

February 17, 2016

St. Cloud State University Survey Fall 2015 Annual Statewide Survey: Americans with Disabilities Act Report

Introduction

This report was prepared by Amanda Hemmesch Breaker, PhD. Dr. Hemmesch Breaker is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at St. Cloud State University. Her primary research focuses on aging, disability/chronic conditions, and social relationships. Questions or requests for more information can be sent to her by email (arhemmesch@stcloudstate.edu) or telephone (320.308.3215).

The St. Cloud State University Survey Center uses telephone-based and other survey methods. Each year, the SCSU Survey conducts a telephone survey of adult Minnesotans about their perspectives on relevant political and social issues. Among other issues, this year we asked respondents about the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which celebrated its 25th year as law in 2015. These questions helped us to capture more information about disability within the state and to gauge how successful Minnesotans perceive the ADA legislation to be.

One of the only other large-scale, representative surveys of disability was conducted by Pew Internet Research in 2010 as part of their Health Tracking study. The Pew survey defined disability as any condition that interferes with daily living, including those that affect mobility, thinking, hearing, seeing, or self-care tasks like dressing, and found that about 27% of individuals reported a disability (Fox, 2011; <http://www.pewinternet.org/2011/01/21/americans-living-with-disability-and-their-technology-profile/>). The Fall 2015 SCSU Statewide Survey study left the definition of disability open so that participants could use their personal definitions and experience to guide their responses.

Brief methods and sampling error (from Finan, 2015)

The Fall 2015 SCSU Statewide Survey findings are based on telephone interviews with a representative sample of 623 (weighted) adults in Minnesota. The sample included both landline phones and cell phones. Interviews were conducted from October 12 to October 22, 2015 at the St. Cloud State University Survey Lab. The sample was obtained from Survey Sampling International (SSI) of Fairfield, Connecticut. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data is ± 4 percent (at the 95 percent confidence level). The margin of error for sub-samples, such as party affiliation, is higher due to smaller sample sizes.

This is a brief summary of the methods used in the SCSU Fall Survey. For a more complete information about the survey methods, survey questionnaire, and related reports, please consult the materials available on the St. Cloud State Survey website, www.stcloudstate.edu/scsusurvey.

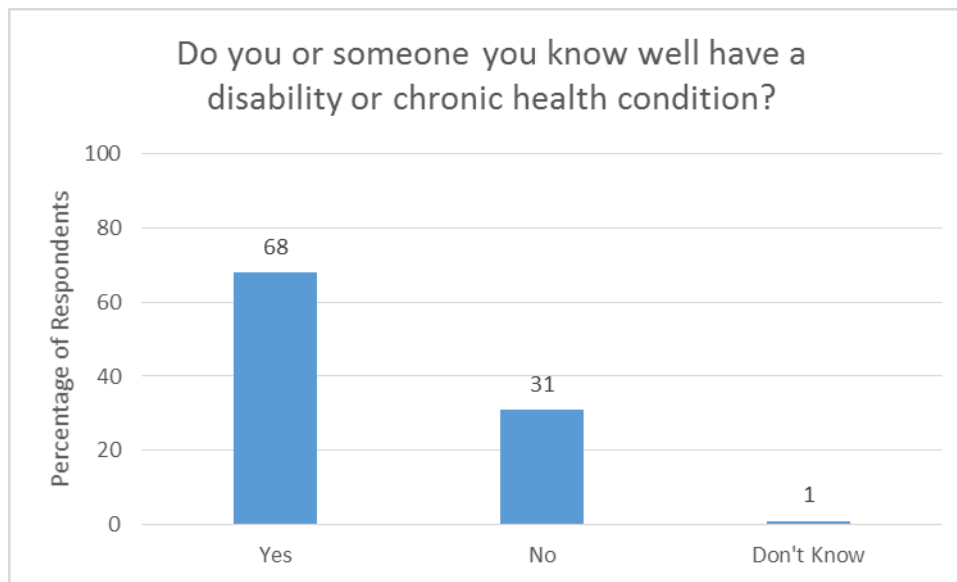
Highlights

- Approximately two-thirds Minnesotans (68%) know someone well who has a disability or chronic health condition.

- Approximately two-thirds of Minnesotans (65%) are at least somewhat familiar with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Many Minnesotans believe that the ADA has been successful at improving accessibility (76%) and at reducing discrimination for individuals with disabilities (64%).
- Younger Minnesotans were less likely to know someone with a disability and were less likely to believe that the ADA has improved accessibility and reduced discrimination than middle age or older Minnesotans.
- Outstate Minnesotans were more likely to know someone with a disability than metropolitan residents, but metropolitan residents were more likely to be familiar with the ADA. Metropolitan residents were also more optimistic about the impact of the ADA than outstate residents.

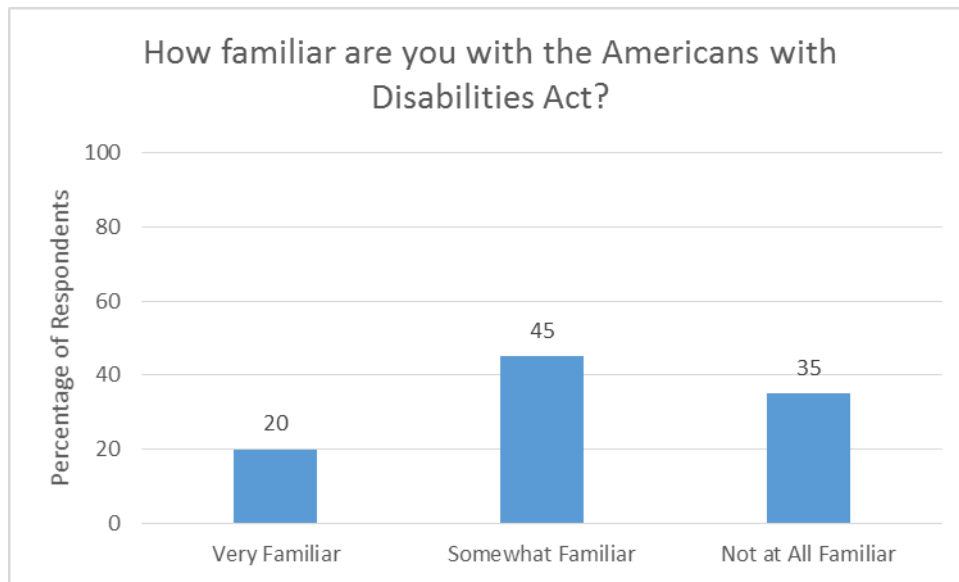
Findings: Knowing someone with a disability in Minnesota

Almost 7 of 10 adult Minnesotans surveyed (68%) know someone well who has a disability or chronic health condition. This is consistent with national data suggesting that disability is relatively common, affecting up to 27% of the population depending on how it is defined (Susannah Fox/Pew Internet, 2011). What the Fall 2015 Minnesota Statewide Survey shows is that experience with disability *is* common. Individuals with disabilities are integrated into familial and social communities so that over two-thirds of Minnesotans have either personal or close experience with disability.

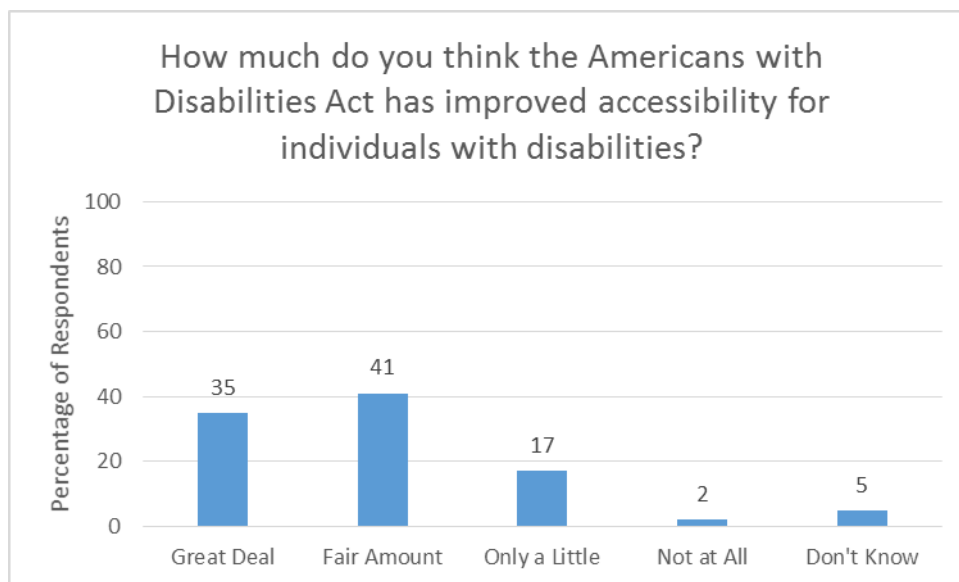


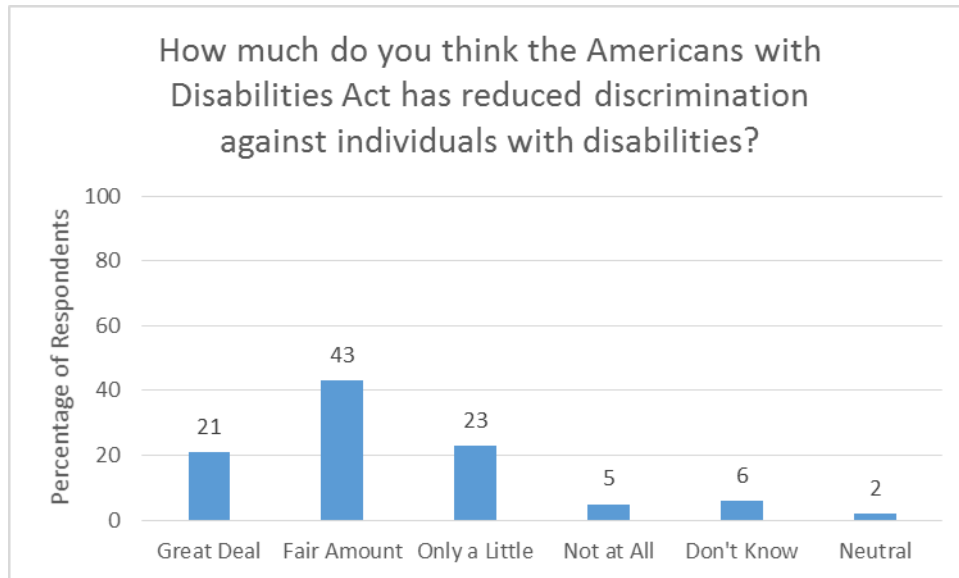
Findings: Familiarity with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its perceived impact

About 65% of Minnesotans are somewhat or very familiar with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which was originally passed into federal law in 1990. Given that the law celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2015, it is interesting that 35% of Minnesotans are not at all familiar with the ADA.



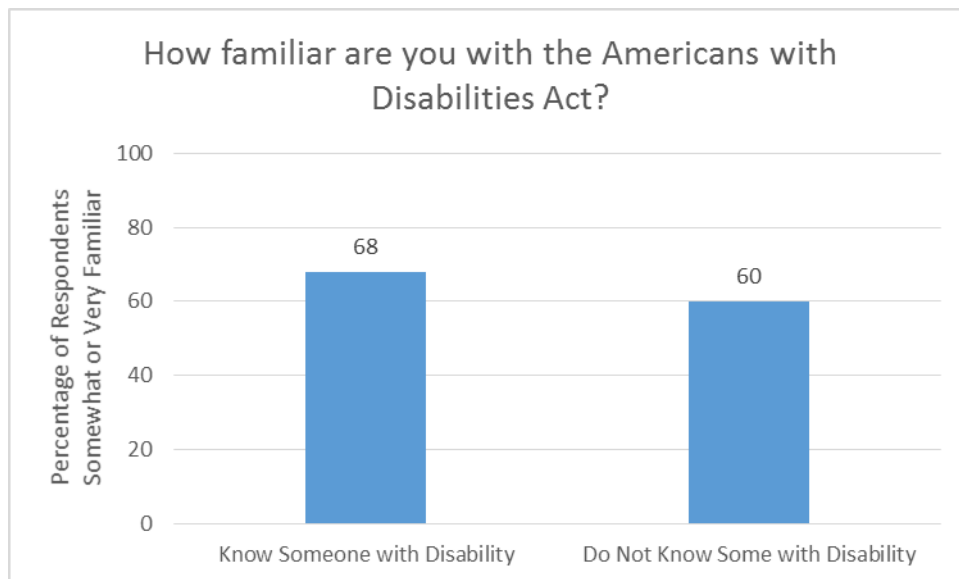
The majority of Minnesotans who are familiar with the ADA (76%) believe that the ADA has improved accessibility a fair amount or a great deal for individuals with disabilities. A smaller, but still substantial (64%), portion of Minnesotans who are familiar with the ADA believe that it has reduced discrimination a fair amount or great deal for individuals with disabilities.



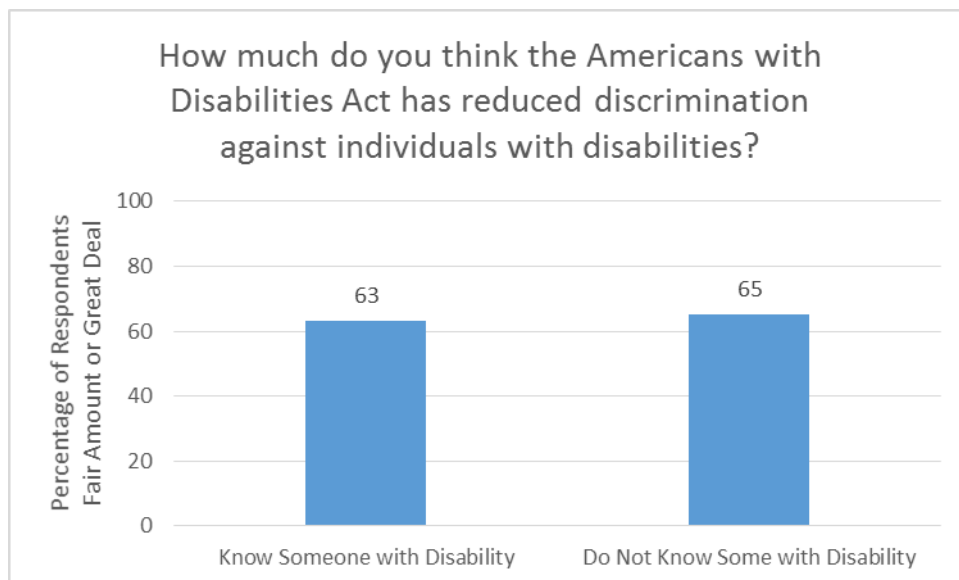
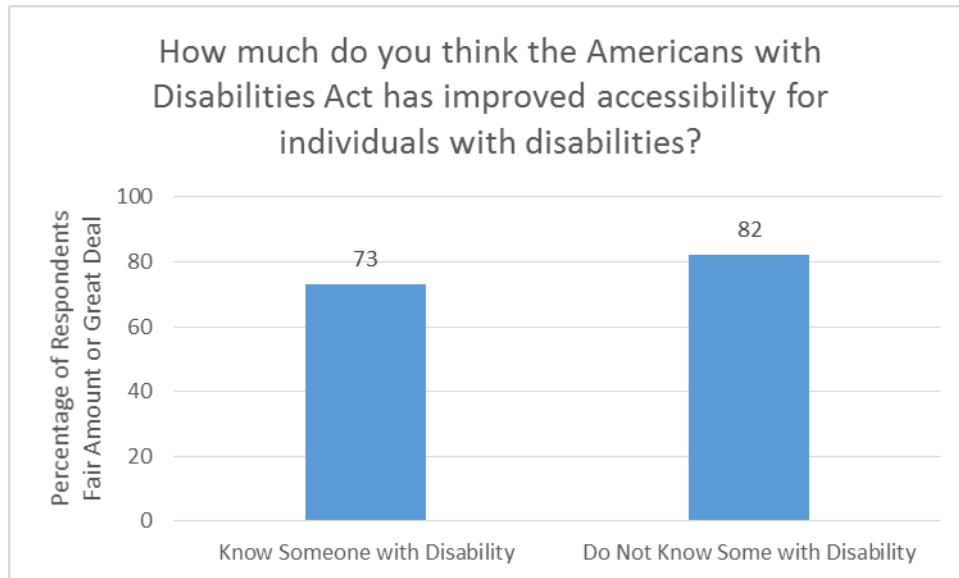


Findings: Familiarity with the ADA for those who do and do not know individuals with disabilities

Approximately 68% of Minnesotans who know someone well with a disability were somewhat or very familiar with the ADA. Similarly, about 60% of Minnesotans who do not know someone with a disability were also somewhat or very familiar with the ADA.



Minnesotans who know someone with a disability are slightly less likely to believe that the ADA has improved accessibility for individuals with disabilities a fair amount or great deal (73%), compared to those who do not know someone with a disability (82%).

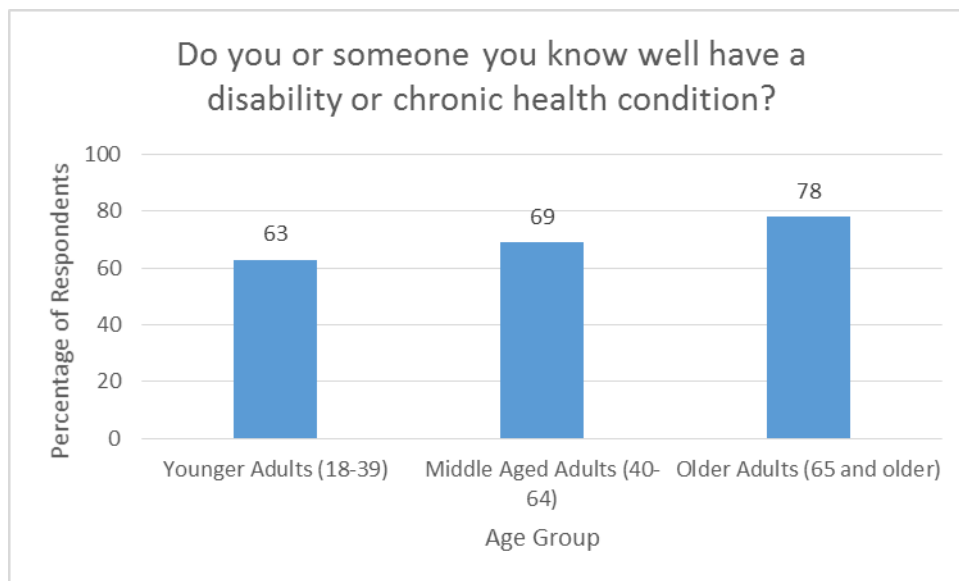


Minnesotans who know someone with a disability (63%) were similarly likely to believe that the ADA has reduced discrimination for individuals with disabilities (65%) than those who do not know someone with a disability.

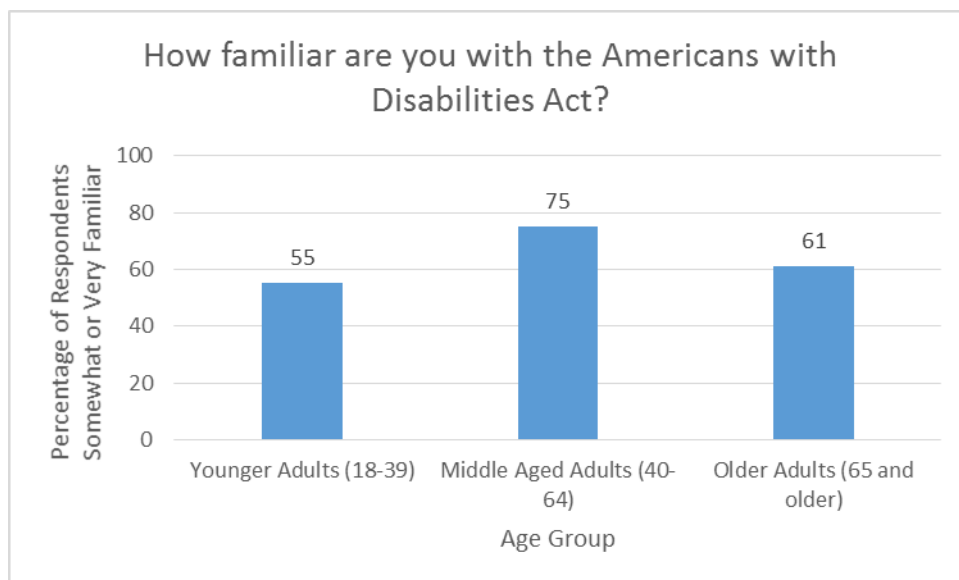
Findings: Age differences in familiarity with the ADA

The Fall 2015 Statewide Survey was designed to survey respondents who represented the population of Minnesota across many different demographic factors, including age. Of the 622 participants included in the analyses for this report, 236 (38% of the sample) were younger adults (ages 18-39), 283 (45% of the sample) were middle aged adults (ages 40-64), and 103 (17% of the sample) were older adults (ages 65 and older).

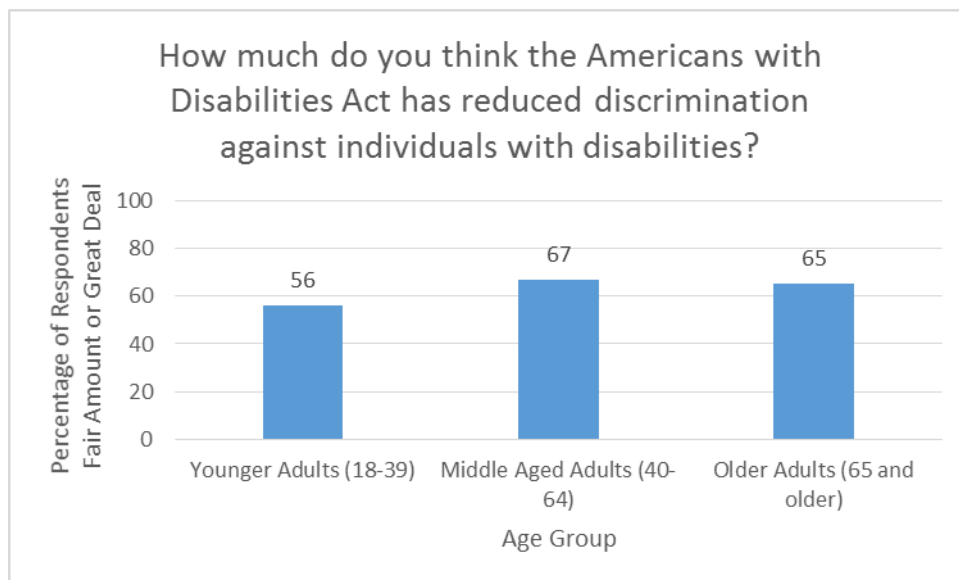
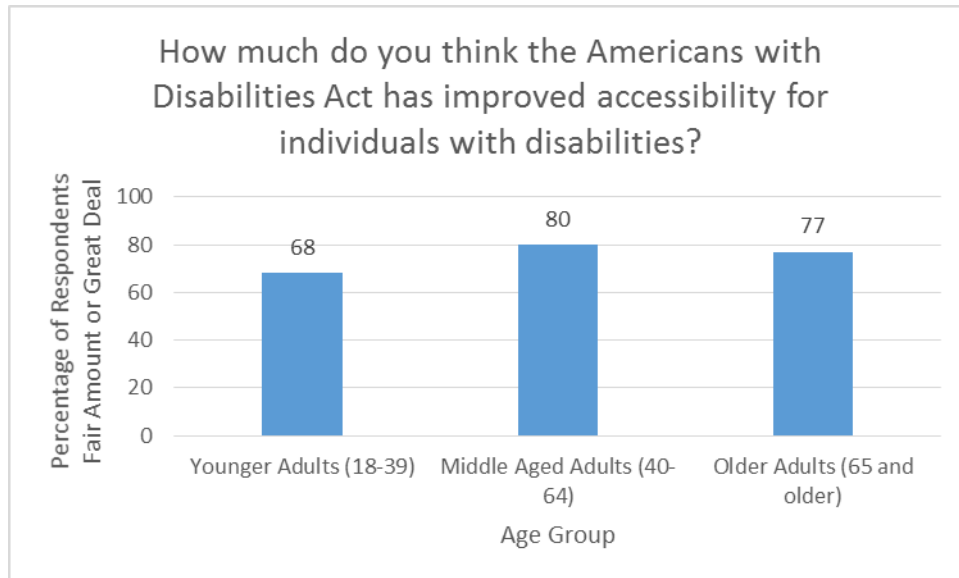
The likelihood of having a disability or knowing someone well who has a disability increased significantly with age: 63% of younger adults, 69% of middle aged adults, and 78% of older adults reported having or knowing someone with a disability.



There were also age differences in familiarity with the ADA. Middle aged adults were most likely to be familiar with the ADA. Approximately 55% of younger adults were somewhat or very familiar with the ADA, compared to 75% of middle aged adults and 61% of older adults.



Looking at Minnesotans who were at least somewhat familiar with the ADA, middle aged and older adults tended to be more optimistic than younger adults about the ADA's ability to improve accessibility and reduce discrimination over the past 25 years.

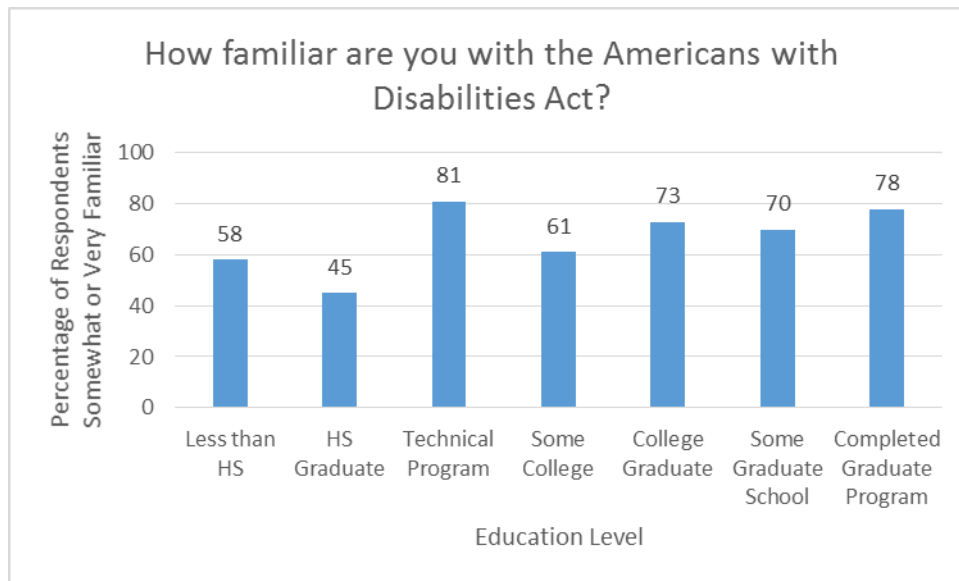


Findings: Educational differences in familiarity with the ADA

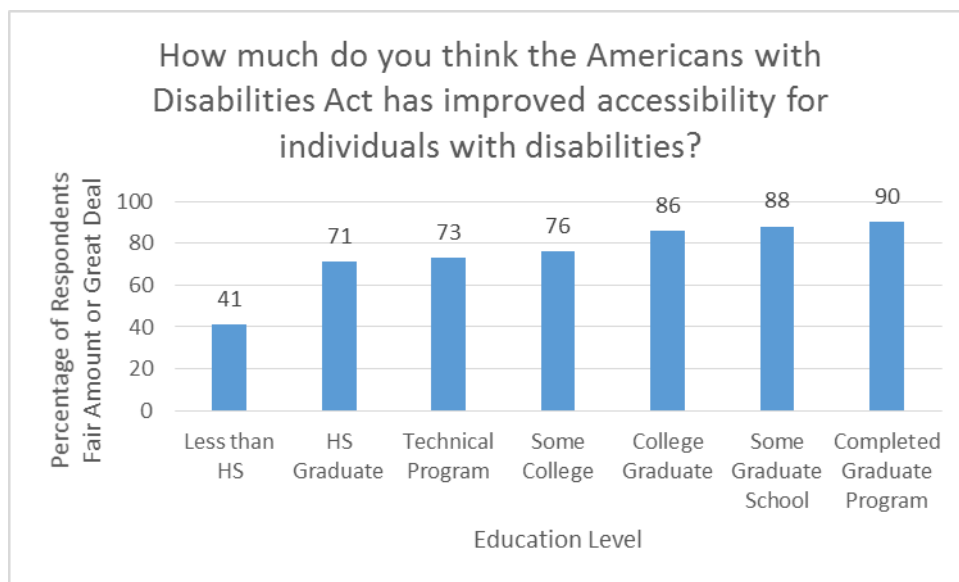
The Fall 2015 Statewide Survey was also designed to represent the educational attainment of Minnesotans. Of the 621 participants who answered a question about their highest level of education, 33 (5% of the sample) had completed less than a high school education, 122 (20%) graduated from high school, 32 (5%) had attended a post-secondary program of some type (e.g., technical program or beauty school), 132 (21%) completed some college, 206 (33%) had a bachelor's degree, 23 (4%) had completed some graduate education, and 69 (11%) completed a graduate program; 4 participants (1%) did not know how to best answer that question.

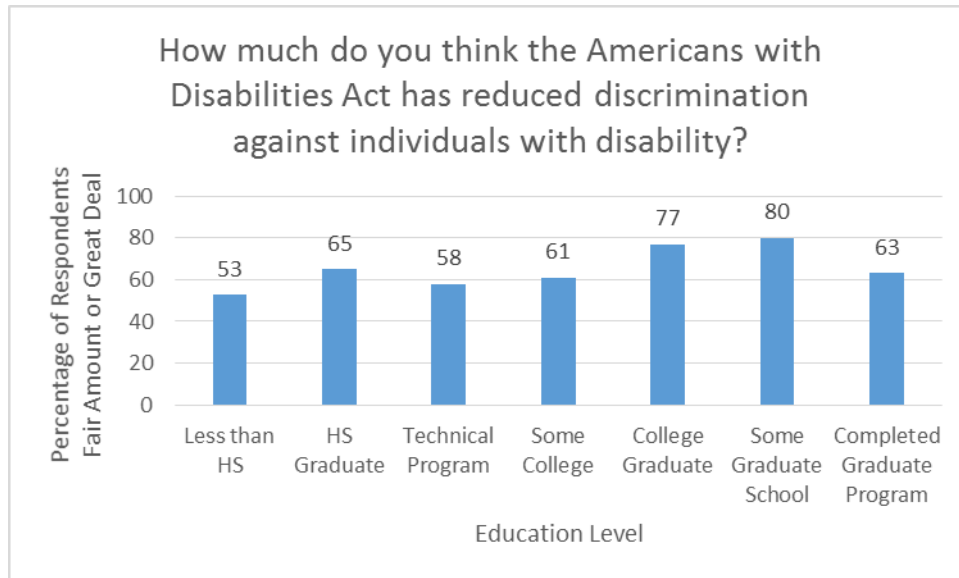
The likelihood of having a disability or knowing someone well who has a disability did not vary with education. However, familiarity with the ADA and its perceived impact did vary with education level.

Generally speaking, Minnesotans with more education were more likely to be somewhat or very familiar with the ADA.



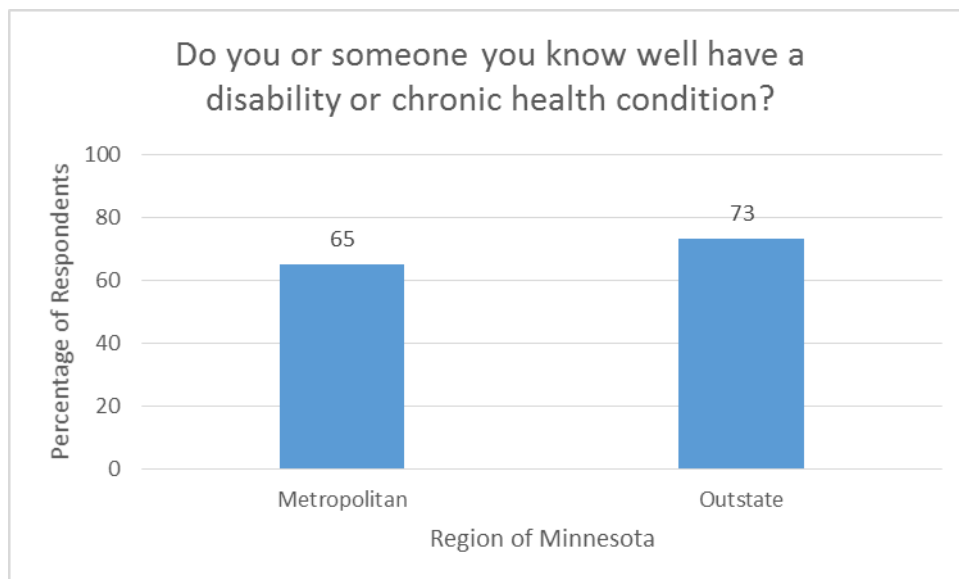
Of the Minnesotans surveyed who were familiar with the ADA, those with more education were more likely to believe the ADA has improved accessibility. There was a weaker relationship between education and perceptions that the ADA reduced discrimination for individuals with disabilities.



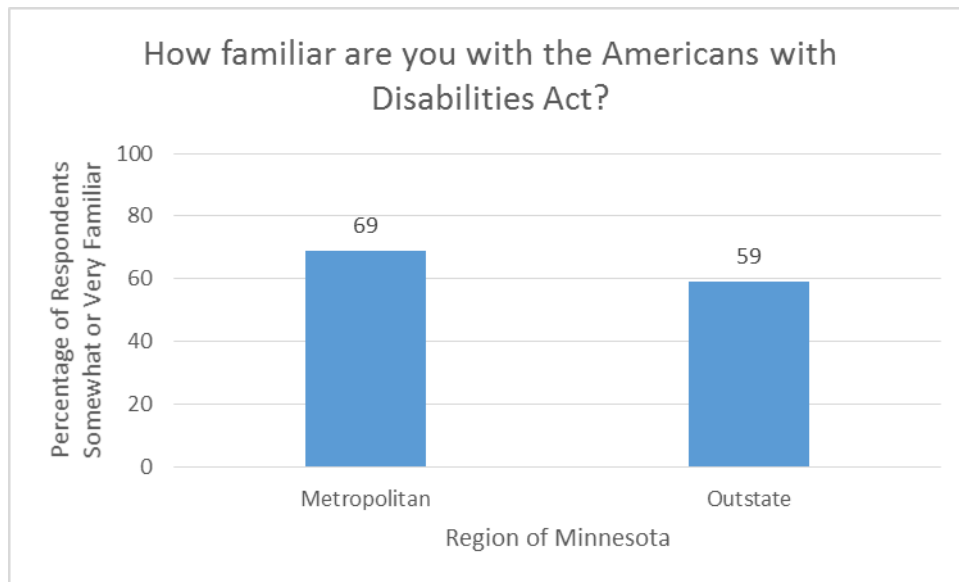


Findings: Regional differences in knowing someone with a disability and familiarity with the ADA

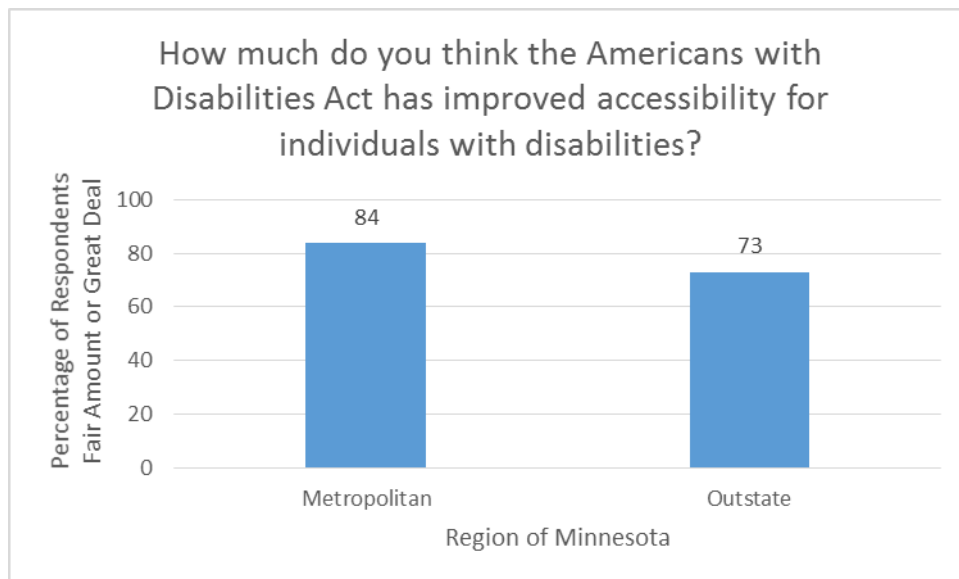
Analyses also compared the seven county metropolitan region (Hennepin, Ramsey, Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott, and Washington counties) to outstate Minnesota. These analyses are more prone to error than the others in this report because area codes reflect region less accurately for cell phones than for landlines. Residents of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area were marginally less likely to know someone well who has a disability or chronic health condition than those living in outstate Minnesota (65% vs 73%, respectively).

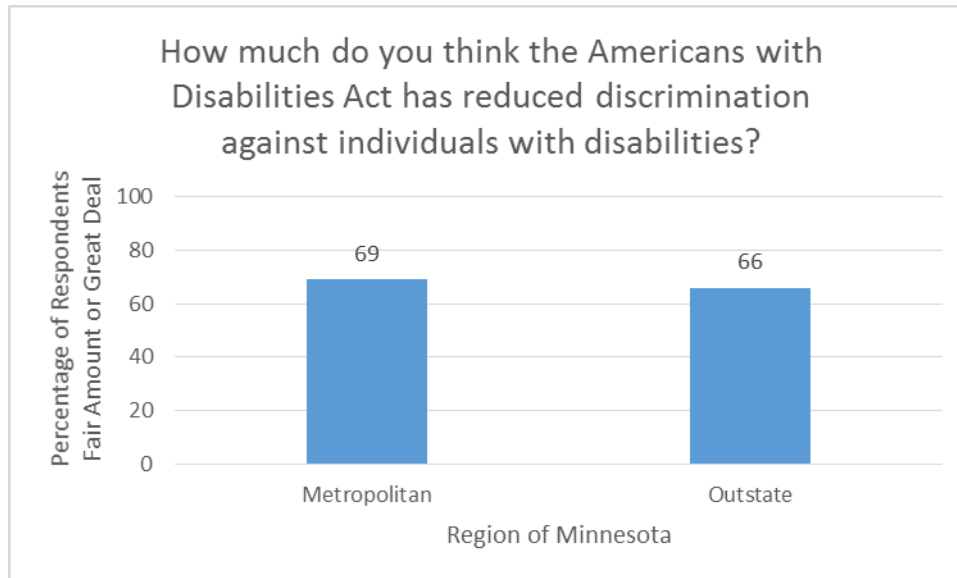


Regional analyses also indicated that Minnesotans who live in the seven-county metropolitan area surrounding Minneapolis-St. Paul were more likely to be somewhat or very familiar with the ADA (69%) than Minnesotans who live outstate (59%).



Looking at Minnesotans who were at least somewhat familiar with the ADA, Minnesotans in the metropolitan area were more likely to believe that the ADA has improved accessibility for individuals with disabilities (85%) than outstate Minnesotans (73%), although there were no regional differences in beliefs about how well the ADA has reduced discrimination (69% of metropolitan residents compared to 66% of outstate residents).





Findings: Political differences in familiarity with the ADA

There were no differences in familiarity with the ADA across the major political parties in Minnesota (Democrat, Republican, Libertarian, Green, Tea Party, MN Independence, Independent, or Minnesotans not involved in politics).

Narrowing the analyses to just Minnesota Democrats and Republicans (the two most common affiliations) also failed to show differences across political affiliation. Republicans and Democrats perceived the impact of the ADA similarly: Approximately 80% of Democrats and 75% of Republicans believed that the ADA improved accessibility a fair amount or great deal for individuals with disabilities. Similarly, 65% of Democrats and 67% of Republicans believed that the ADA reduced discrimination against individuals with disabilities a fair amount or great deal.

More Information about the SCSU Survey Center and Fall 2015 Statewide Survey

Major Contributors

As is our practice, the survey was part of several professors' classes and scholarly research. Faculty directors:

Drs. Steve Frank, Steven Wagner, and Jim Cottrill (Political Science);

Drs. Sandrine Zerbib and Ann Finan (Sociology);

Dr. Amada Hemmesch Breaker (Psychology);

Dr. John Kulas, a former faculty director (Psychology), also contributed to this project.

Dr. Monica Perez-Gomez (Economics) is on leave.

Students from a variety of majors are also integral to this survey.

Lead Student Directors:

Ms. Megan Kalk, 4th Year Student, Sociology and International Relations Majors, Onamia, Minnesota.

Ms. Karen Stay, Graduate Student, Cold Spring, Minnesota

Assistant Lead Director:

Ms. Josefina Abdullah, 3rd year Student, Sociology Major, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Student Directors:

Mr. Landry Kabore, 3rd year Student, Political Science and International Relations Majors, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Mr. Mike Grewatz, 4th year Student, Sociology Major, Duluth, Minnesota.

Ms. Oluwatobi Oluwagbemi, 3rd year Student, International Relations and Women Studies, Ilorin, Nigeria.

Student Technical Consultant:

Ms. Irina Nishat 3rd year Student, Management Information Systems Major, St Cloud, Minnesota.

Students from St. Cloud State University completed the calling for the Fall 2015 SCSU Statewide Survey. The SCSU Survey Center provides opportunities for student directors and callers get first-hand experience with research. Research experience has been identified as a high-impact practice for promoting deep learning and developing general and practical skills (AAC&U, 2013).

Sample Design

The sample was designed to represent all adults (age 18 and older) with a landline or cell phone in Minnesota. The final sample consists of one land line sample and two cell samples. Interviewing began using the landline sample and one cell sample. As available cell phone numbers ran out, a smaller cell sample was ordered and added to the original cell sample. Samples were compared for duplicates; none was found.

The completed sample consists of 623 interviews. Of the 623 interviews, 277 are landlines and 346 are cell phone numbers. In samples of 623 interviews, the error due to sampling and other random effects is approximately plus/minus 4.0 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that if one were to have drawn 20 samples of the adult Minnesota population and administered the same instrument, it would be expected that the percentages in the sample findings would differ from the true population percentages by more than 4.0 percent only one time in twenty. In all sample surveys there are other possible sources of error for which precise estimates cannot be calculated. These include interviewer and coder error, respondent misinterpretation, and analysis errors. When analysis is made of sub-samples such as respondent gender, the sample error may be larger.

The original sample consisted of 2,868 landline and 4,050 cell phone numbers. However, only 2,282 cell phones that were active were drawn. After completing the survey, the total sample

consisted of 623 respondents. In the completed sample, 277 were on landline phones and 346 were on cell phones. The questionnaire consisted of approximately 40 questions.

Several steps were taken to ensure that the telephone sample of adults in the state was representative of the larger adult state population. Interviewers for landline numbers alternately asked to speak with oldest and youngest men and women (age at least 18 years old). This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender. For cell phone numbers, the interview was completed with the person of initial contact, provided the contact person was at least 18 years of age and a Minnesota resident.

As is often the case with survey research, the initial findings were weighted to compensate for patterns of nonresponse that might bias results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis approximates the demographic characteristics of the sample with the demographic characteristics of the Minnesota population. Parameters used for this survey were determined using the 2012 American Community Survey - 1 Year Estimates provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS-USA) and found at <https://usa.ipums.org/usa/> . IPUMS is composed of microdata which allows us to estimate population distributions across categories we define. In this year's survey, only minor weighting was done on two variables (age and education).