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Public Viewpoint: COVID-19 Work and Education Survey

Interested But Not Enrolled:
Understanding and Serving Aspiring Adult Learners

Sept. 16, 2020



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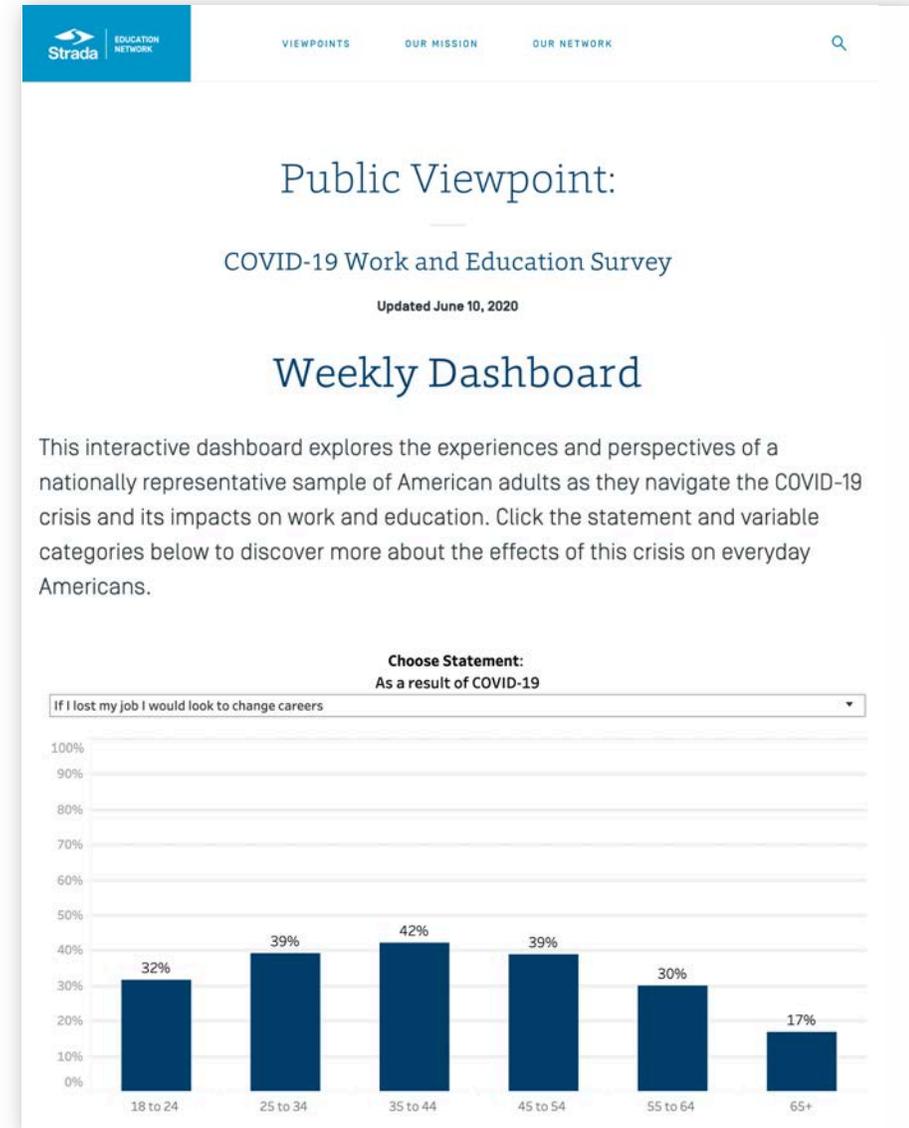
Public Viewpoint

A regular survey of 1,000 American adults that is representative of the population on the basis of:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Educational attainment.
- Race/ethnicity.
- Nine geographic census regions.
- 17,000-plus responses from March 25 to Sept. 3.

Other survey research incorporated in findings:

- Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Survey: 10,000-plus responses from March 30 to May 28.
- Aspiring Adult Learner Survey: 1,007 responses from August to September 2019.



Key Questions

- Who are aspiring adult learners?
- How has their interest in education changed in 2020?
- What do they care about and need most at this time?

Who are aspiring adult learners?

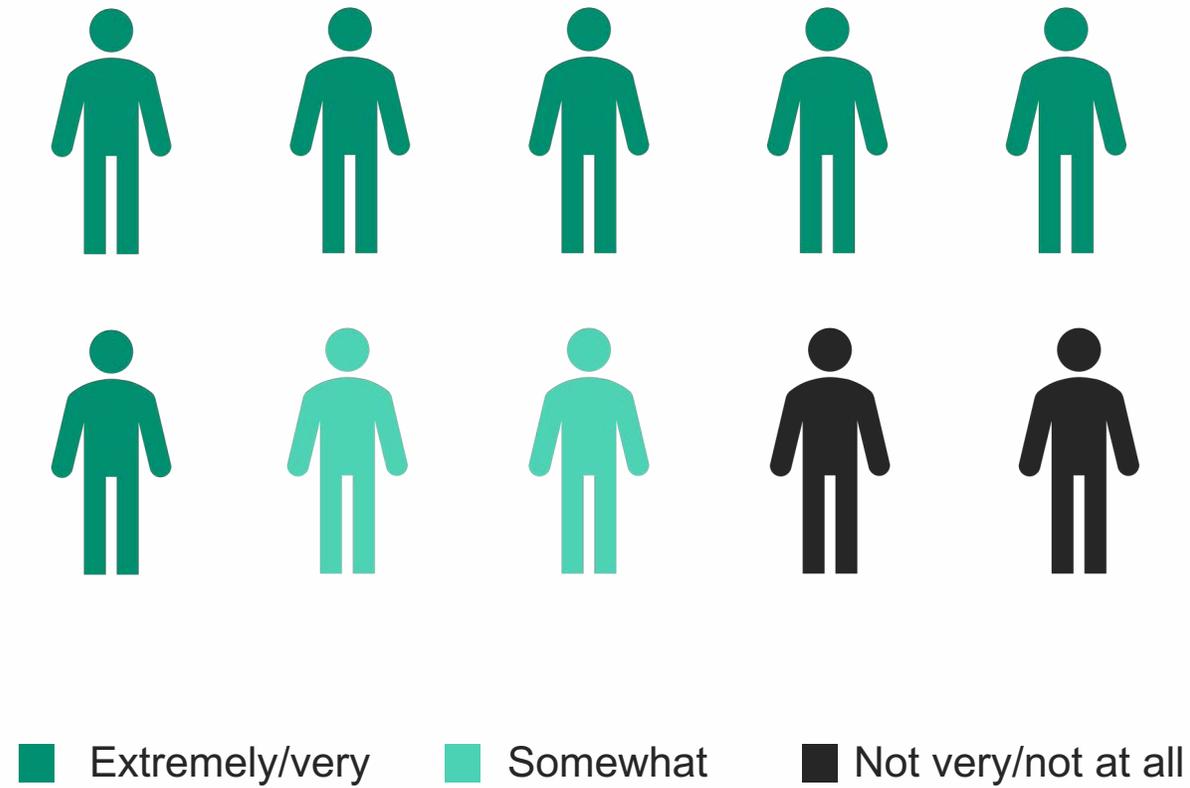
Understanding the Aspiring Adult Learner

- Ages 25-44.
- Do not have a two- or four-year college degree.
- Seriously considering or planning to enroll in additional education.



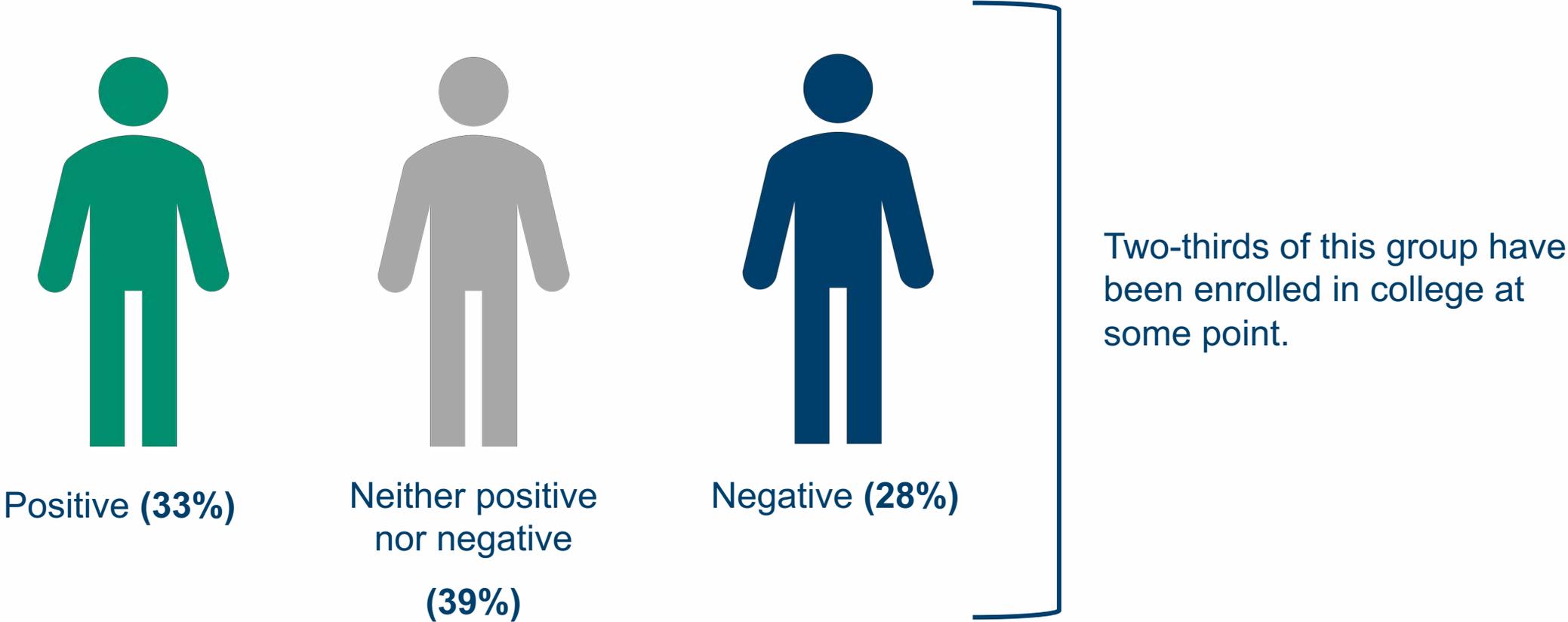
6 out of 10 were highly interested in pursuing education immediately after high school

Immediately after leaving high school, how interested were you in pursuing additional education?



Only 1 in 3 adults without degrees had a positive experience with education the last time they were enrolled

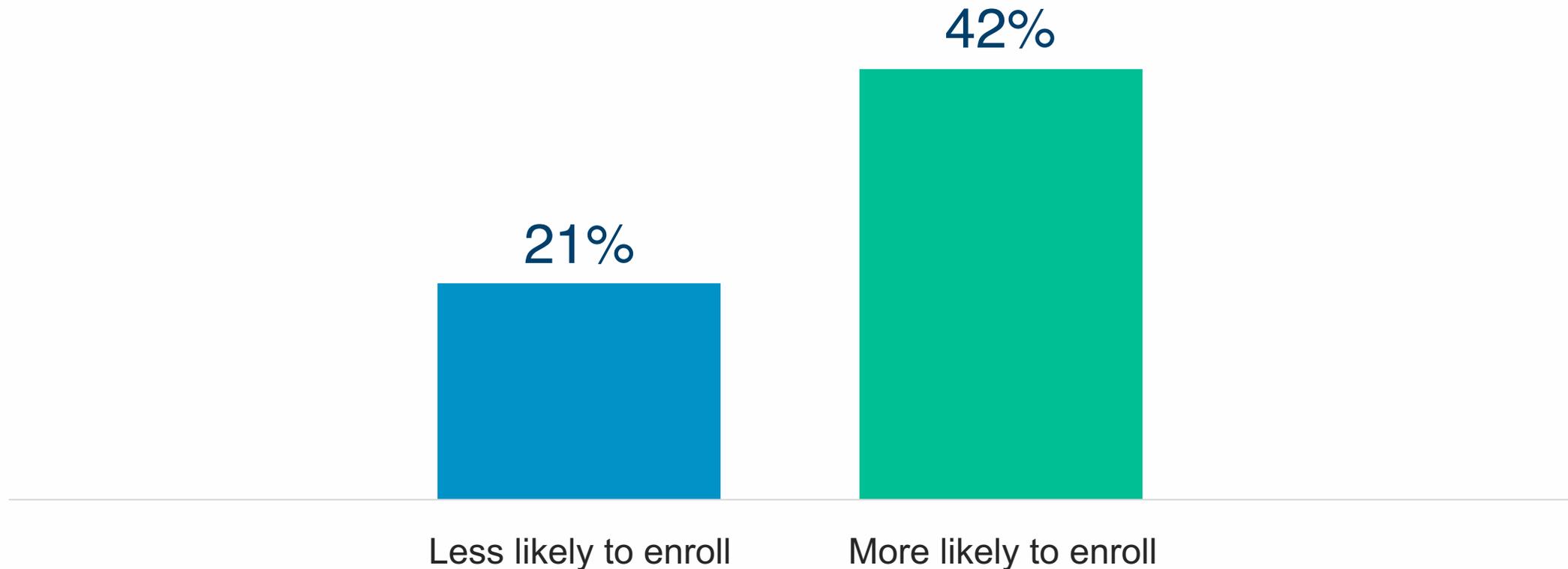
My most recent experience with education was...



How has interest in education
changed for aspiring adult
learners in 2020?

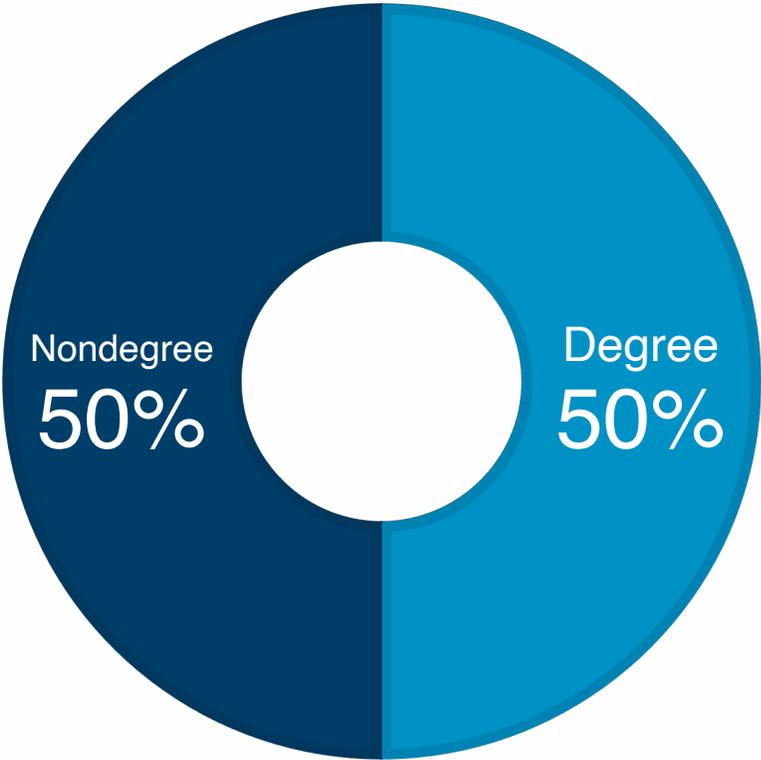
Aspiring adult learners say that COVID-19 has made them more likely to enroll in education

How has the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis affected your interest in enrolling in an education or training program? Would you say you are:

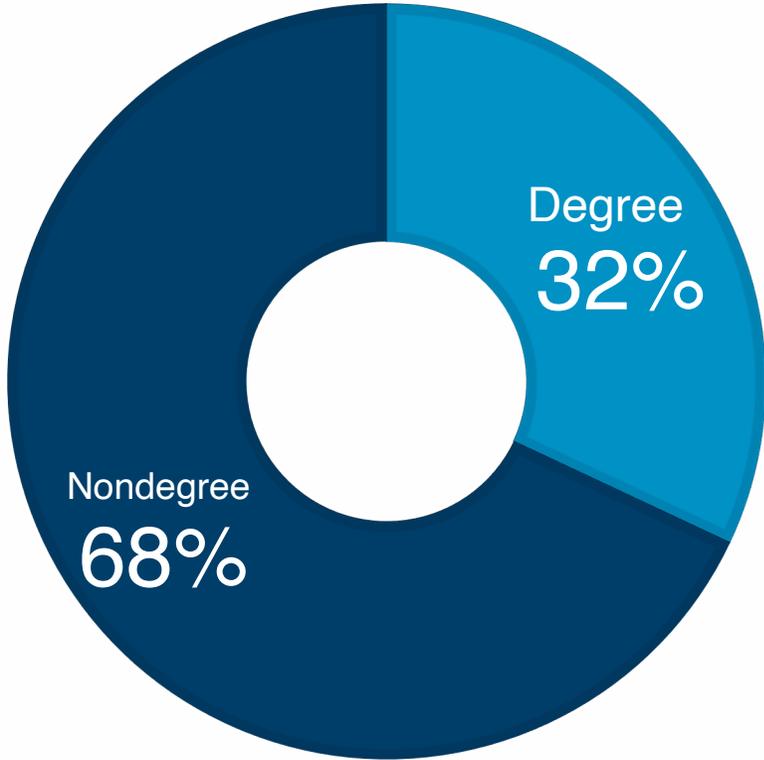


In 2020, aspiring adult learners' interests have shifted toward nondegree pathways

2019

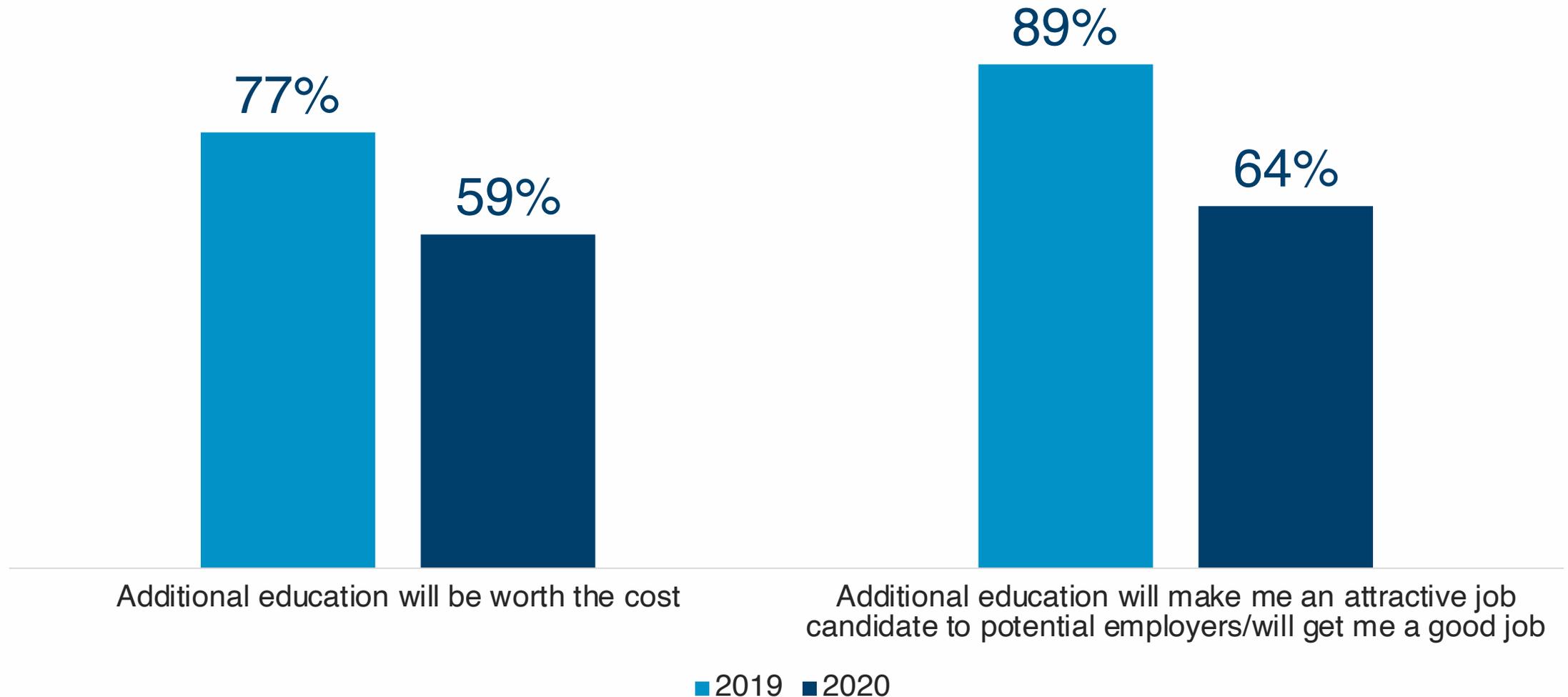


2020



Online survey with Heart+Mind Strategies August-September 2019. Base: Americans ages 25-44 with no postsecondary degree or credential who are considering enrolling in education, n=1,007. Strada Center for Consumer Insights Public Viewpoint surveys, April 15-Sept. 3, 2020. Base: adults without degrees ages 25-44 who are considering enrolling in education, n=179.

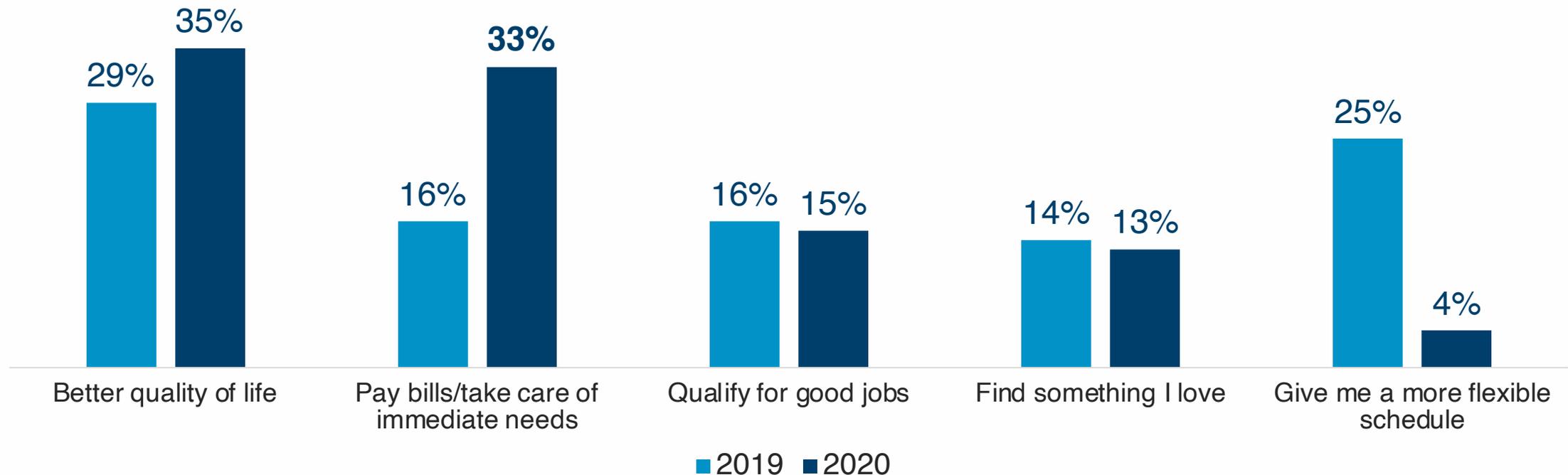
In 2020, aspiring adult learners are less confident in the value of education



What do adults without degrees care about most at this time?

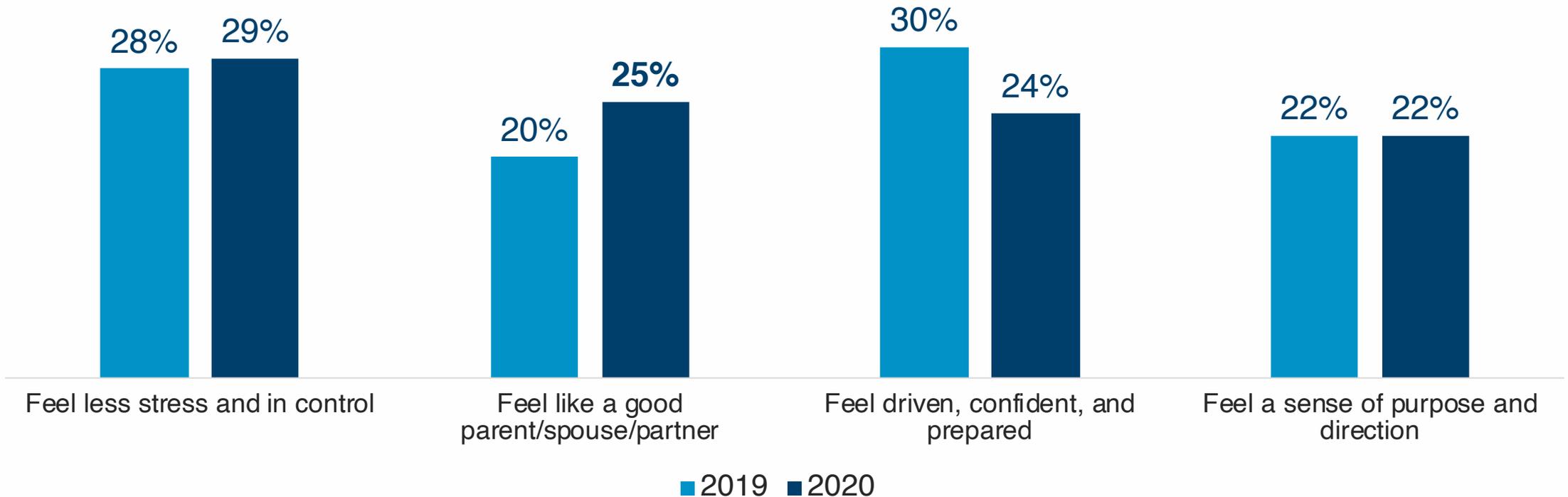
In 2020, adults without degrees are more focused on paying bills and taking care of immediate needs

Thinking about the potential benefits of the additional education [you are considering], please rate each of the following benefits based on how important each is to you personally. (% most important)



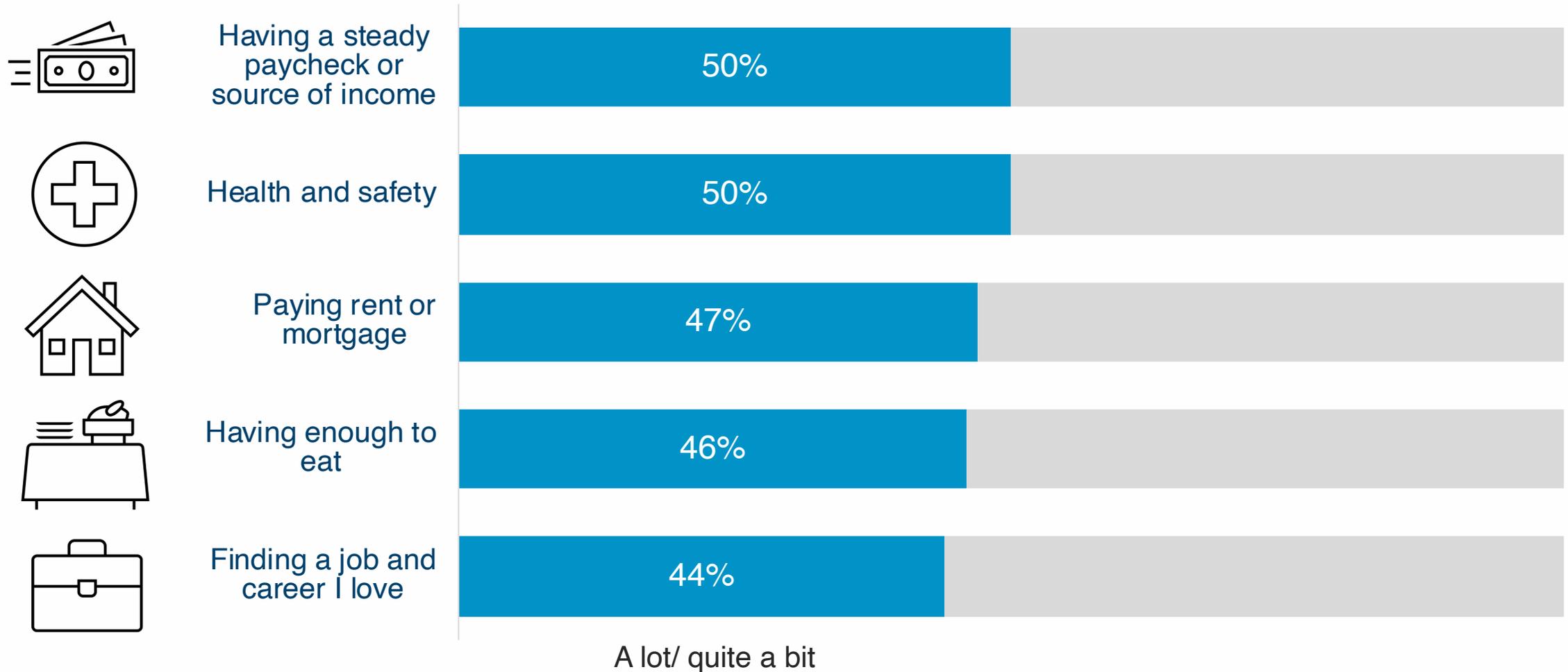
In 2020, adults without degrees place greater emphasis on feeling like a good parent, spouse, or partner

Select the most important feeling or emotional consequence to you personally.



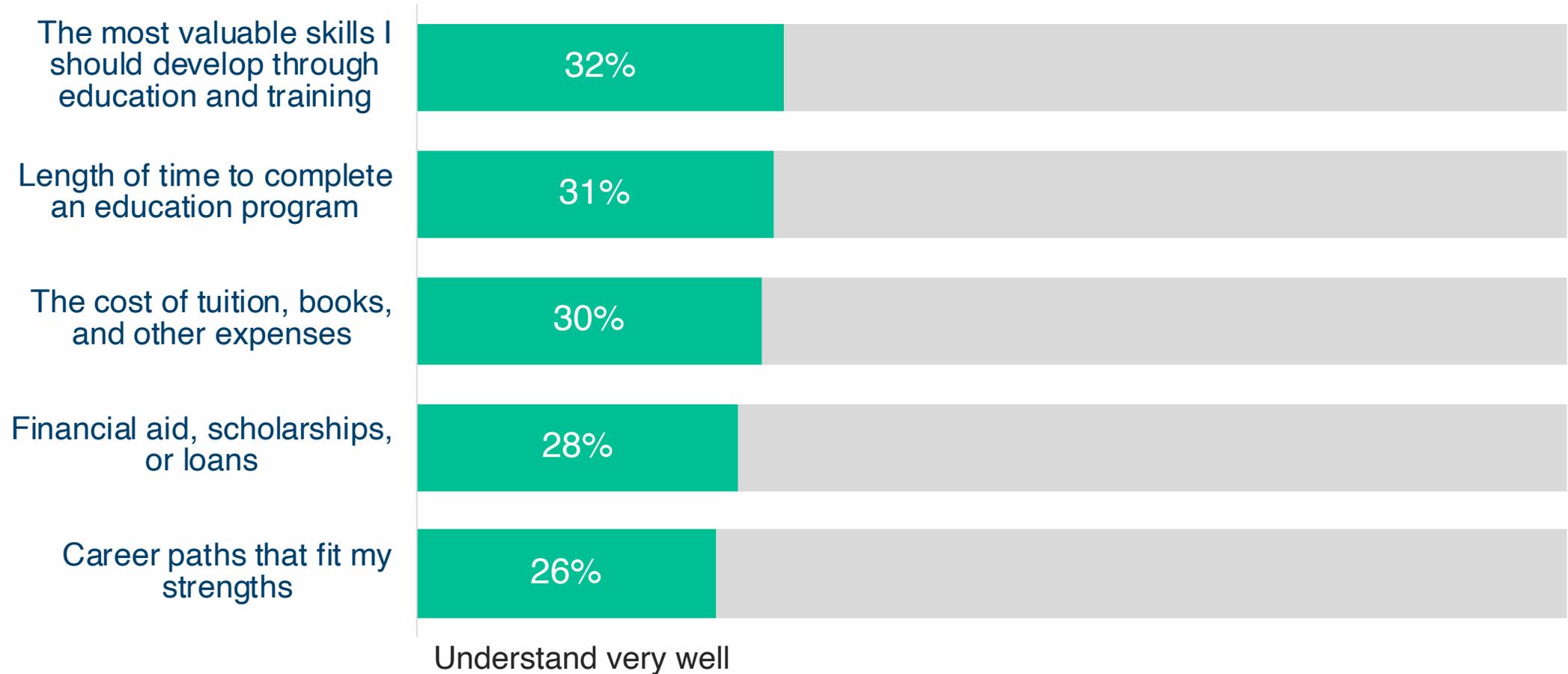
Although basic needs are high, adults without degrees still prioritize finding a job or career they love

How much do you worry about the following:



Adults without degrees need more information: Fewer than 1 in 3 have a very good understanding of career and education pathways

How well do you feel you understand the following:



Key findings

- 1. Confidence in the value of education has fallen among aspiring adult learners.** Compared to 2019, adults considering enrolling in education are 18 percentage points less likely to believe it will be worth the cost and 25 percentage points less likely to believe additional education will get them a good job.
- 2. In 2020, interest has shifted toward nondegree pathways.** In 2019, half of adults considering enrolling in education expressed a preference for nondegree pathways, but in 2020 that share has grown to 68 percent.
- 3. Compared to 2019, in 2020 adults without degrees are more likely to cite the ability to pay bills and take care of immediate needs as the primary benefit of education.** Focus also has shifted from education as a means to greater self-confidence to education as a way to better support loved ones.
- 4. Adults without degrees place finding a job or career they love among their priorities, along with basic needs.** Worry about finding a satisfying career ranks nearly as high as worries about needs such as having enough to eat or paying rent.
- 5. Adults without degrees need more information about education and career pathways.** Fewer than 1 in 3 say they understand available career pathways, valuable skills, and details about potential education programs “very well.”

Learn more at
StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint
or email
consumervoice@stradaeducation.org

Methodology

- Public Viewpoint is a regular tracking survey of education consumers' perceptions of COVID-19's impact on postsecondary education and work in the United States, completed by Heart+Mind Strategies on behalf of Strada Center for Consumer Insights.
 - Online survey of Americans ages 18 and above.
 - Representative of the general population in age, gender, geographic region, educational attainment, and race/ethnicity.
 - Current database size from March 25 to Sept. 3: n = 17,117.
 - A theoretical margin of error based on a probability sample of size 1,000 would be +/- 3.1 percent at 95 percent confidence. This is not a probability-based sample, and a margin of error cannot be estimated. Based on experience, we believe the sampling error would be at least this number.
- The 2020 wave of the Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Survey is a nationally representative survey using both mail and web data collection modes. The survey was conducted from March 30 to May 28; n=10,361.
- The survey of Aspiring Adult Learners is a nationally representative online survey of adults ages 25-44. The survey was conducted by Heart + Mind Strategies on behalf of Strada Center for Consumer Insights from August to September 2019.
- Please contact Strada Center for Consumer Insights with questions or information requests at consumervoice@stradaeducation.org or learn more at StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint.