

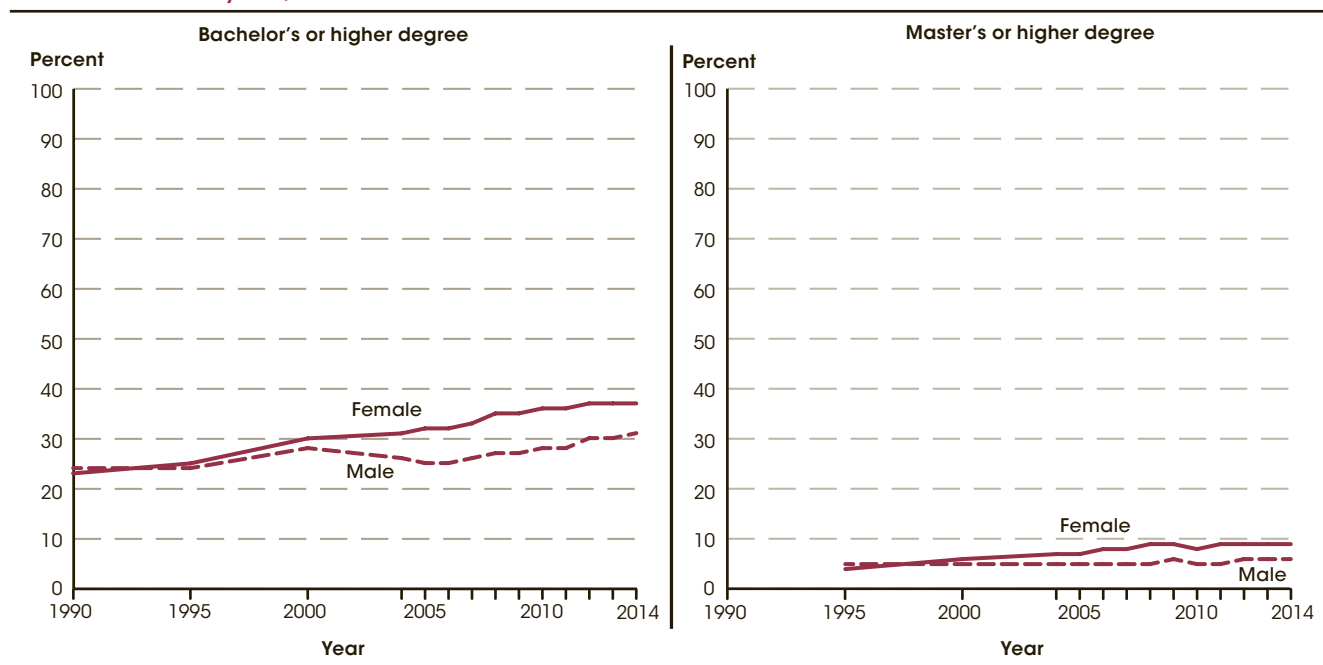
Educational Attainment

In 2014, some 91 percent of 25- to 29-year-olds had received at least a high school diploma or its equivalent. Between 1990 and 2014, the size of the White-Black gap in attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent narrowed from 8 to 4 percentage points, and the size of the White-Hispanic gap narrowed from 32 to 21 percentage points.

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education completed (e.g., a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, a bachelor's degree, or a master's degree). Between 1990 and 2014, educational attainment rates among 25- to 29-year-olds increased. The percentage who had received at least a high school diploma or its equivalent increased from 86 to 91 percent, with most

of the change (4 percentage points) occurring between 2004 and 2014. The percentage who had completed a bachelor's or higher degree increased from 23 percent in 1990 to 34 percent in 2014; and the percentage who had completed a master's or higher degree increased from 5 percent in 1995 to 8 percent in 2014.

Figure 1. Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who completed bachelor's or higher and master's or higher degrees, by sex: Selected years, 1990-2014

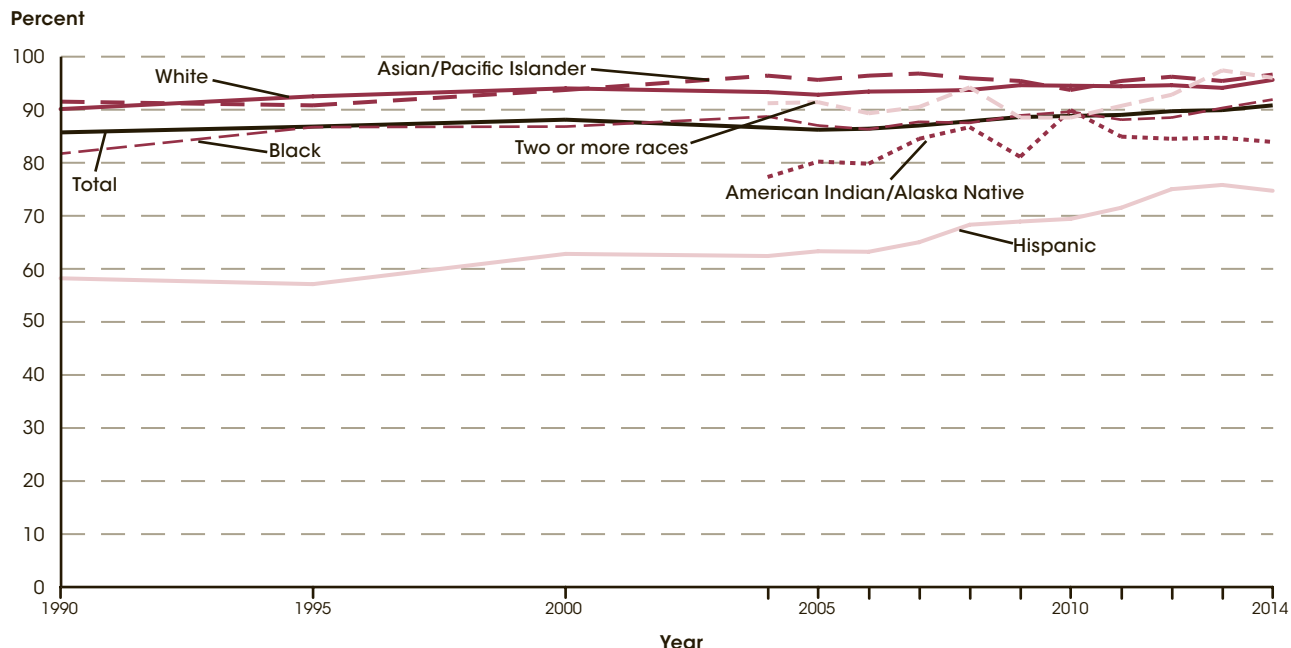


NOTE: Prior to 1995, data on attainment of a master's or higher degree were not available.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), "Annual Social and Economic Supplement," selected years, 1990-2014. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*, table 104.20.

Female attainment rates have been generally higher than male attainment rates at each education level since 2000. More specifically, in 1990 the percentages of male and female 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed a bachelor's degree or higher were not measurably different, but in 2014 the percentage of females (37 percent) attaining this level of education was 6 points higher than the percentage

of males doing so (31 percent). Similarly, in 1995 the percentages of males and females who had completed a master's degree or higher were not measurably different, but in 2014 some 9 percent of females had completed a master's degree or higher, compared with 6 percent of males.

Figure 2. Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who completed at least a high school diploma or its equivalent, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1990–2014



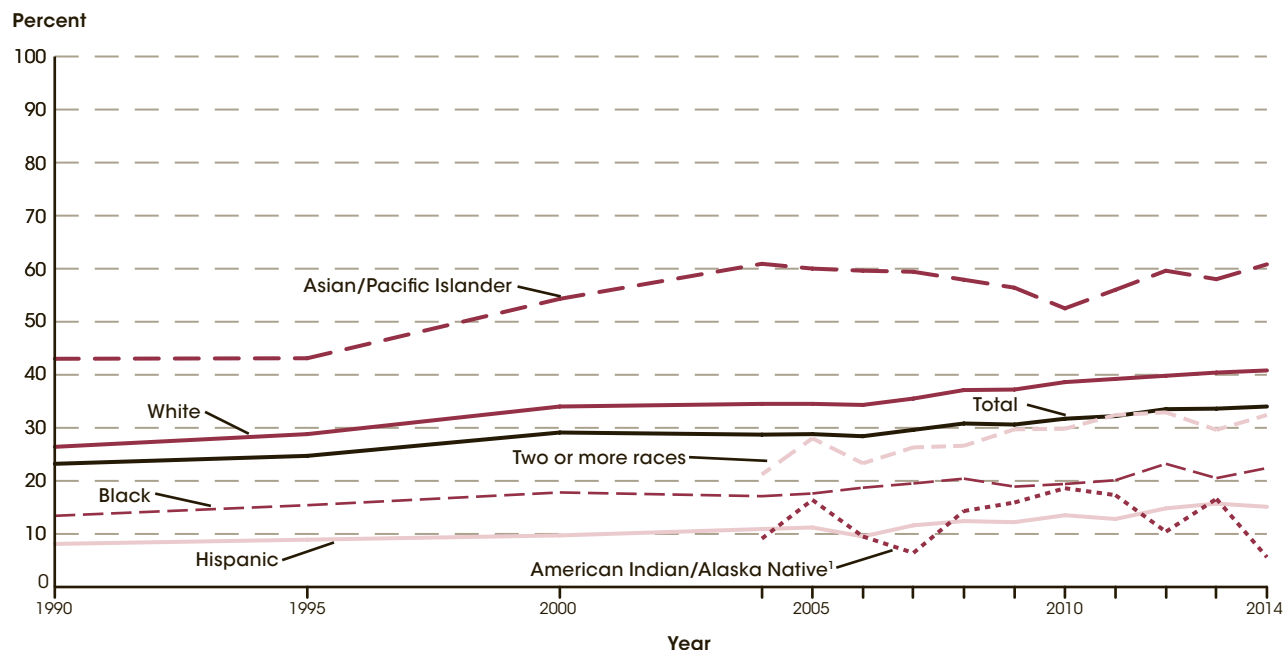
NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Prior to 2004, separate data on American Indians/Alaska Natives and persons of Two or more races were not available.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), "Annual Social and Economic Supplement," selected years, 1990–2014. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*, table 104.20.

Between 1990 and 2014, the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who completed at least a high school diploma or its equivalent increased for Whites (from 90 to 96 percent), Blacks (from 82 to 92 percent), Hispanics (from 58 to 75 percent), and Asians/Pacific Islanders (from 92 to 97 percent). For Hispanics, most of the change over this period (i.e., 12 percentage points out of the total 17 percentage point change) occurred in the

last 10 years. Between 1990 and 2014, the percentage of Whites who had attained at least a high school diploma or its equivalent remained higher than that of Blacks and Hispanics. However, the size of the White-Black attainment gap at this education level narrowed from 8 to 4 percentage points, and the size of the White-Hispanic gap narrowed from 32 to 21 percentage points.

Figure 3. Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who completed a bachelor's or higher degree, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1990-2014



¹ Interpret data for 2004, 2006, 2007, and 2014 with caution. The coefficients of variation (CVs) for these estimates are between 30 and 50 percent.

NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Prior to 2004, separate data on American Indians/Alaska Natives and persons of Two or more races were not available.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), "Annual Social and Economic Supplement," selected years, 1990-2014. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*, table 104.20.

From 1990 to 2014, the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had attained a bachelor's or higher degree increased for Whites (from 26 to 41 percent), Blacks (from 13 to 22 percent), Hispanics (from 8 to 15 percent), and Asians/Pacific Islanders (from 43 to 61 percent). Most of the increase for Hispanics over this period (4 percentage points) occurred in the most recent decade. Over the period from 1990 to 2014, the gap between Whites and Blacks in the rate of attaining a bachelor's or higher degree widened from 13 to 18 percentage points, and the gap between Whites and Hispanics in attaining this education level widened from 18 to 26 percentage points.

From 1995 to 2014, the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had attained a master's or higher degree increased for Whites (from 5 to 9 percent), Blacks (from 2 to 4 percent), Hispanics (from 2 to 3 percent), and Asians/Pacific Islanders (from 11 to 18 percent). The gap between Whites and Hispanics in the attainment of a master's or higher degree was wider in 2014 (6 percentage points) than in 1995 (4 percentage points); however, the gap between Whites and Blacks in 2014 was not measurably different from that in 1995.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*, table 104.20

Related indicators: International Educational Attainment (indicator 2), Annual Earnings of Young Adults (indicator 3), Trends in Employment Rates by Educational Attainment [*The Condition of Education 2013 Spotlight*]

Glossary: Educational attainment (Current Population Survey)