

INTRODUCTION

During the fall of 2023, Utah Women & Leadership Project (UWLP) researchers conducted a statewide study to establish a baseline for public perceptions related to the awareness, understanding, and attitudes about challenges that Utah women and girls face (see [Background & Methods](#) for details). The study was created to support the work of 18 areas of focus (spokes) within the movement called [A Bolder Way Forward](#), which is dedicated to helping more Utah girls and women thrive. One of the 18 areas of focus is home and family, and this summary shares findings that highlight present perspectives and establishes a baseline to track progress in key areas.

BACKGROUND

In 2017, the UWLP released a research snapshot titled "[Unpaid Care Work Among Utah Women](#)," which is currently being updated. Yet, there is little available data that helps Utahns understand various elements of home and family dynamics, which include, but are not limited to, relational power dynamics, caregiving responsibilities, domestic and emotional labor, communication challenges, differing financial habits, and sexual satisfaction. Few research sources provide Utah data for any of these topics. Four items from this new study provide some additional insight that can help guide changes to improve women's experiences in the home and family domain (focused on healthy relationships) within the state.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Participants responded to each survey item using a 7-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=neither disagree nor agree, 5=somewhat agree, 6=agree, 7=strongly agree). For Sample 1 (non-probability), 2,391 Utahns responded to these four questions, and for Sample 2 (representative), there were 650 participants (Total=3,041).

1. Equal Voice: The first survey item was "I have an equal voice in decision making within my home." The statistical mean was 6.23 (SD 1.26) for the non-probability sample and 5.78 (SD 1.45) for the representative sample. Although there was a significant difference between samples, 79.9% of all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, while 20.1% disagreed, were neutral, or selected "somewhat agree." See the demographic findings below.

DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

**Gender:* Women's agreement levels were significantly higher than men's (6.19 and 5.90, resp.).

**Age:* Those ages 18–24 had the lowest agreement, and 50–54-year-olds had the highest.

**Education:* Those with a high school diploma or less had the least agreement, while those with graduate degrees had the highest.

**Marital Status:* There were no significant differences among categories.

**Income:* The higher the household income, the more the agreement.

**Children:* Parents had higher agreement than nonparents.

**Race & Ethnicity:* Those who identified as Pacific Islander or White had higher agreement levels.

**Religion:* Although all strongly agreed, Protestants agreed the most strongly and "spiritual but no affiliation" the least. Also, "very active" respondents had the highest agreement.

**Employment:* Unemployed people and full-time students had lower agreement.

**Residency:* There were no significant differences among categories.

**Counties:* There were no significant agreement differences among counties. However, the statistical means ranged from 5.87 (Box Elder) to 6.33 (Tooele, Morgan, and Rich grouping).

2. Domestic Labor: The second survey item was "I feel the load of domestic labor is shared equitably within my home." The statistical mean was 4.88 (SD 1.94) for the non-probability sample and 4.86 (SD 1.72) for the representative sample. The two are nearly identical, with a wide variance in responses. Overall, with both samples combined, 43.9% of respondents either disagreed at some level or selected "neither agree nor disagree"; 13.4% selected "somewhat agree," 21.7% "agree," and "26.0% "strongly agree." See the combined demographic findings below.

DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

**Gender:* Men's agreement levels were significantly stronger than women's (5.17 and 4.81, resp.).

**Age:* There were no significant differences among age categories.

**Education:* There were no significant differences among education categories.

**Marital Status:* Divorced and married but separated respondents had the least agreement, and those who were living with a partner/cohabiting had the strongest.

**Income:* The higher the household income, the more the agreement.

**Children:* Nonparents had higher agreement than parents. In addition, there were no significant differences among parents with different numbers and ages of children.

**Race & Ethnicity:* The strongest agreement was with those who identified as White, followed by Hispanic and Asian. Native Americans agreed the least.

**Religion:* There were no significant differences among categories. However, those who were most active in their religion had the highest agreement.

**Denotes statistically significant differences within the demographic categories.*

Employment: There was no significant difference among categories.

Residency: There were no significant differences among categories.

Counties: There were no significant agreement differences among counties. However, the statistical means ranged from 4.61 (Summit/Wasatch) to 5.13 (the Millard, Sevier, Juab, Beaver, and Piute region).

3. Caregiving: The third survey item was “I feel the load of caregiving is shared equitably within my home.” The statistical mean was 4.81 (SD 1.86) for Sample 1 and 4.81 (SD 1.67) for Sample 2, which, again, are nearly identical. In the combined samples, 23.8% disagreed at some level, 20.1% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 56.0% agreed (from somewhat to strongly). The statistical means are still slightly below “somewhat agree,” which is important to keep in mind. See demographic findings below.

DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

**Gender:* Women’s agreement was significantly lower than men’s (4.73 and 5.16, resp.).

Age: There were no significant differences among age categories.

Education: There were no significant differences among education levels.

**Marital Status:* Nonparents had higher agreement than parents. Among parents, those who have teenagers had lower agreement.

**Income:* The higher the household income, the more the agreement.

**Children:* Nonparents had higher agreement than parents. Among parents, those who had teenagers had lower agreement.

Race & Ethnicity: There were no significant differences among race and ethnicity categories.

**Religion:* There were no significant differences among affiliations. Those who were most active in their religion, however, had the highest agreement.

Employment: There were no significant differences among employment categories.

**Residency:* Respondents who had lived in Utah 2–5 years had the strongest agreement, while those who had lived in Utah more than 21 years had the lowest agreement.

Counties: There were no significant agreement differences among counties. However, the statistical means ranged from 4.68 (Box Elder) to 4.97 (the Millard, Sevier, Juab, Beaver, and Piute region).

4. Satisfaction: The final survey item was “I value my own sexual satisfaction as equally important as a partner’s satisfaction.” The statistical mean was 5.95 (SD 1.45) for Sample 1 and 5.53 (SD 1.52) for Sample 2. For the non-probability sample, 16.8% disagreed or were neutral, while 27.5% in the representative sample selected those same choices. With both samples combined, 46.4% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement. See the combined demographic findings below.

DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

**Gender:* Women’s agreement levels were statistically higher than men’s (5.89 and 5.68, resp.).

Age: There were no significant differences among age range categories.

**Education:* The higher the educational attainment, the stronger the agreement.

**Marital Status:* Those who were widowed or married but separated had the lowest agreement levels.

**Income:* The higher the household income, the higher the agreement.

Children: There was no difference between parents and non parents. In addition, there were no significant differences among parents with various numbers and ages of children.

Race & Ethnicity: There was no difference among race/ethnicity categories.

Religion: There were no significant differences among religious affiliations or religious activity categories.

**Employment:* Respondents who were unemployed had the least agreement to this survey item.

Residency: There were no significant differences among the categories that represented the number of years respondents had lived in Utah.

Counties: There were no significant agreement differences among counties. The statistical means ranged from 5.73 (10 rural eastern counties) to 6.05 (the Tooele, Morgan, and Rich grouping).

CONCLUSION

This summary highlights key findings related to four home and family questions. Respondents from across the state participated in the study (see [Background & Methods](#) for the demographic details on both samples). Each sample is useful in understanding the perceptions and attitudes of Utahns on this topic; however, Sample 2 (representative sample) may provide a better understanding of the perspectives of Utahns more generally.

In sum, 79.9% of respondents in a combined sample stated that they had an equal voice in decision making at home. With a wide variance, Utahns perceived—slightly less than “somewhat agree”—that domestic labor and caregiving were shared equitably between partners in the home, with women having significantly less agreement than men. And, finally, women, even more than men, value their own sexual satisfaction as highly as their partner’s. The findings offer important data as we consider ways to help more Utah women thrive in their homes and families.

[A Bolder Way Forward](#) aims to make Utah a place where more women and girls can thrive in any setting, and that includes home and family. When Utah women thrive in their homes, it is more likely that their families will also thrive. Home and family settings are very different for each woman, and supporting her informed choices is essential to the “thriving” conversation.

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