



EDUCATION
NETWORK

Public Viewpoint

Value Beyond the Degree: Alumni Perspectives on How College Experiences Improve Their Lives

November 16, 2022

Findings from the 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey

Key Findings

When asked about their education experiences, skill development, and post-completion outcomes, bachelor's degree graduates from the past 20 years tell us the following:

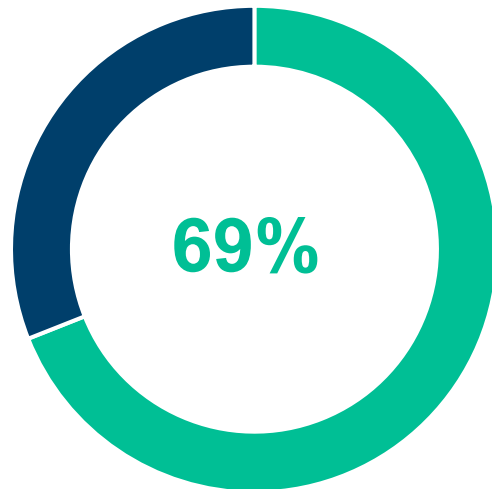
1. A meaningful share of bachelor's degree holders do not feel their education was worth the cost — and outcomes differ by race and gender.
2. Developing a key set of skills, including both general and specialized elements, is strongly associated with economic and non-economic benefits.
3. Development of distinct skills is associated with distinct elements of post-completion value.
4. Students gain key skills both inside and outside the classroom.
5. Skill development provides benefits for everyone — but not equally.

Outcomes beyond completion

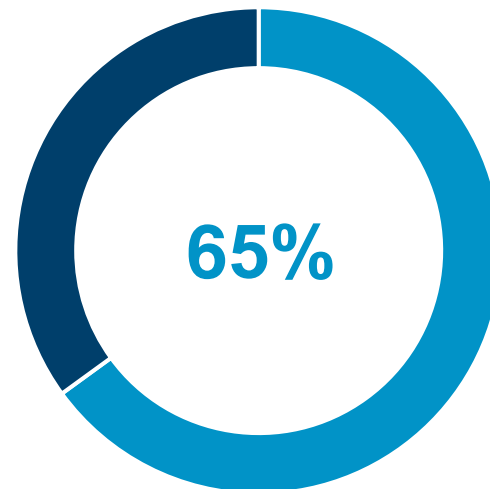
A framework for measuring benefits beyond completion



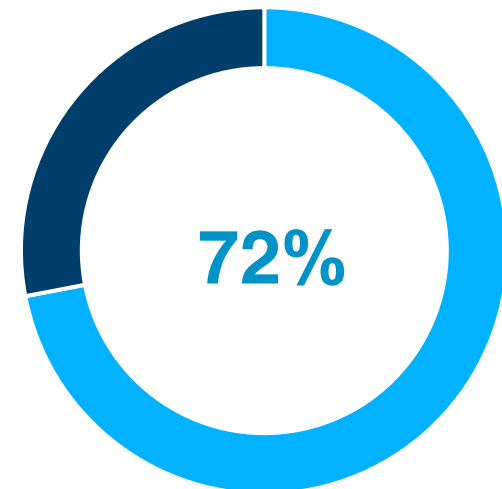
Income over \$50k



Worth the cost



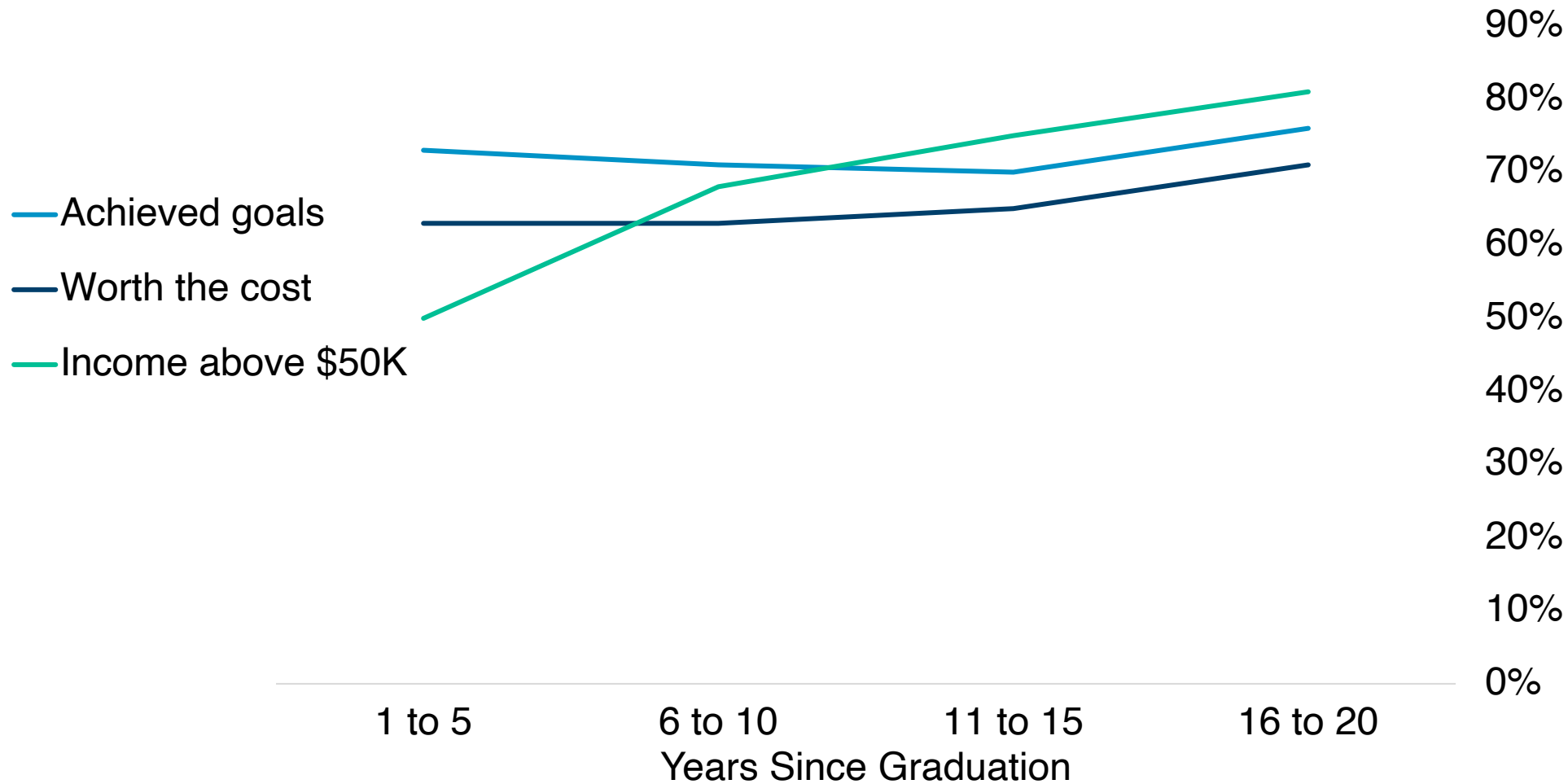
Achieved goals



Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230. Current income is for full-time employed only.

Earnings are the outcome most likely to change with time

Share of alumni who meet measures of post-completion success



Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230. Current income is for full-time employed only.

Different dimensions of post-completion benefits

Career Impact

What impact has it had on your success at work?

My education makes/made me an attractive candidate for potential employers.

How much has it helped you to be able to qualify for good jobs?

How much has it helped you to gain skills to be successful in work?

How much has it helped you to advance your career?

Life Impact

What impact has it had on your quality of life?

How much has it helped you to learn new things?

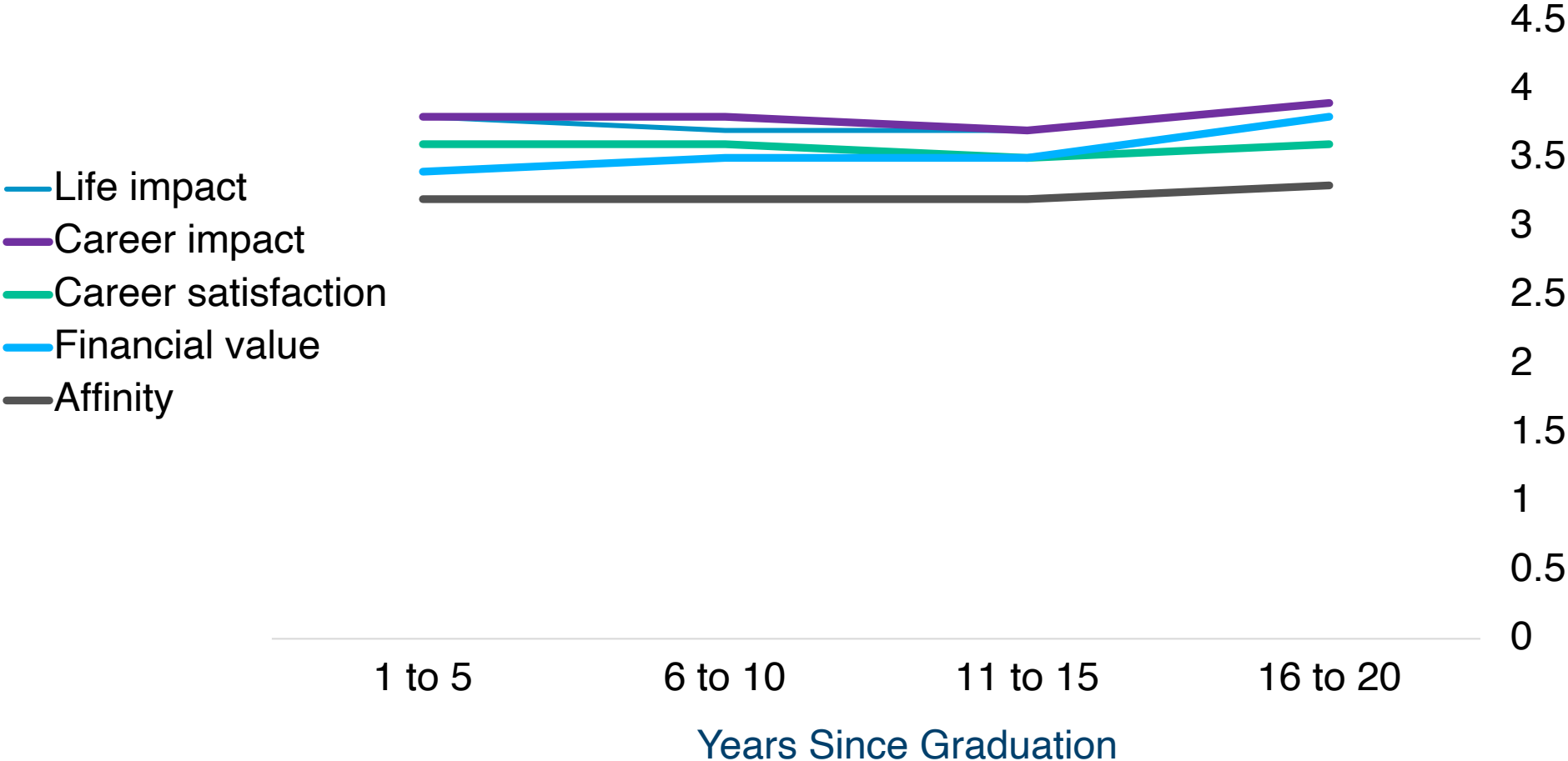
What impact has it had to your community engagement, such as voting, volunteering, or advocacy?

How much has it helped you to become the best person you can be?

How much has it helped you to be a good role model?

Value perceptions remain stable over time

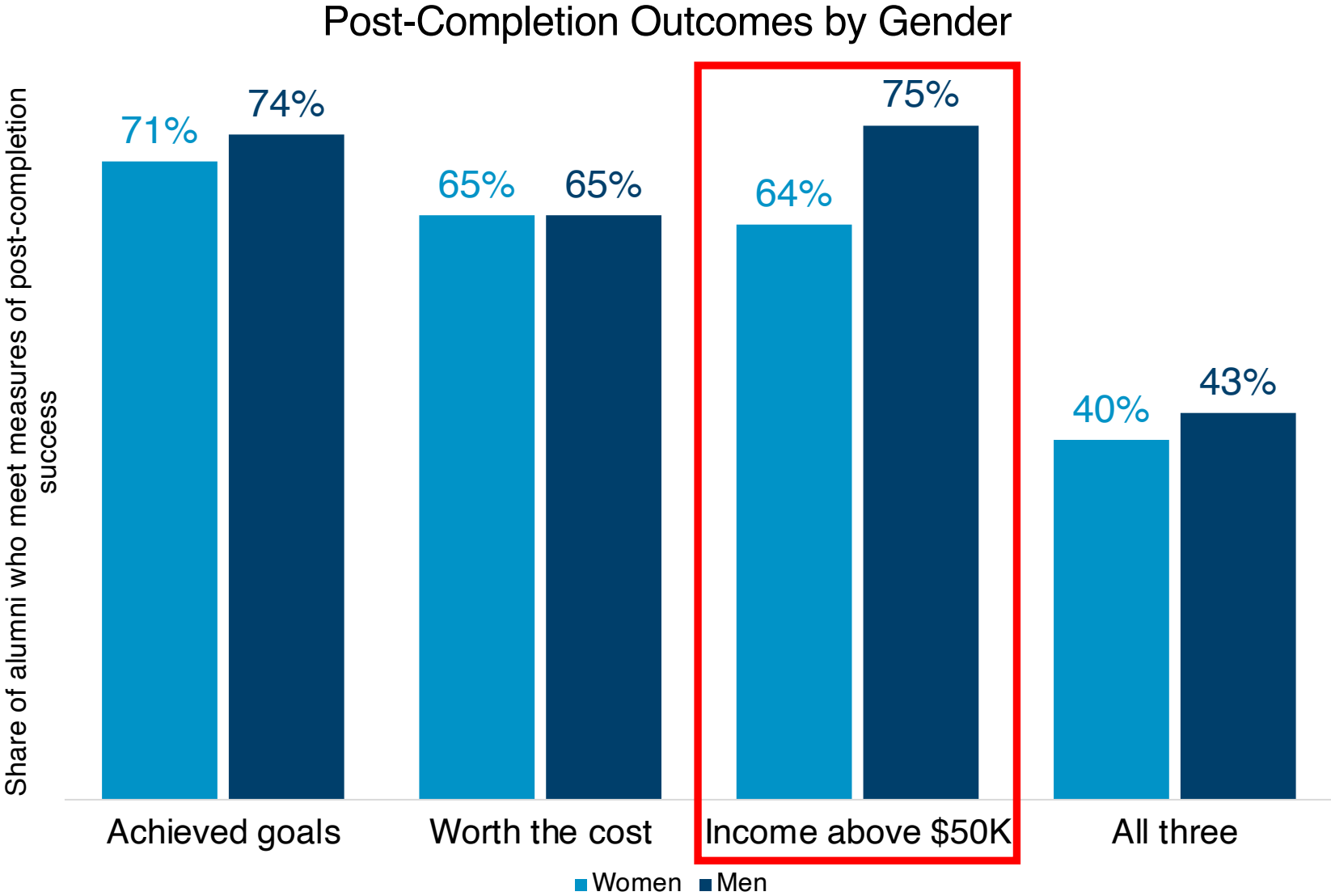
Average score on indexes of post-completion success



Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230.

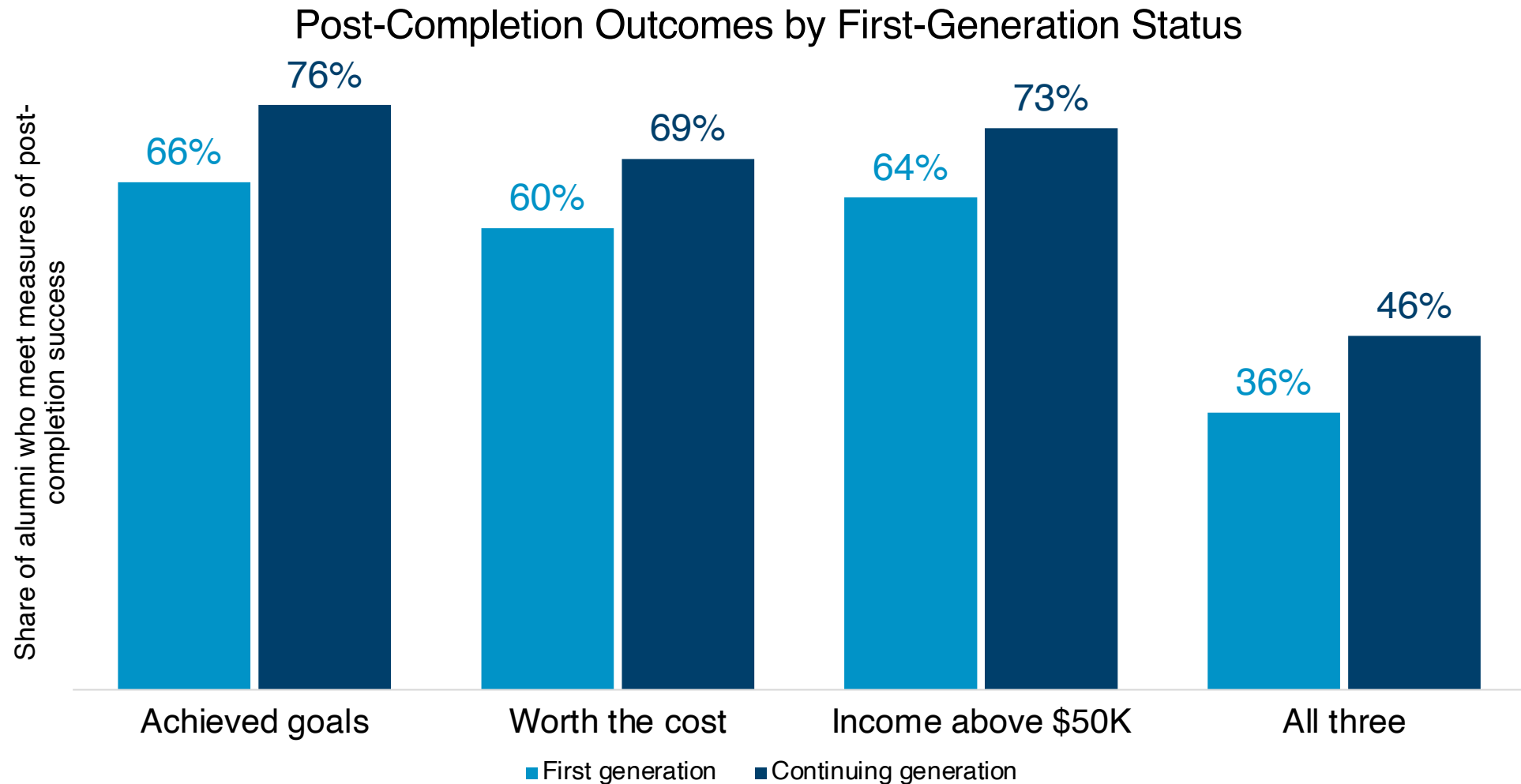
Outcomes beyond completion
are not equitable

Female alumni are less likely to earn a family-sustaining income



Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230. Current income is for full-time employed only.

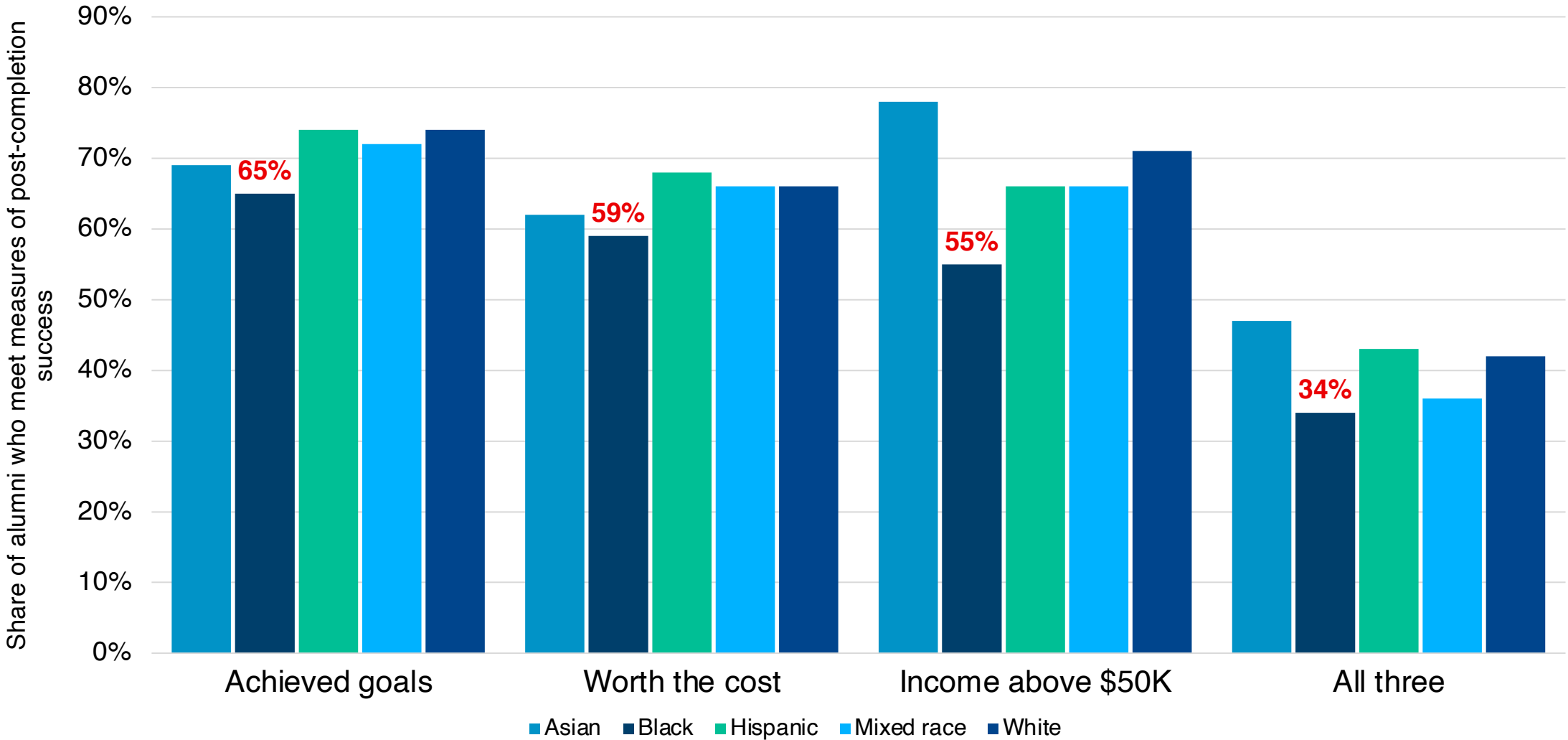
First-generation students are less likely to experience post-completion benefits



Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230. Current income is for full-time employed only.

Black alumni are less likely to experience post-completion benefits

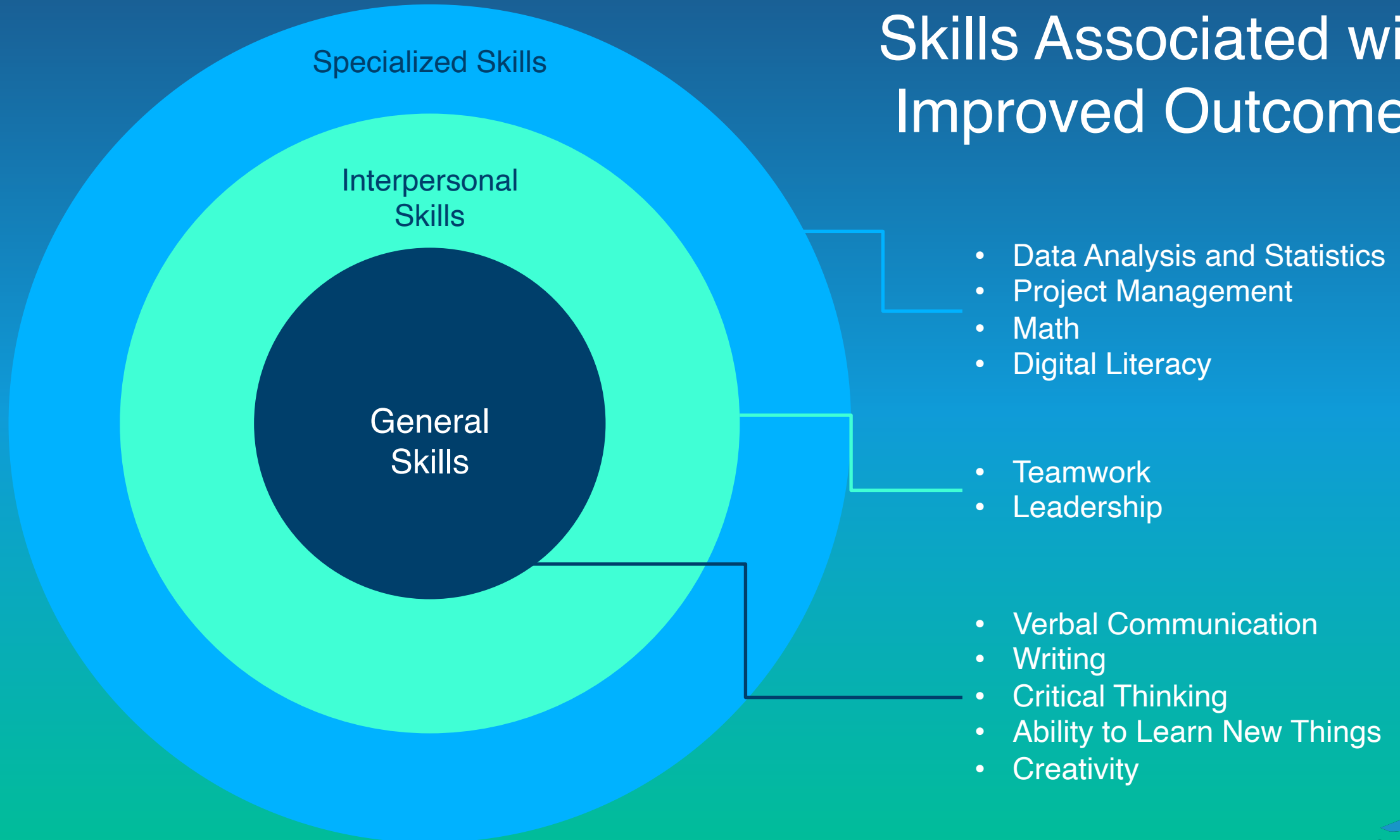
Post-Completion Outcomes by Race and Ethnicity



Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230. Current income is for full-time employed only.

What improves outcomes
beyond completion?

Skills Associated with Improved Outcomes



Alumni who say they developed key skills have higher income

First-year income

+\$8,672

Predicted difference
in median income

(from low skill development to high skill
development)

+19 pp

Predicted increase in
probability of being in top
two income quintiles

(from low skill development to high skill
development)

Current income

+\$10,308

Predicted difference
in median income

(from low skill development to high skill
development)

+29 pp

Predicted increase in
probability of being in top
two income quintiles

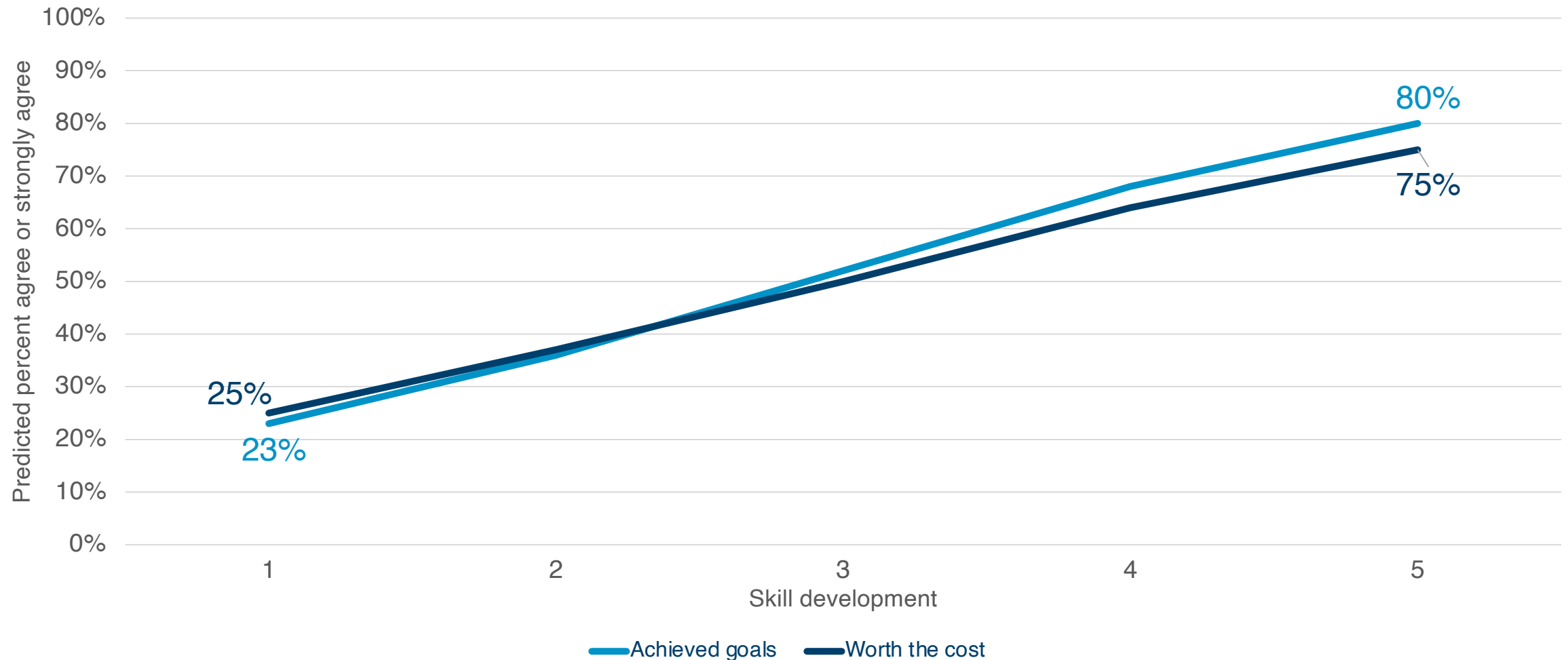
(from low skill development to high skill
development)

Control variables: race, gender, generational status, field of study, academic experience, career experience, and community experience.

Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230. Current income for those working full-time.

Attribution of skill development predicts higher perceptions of value

Skill Development, Goal Achievement, and Cost Value

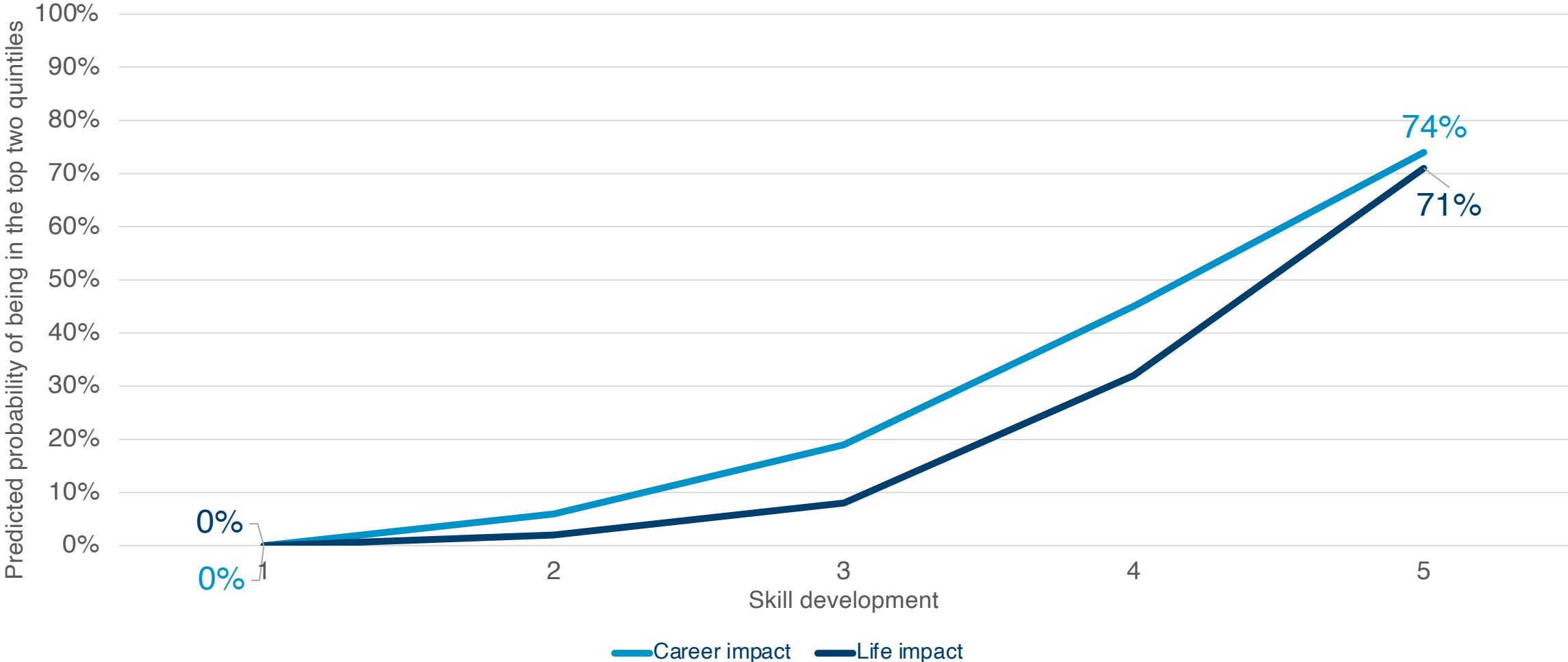


Control variables: race, gender, generational status, field of study, academic experience, career experience, and community experience.

Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230.

Perceived skill development predicts more positive attributions of career and life impact

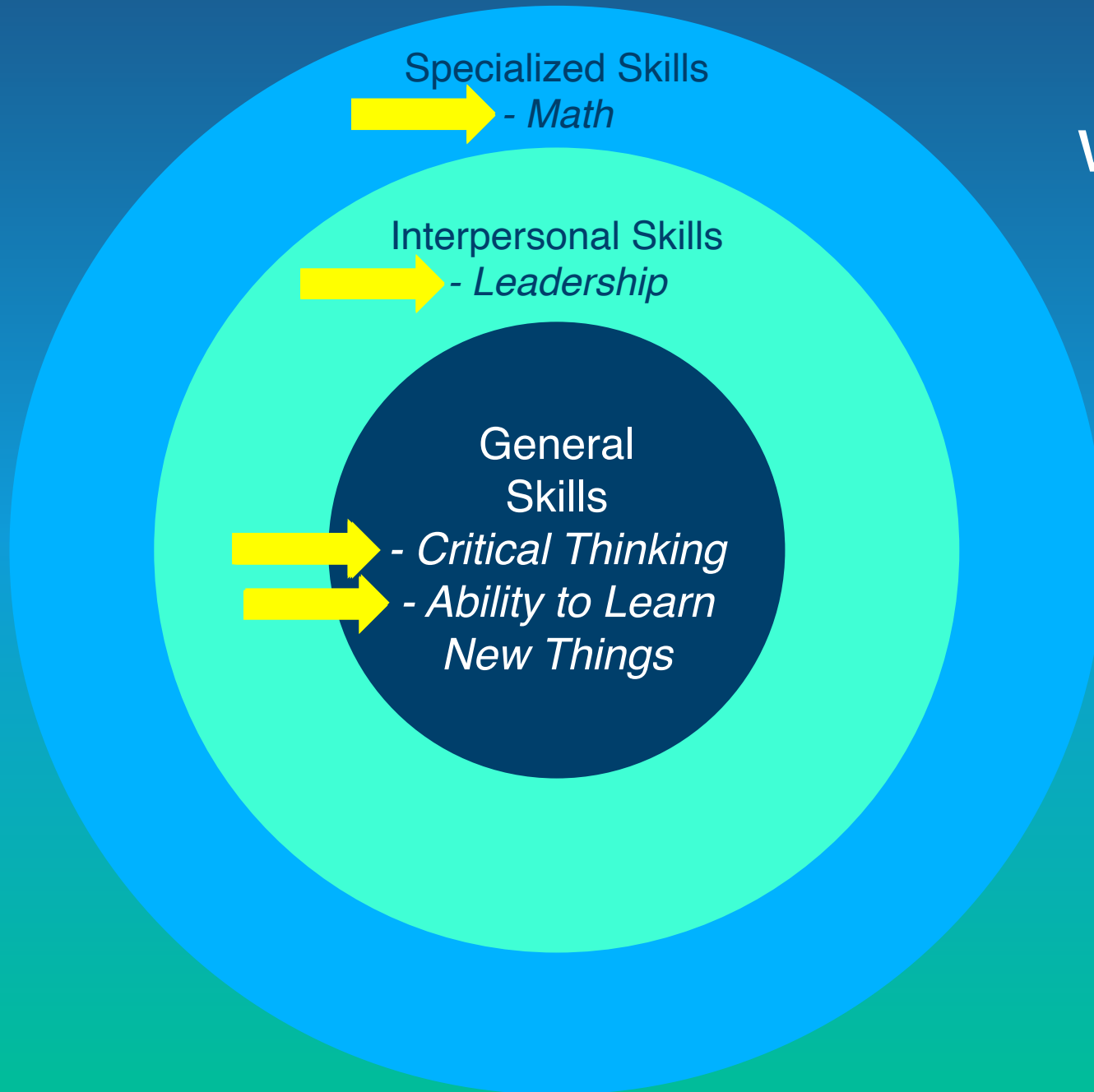
Skill Development and Career and Life Impact



Control variables: race, gender, generational status, field of study, academic experience, career experience, and community experience.

Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230.

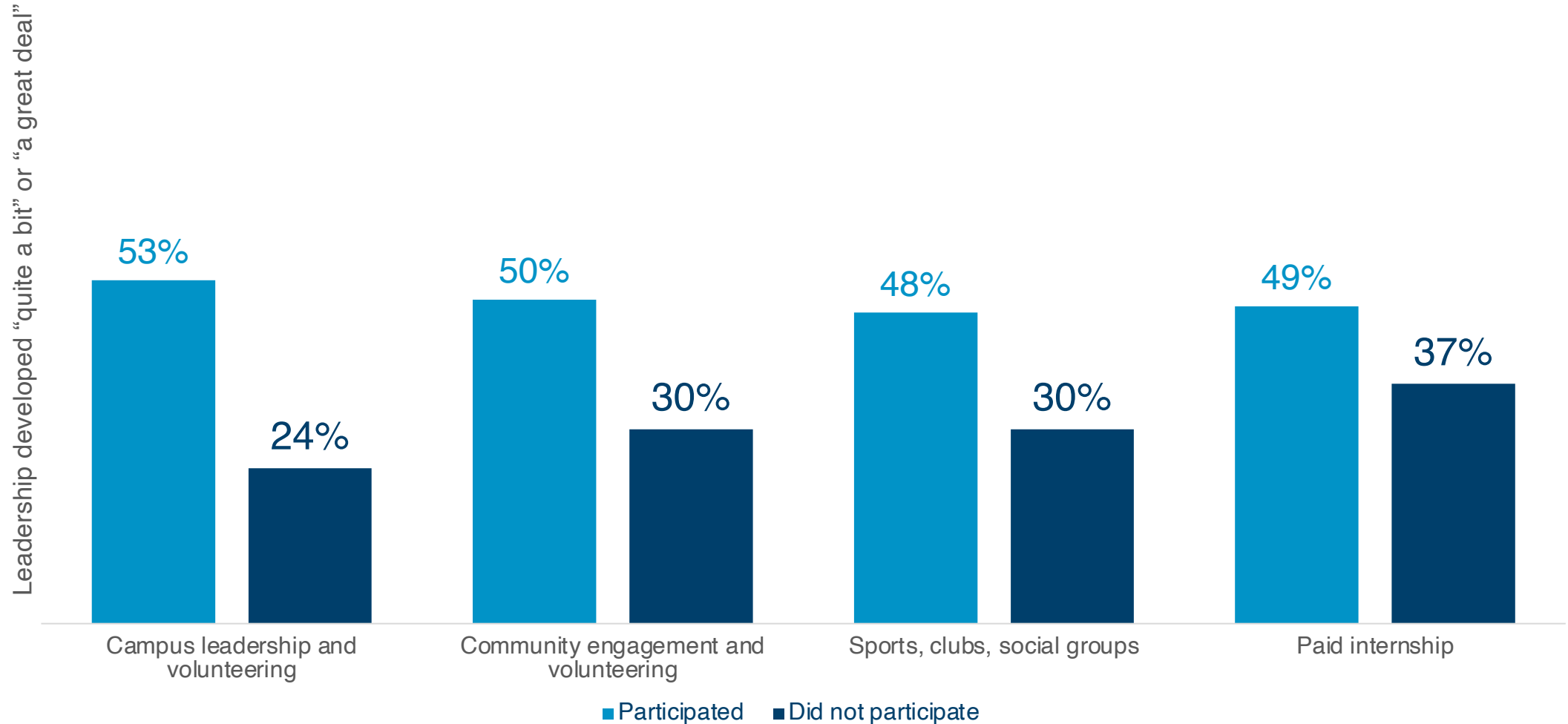
Four Skills Associated with Improved Outcomes



- First-Year Income
- Current Income
- Worth the Cost
- Achieved Goals
- Career Impact
- Life Impact

Leadership skills are tied to extracurricular activities

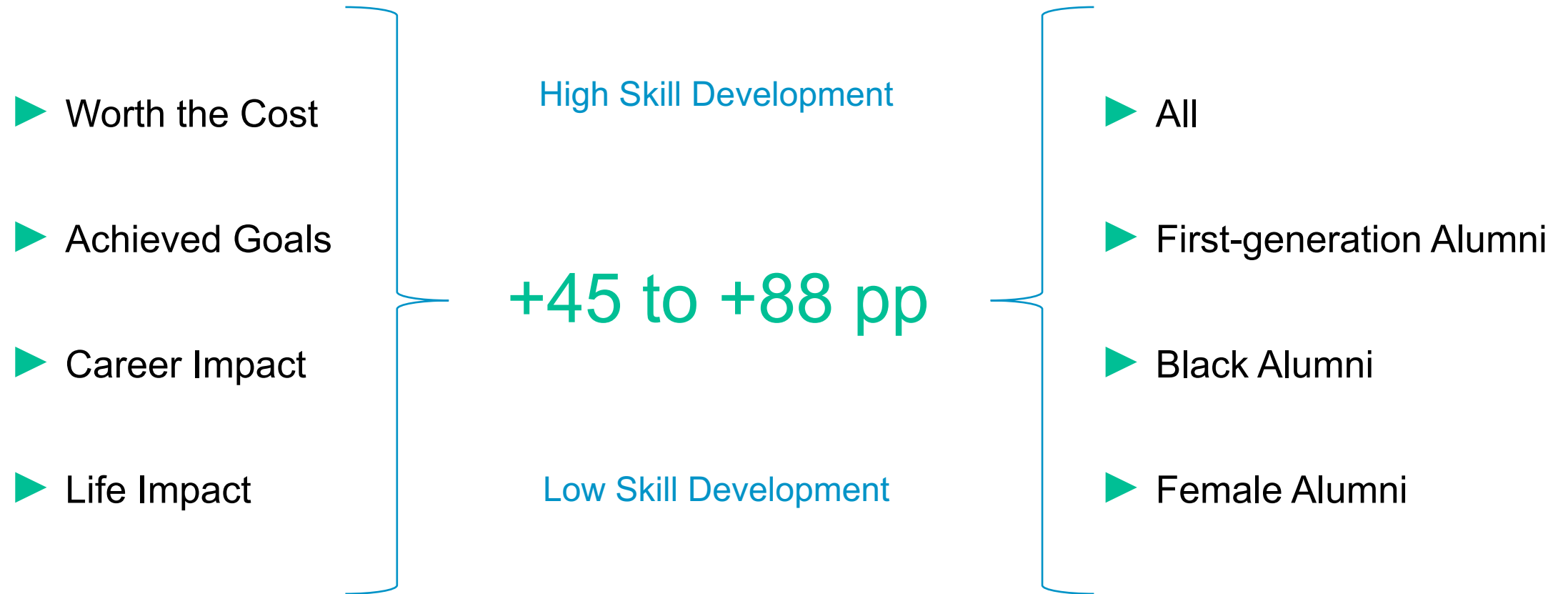
Development of Leadership Skills, by Extracurricular Activities



Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230.

Equity Gaps

Attributions of skill development predict higher perceptions of value



Control variables: race, gender, generational status, field of study, academic experience, career experience, and community experience.

Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230.

Black alumni experience no earnings benefit associated with perceived skills development

First-year income

+\$8,672

Predicted difference
in median income

(from low skill development to high skill
development)

Female Alumni +\$11,760
First-Generation Alumni +\$12,724

Black Alumni - None

Current income

+\$10,308

Predicted difference
in median income

(from low skill development to high skill
development)

Female Alumni +\$6,852*
First-Generation Alumni +\$23,480

Black Alumni - None

Control variables: race, gender, generational status, field of study, academic experience, career experience, and community experience.

Source: 2022 Strada Outcomes Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2002-2021, n=3,230. Current income is for full-time employed only. *p=0.1

Recommendations

- Measure, and aim to improve, outcomes beyond completion.
- Set skill development as a key goal.
- Identify high-value skills.
- Ensure access to experiences that produce valuable skills.
- Engage employers in order to erase outcomes gaps.

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StradaInsights.org