

Commission on the Economic Status of Women

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Education and Earnings

Data compiled from U.S. Bureau of the Census:

Current Population Reports, *Educational Attainment in the United States:*
March 1998.

Current Population Reports, *Money Income in the United States: 1998.*

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Highlights of Women's Earnings in 1998.*

Current Population Reports, *Educational Attainment in the United States:*
March 1993 and 1992.

Contents

Educational Attainment in Minnesota.....	2
Annual Earnings by Educational Attainment (U.S.).....	2
Weekly Earnings (Annual Averages) by Educational Attainment (U.S.)....	3
Change in Weekly Earnings by Educational Attainment (U.S.).....	3
Median Weekly Earnings in the U.S. and Minnesota.....	4
Hourly Earnings (Annual Averages) by Educational Attainment (U.S.)....	4
Worklife Earnings by Educational Attainment (U.S.).....	5
Definitions and Data Notes	5

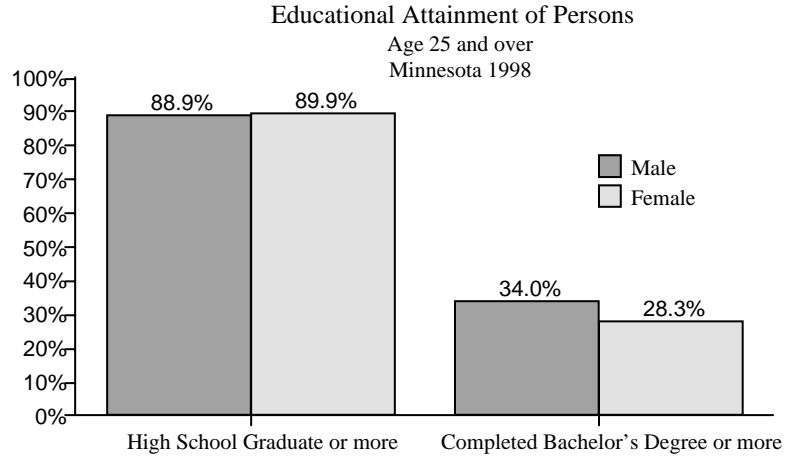
Educational attainment has a major impact on the income earned over a lifetime. In general, each increasing level of attainment has higher earnings than the one below it.

- Most data are for those age 25 and over, except for median weekly earnings in Minnesota and the U.S. which are for those 16 and over.
- Worklife earnings estimates are not available by sex.
- The definitions and data notes section contains further explanation of the measures and terms used in this newsletter.

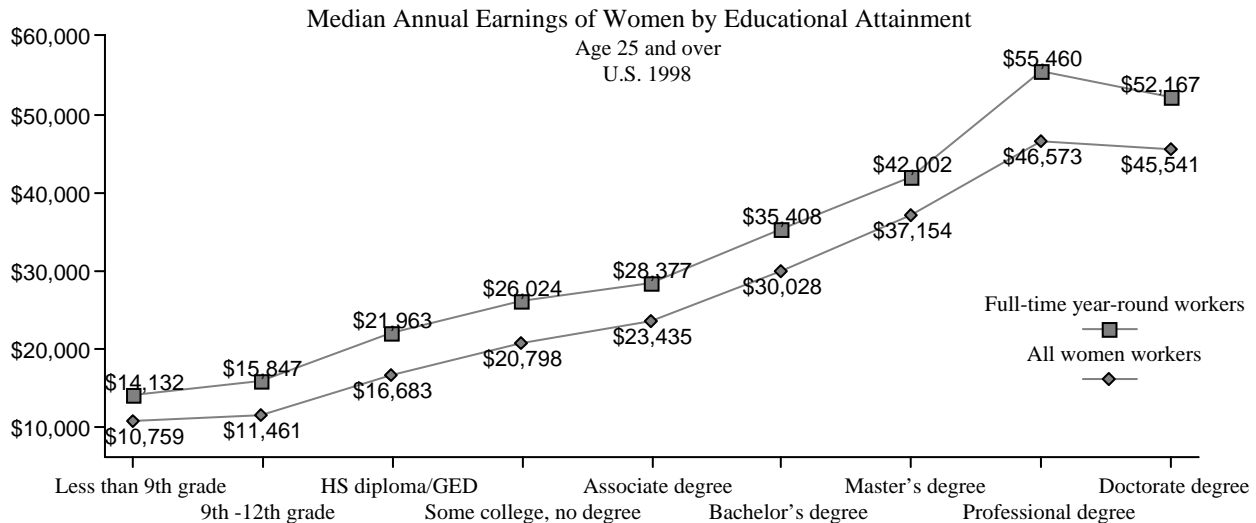
Educational Attainment in Minnesota

Women and men in Minnesota had higher educational attainment than the U.S. averages. In Minnesota, nearly 90 percent of women and men age 25 and over had at least a high school diploma in 1998. In the U.S., 83 percent of both women and men had at least a high school diploma.

Although the proportions of women with a high school diploma were not significantly different from that of men, women were less likely to have attained at least a bachelor’s degree. In Minnesota, 28 percent of women had at least a bachelor’s degree compared to 34 percent of men. In the U.S., 22 percent of women and 27 percent of men had at least a bachelor’s degree.

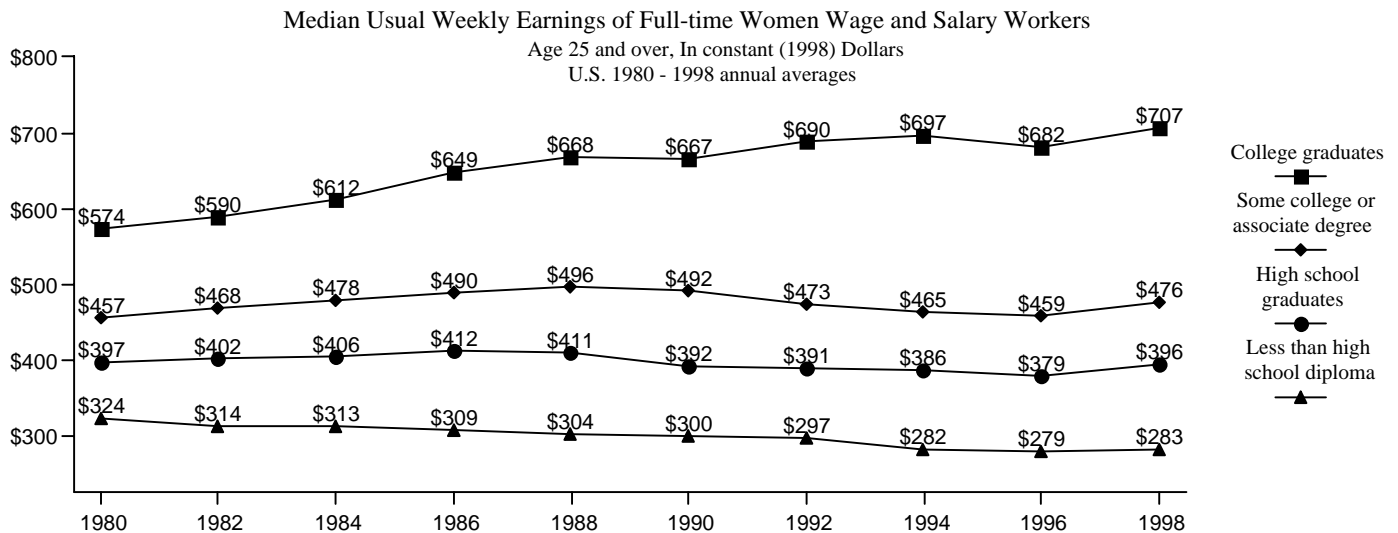


Annual Earnings by Educational Attainment, U.S.



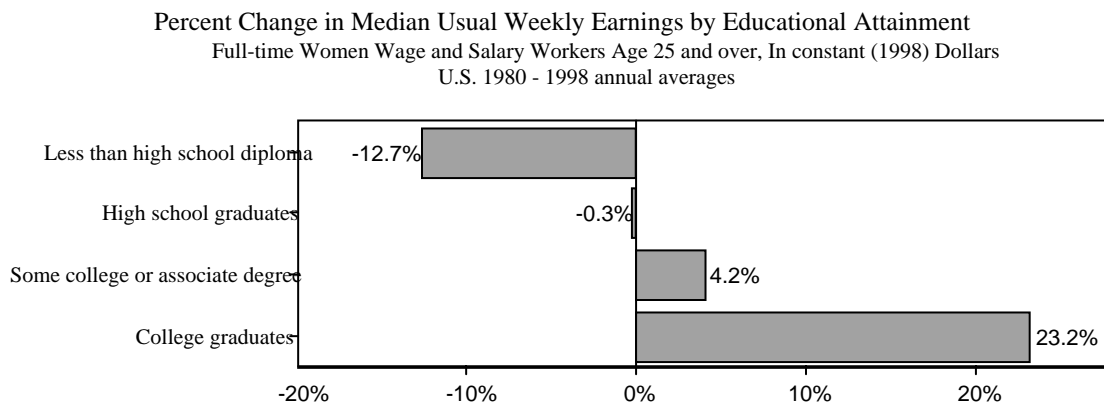
- In 1998, median annual earnings of all women workers with a high school diploma (or GED) were 46 percent higher than the earnings of their counterparts with a 9th through 12th grade education.
- Median annual earnings of women with some college were 25 percent higher for all workers and 19 percent higher for full-time, year-round workers than their counterparts with a high school diploma (or GED).
- Median annual earnings of women with a bachelor’s degree were 80 percent higher for all workers and over 60 percent higher for full-time, year-round workers than their counterparts with a high school diploma (or GED).

Weekly Earnings (Annual Averages) by Educational Attainment, U.S.



- In 1998, women with some college or an associate's degree had median weekly earnings that were 20 percent greater than women with a high school education.
- In 1998, full-time women wage and salary workers with a college degree had median weekly earnings that were approximately 1.5 times more than those with some college and nearly 1.8 times greater than women with a high school education.

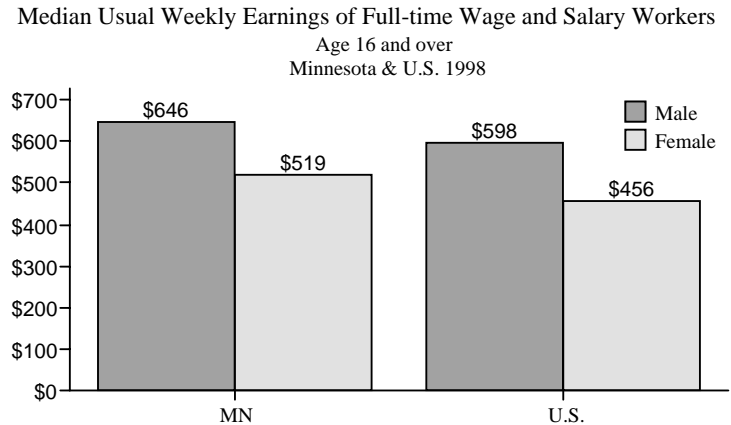
Change in Weekly Earnings (Annual Averages) by Educational Attainment, U.S.



- Median weekly earnings (adjusted for inflation) of women full-time wage and salary workers age 25 and over without a high school diploma have fallen 13 percent over the last 18 years.
- Median weekly earnings of women high school graduates stayed relatively stable from 1980 to 1998.
- Women with some college or an associate's degree had increased median weekly earnings of just over 4 percent from 1980 to 1998.
- Median weekly earnings increased by 23 percent for women with at least a bachelor's degree. This was the category with the most substantial increase in earnings during the last 18 years.

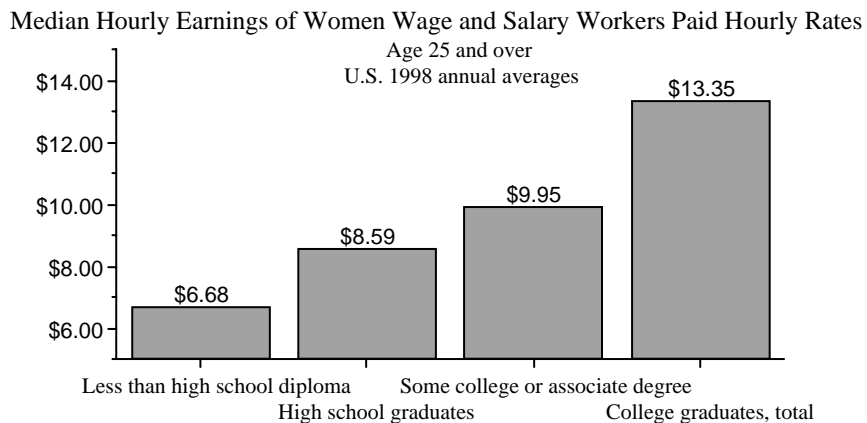
Median Weekly Earnings in the U.S. and Minnesota

- In Minnesota, median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers (age 16 and over) were greater than the national average.
- In 1998, women full-time wage and salary workers in Minnesota had median usual weekly earnings that were 14 percent greater than their U.S. counterparts.
- The median usual weekly earnings of men in Minnesota were 8 percent higher than the U.S. median for men full-time wage and salary workers in 1998.



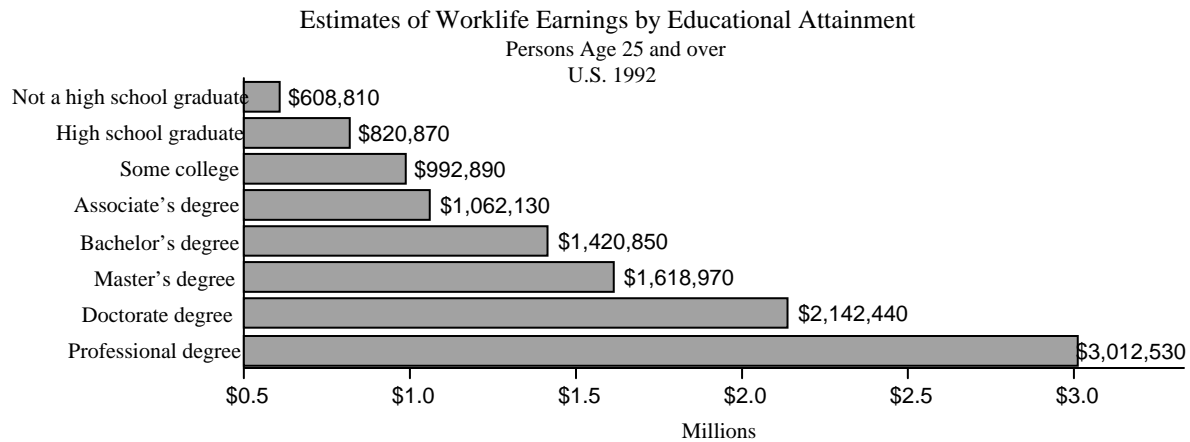
- Comparing the median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers age 16 and over, the earnings gap, or ratio of female-to-male earnings, was 80.3 percent in Minnesota. In the U.S., this earnings gap was larger at 76.3 percent.

Hourly Earnings (Annual Averages) by Educational Attainment, U.S.



- Sixty-four percent of women employed in wage and salary jobs were paid on an hourly basis in 1998.
- Median hourly earnings of women high school graduates with no college were \$8.59. These earnings were 29 percent higher than those of women with less than a high school diploma.
- In 1998, women with some college or an associate's degree had median hourly earnings of \$9.95. These earnings were 16 percent greater than median earnings of high school graduates and nearly 50 percent greater than earnings of women with less than a high school diploma.
- Median hourly earnings of women college graduates were \$13.35. These earnings were 34 percent higher than women with some college, 55 percent higher than high school graduates and 100 percent higher than women with less than a high school diploma.

Worklife Earnings by Educational Attainment, U.S.



Note: these estimates of worklife earnings are based on mean annual earnings and are not available by sex

Education has a major impact on the income earned over a lifetime as earnings differences compound over time.

- Over a worklife*, a worker with no high school degree will earn 57 percent of what a person with an associate's degree may earn and 43 percent of what a person with a bachelor's degree may earn.
- High school graduates earn 77 percent of what a person with an associate's degree may earn and only 58 percent of what college graduates earn over a worklife*.

**A worklife is defined as the 40 years from age 25 to age 64.*

Definitions and Data Notes

Median earnings: The amount that divides the earnings distribution into two equal groups, half having earnings above the median, half having earnings below the median.

Full-time year-round workers: Persons working 35 and more hours a week for at least 50 weeks in a year.

Usual weekly earnings: Annual averages of wages and salaries before taxes and other deductions. Earnings include overtime pay, commissions, or tips usually received (at the principal job in the case of multiple job holders).

Median hourly earnings include the earnings of full- and part-time wage and salary workers paid hourly rates.

Annual median earnings of full-time, year-round workers are a better measure of changes over time because they are less affected by fluctuation in earnings of temporary, part-year or overtime workers.