

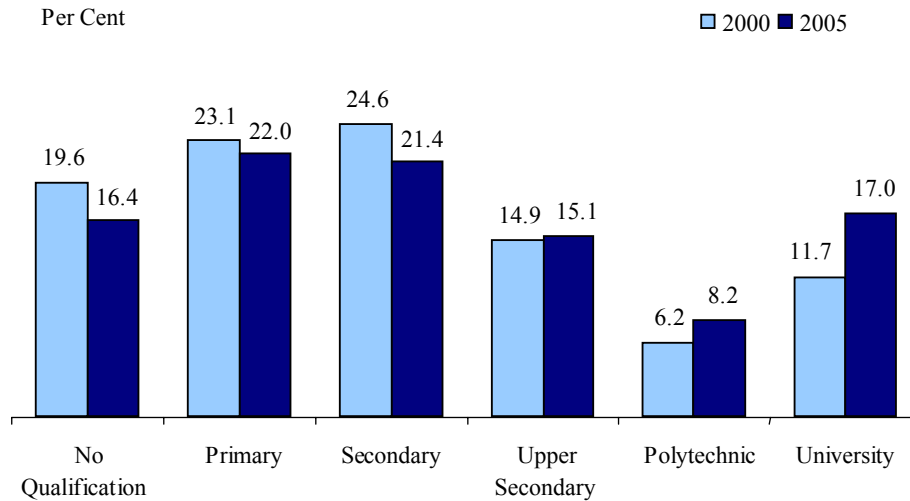
2 EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE

Highest Qualification Attained

Proportionately More with Tertiary Qualifications

The educational profile of Singapore residents has improved further. Polytechnic and university graduates made up 25 percent of the resident non-student population aged 15 years and over in 2005, up from 18 per cent in 2000 (Chart 1). The increase in tertiary-educated population may be attributed to the expansion in educational facilities to meet the rising aspirations of the population to attain higher education and inflows of highly educated permanent residents.

**Chart 1 Resident Non-Student Population Aged 15 Years and Over
by Highest Qualification Attained**



Larger Increase of University Graduates among Permanent Residents

Between 2000 and 2005, the proportion of university graduates among the citizen population increased from 9.5 per cent to 14 per cent (Table 1). The proportion with polytechnic qualification also increased - from 6.3 per cent to 8.2 per cent. Among the permanent residents, the increase in proportion of university graduates was much larger, from 33 per cent in 2000 to 40 per cent in 2005.

**Table 1 Resident Non-Student Population Aged 15 Years and Over
by Highest Qualification Attained and Residential Status**

	Per Cent			
	Singapore Citizens		Permanent Residents	
	2000	2005	2000	2005
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No Qualification	20.9	18.0	7.5	5.6
Primary	23.6	22.9	17.6	15.6
Secondary	25.3	22.5	18.5	14.2
Upper Secondary	14.5	14.9	18.4	16.6
Polytechnic	6.3	8.2	5.2	8.1
University	9.5	13.5	32.7	39.9

Good Progress Among All Ethnic Groups

All ethnic groups among the resident population are better qualified than before. During 2000 – 2005, the proportion of residents with polytechnic or university qualification increased from 20 per cent to 27 per cent among the Chinese, from 4.9 per cent to 8.6 per cent among the Malays and from 20 per cent to 31 per cent among the Indians (Table 2).

**Table 2 Resident Non-Student Population Aged 15 Years and Over
by Highest Qualification Attained and Ethnic Group**

	Per Cent							
	Chinese		Malays		Indians		Others	
	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No Qualification	20.2	17.2	20.0	16.5	13.9	10.9	7.5	5.3
Primary	21.9	21.5	30.1	27.9	24.5	20.1	16.2	13.1
Secondary	23.2	20.0	32.1	30.8	26.4	22.1	25.2	17.3
Upper Secondary	15.0	14.8	12.9	16.2	15.6	15.8	19.9	18.1
Polytechnic	7.0	8.9	2.9	5.2	3.1	6.1	3.8	7.3
University	12.6	17.7	2.0	3.4	16.5	25.1	27.5	38.9

The Indians had larger increase in proportion of university graduates compared with the Chinese and Malays. The increase in proportion of Indian university graduates was partly due to the inflow of Indian permanent residents with university qualifications. Some 60 per cent of Indian permanent residents were university graduates in 2005, up from 51 per cent in 2000 (Table 3). The increase was smaller among the Chinese and Malay permanent residents.

Table 3 Proportion of University Graduates by Ethnic Group and Residential Status

Ethnic Group	Per Cent					
	Total		Singapore Citizens		Permanent Residents	
	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005
Total	11.7	17.0	9.5	13.5	32.7	39.9
Chinese	12.6	17.7	10.8	15.5	29.7	34.4
Malays	2.0	3.4	1.8	3.0	5.6	11.0
Indians	16.5	25.1	8.1	11.1	51.0	60.4
Others	27.5	38.9	11.0	14.2	51.1	58.5

Educational Upgrading

Proportionately More Acquiring University Qualification

Educational opportunities at the bachelor degree level have increased markedly with the establishment of a third university¹ in 2000 in Singapore and the rapid expansion of external degree programmes offered by local private organizations in collaboration with overseas universities. Consequently, there is substantial educational upgrading among the adult population.

Table 4 shows the proportion of university graduates among Singapore citizens by age cohort. A significant proportion of young adults in their twenties and thirties in 2000 upgraded their educational attainment to university level during 2000 - 2005. The upgrading was most marked for those aged 25 – 29 years in 2000. For this age cohort, the proportion with university qualification increased by 6.7 percentage points between 2000 and 2005.

Males tend to have higher propensity than females to upgrade their educational attainment to university level. The increase in the proportion with university qualification was larger among male citizens than female citizens for each age cohort.

Table 4 Proportion of University Graduates Among Singapore Citizens by Age Cohort

Per Cent

Age Group (Years)		Total		Males		Females	
2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005
25-29	30-34	25.4	32.1	24.5	33.2	26.2	31.0
30-34	35-39	18.5	21.5	20.7	24.2	16.3	18.8
35-39	40-44	11.1	13.1	12.8	15.2	9.4	11.0
40-44	45-49	7.7	8.5	9.4	10.6	5.9	6.5
45-49	50-54	5.9	6.6	7.9	8.7	3.9	4.5
50 & Over	55 & Over	3.1	3.3	4.7	5.1	1.6	1.8

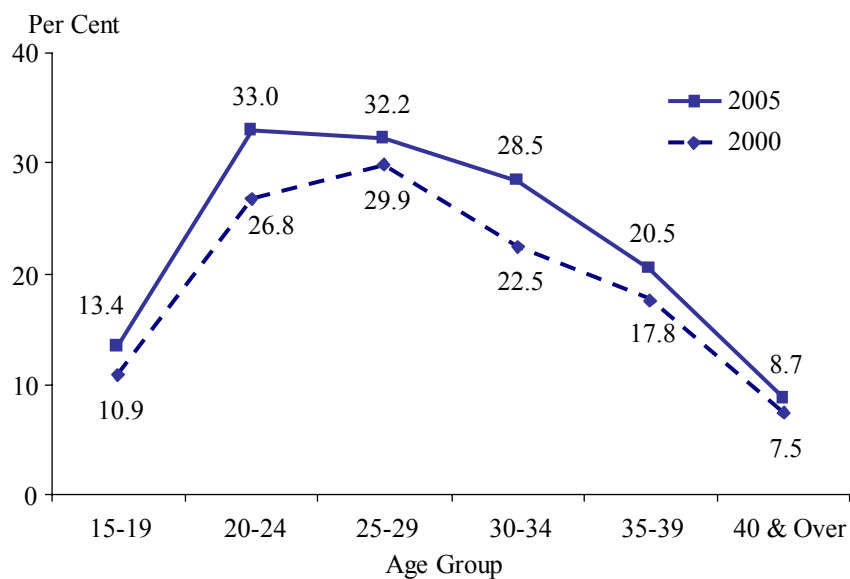
¹ Singapore Management University.

More Young Residents with Technical, Commercial or Vocational Qualification

In addition to tertiary education programs, Singapore residents have the option to upgrade their educational attainment by acquiring technical, commercial or vocational qualifications. Among residents who were not university or polytechnic graduates in 2005, 14 per cent had acquired technical, commercial or vocational qualifications after leaving school. This was slightly higher than the corresponding 13 per cent in 2000.

Young adults in their twenties and early thirties have higher propensity to advance their education at non-tertiary levels. Among residents in their twenties who were not university or polytechnic graduates in 2005, about one third had acquired a technical, commercial or vocational qualification (Chart 2). Among those aged 30-34 years, the corresponding proportion was close to 30 per cent. In contrast, less than 10 per cent of non-graduate residents aged 40 and over had acquired a technical, commercial or vocational qualification.

Chart 2 Proportion Who Acquired Technical, Commercial or Vocational Qualification Among Resident Non-Students With Upper Secondary or Lower Qualification by Age Group



Higher Tendency to Continue Education
Among Males and Better-Educated Residents

Males appear to have stronger likelihood of continuing education. While 18 per cent of non-tertiary males continued their education to acquire technical, commercial or vocational qualifications, only 9.9 per cent of females did so (Table 5).

Continuing education is more prevalent among the better-educated. In 2005, 25 per cent of those with secondary qualification and 15 per cent of those with upper secondary qualification had acquired technical, commercial or vocational qualifications. The corresponding proportions were lower among those with primary or no qualifications.

Compared with 2000, proportionately fewer residents with upper secondary qualification had acquired technical, commercial or vocational qualifications in 2005. This might be due to the increasing preference to acquire a university degree as more opportunities for study at the university level become available for adult school leavers.

Table 5 Proportion Who Acquired Technical, Commercial or Vocational Qualification Among Resident Non-Students Aged 15 Years and Over by Highest Academic Qualification and Sex

Per Cent

	Total		Males		Females	
	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005
Total	13.1	13.7	16.0	18.0	10.4	9.9
No Qualification	1.2	1.4	2.5	2.4	0.5	0.8
Primary	9.4	10.9	13.1	15.0	5.1	6.4
Secondary	22.7	24.6	25.6	30.2	20.0	19.4
Upper Secondary	22.7	15.4	21.6	14.9	23.7	15.8

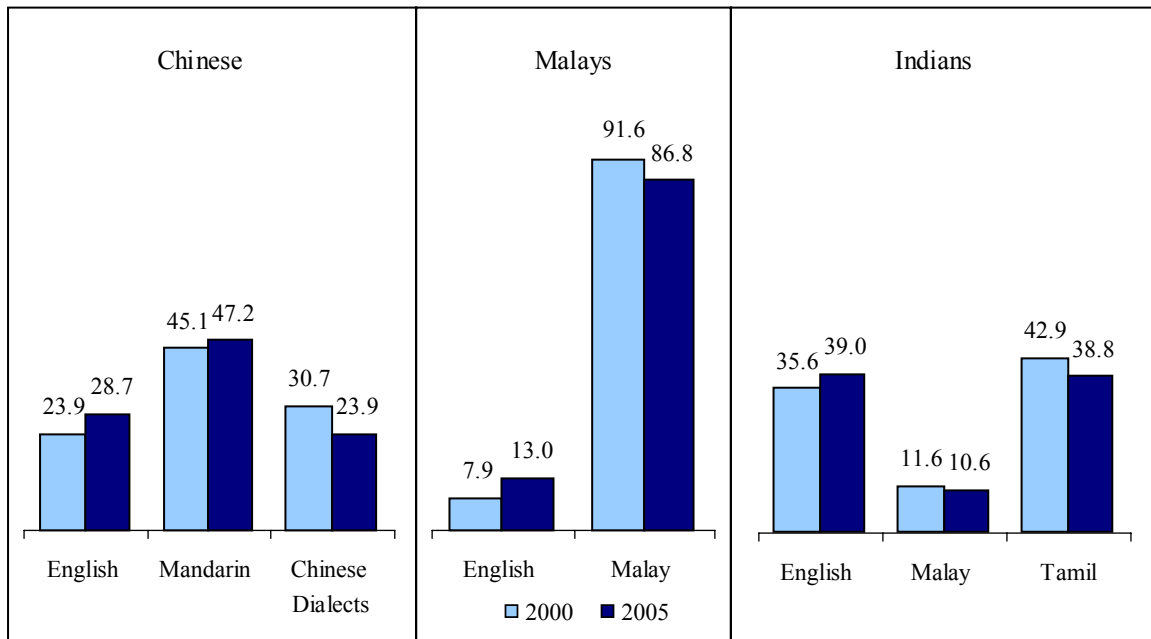
Language Most Frequently Spoken at Home

Increasing Usage of English at Home

Compared with 2000, there was an increase in the usage of English as predominant home language among all the major ethnic groups in 2005 (Chart 3). Mandarin had become more popular as the predominant home language of the Chinese while usage of Chinese dialects at home declined. Usage of the other vernacular languages (Malay and Tamil) at home declined among the Malays and Indians.

**Chart 3 Resident Population Aged 5 Years and Over
by Language Most Frequently Spoken at Home and Ethnic Group**

Per Cent



Educational Differentials among Major Ethnic Groups

Although the usage of English has increased over the years, there appears to be a greater tendency to switch from Chinese dialects to Mandarin than to English at home among the Chinese resident population at all educational levels. Between 2000 and 2005, the proportion speaking Mandarin increased more rapidly than English even among university graduates (Table 6). However, the majority of the Chinese with below secondary qualifications still used Chinese dialects as home language.

Table 6 Resident Non-Student Population Aged 15 Years and Over by Language Most Frequently Spoken at Home and Highest Qualification Attained

Per Cent

Ethnic Group/Language	Below Secondary		Secondary		Post-Secondary		University	
	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005
Chinese	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
English	4.2	5.3	27.3	29.6	32.5	34.4	47.1	48.5
Mandarin	37.5	42.4	46.0	49.6	44.0	49.3	34.7	38.5
Chinese Dialect	57.9	52.1	26.5	20.6	23.2	16.1	17.5	12.3
Others	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.7
Malays	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
English	1.9	3.3	9.4	12.6	15.7	19.9	38.1	46.0
Malay	97.5	96.5	90.2	87.2	84.0	79.7	60.5	51.9
Others	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.3	1.4	2.2
Indians	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
English	14.9	18.4	39.9	45.5	48.7	48.2	42.6	35.7
Malay	16.6	17.7	12.2	12.7	7.4	9.1	0.9	1.1
Tamil	60.9	56.5	40.6	35.5	32.8	32.3	32.3	35.6
Others	7.5	7.4	7.3	6.3	11.1	10.4	24.2	27.6

Among the better-educated Malays, there was a significant increase in the use of English as predominant home language during the last five years. Nonetheless, Malay remained as the principal home language at all educational levels.

In contrast, the increase in the use of English as predominant home language among the Indians occurred mainly among those with secondary or lower qualifications. Among Indian university graduates, the proportion who spoke English most frequently at home declined. The proportion using Tamil as home language increased, and was close to the proportion using English in 2005.

More Students Speaking English at Home

English is emerging as the language of the young among the resident population. The proportion of resident students speaking English at home increased significantly among all major ethnic groups between 2000 and 2005 (Table 7). In contrast, there was a decline in the proportion speaking the vernacular languages (Mandarin, Chinese dialects, Malay and Tamil) at home.

Table 7 Resident Students Aged 5 Years and Over by Language Most Frequently Spoken at Home and Level of Education Attending

Ethnic Group/Language	Per Cent							
	Primary		Secondary		Post-Secondary		University	
	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005
Chinese	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
English	36.5	44.9	27.5	38.7	25.1	35.9	29.9	39.2
Mandarin	59.3	52.8	63.8	57.8	60.5	58.4	53.1	52.9
Chinese Dialect	3.9	2.0	8.2	3.3	14.1	5.5	16.9	7.6
Others	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3
Malays	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
English	9.2	17.6	8.4	14.1	12.2	17.6	26.4	32.8
Malay	90.3	82.3	91.0	85.7	87.3	82.1	73.1	67.2
Others	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.5	-
Indians	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
English	43.5	47.8	41.4	46.7	46.2	51.9	56.7	64.2
Malay	13.2	9.4	14.7	14.4	11.9	11.9	6.1	4.9
Tamil	35.9	32.8	38.0	33.5	33.9	29.6	26.9	26.7
Others	7.4	10.0	5.9	5.5	8.0	6.6	10.2	4.2