



University Forum Lecture Series
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The Benefits of Lifelong Learning for Wellbeing

Taka Yamashita, Ph.D.

Jennifer Keene, Ph.D.

Erick López, MA

Department of Sociology

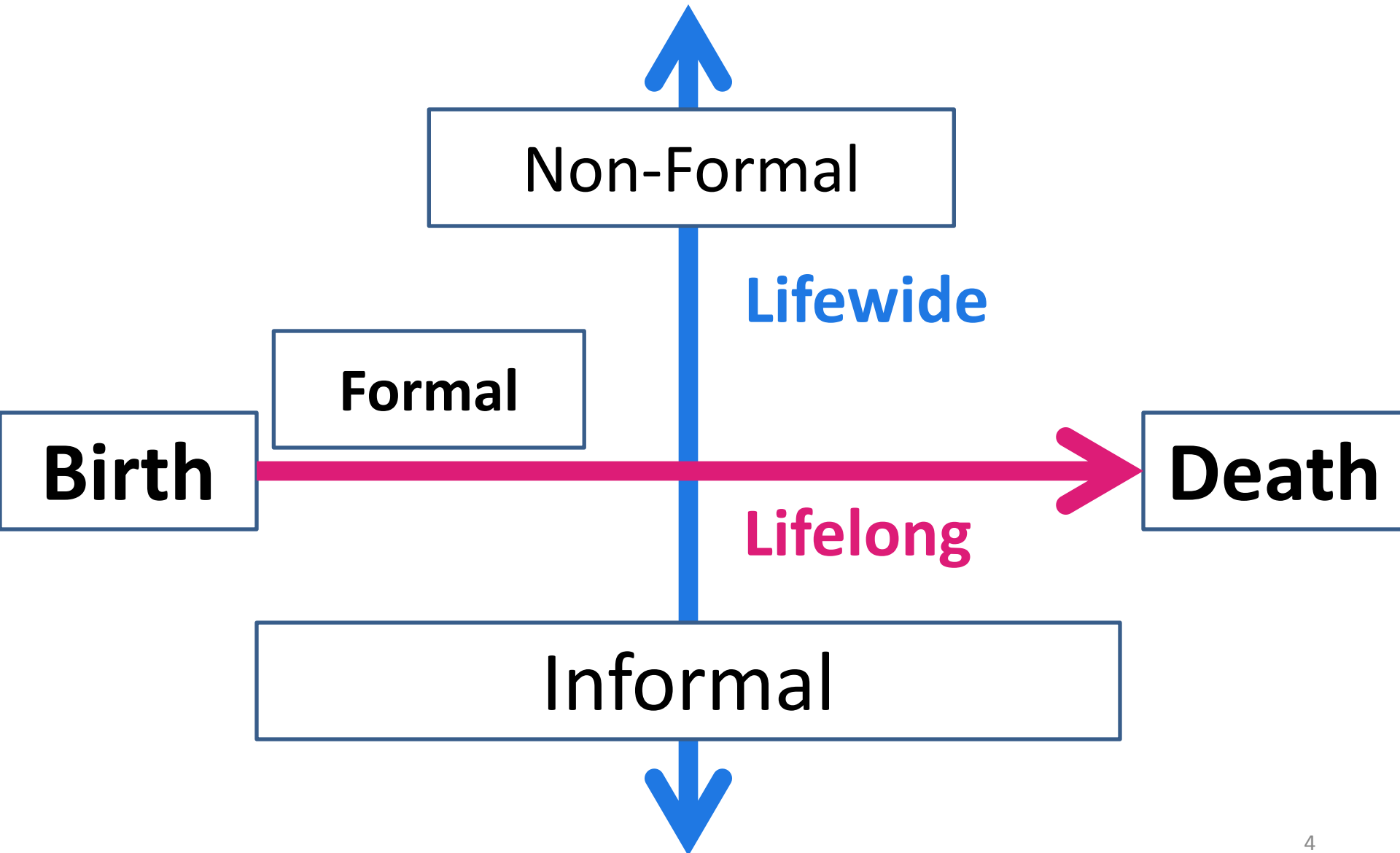
Outline

1. What is lifelong learning?
2. What are the benefits of education?
3. How does education affect our well-being?
4. Why are people engaged in lifelong learning?
5. Why should we care about lifelong learning?
6. Life Wide Learning and Well-being Survey
7. Concluding remarks

1. What is Lifelong learning (LL)?

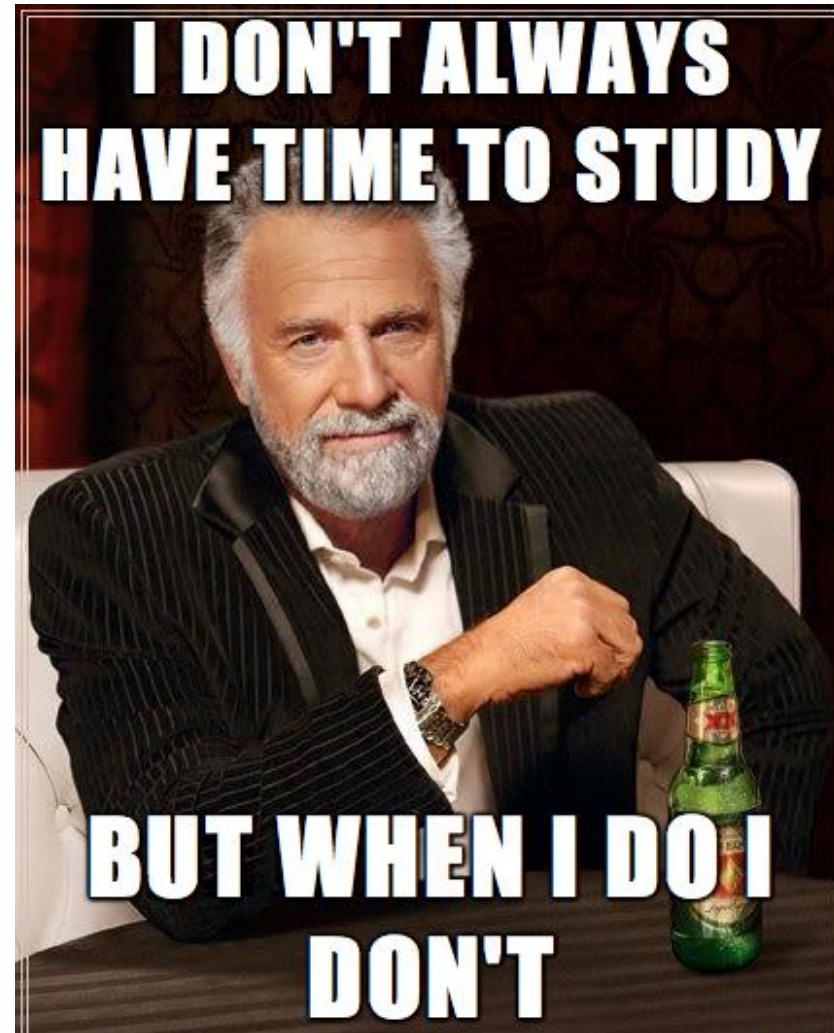
- Basil Yeaxlee (1929) coined the term → 85 years old
- “all learning activity taken throughout life” ¹
- In general, the concept of LL is used in the context of occupational and economic benefits ²
- Lifewide learning ³:
 - (1) formal
 - (2) non-formal
 - (3) informal

Lifewide Learning Model ¹



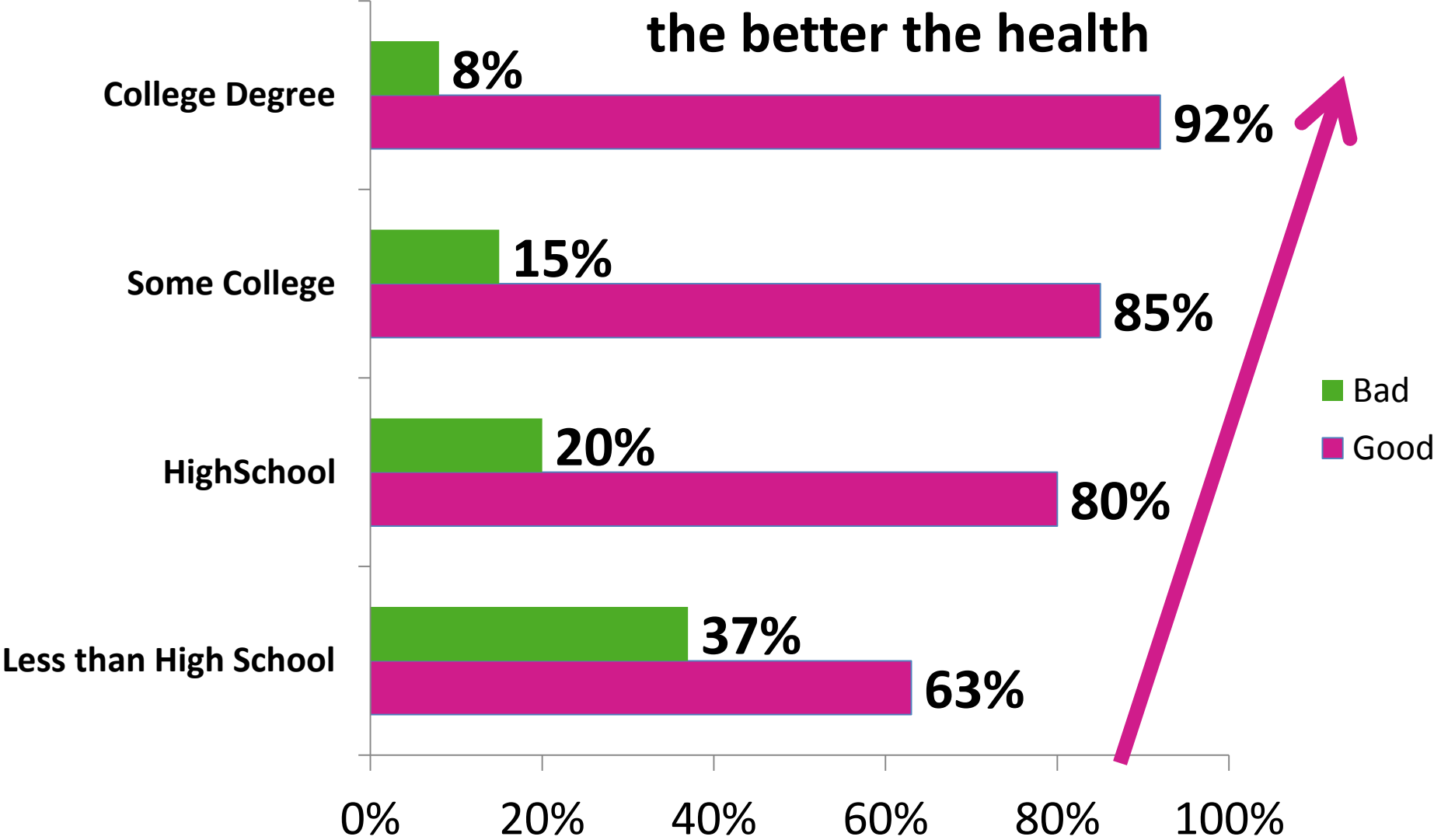
2. What are the Benefits of education?

- Life course: education, work & retirement ¹
- Educational attainment
 - Well-being
 1. Health
 2. Life expectancy
 3. Happiness

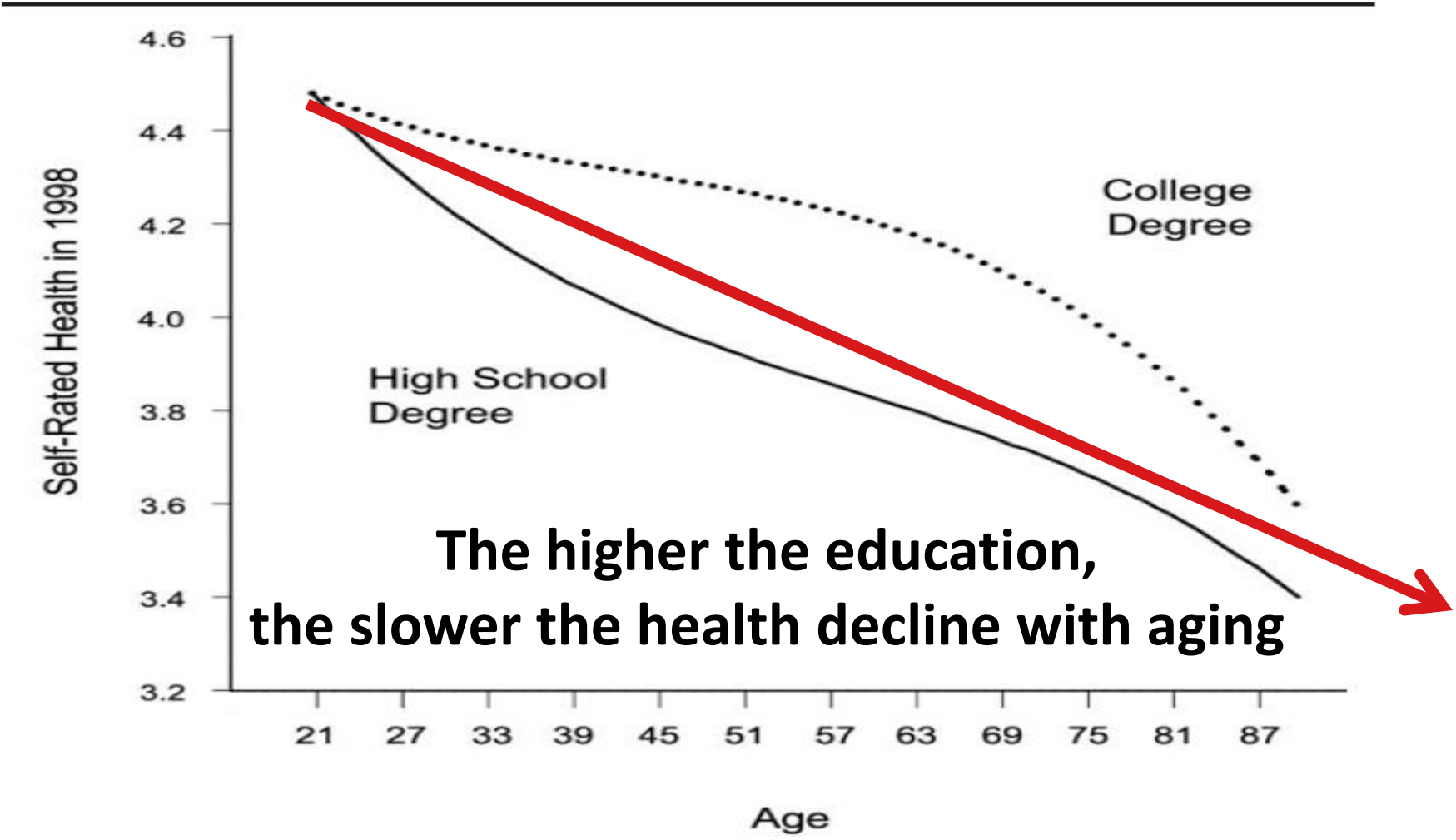


Self-rated health by educational attainment ¹

**The higher the education,
the better the health**

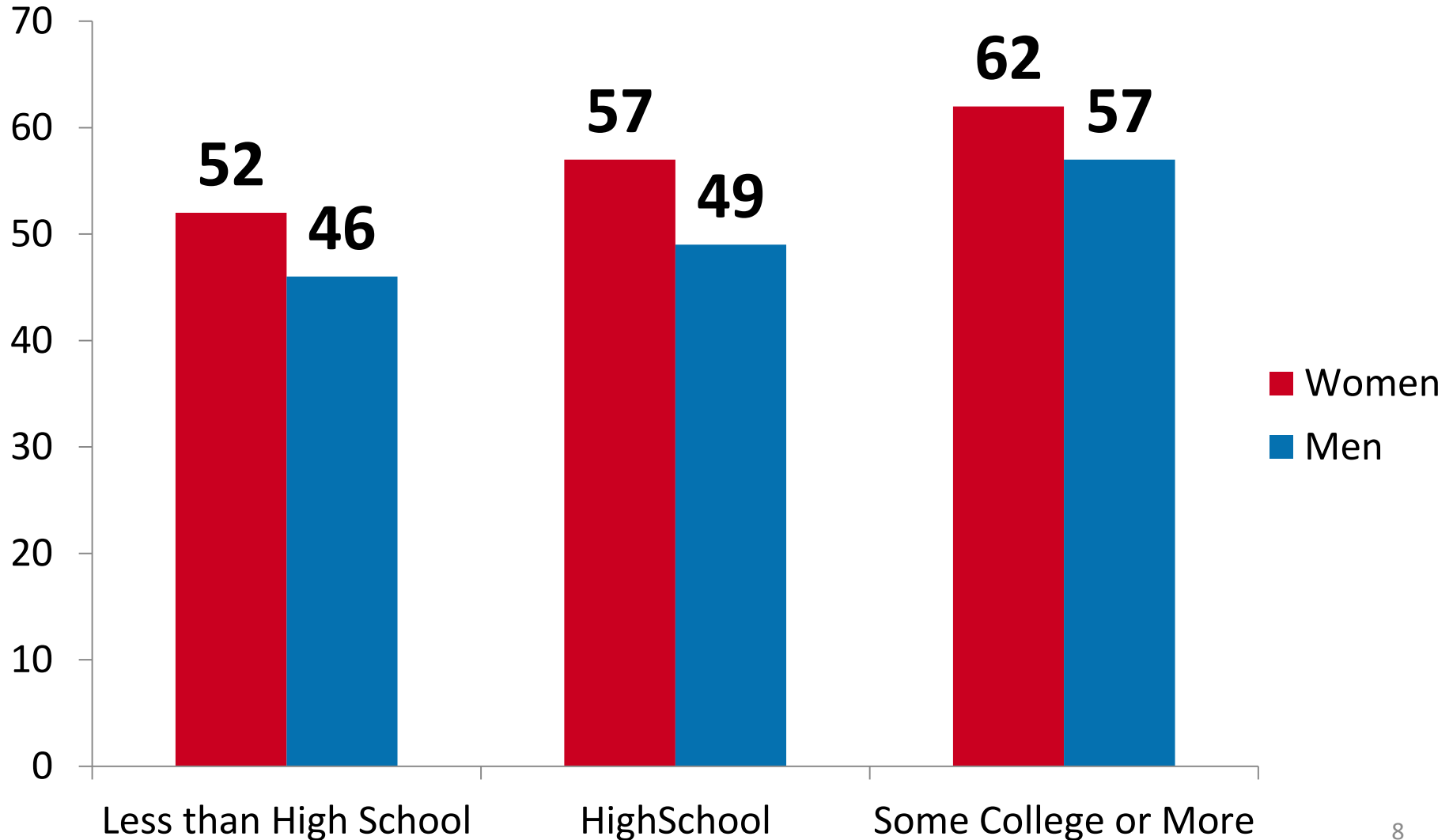


Self-rated health by educational attainment ¹

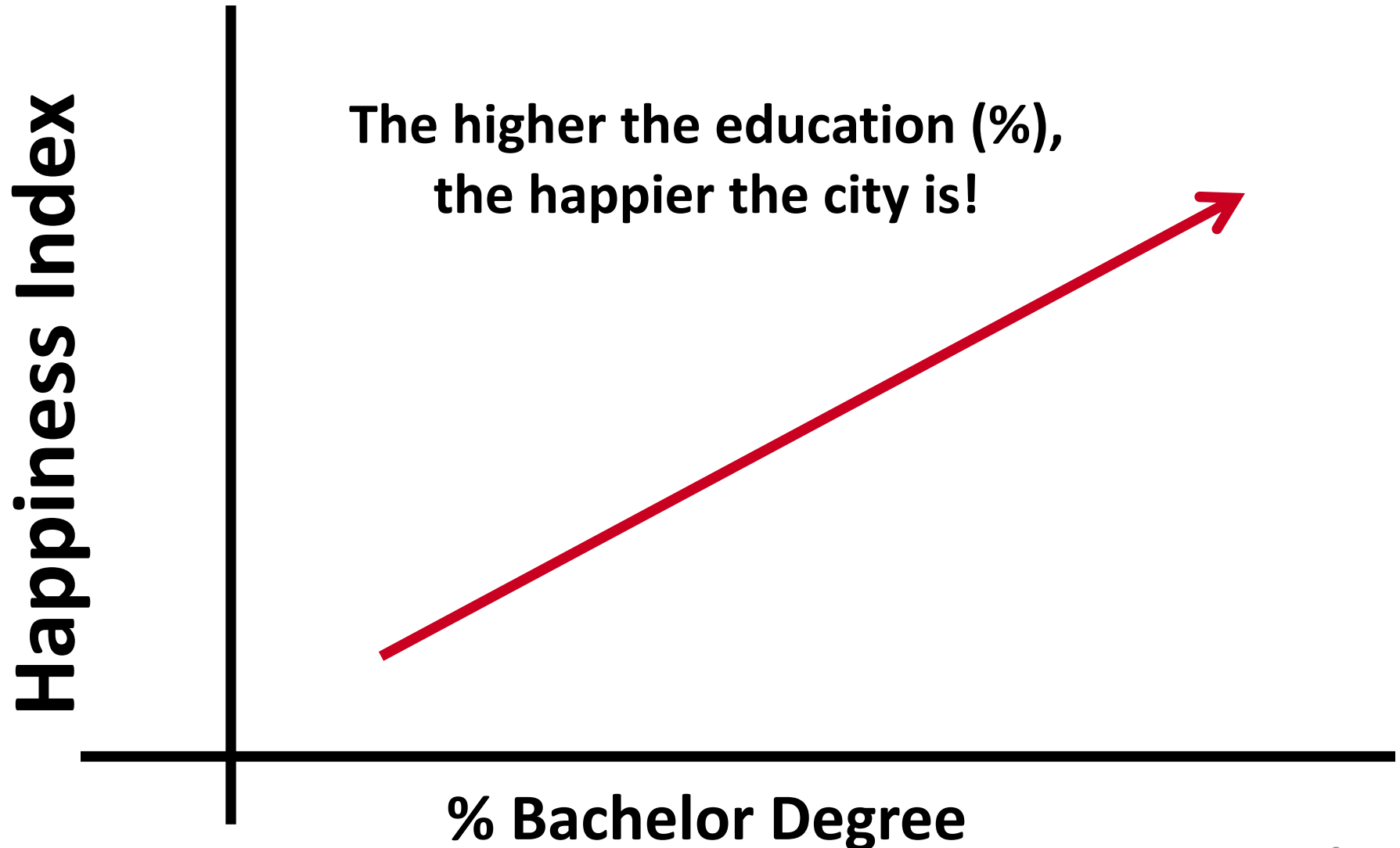


**The higher the education,
the slower the health decline with aging**

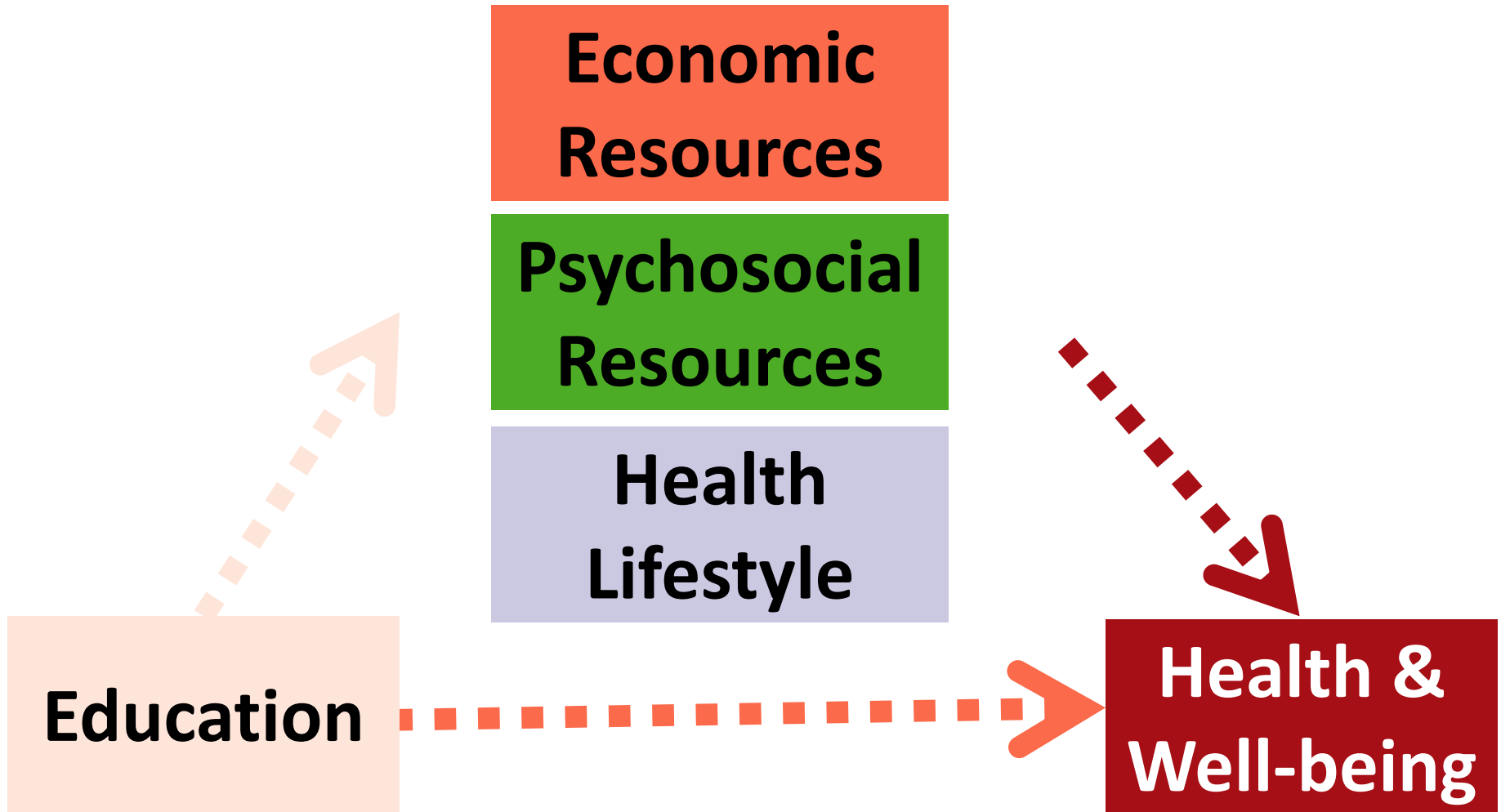
Life expectancy at age 25 by gender and education ¹



Education and happiness by metropolitan areas ¹



3. How does education influence our health? ¹



Benefits of continuing education/LL among mid-age to older adults

- Same as formal education → physical and mental health ¹
- Brain health, cognitive function, Alzheimer's disease, memory ²
- Enhanced social network ³
- Personal development, joy of learning ⁴
- **“Ripples on a pond effect”** ⁵

4. Why are middle-age to older people engaged in lifelong learning?

Many reasons ¹

- Job-related
- Brain health
- Personal development
- Cognitive interests
- Social network
- Previous learning Experience ²

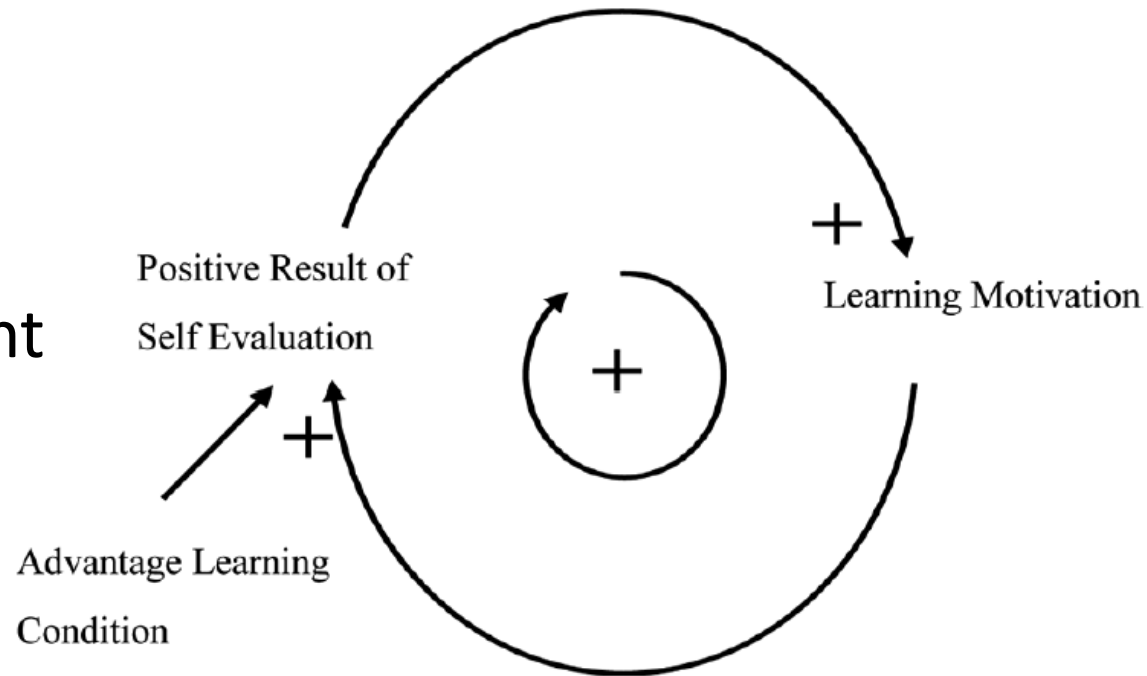


Figure 1. Learning motivation of older adults.

5. Why care about lifelong learning?

- Population aging 14% (2013) → over 20% (2050) ¹
- Health and well-being ²
- Formal schooling in youth to lifelong process ³
- Knowledge society ⁴ & economy ⁵
- **However**, motivation for learning declines with aging ⁶
- Research has focused mainly on the **negative aspects** of LL participation → Need to know more about how LL is done and how to continue learning!

Lifelong learning programs examples

- The Elderhostel (since 1975)
- The University of the Third Age (since 1973)
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (since 2001)



What is OLLI?

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at UNLV

- Designed for retired and semi-retired adults age 50+
- Continuing education
- Opportunity to meet new and interesting peers
- Variety of intellectual classes

6. Life Wide Learning and Well-being Survey

Purposes: To better understand the benefits of lifelong learning and to inform the OLLI at UNLV programs

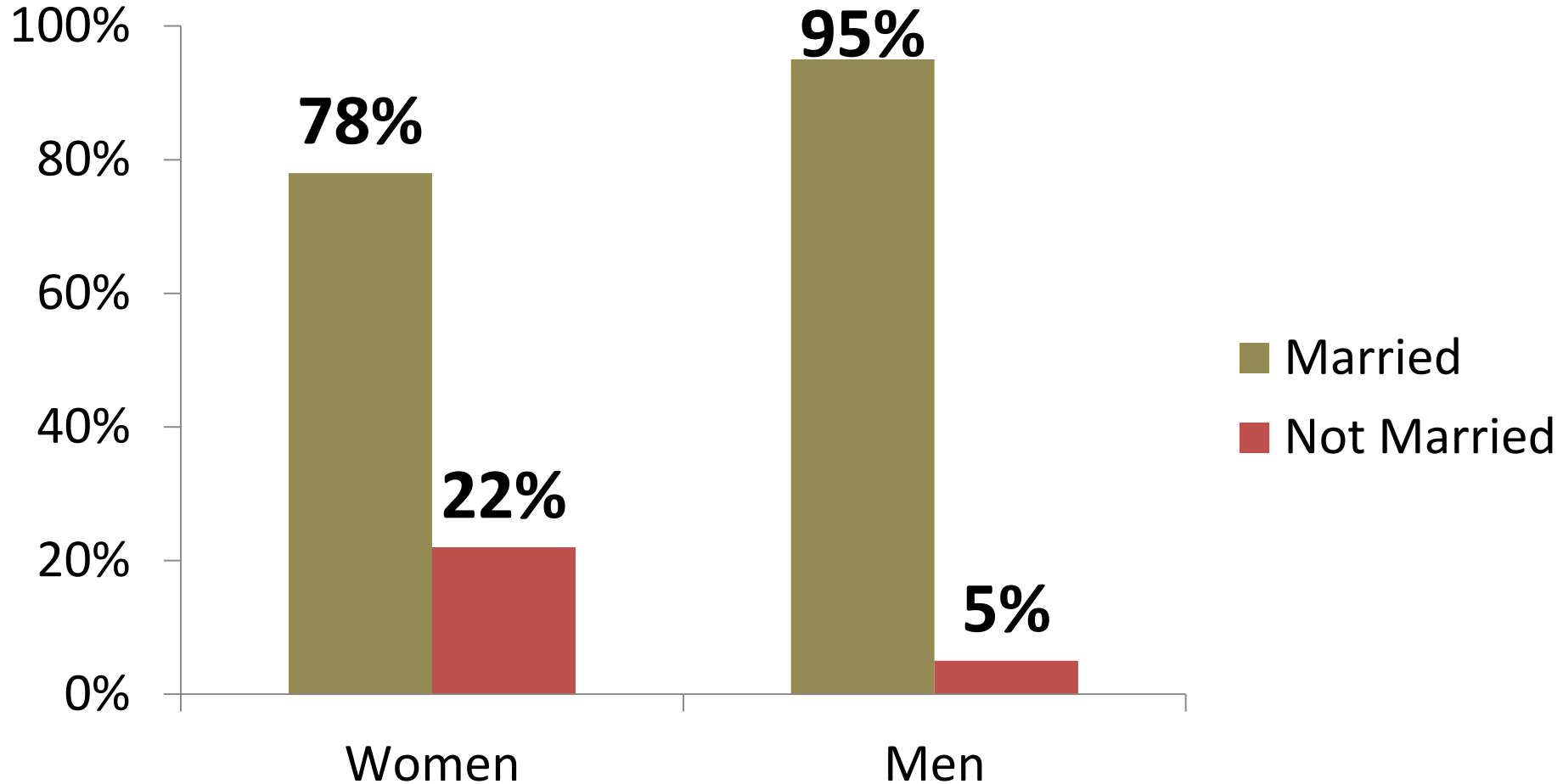
- Longitudinal survey
- Three waves of data (November 2014)
- Health and well-being, social interactions, demographic characteristics, and participation in OLLI at UNLV

Demographics

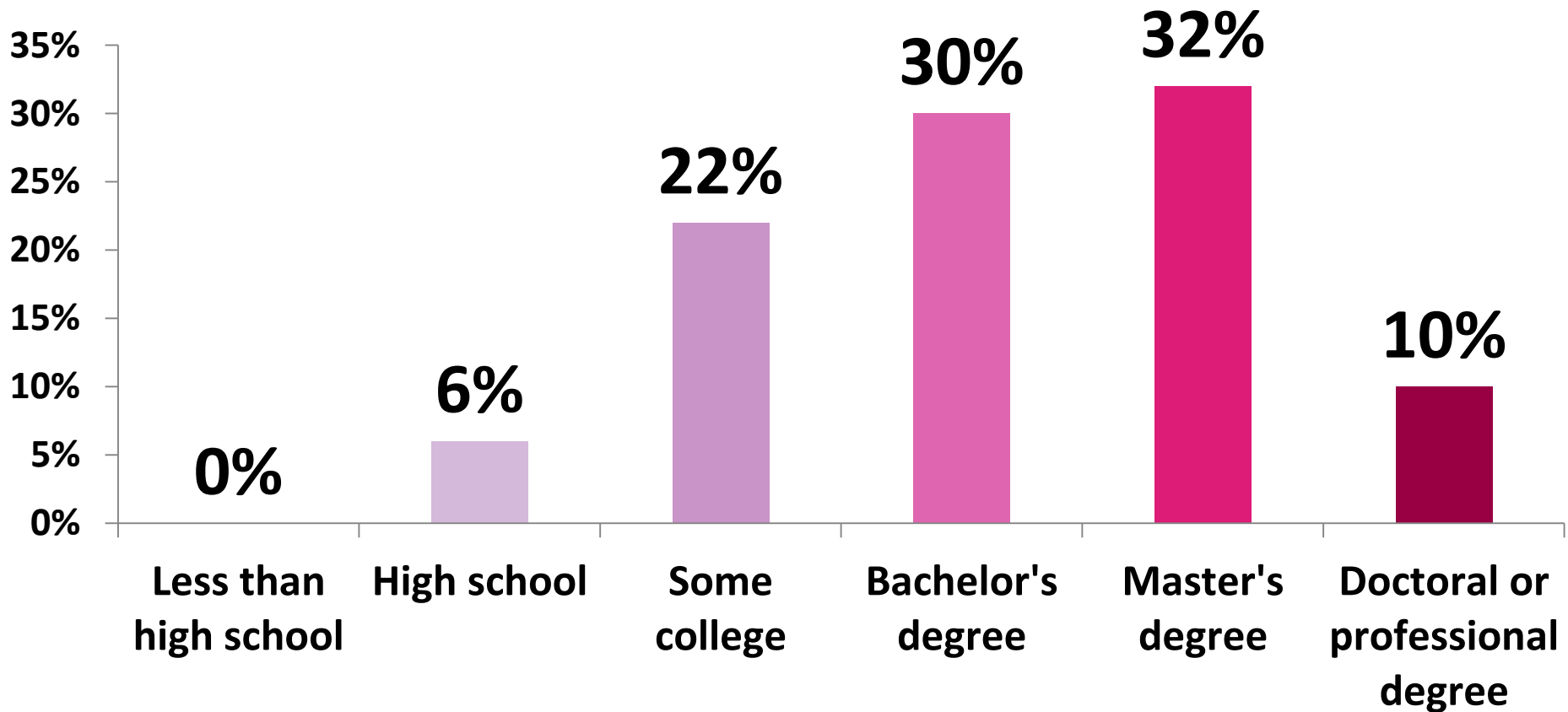
- Data from Spring 2014
- 330 OLLI participants (N = 1,125)
- Median age: 70
- 69% Women
- 91% White



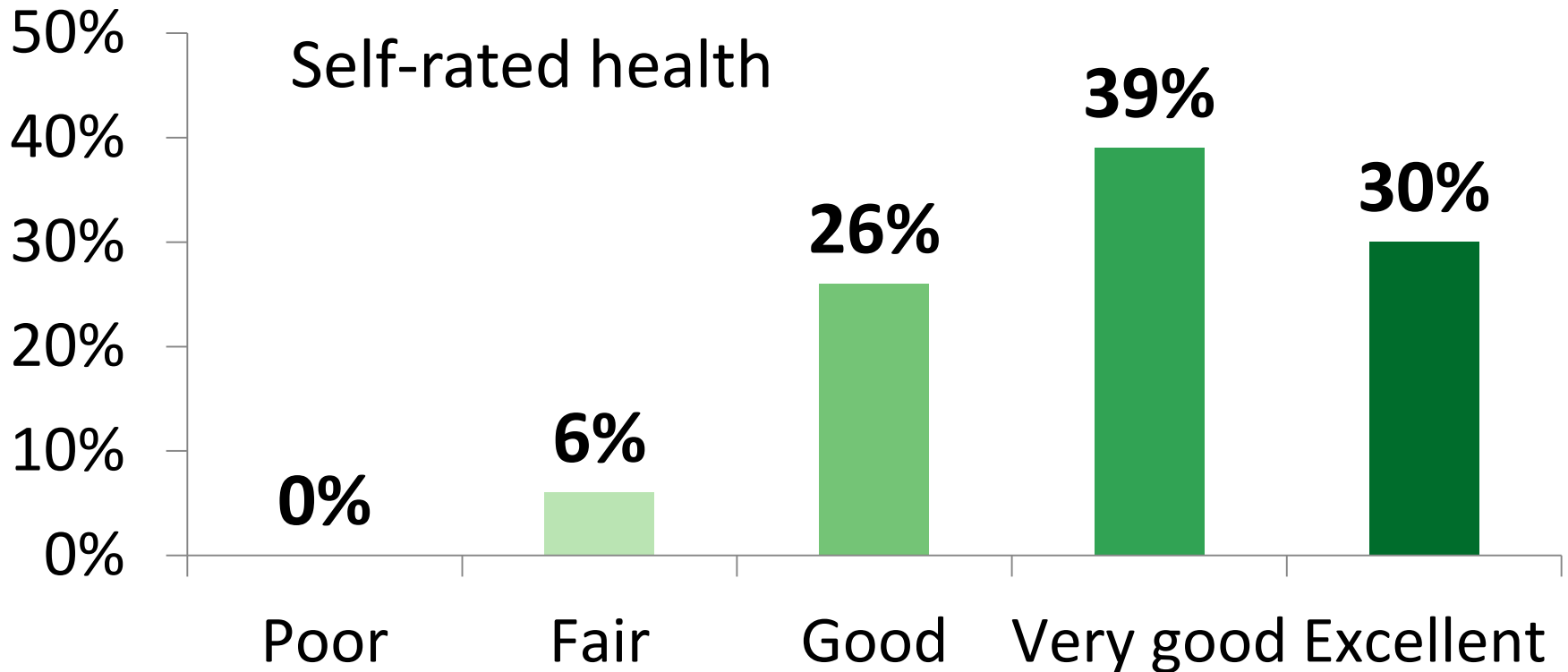
Marital Status by Gender



Educational Attainment



Health and Well-being



WHO Well-being Index [0 → 100 = ill → well]

Mean (SD) = 74 (16)

OLLI at UNLV

- 81% participated in OLLI in a previous semester
- 45% have been with OLLI for 1-4 years
- On average, the OLLI participants took 3.1 courses per semester
- Some took 15 courses!!



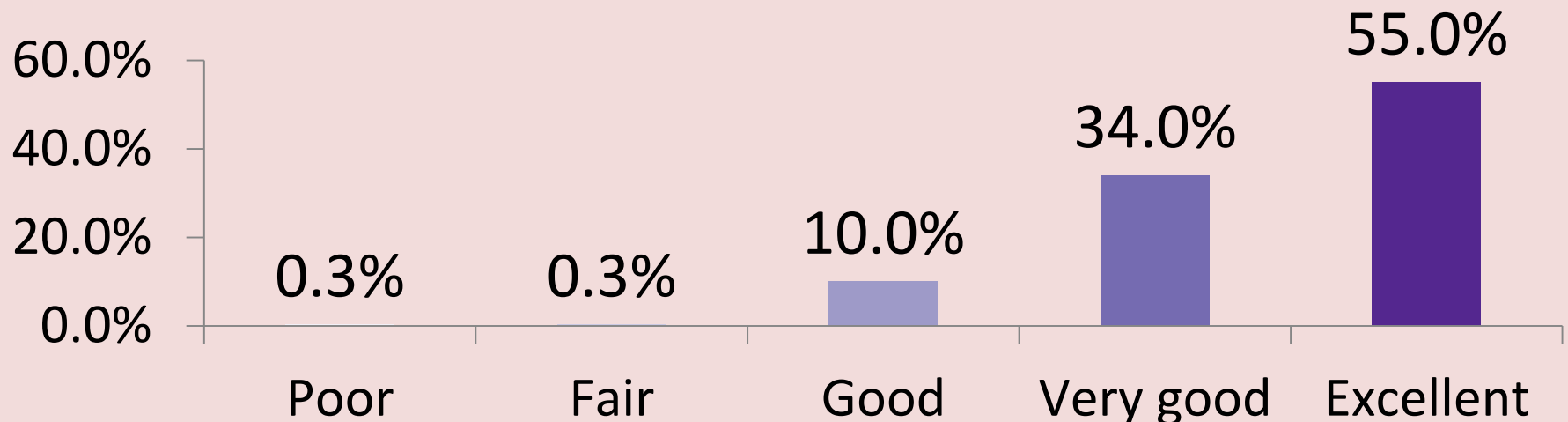
Why people participate

Motivations

1. Educational purposes (81%)
2. Social opportunities (10%)
3. To fill spare time (5%)

Other motivations: fun, stay active, work-related, ukulele, etc.

Satisfaction with OLLI at UNLV



Participants Voices

Question: “Do you have any comments or suggestions for the OLLI program?”

Themes:

- Increase social interaction
- Increase extracurricular activities
- Member recruitment
- Invite speakers/lecturers

Research

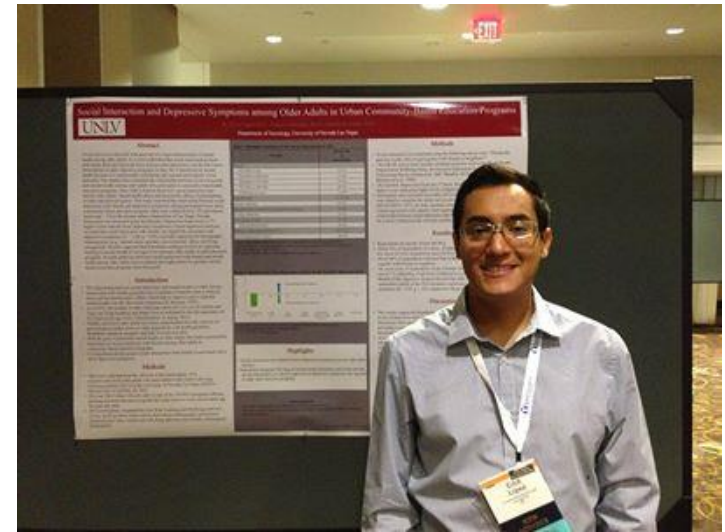
Data collection, conference presentations, OLLI site presentations, data analysis, manuscript writing, etc.

2013

- Data collection (wave 1 - pilot)
- Two conference presentations

2014

- Data collection (wave 2 & 3)
- Two conference presentations
- One scientific paper (in progress)

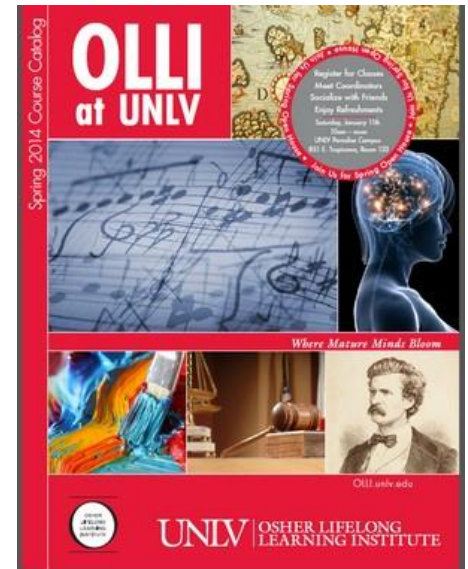


Research - Current project and preliminary findings

Results:

1. women (+)
2. number of household members (+)
3. income (+)
4. religious affiliation (+)
5. the number of OLLI classes (+)
6. health (+)

Discussion: Gender difference, non-OLLI social network, resource (e.g., time availability) and health status.



UNLV | OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

OLLI @ UNLV Survey Project

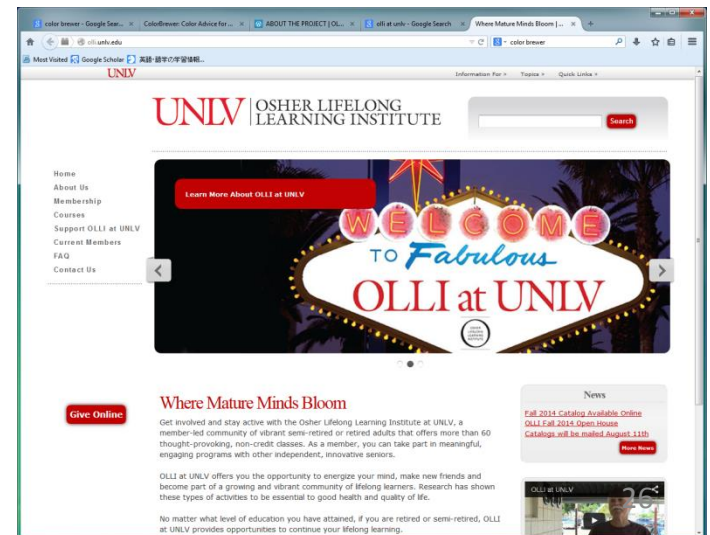
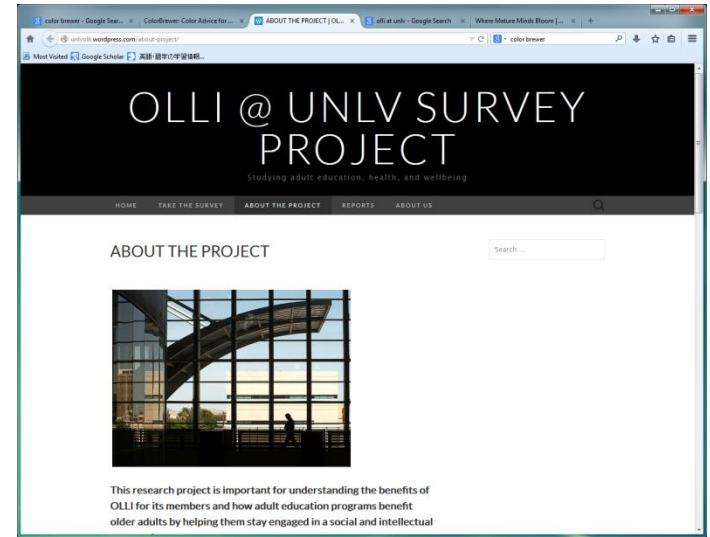
<http://unlvल्ली.wordpress.com/>

UNLV department of Sociology

<http://www.unlv.edu/sociology>

Osher Life Learning Institute at UNLV

<http://olli.unlv.edu/>



7. Concluding remarks

- Next steps:
- Examination of the association between lifelong learning (i.e., OLLI at UNLV program) and well-being with the longitudinal data.
- Expand the scope of inquiry to the national network of OLLI



- Lifelong learning →

**health, well-being, social network,
life satisfaction, happiness, etc.**

Thank you

Contact information

For easy questions (and compliments), Dr. Taka Yamashita at takashi.yamashita@unlv.edu

For difficult questions (and complaints), Mr. Erick Lopez at lopeze5@unlv.nevada.edu

For more difficult questions, Dr. Jennifer Keene at jennifer.keene@unlv.edu

About the OLLI at UNLV, Mr. Rich Easter at richard.easter@unlv.edu

References available upon request

