) were employed within the education services sector and 122 (32%) were employed in the healthcare and social services sector. Of the 190 BBF recent graduates employed within the Indigenous community not-for-profit/charitable sector, 51 (27%) were employed within the healthcare and social assistance sector. The second major sector, where 35 of the 190 (18%) BBF recipients reviewed were employed, was the education sector. These two sectors accounted for nearly half of the total employment for recent BBF recipients

following graduation. These highly concentrated sectors and employment distribution trends within the NES data were also observed and reported by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business and Indspire (2020).

Limitations

One of the major limitations to this investigation is the definition of reciprocity. Several forms of reciprocity exist, and post-graduate employment tendencies capture a limited assessment of this variable. This analysis, however, is useful for a preliminary assessment of the reciprocal tendencies of BBF recipients.

Further limitations included the respondent and investigator assessment of a not-for-profit organization as well as a definition of what qualifies as the Indigenous community. For this analysis, not-for-profit organizations were determined by either respondent indication or by selecting nationally recognized not-for-profit organizations indicated as the place of employment by the respondent. “Indigenous community” was determined by a positive response from the respondent for working on a reserve, Métis or Inuit settlement, or working for an Indigenous employer.

All instances of “blank” or “other” within the National Education Survey data (without further indicative information) were not included in the tabulation for reciprocal employment.

A significant limitation for this analysis is the motivation behind employment outcomes for the BBF recipients. For example, the employment climate for Indigenous graduates may also foster an increased likelihood of working within the not-for-profit sector, the Indigenous community, or both sectors.

Additionally, when considering the tendencies toward reciprocity within the NES data it should be noted, as observed by CCAB and Indspire (2020), that the BBF program screening process includes an element that assesses the applicants’ volunteerism within the community. This screening element of the BBF application, could have then potentially skewed the results of this investigation as this sample set is likely to be predisposed to reciprocal behaviour.

Future Work

This analysis was performed to assess if there existed a basis for a more in-depth investigation of these reciprocal motivations – and, based on its results, it does appear as though a more in-depth analysis would be beneficial. A future study for obtaining a more comprehensive measure of reciprocity should be aimed to better identify the nature and extent of BBF recipients' tendencies toward reciprocity. A more inclusive measure to incorporate the unemployed as well as those continuing their studies would contribute to a more accurate assessment of this variable.

Future investigation into the reciprocity of BBF recipients would benefit from improving the measurement variable used for assessment as well as understanding the motivation(s) behind and the intent of their reciprocal activities. With this more comprehensive analysis, Indspire could begin to understand the impacts of Indigenous post-secondary students' reciprocity on both their communities and Canada as a whole.

Additionally, a future study investigating if there exists an intrinsic motivation toward reciprocity that motivates BBF recipients to seek employment within the not-for-profit sector, or if this employment trend is due to existing barriers would be beneficial. This type of study could potentially identify further employment barriers that exist for Indspire-supported students. According to the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres report there are a disproportionate number of Indigenous people working within not-profit agencies over any other employment sector (BCAAFC, 2011). It would be beneficial to determine if this trend continues to exist and what contributes to this potential barrier to employment and employment trend.

Conclusion

We found that 20% of recently graduated BBF recipients went on to work within the not-for-profit sector following graduation. The percentage of BBF recipients working within the not-for-profit sector (20%) is nearly twice the Canadian average of charitable employment (11% (Barr & Lasby, 2018)). Of the employed and recently graduated respondents, there was a pronounced tendency toward reciprocity in terms of their employment within Indigenous communities (29% of employed post-graduates). In fact, nearly half of the 20% of recipients working within the not-for-profit sector obtained employment within an Indigenous community. These individuals showed a tendency to work in education and healthcare-related fields. This information is a critical first step in understanding the amplifying effect of BBF recipients' reciprocity on both their communities and Canada.

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