

5.5.2 Socioeconomic factors

“Poverty, relative deprivation and social exclusion have a major impact on health and premature death, and the chances of living in poverty are loaded heavily against some social groups.”

Social Determinants of Health: The Solid Facts, WHO, 2003⁴

Evidence shows that health is linked to socioeconomic position, with the socioeconomically disadvantaged having higher mortality rates for most major causes of death, their morbidity pattern indicates they experience more ill-health.²²

2003 is the first year that the Socioeconomic Index for Areas (SEIFA) does not include the percentage of the population that identified as Indigenous as part of its formula.⁸⁰ This means that the SEIFA index can now be more appropriately used to identify differences in the socioeconomic status of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. In addition, the Queensland Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) has requested that SEIFA indices be calculated separately for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders.

As shown in Figure 5.54, 93.3% of the Indigenous population lived in the areas that were scored comparably to the most disadvantaged 10% of Queensland, while virtually no groups of Indigenous peoples scored equivalently to the more advantaged areas in Queensland. In other words, Indigenous Queenslanders were more than nine times as likely to live in extreme socioeconomic disadvantage than non-Indigenous Queenslanders.

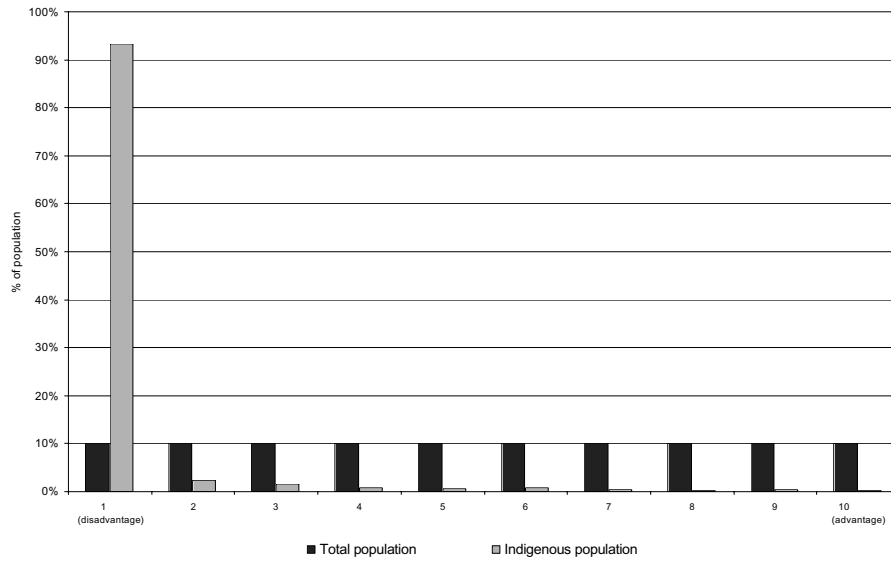
While Indigenous participation in school up to year 12 appears comparable with that of the non-Indigenous population, Indigenous peoples were less likely to have a non-school or higher qualification (Figure 5.58, Figure 5.59).

Three levels of employment are shown in Figure 5.55. One of these categories is the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP). CDEP, in non-remote areas, pays approximately the same as ‘Work for the Dole’ and slightly more in remote areas (where the cost of living is higher).^{81,82} However, current political practices require CDEP to be listed as a form of ‘employment’. Information on CDEP status is only collected in the census in remote areas, so some portion of the ‘employed’ Indigenous peoples counted on Census from non-remote areas are actually working as CDEP workers at essentially the same pay rate as ‘Work for the Dole’.

Indigenous Queenslanders were almost two and a half times more likely to identify as formally unemployed in census 2001 (Figure 5.55). Indigenous households were twice as likely to have a total family income of less than \$300 gross per week and half as likely to have a total family income of greater than \$1200 gross per week (Figure 5.60).

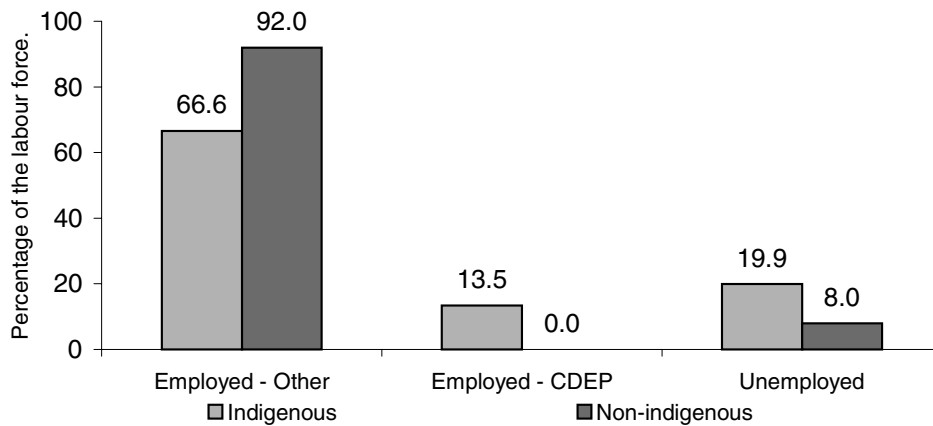
This underlying social disadvantage manifests itself in terms of access to resources including access to a computer and the Internet (Figure 5.56, Figure 5.57).

Figure 5.54: Percentage of the population in each decile of socioeconomic advantage/disadvantage, Queensland, by Indigenous status, 2001



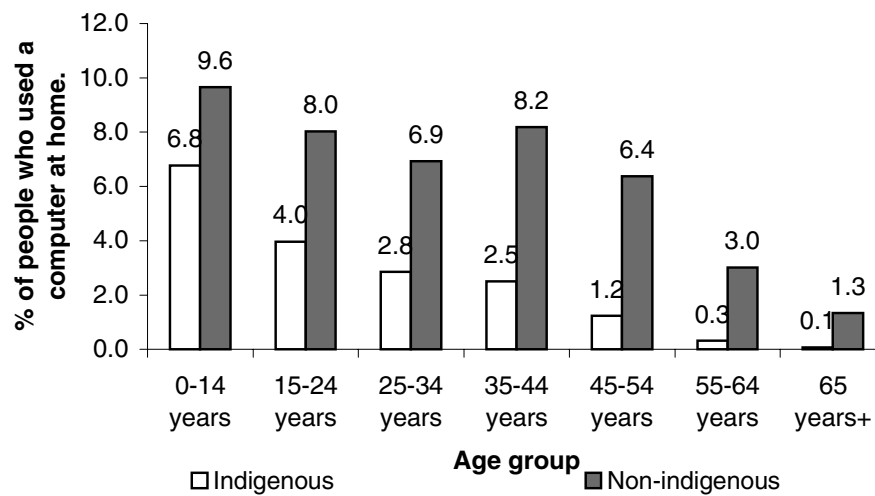
Source: ABS SEIFA 2001 as requested by OESR, Qld.

Figure 5.55: Employment status by Indigenous status, people in the labour force, Queensland, 2001



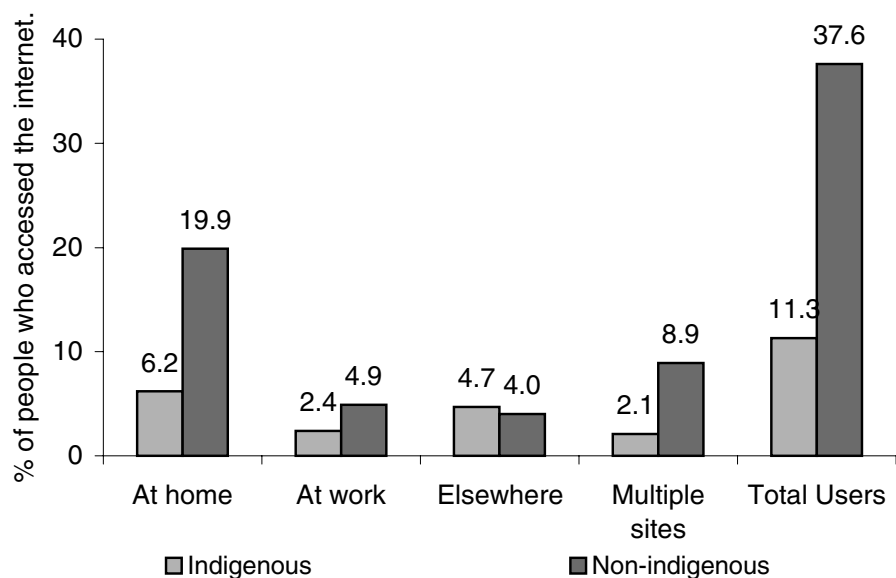
Source: ABS Census of population and housing 2001

Figure 5.56: Proportion of Queenslanders who used a computer at home, by age and Indigenous status, 2001



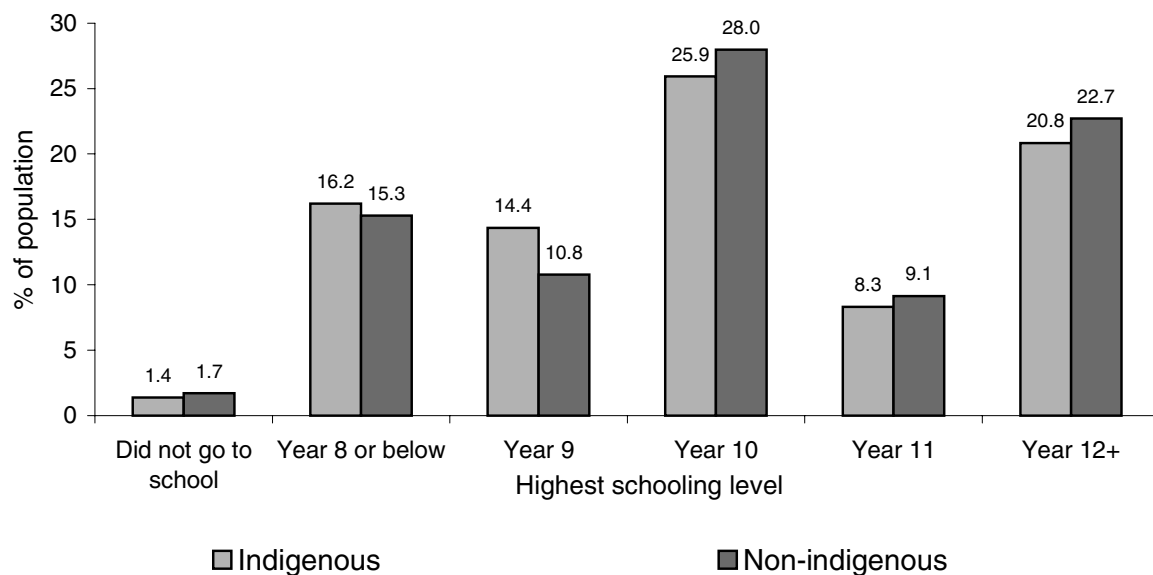
Source: ABS Census of population and housing 2001

Figure 5.57: Proportion of Queenslanders who accessed the Internet, by location and Indigenous status, 2001



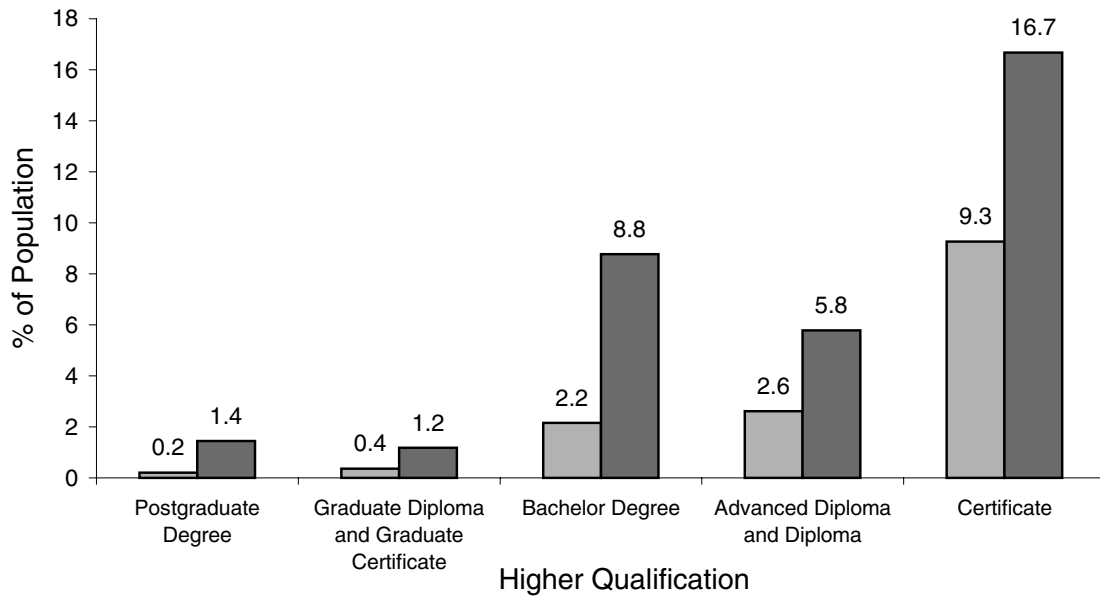
Source: ABS Census of population and housing 2001

Figure 5.58: Highest level of schooling completed, by Indigenous status, Queensland, 2001



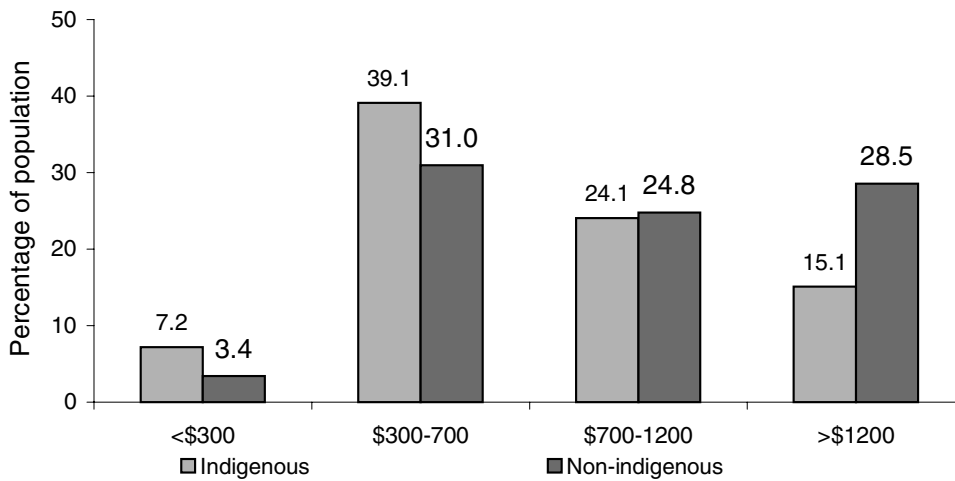
Source: ABS Census of population and housing 2001

Figure 5.59: Non-school qualifications completed, by Indigenous status, Queensland, 2001



Source: ABS Census of population and housing 2001

Figure 5.60: Total gross weekly household income from all sources, families in occupied private dwellings, 2001



Source: ABS Census of population and housing 2001