

7.1.2.3 Trade and technical education

Increasing use of automated processes in business and industry is resulting in a shrinking market for unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Early school dropouts are finding it more difficult to get suitable employment and many are trying to acquire in their adult years the general education or training in the skilled trades that they missed in their youth. Persons still in the regular school system are tending to remain longer and go farther in the system, partly because of the changing attitudes of society toward education and partly for economic reasons.

To meet this growing demand for better educational facilities, educators are striving to provide comprehensive programs at all levels to satisfy the needs not only of the university-bound but also of the great majority who require adequate preparation for early entry into the labour force. It is now accepted that vocational education for adults as well as for youths is a public responsibility that must be made available, as needed, throughout the person's working life. Education of this nature is of national concern and has a direct impact on material prosperity, the economy and the standard of living.

The pattern of vocational education in Canada varies from province to province and there are variations within the provinces. However, there are three basic types of institutes offering vocational education: secondary schools, trade and occupational training schools and post-secondary institutes of technology. Many municipal school boards provide vocational courses as part of the regular secondary school program in technical or composite-type schools. Students in these schools get some general vocational training or training in certain specific fields, such as typing or auto mechanics, along with instruction in general academic or cultural subjects.

Trade and occupational training schools, on the other hand, are open only to those who have passed the provincial school-leaving age and have left the regular school system. These schools offer specialized training and their purpose is to develop competent people for a variety of occupations. Courses at the trade level do not usually require high school graduation; the grade level demanded varies according to province or trade from grade 8 to grade 12.

The third type, the institutes of technology, operate at a higher level of training. Enrolment in these institutions requires high school graduation or at least high school standing in such relevant subjects as mathematics and the sciences. Graduates from institutes of technology are awarded diplomas of applied arts or diplomas of technology and form an essential link between professionals on the one hand and qualified craftsmen on the other. Most of the institutes of technology and trade schools across Canada are provincially operated.

In addition to the vocational education and training provided by these three types of publicly operated schools, many private business colleges and trade schools offer a wide variety of business, trade and technical courses, some through correspondence. Vocational education is also carried out under a system of apprenticeship training. Such training is given mainly on the job, with classes taken at the trade schools either during the evening or full-time during the day for periods ranging from three to 10 weeks a year.

7.1.2.4 Tertiary education

Community colleges and related institutions provide post-secondary education in various programs that enable students to proceed to university with credit of up to three years of university study, or undertake technical/vocational training in programs of up to four years in duration, leading to the occupational level of the skilled technologist.

Entry requirements involve secondary school graduation but in some institutions a "mature student" status is used to enable promising but otherwise ineligible students to enter. Qualifying programs are also offered to help students overcome academic deficiencies.

Programs offered in the technical/vocational sphere are widely diversified and reflect the manpower requirements of the college region. Other programs offered are: business administration, applied arts, health sciences and a wide variety of technologies such as architectural, mechanical, electrical, chemical and resource. Many of these colleges offer credit and non-credit programs in continuing education.

There were approximately 150 institutions offering college-level programs in Canada in 1972-73. The Atlantic provinces had 12 colleges: the College of Fisheries and the College of Trades and Technology in Newfoundland; Holland College in Prince Edward Island; two marine institutes, two technical institutes, a land survey institute and an agricultural college in