

Prosperity 2020:

The Impact of Postsecondary Education in Utah

August 2011

For questions, please contact:

Aaron Andersen, Senior Analyst

801-456-6743

aandersen@cicerogroup.com

The Cicero Group: Fast Facts

- Premier Strategy, Market Research, and Analytics Firm
- Headquartered in Salt Lake City; conducting research in 47 countries and interviewing in 14 languages
- Subsidiaries: *Dan Jones & Associates; Education Direction*
- 200 employees: market strategists, statisticians, moderators, and analysts and internal team of interviewers / data-inputters / mystery shoppers
- Staff with decades of senior-level experience in myriad industries
- Significant investment in data-collecting technologies
 - Our Clients Include:



Table of Contents



1. Background and Methodology
2. General Overview
3. Key Findings

Study Background and Objectives

In an effort to better understand the benefits of postsecondary education in Utah, this study was designed to examine the influence of postsecondary degree or certificate completion on measures of professional and personal success.

Data-based Objectives

1	Highest level of educational attainment	6	Employment benefits
2	Type of degree(s)/certificate(s)	7	Civic engagement
3	Personal/household income	8	Utilization of government assistance programs
4	Current employment status	9	Family educational attainment
5	Job volatility/type	10	Demographic information

Perception-based Objectives

1	Importance of higher education
2	Impact of education on career and life success
3	Impact of education on career and life satisfaction
4	Impact of education on other “success” measures (e.g. health, marriage, family, and community engagement)

Methodology and Terminology

Methodology

Secondary Research	A review of scholarly research related to the personal and societal impacts of higher education was conducted to inform study preparation and analysis.
Survey	A robust study surveying over 1,200 Utahns was prepared and conducted via telephone, mail, in-person, and online.
Sampling	Study invitations were sent to a randomly-selected pool of 10,000 individuals that aligned with 2010 Census data demographics in: age, county, ethnicity, gender, education level, and household income. Participants who took the survey too quickly or demonstrated a lack of attention to questions were removed from the study.
Analysis	Tests of statistical significance were performed for each measure; additional statistical tests including ANOVA, t-testing, factor analysis, multivariate and ordinal probit regression analysis, and Cox Proportional-Hazards Regression Analysis were performed to determine effect size and influence of education on a range of measures.

Terminology

Completion/ Non-completion	The findings of this study draw comparisons between those who completed a postsecondary degree or certificate and those who did not. For the sake of simplicity in this report, these classifications are defined in terms of “completion” and “non-completion.” Completion indicates postsecondary credentials have been obtained, including vocational degrees or skilled trade certificates, associate’s degrees, bachelor’s degrees, and/or graduate degrees. Non-completion indicates no postsecondary credentials have been obtained, including those who attended but did not complete college
---------------------------------------	---

Table of Contents

1. Background and Methodology
-  2. General Overview
3. Key Findings

General Overview

Report Synopsis



This study found that completion of a postsecondary degree or certificate has a significant impact across a range of different measures, including:

- Income and employment
- Career satisfaction and confidence
- Personal happiness and satisfaction with life
- Community engagement

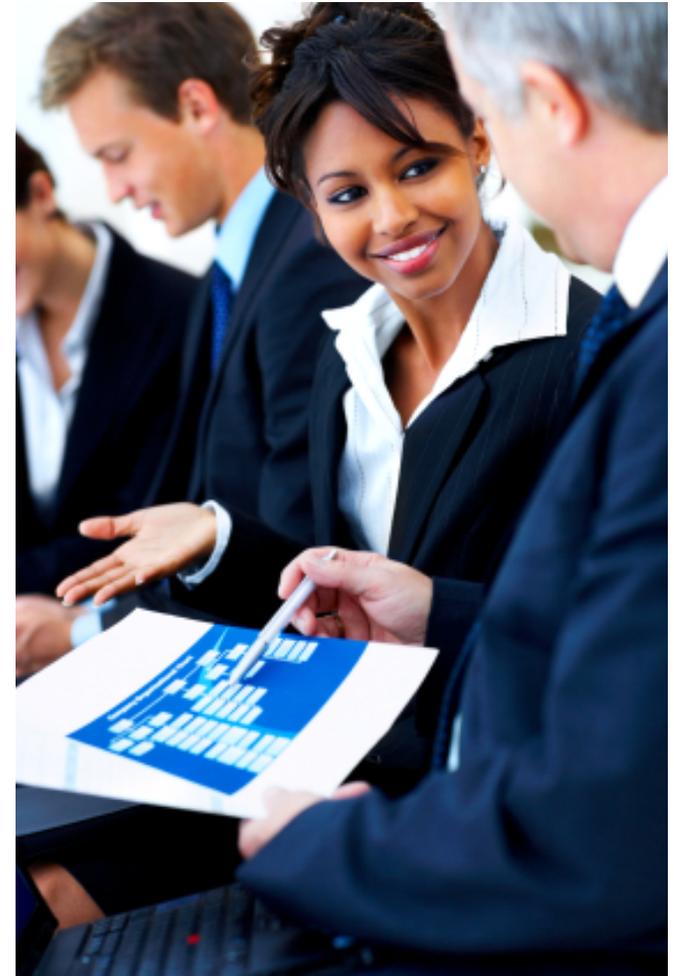
Additionally, this study found that individuals who have parents and/or siblings who completed a postsecondary degree or certificate are significantly more likely to complete a degree or certificate themselves.

General Overview

Income and Employment Measures

Completion of a postsecondary degree or certificate has a significant impact on income and employment.

- Mean personal annual compensation is 75% greater among those with a degree or certificate.
- Degree or certificate holders are 2.6 times more likely to work in salaried, rather than hourly jobs.
- One quarter (23%) of those without a postsecondary degree or certificate have experienced more than two years of total post-high school unemployment, compared to 9% of those with a degree or certificate.



General Overview

Personal Measures



The impact of degree or certificate completion on specific personal measures is significant.

- Postsecondary degree or certificate holders are 11% more likely to report happiness with their life than those without a degree or certificate.
- Individuals who completed degrees or certificates are 9% more likely to indicate that they have great marriages, and are 6% more likely to characterize themselves as having a good family life.
- Degree or certificate holders are 11% more likely to report good health than non-degree or certificate holders.

General Overview

Community Measures

Community engagement is highly influenced by completion. Degree and certificate holders are engaged in their communities at higher rates and are less likely to utilize government assistance programs.

- Individuals without a degree or certificate are more than twice as likely to have utilized Medicaid, WIC, and CHIP in the last five years, and over three times as likely to have utilized food stamps.
- Postsecondary degree or certificate holders voted in the most recent state election at a rate 50% higher than those without a degree or certificate.



General Overview

Educational Attainment



Among Utahns, completion of a degree or certificate is most often inhibited by:

- Marriage and/or children: 36%
- Too expensive: 21%
- Could not balance with work: 13%

Parent/sibling attainment has a significant impact:

- Individuals with at least one parent with a degree or certificate are 50% more likely to complete.
- If a sibling completed a degree or certificate, individuals are twice as likely to complete.

Table of Contents

1. Background and Methodology
2. General Overview
3. Key Findings



Mean annual personal total compensation is substantially higher among those who have completed a postsecondary degree or certificate.

Mean Annual Personal Compensation

(Figures represent imputed means of total compensation, including bonuses, based on categorical data)



VS.



The mean annual personal compensation among those who have completed a postsecondary degree or certificate is **75%** higher than among those without a degree or certificate.

As educational attainment increases, mean annual total compensation increases significantly.

Mean Annual Personal Compensation

(By highest level of education completed, figures represent imputed means of total compensation, including bonuses, based on categorical data)

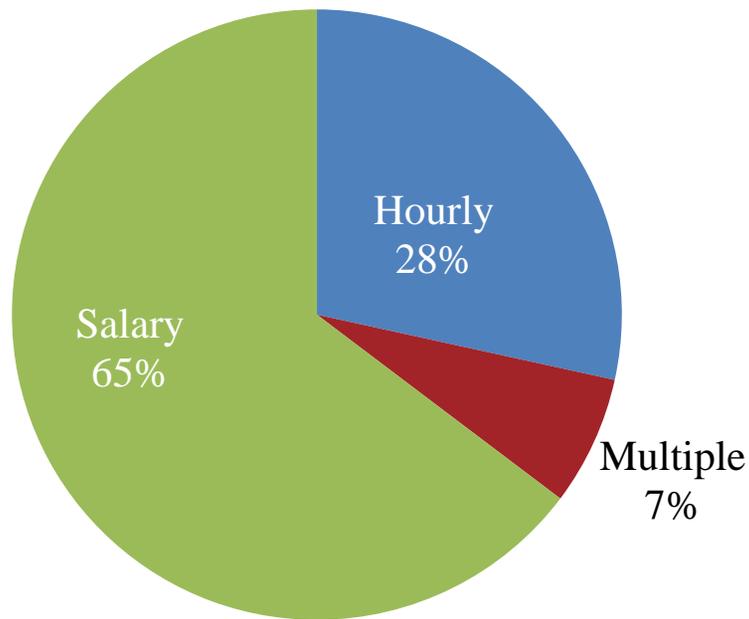
Level of Education	Mean Annual Compensation
High School Diploma or GED	\$ 28,100
Associate's Degree	\$ 30,800
Vocational Degree or Skilled Trade Certificate	\$ 31,100
Attended Some Postsecondary Education	\$ 32,000
Bachelor's Degree	\$ 50,250
Graduate Degree	\$ 69,450

Imputed total compensation means align closely with Utah census data. Slight differences are due to Utah census data being median rather than mean, survey data having a lower total sample size, and Utah census data assuming similar proportion of men and women working in each category

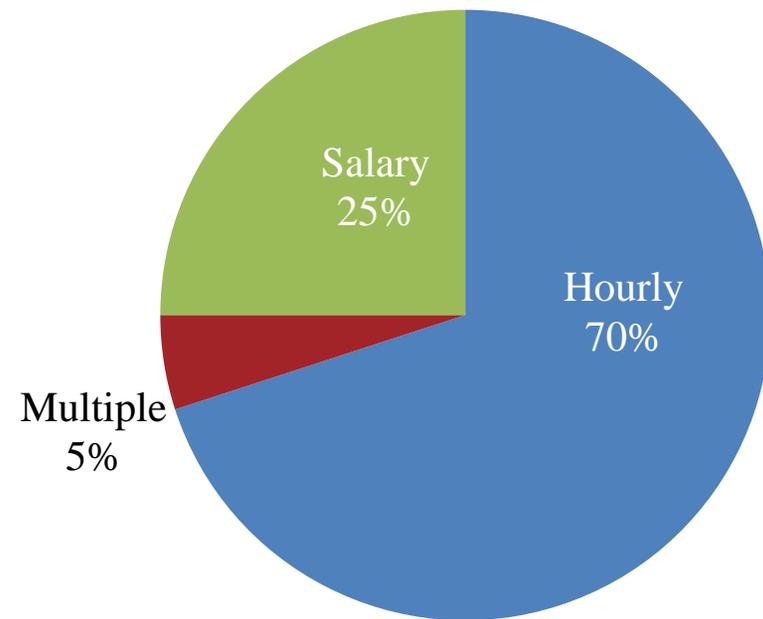
Individuals with a postsecondary degree or certificate are substantially more likely to be employed in salaried rather than hourly positions, while those without a degree or certificate are more likely to work in hourly positions.

Current Employment Situation

(By completion/non-completion and type of position)



Completion



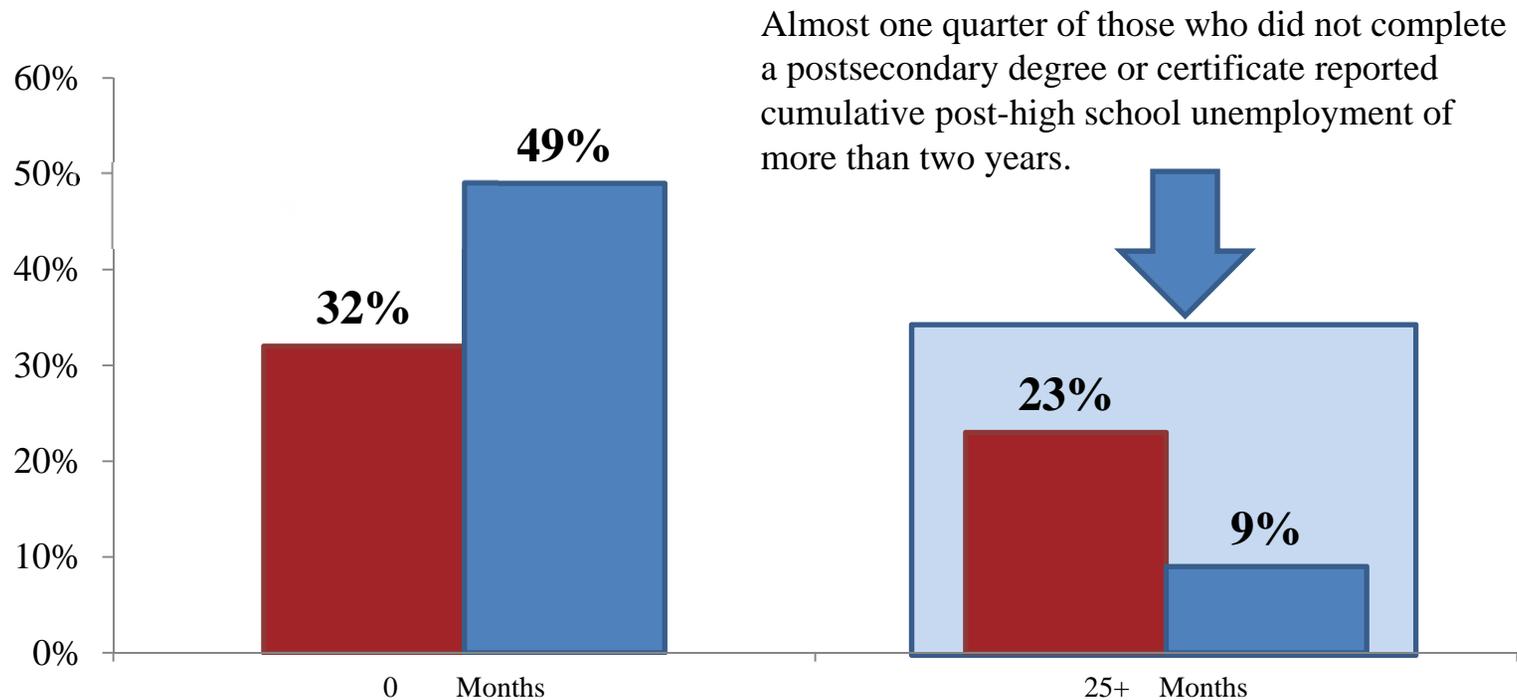
Non-completion

Q18. How would you describe your current employment situation?

Postsecondary degree or certificate holders report less total time of post-high school unemployment. Almost half of those with a degree or certificate report no post-high school unemployment, while almost one quarter of those without a degree or certificate report over two years of cumulative post-high school unemployment.

- Non-completion
- Completion

Total Length of Involuntary Post-High School Unemployment

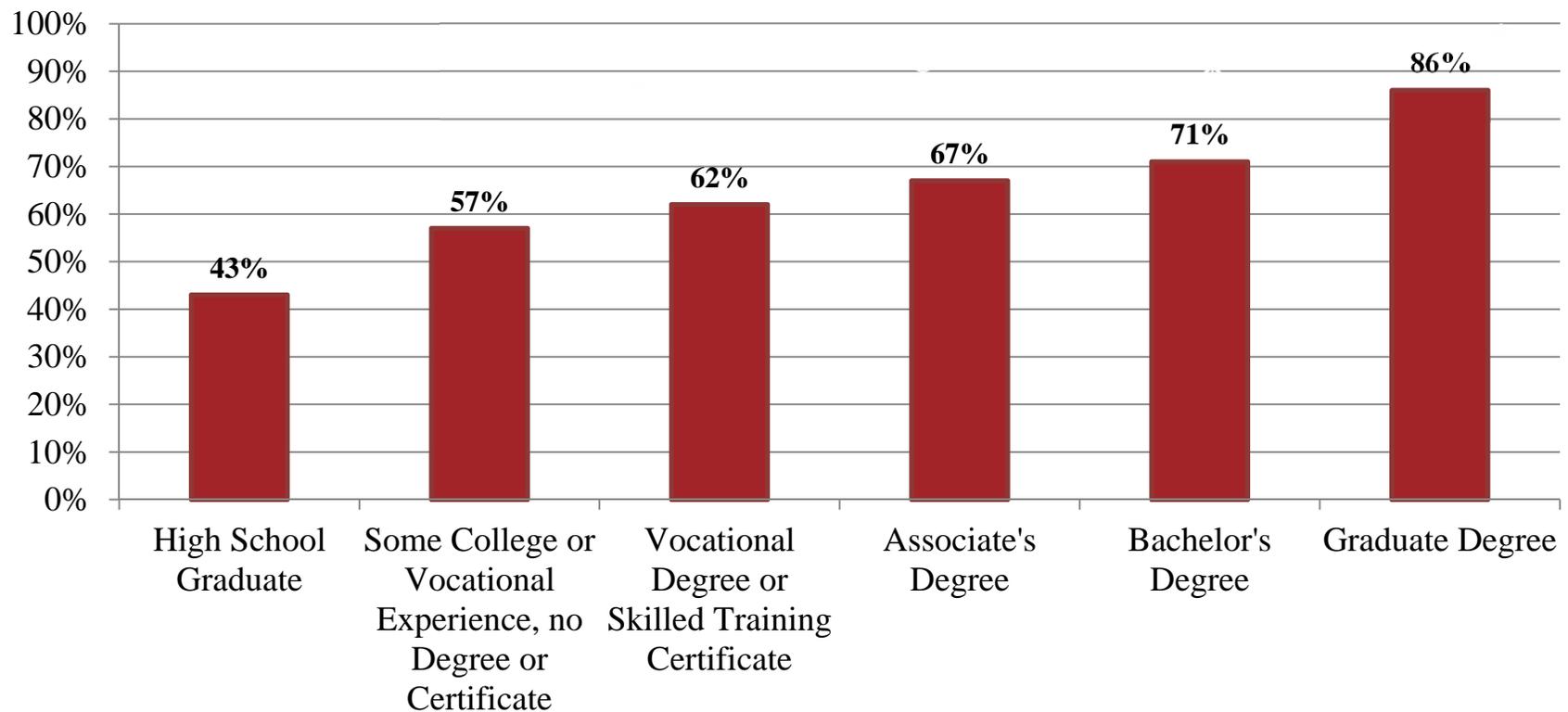


Q23. Since high school, approximately how many months total have you been involuntarily unemployed?

As educational attainment increases, satisfaction with career experiences also increases.

Satisfaction with Career Experiences

(Top 2 box: response ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree)



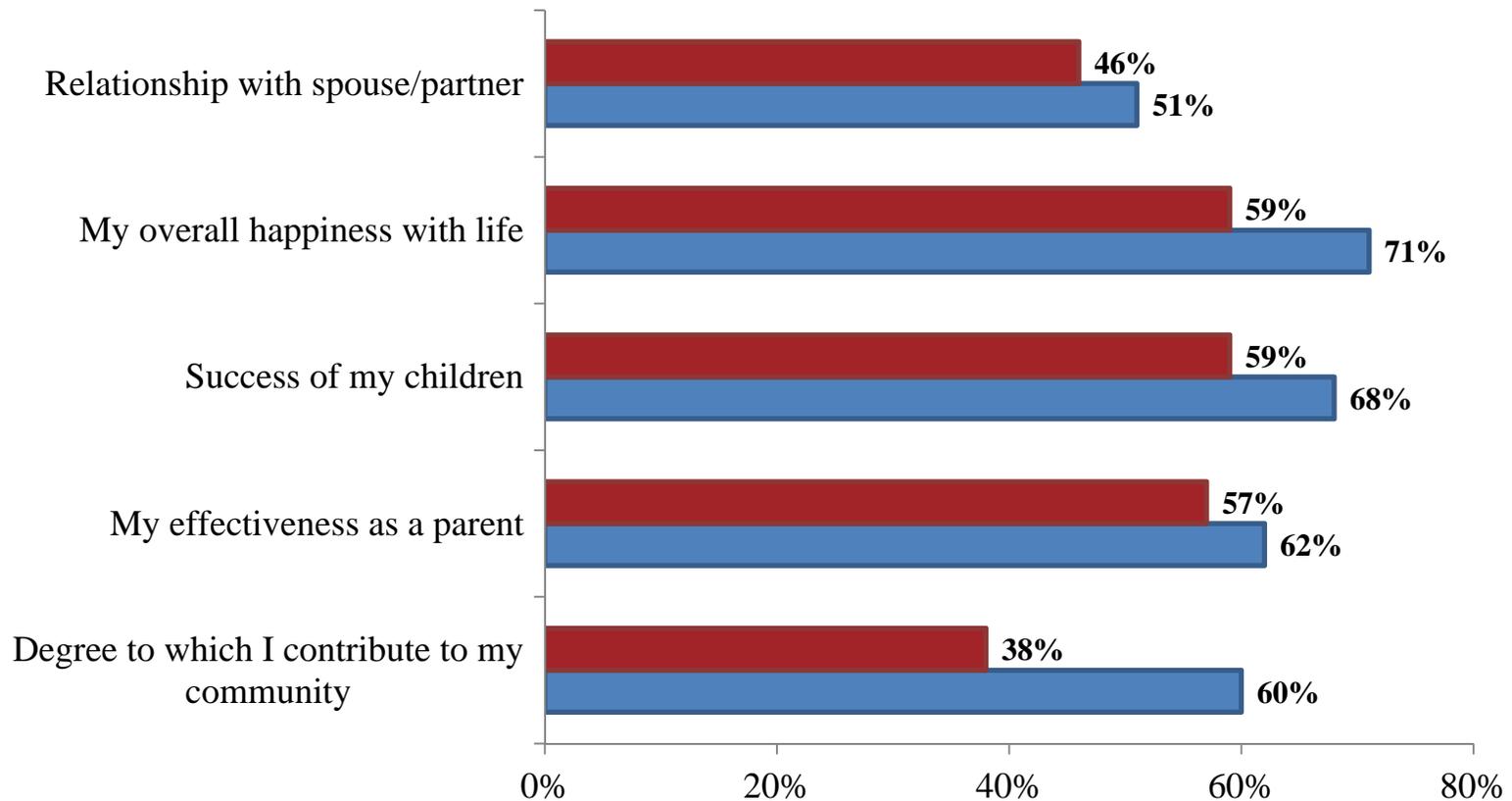
Q26. I am satisfied with my career experiences.

Those with a postsecondary degree or certificate believe that the education they received has more of a positive contribution in a number of key factors related to their lives and families than those without a degree or certificate.

■ Non-completion
■ Completion

Impact of Education on Personal Matters

(Top 2 box: responses range from absolutely no impact to significant impact)



Q42. To what extent has your education positively contributed to the following?

Rates of household utilization of government assistance programs are much higher among individuals without a degree or certificate. Specifically, rates of participation in Medicaid and food stamps are higher among those who did not complete a degree or certificate.

Utilization of Government Assistance Programs

	Non-completion	Completion
Federal Housing Assistance	3%	1%
TANF	3%	1%
Disability Insurance	5%	5%
CHIP	10%	4%
WIC	16%	7%
Food Stamps	20%	6%
Medicaid	22%	10%

Individuals without a degree or certificate are more than **twice** as likely to have utilized Medicaid, WIC, and CHIP in the last five years, and over **three times** as likely to have utilized food stamps.

Q56. In the past five years, in which of the following government programs have you or someone in your immediate household participated?

A greater share of those who have completed a postsecondary degree or certificate have health insurance, dental insurance, employer retirement contribution, and paid vacation time than those who did not complete a degree or certificate.

■ Non-completion

■ Completion

Employment Benefits

(Figures represent individuals who are currently employed and have specified benefits through their employer)

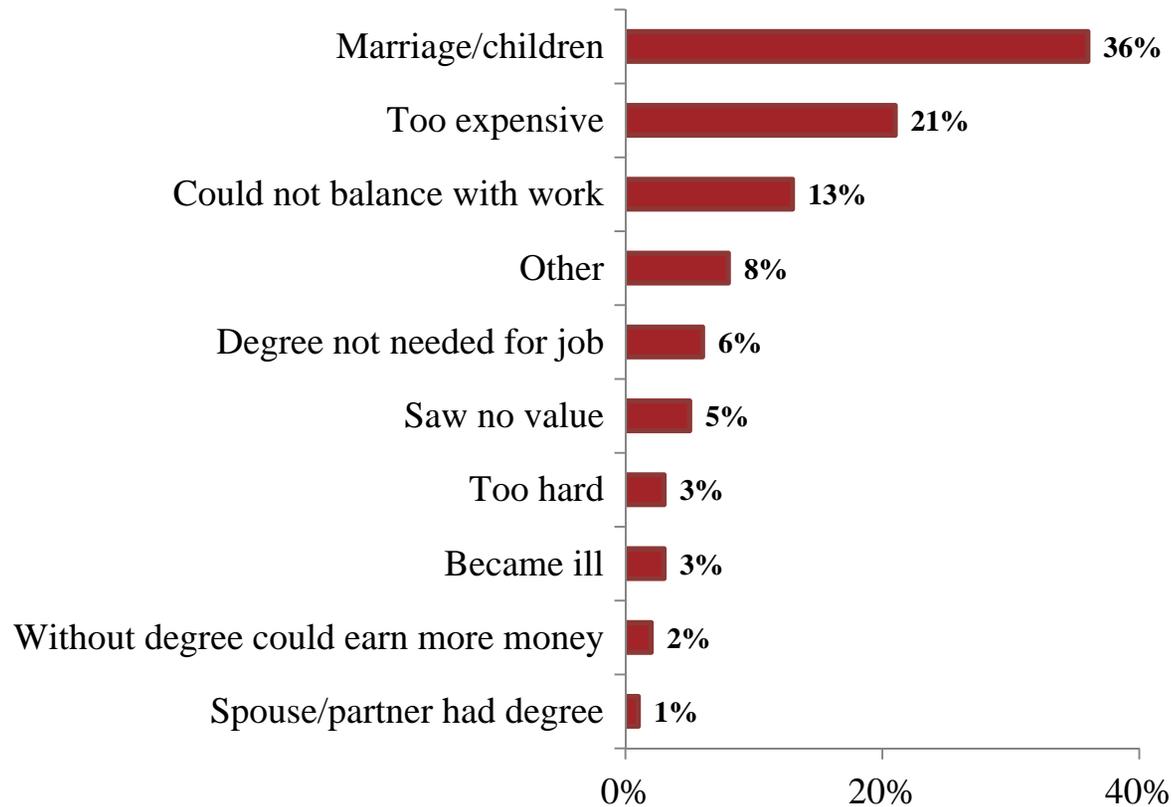
Employment Benefits	Non-completion	Completion
Employer Retirement	42%	66%
Health Insurance	49%	75%
Dental Insurance	44%	64%
Paid Vacation	53%	68%

Q22. Please select all of the benefits that you currently have through your employment.

Among those who did not complete a postsecondary degree or certificate, by far the most commonly cited reason that kept them from seeking or completing a degree was marriage/children.

■ Non-completion

What Kept Individuals from Seeking or Completing a Postsecondary Degree or Certificate?

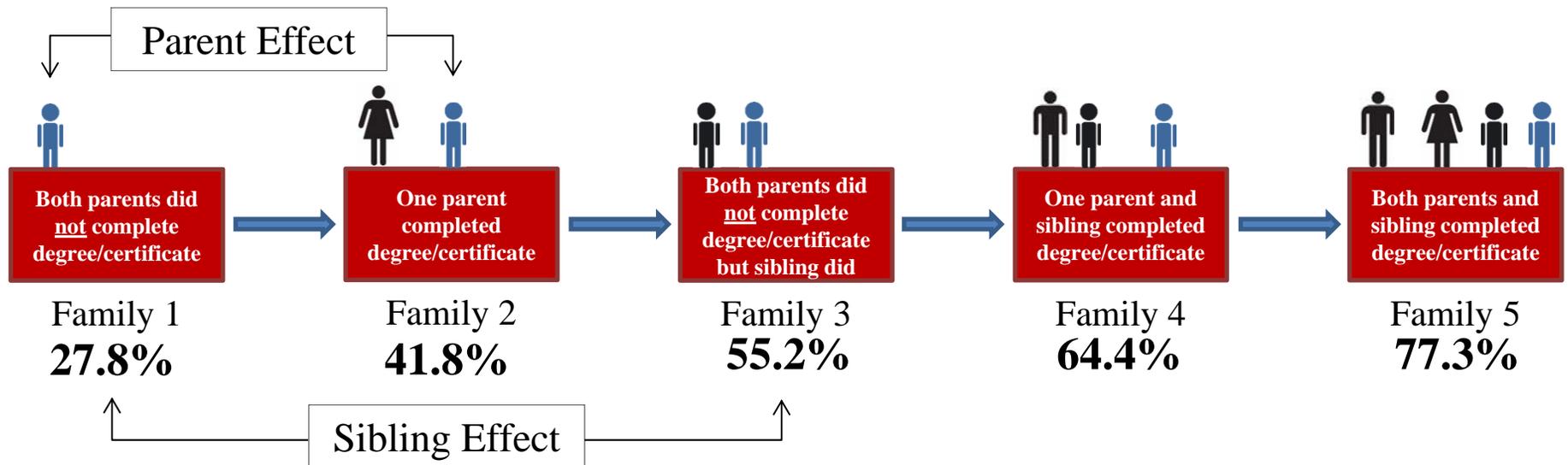


Q52. Which of the following best describes why you never completed or sought a college degree?

Investment in a postsecondary degree or certificate has an impact that extends beyond the individual. Each time another member of a household obtains a degree/certificate, it increases the likelihood that their siblings and/or children will complete a degree/certificate.

Impact of Family on Degree/Certificate Attainment

(Percentages represent likelihood of child completing degree or certificate)

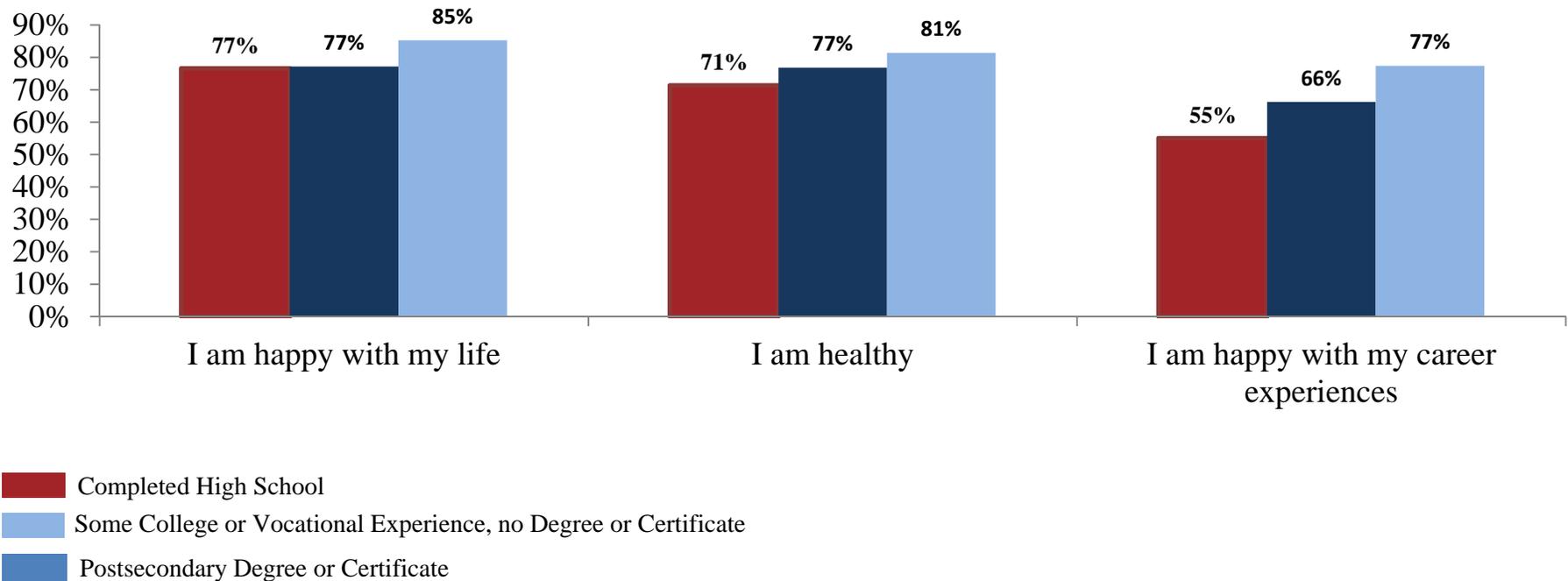


- Individuals with at least one parent with a degree or certificate are **50%** more likely to complete a degree or certificate themselves.
- If a sibling completed a degree or certificate, individuals are **twice** as likely to complete a degree or certificate themselves.

Women reported good health, happiness, and satisfaction with career experiences at higher rates in accordance with their level of educational attainment.

Impact of Educational Attainment for Women

(Top 2 box: response ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree)



Q26. Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

Summary

- Postsecondary degree completion impacts a range of economic, personal, and societal measures.
- The primary inhibitors to postsecondary degree completion in Utah are marriage/children, cost, and the ability to balance work with school.
- An investment in the education of a single Utahn has returns beyond individual success. Impacts are broad and generational, as completion enhances home and community, and increases the likelihood of completion among siblings and children.

