

STATUS OF WOMEN OFFICE

Socio-Demographic Profiles of Saskatchewan Women

Women with Disabilities



Saskatchewan
Ministry of
Advanced Education,
Employment and
Labour

Women with Disabilities

This statistical profile describes some of the social and economic characteristics of Saskatchewan women who report having a disability.

There are several potential data sources that can be used to describe women with disabilities. The most reliable statistics are from a follow up survey to the Statistics Canada census called the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS). Information from the 2006 PALS was not available when this profile was prepared so a different survey, the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), also conducted by Statistics Canada, was used instead. The CCHS has reliable statistical information about women with disabilities in 2005 but unfortunately the survey excludes the population living on Reserve¹. The survey covers all persons twelve years of age and older².

TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF DISABILITY

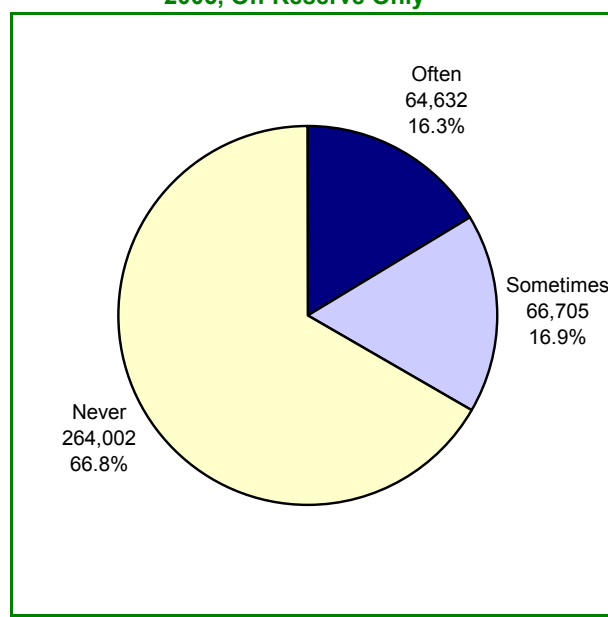
There is no consensus on what constitutes a disability and there are varying degrees of disability so it is difficult to develop a precise definition. Many surveys including the Canadian Community Health Survey use the concept of “activity limitation” to measure disability. In the survey a respondent is classified as having a disability if he or she reports that they sometimes or often experience an activity limitation imposed on them by a long-term physical and/or mental health problem that has lasted or is expected to last six months or more. In particular the term disability is used for those who reported that they:

- sometimes or often have a difficulty such as hearing, seeing, communicating, walking, climbing stairs, bending, learning or doing any similar activities; or
- have an activity limitation, that is, a long-term physical condition or mental condition or health problem that often or sometimes reduces the amount or the kind of activity that they can do:
 - at home;
 - at work;
 - at school; or
 - when participating in other activities.

With this definition, approximately one third of the Saskatchewan population twelve years of age and older are classified as having a disability.

Figure 1 shows that of the 395,300 Saskatchewan women twelve years of age and older in 2005 who lived off Reserve, 131,300 or 33.2% reported a disability. The incidence of disability among

Figure 1 Incidence and Severity of Disability (Activity Limitation), Saskatchewan Women, Twelve Years of Age and Older, 2005, Off Reserve Only



Saskatchewan men was almost identical at 32.8%. Figure 1 also shows that those with a disability were equally split (in terms of frequency) between those who reported that their limitation often or sometimes affected their activities.

Figure 2 shows that almost all the women who reported a disability (27% of women) reported a difficulty doing routine tasks. For 20% of women, this had a limiting effect at home or while doing other activities. Fewer reported limitations in their activities at work or school in part because only 15% of women with a disability were going to school and only 51% were employed at the time of the survey.

HEALTH EFFECTS

Some people are born with a health or physical condition that limits their activities whereas others acquire a problem through an accident or ill health later in life. Almost all women (94%) who reported an activity limitation in the survey also reported that they had a chronic mental or physical health condition³ that caused the activity limitation. The opposite is not necessarily true; 42% of those reported a chronic health condition reported that they also had an activity limitation.

One of the characteristics of women reporting an activity limitation is that many also reported that they were in good physical health. Figure 3 shows self-assessed health status among Saskatchewan women from the same survey. While much lower than women without a disability, one third of women with a disability reported their health as excellent or very good.

The vast majority of women with a disability (87%) also reported that they were “satisfied” with their life in general, a measure of their mental health status.

Figure 2 Percentage of Saskatchewan Women Reporting a Difficulty or Activity Limitation, 2005

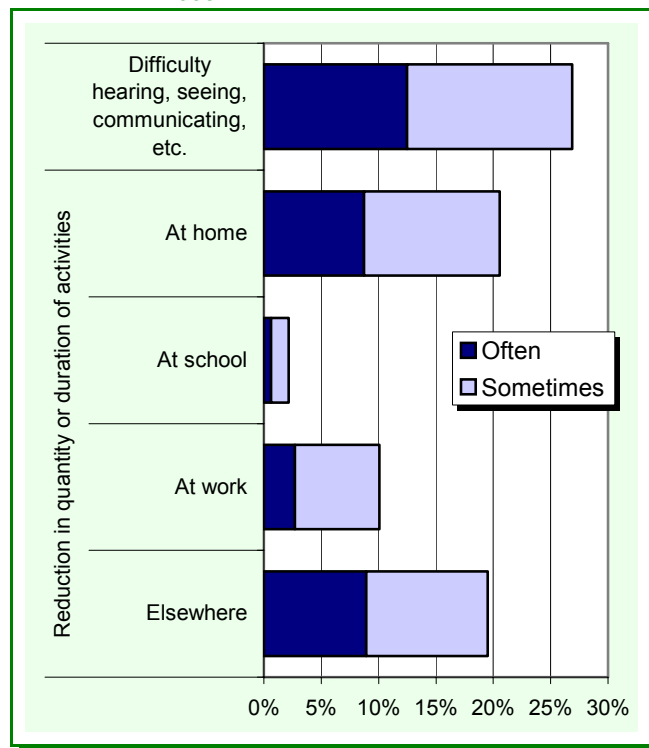
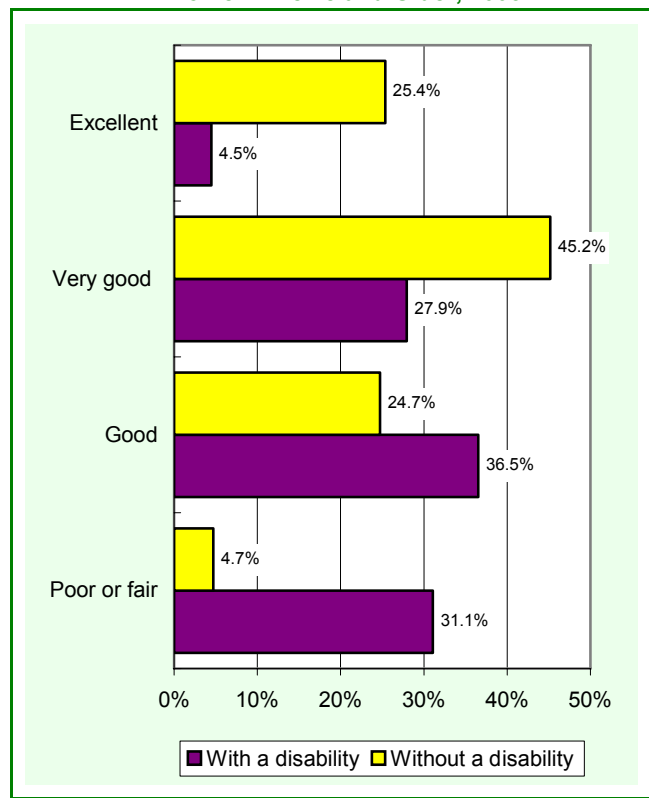


Figure 3 Self-Rated Health Status, Saskatchewan Women Twelve and Older, 2005



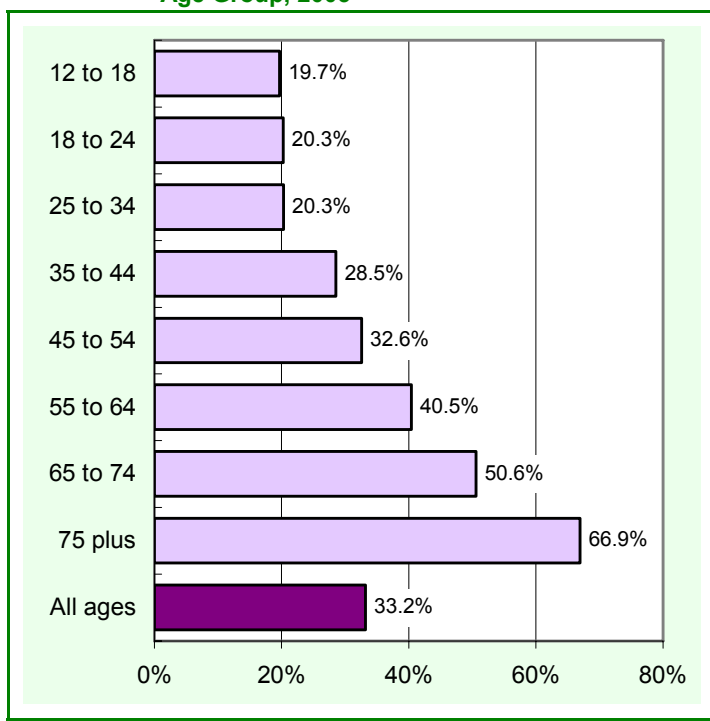
AGE GROUP

The incidence of disability among both men and women is strongly correlated with age. Figure 4 shows that the percentage of women reporting a disability, 33% over all women twelve and older, ranges from a low of near 20% among those under 35 years of age to a high of 67% among those 75 and older.

One of the consequences of this age-related difference in the incidence of disability is that one third of women reporting a disability were seniors, that is, 65 years of age and older.

In the primary labour market age group, taken to be those 25 to 54 years of age, the incidence of disability among women was 28%.

Figure 4 Percentage of Women Reporting a Disability, by Age Group, 2005

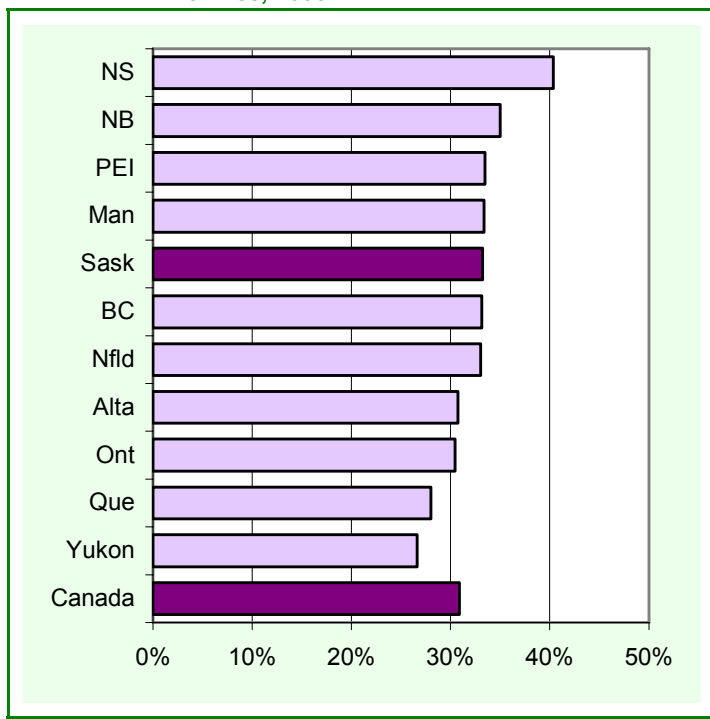


INTERPROVINCIAL COMPARISON

With the incidence of disability related to age, one would expect that provinces with a higher proportion of older women would have a higher incidence of disability. Figure 5 shows that this is partly true but other factors are also important.

In 2005, the proportion of women reporting a disability ranged from a low of 27% in the Yukon Territory to a high of 40% in Nova Scotia with a national average of 31%. Saskatchewan and Manitoba have the highest proportions of seniors in Canada and an above-average proportion of women with disabilities but the incidence is only slightly above the national average.

Figure 5 Percentage of Women Reporting a Disability, By Province, 2005



REGIONS WITHIN SASKATCHEWAN

The Canadian Community Health Survey has a large enough sample size to enable it to publish sub-provincial data using aggregates of the province's health regions. Figure 6 shows the percentage of women and men reporting a disability in each of seven health districts or groups of health districts.

There are differences in the incidence of disability by region. Women in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region and in the east central part of the province (Sunrise Health Region and Kelsey Trail Health Region) reported the highest incidence of disability. The lowest incidence was among women who lived in the west central part of the province (Heartland Health Region and Prairie North Health Region).

The larger sizes of the Regina and Saskatoon health regions, however, means that 57% of women reporting a disability lived in one of those two large health regions.

There are some similarities with the incidence of disability among men and some differences too. The lowest rate for men is also in the west central part of the province but there was also a particularly high incidence among men living in the east central part of the province.

FAMILY STATUS AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS⁴

A third of women reporting a disability in 2005 were seniors and this is reflected in the data describing family status and living arrangements. Fully a quarter (26%) of women who reported a disability had a marital status of "widowed, separated, or divorced" and the vast majority of these were probably widows.

Figure 6 Percentage of Persons with a Disability, 2005, by Health Region

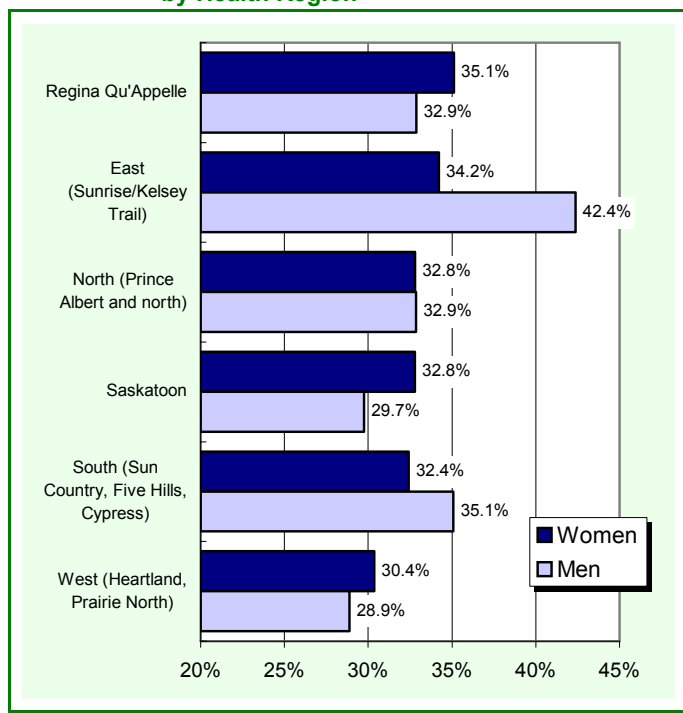


Figure 7 Living Arrangements for Saskatchewan Women With and Without a Disability, 2005

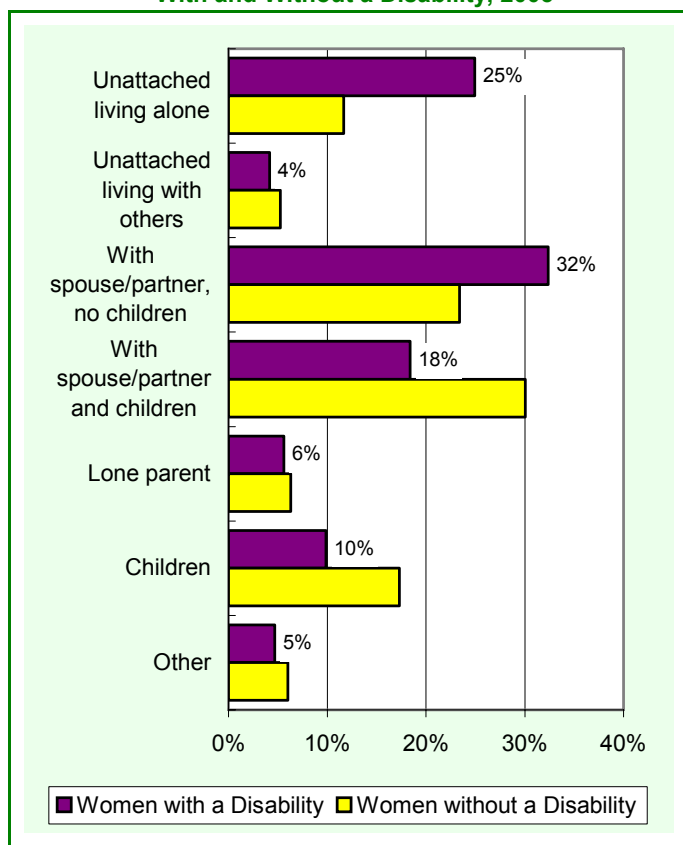


Figure 7 shows that, compared with other women, those who reported a disability were more likely to be living alone or with a partner (but no children). They were as likely as women who didn't report a disability to be lone parents.

Men with a disability were much less likely to be living alone (14% are) than women with a disability.

DIVERSITY

The incidence of disability among women who were born outside Canada is available from the Canadian Community Health Survey. For the incidence of disability among women who are Aboriginal⁵ or members of a visible minority group⁶, a special tabulation from the 2006 census data was used instead because these characteristics were not identified in the Canada Community Health Survey.

Women who were born outside Canada had slightly lower levels of disability than those who were born in Canada. The same is true among women who were members of a visible minority group and who reported an Aboriginal identity.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT⁷

Women in older age groups tend to have lower levels of completed formal education than those are younger. This is because many grew up in a time when even completing high school was rare. With the older average age for women reporting a disability, one would expect lower levels of completed education among women who have a disability.

In fact, Figure 9 shows that the levels were quite similar. Among women with a disability, for example, 42% were post-

Figure 8 Incidence of Disability, Saskatchewan Women with Selected Diversity Characteristics

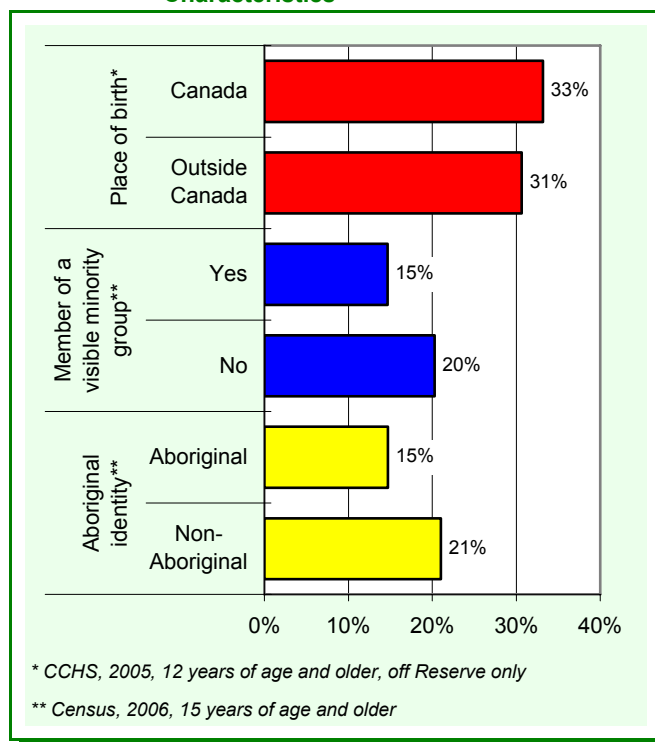
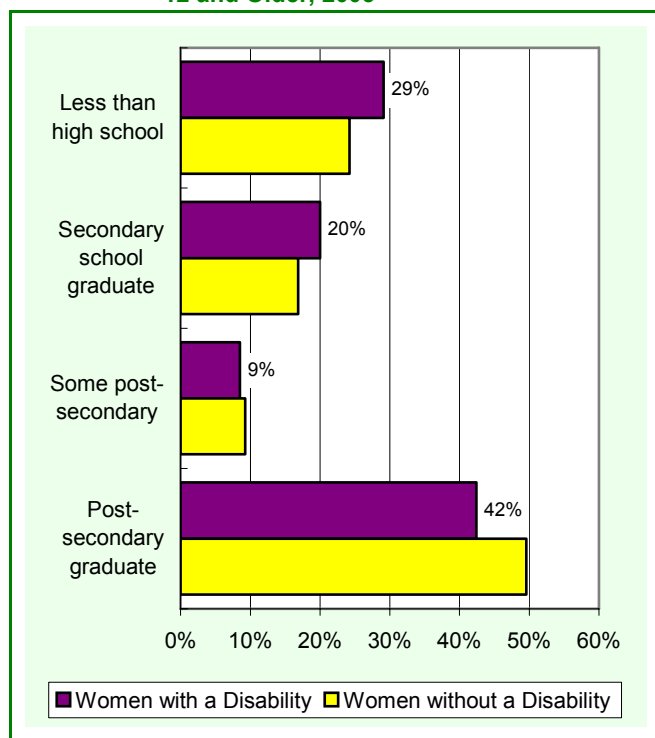


Figure 9 Completed Education for Saskatchewan Women With and Without a Disability, Ages 12 and Older, 2005



secondary graduates compared with 50% of women who did not have a disability.

The levels of completed education among men with a disability were similar to those for women. For example, 42% were post-secondary graduates and 33% had less than high school.

At the time of the survey, 11% of women reporting a disability were going to school, at either a secondary or post-secondary institution, on either a full-time or a part-time basis.

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION⁸

Among women 15 to 74 years of age who reported a disability in the Canadian Community Health Survey, 4% said that their disability prevented them from working. The same proportion of men with a disability reported an inability to work.

The presence of a disability was clearly a major barrier for women wishing to enter the labour market. In the week prior to the survey, 60% of women who reported a disability were employed. This was well below the employment rates of 74% for men with a disability and 72% for women without a disability.

INCOME

The Canadian Community Health Survey measured annual personal and household income before taxes in 2005 as well as the main source of that income.

Women with a disability were less likely to live in households where employment was the main source of income than women without a disability (see Figure 11).

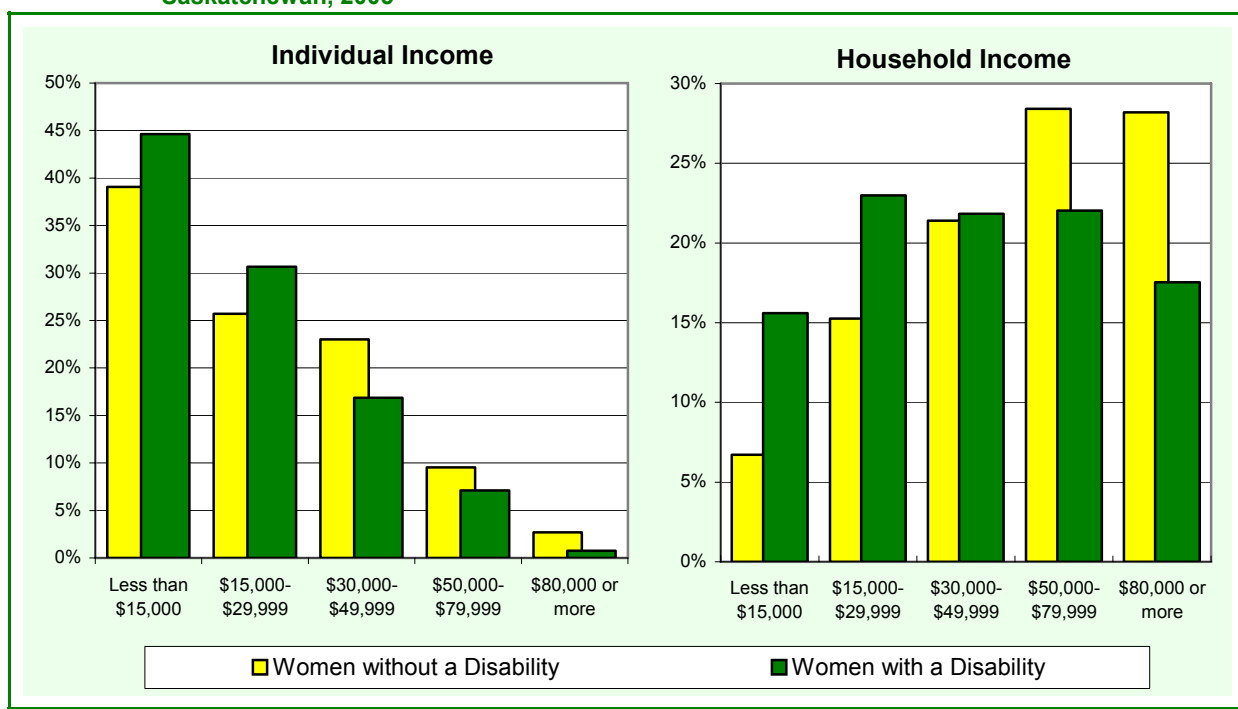
Figure 10 Labour Force Status, Persons 15 to 74 Years of Age, 2005



Figure 11 Main Source of Household Income in 2005, Persons 12 and Older, Saskatchewan



Figure 12 Annual Individual and Household Incomes for Women With and Without a Disability, Saskatchewan, 2005



Offsetting this was a larger proportion of households in which the main source of income was from senior's benefits such as the Canada Pension Plan or Old Age Security and a proportion of households where the main source of income was from "other" sources such as employment insurance, workers' compensation, or social assistance.

The graph on the left side of Figure 12 shows that with lower levels of employment, individual incomes for women with a disability tended to be much lower than for women without a disability. For example, 75% of women with a disability had an annual income of less than \$30,000 in 2005. This compares with 65% of women without a disability and 44% of men with a disability.

The lower levels of personal income translate into lower levels of household income. In households in which a woman with a disability was present, the annual gross income was less than \$30,000 in 39% of the cases and more than \$80,000 in 18% of the cases. This compares with 22% and 28%, respectively, for households in which women without a disability lived and with 25% and 28%, respectively, for households in which men with a disability lived.

Notes

1. *Unless otherwise specified, the statistics in this report are derived from cycle 3.1 of the Canada Community Health Survey (CCHS), a large telephone survey conducted by Statistics Canada with a sample size of 7,765 in Saskatchewan. The survey was conducted over the course of the calendar year 2005 and covers all persons 12 years of age and older. It excludes the population living on Reserve. The statistics were derived from tabulations prepared by Sask Trends Monitor on the microdata file from the survey.*
2. *The CCHS reports a much lower incidence of disability than the PALS. The exclusion of the on-Reserve population and the inclusion of those 12 to 14 years of age only explains part of the difference.*
3. *Some examples of the specific conditions measured in the survey were asthma, food allergies, arthritis, high blood pressure, emphysema, cancer, diabetes, cataracts, mood disorders, and a learning disability.*
4. *A "census family" refers to a married couple (with or without children of either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (with or without children of either or both partners) or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one child living in the same dwelling. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. Although rare, two or more census families can live in the same dwelling. Non-family persons are those living along, with friends, or with people outside their immediate family.*
5. *Aboriginal women are those who responded "yes" to the identity question "Are you an Aboriginal person, that is, a North American Indian, Métis, or Inuit?" in the Statistics Canada census or who are registered under The Indian Act or who are members of a First Nation.*
6. *Members of a visible minority group effectively self-identify themselves in the census by indicating they were Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Korean, Japanese, or a combination of these. Note that Aboriginal women are not considered as members of a visible minority group.*
7. *Statistics Canada uses a hierarchy for completed education so those who have both a university degree and a diploma or certificate will be considered as having a degree. Those who have received a post-secondary education without graduating from high school are still considered as post-secondary graduates. No distinction is made between education received in Canada and education received in other countries.*
8. *Those who are classified as employed are women who did any work at all for pay or profit in the week prior to the survey. Employed persons can be self-employed or the so-called "unpaid family workers", namely those who work without pay in a family farm, business or professional practice. Those who were absent from their job or business because of a vacation, illness, labour dispute, or other reason are still considered as employed.*



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