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## **Earnings and Community College Field of Study Choice in Canada**

Brahim Boudarbat

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to atrophy and obsolescence (Polachek, 1978; Blakemore & Low, 1984). Furthermore, many people seem to believe in the notion that there are “old-boys” networks in some professions that make them hard to getting into for women. This hypothesis cannot be rejected by our data.

With regard to spoken languages, 63% of graduates speak only English and only 23% are bilingual. Obviously, a very large fraction of graduates come from two provinces, Ontario (43%) and Quebec (24%). Students from Ontario tend to graduate mainly in “Education, Fine Arts and Humanities” and “Social Sciences,” whereas those from Quebec seem to privilege “Health” and “Sciences.” Moreover, secondary education is the most important level of education of graduates’ parents especially mothers (43% of fathers and 51% of mothers). On the other hand, only 10% of fathers and 15% of mothers carried out studies at the same level as their children (i.e. community college). In view of this information, the choice of college studies does not seem to be inherited from parents.

The sample is also characterized by the large fraction of graduates who were working before enrolling in their programs (43%). This fraction is high across all fields, ranging between 39% in “Business and Commerce” and 46% in “Health.” We use this information to examine whether work experience prior to starting college studies influences the weights put on expected earnings when choosing a field of study. Finally, 44% of graduates reported student loans as an important source of funding studies. Graduates in “Health” (50%) and “Social Sciences” (47%) counted more than others on such source of funding studies. We use this variable as a proxy for the family income, which is not available in our data.





































