



**PINAL COUNTY—APACHE JUNCTION/GOLD
CANYON/SAN TAN VALLEY
SKILLS ASSESSMENT RESEARCH STUDY
FINAL REPORT**

August 2014

**STRATEGIC RESEARCH INITIATIVES, LLC
SAN TAN VALLEY, ARIZONA**

Purpose of the Research

- Provide Pinal County's Economic Development Department with specific data on residents' skills and current employment, to assist in attracting business and industry to locate to and expand within Pinal County.

Questionnaire

- Developed specifically for Pinal County.
- Able to compare results on some questions directly to the 2010 Resident Study and Census data.
- Took on average 8-12 minutes to complete.
- English and Spanish versions.

Name Sources

- **Apache Junction/Gold Canyon**
- Apache Junction Unified School District
- Central Arizona College (Shadow Mountain Campus in Apache Junction)
- **San Tan Valley**
- Central Arizona College (San Tan Valley Campus)
- J.O. Combs Unified School District
- Florence Unified School District
- Coolidge Unified School District
- Charter Schools
- Greater San Tan Valley Chamber of Commerce
- San Tan Valley Chamber of Commerce
- San Tan Valley.com
- Sizzling Seniors Club
- Johnson Utilities
- Various Home Owner Associations of San Tan Valley.

Return Rate

	Response Rates by Zip Code	
	n	%
Apache Junction	42	7.4%
85117	0	0.0%
85119	27	4.7%
85120	15	2.7%
85178	0	0.0%
Gold Canyon	7	1.2%
85118	7	1.2%
San Tan Valley	522	91.4%
85132	3	0.5%
85140	276	48.3%
85142	62	10.9%
85143	181	31.7%
Total	571	100.0%

Quality of Life Ratings

How would you rate [San Tan Valley/Apache Junction/Gold Canyon/Pinal County]:

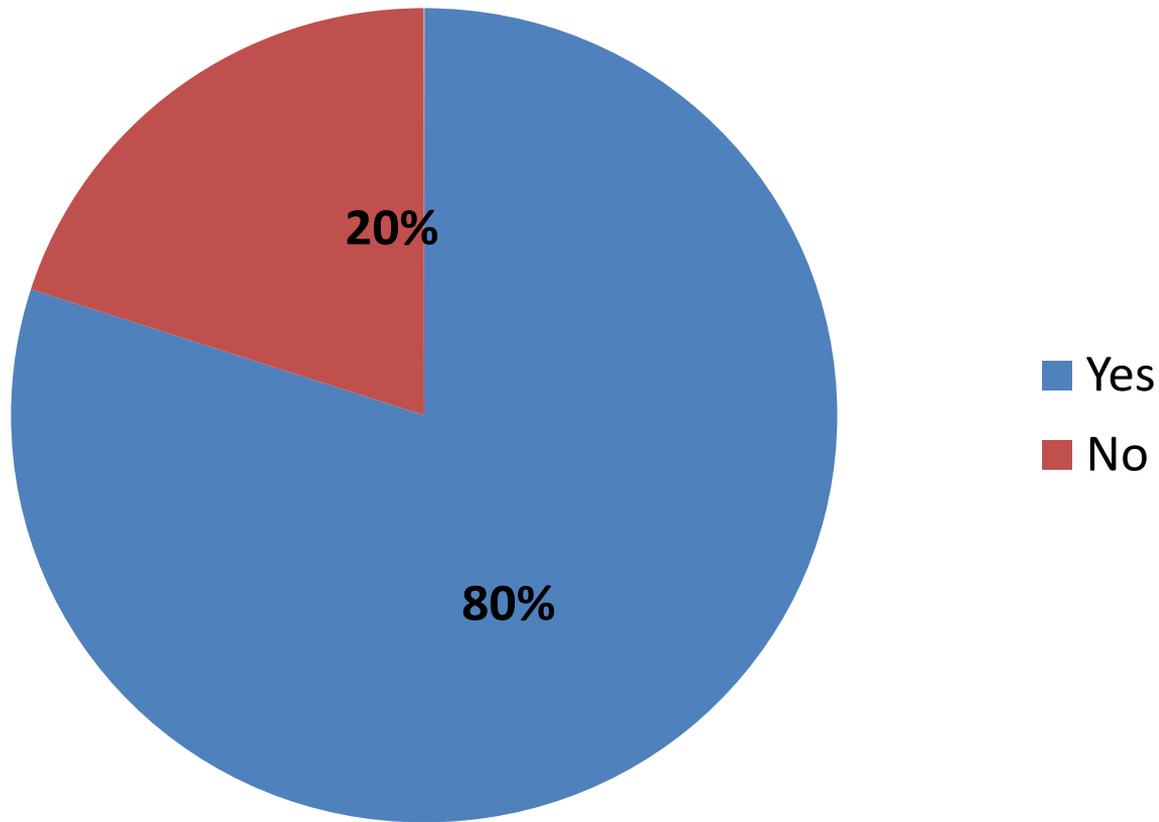
Excellent/Very Good

As a place to live	64%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	66%
As a place to raise children	59%
As a place to work	22%
As a place to retire	55%
The overall quality of life	57%

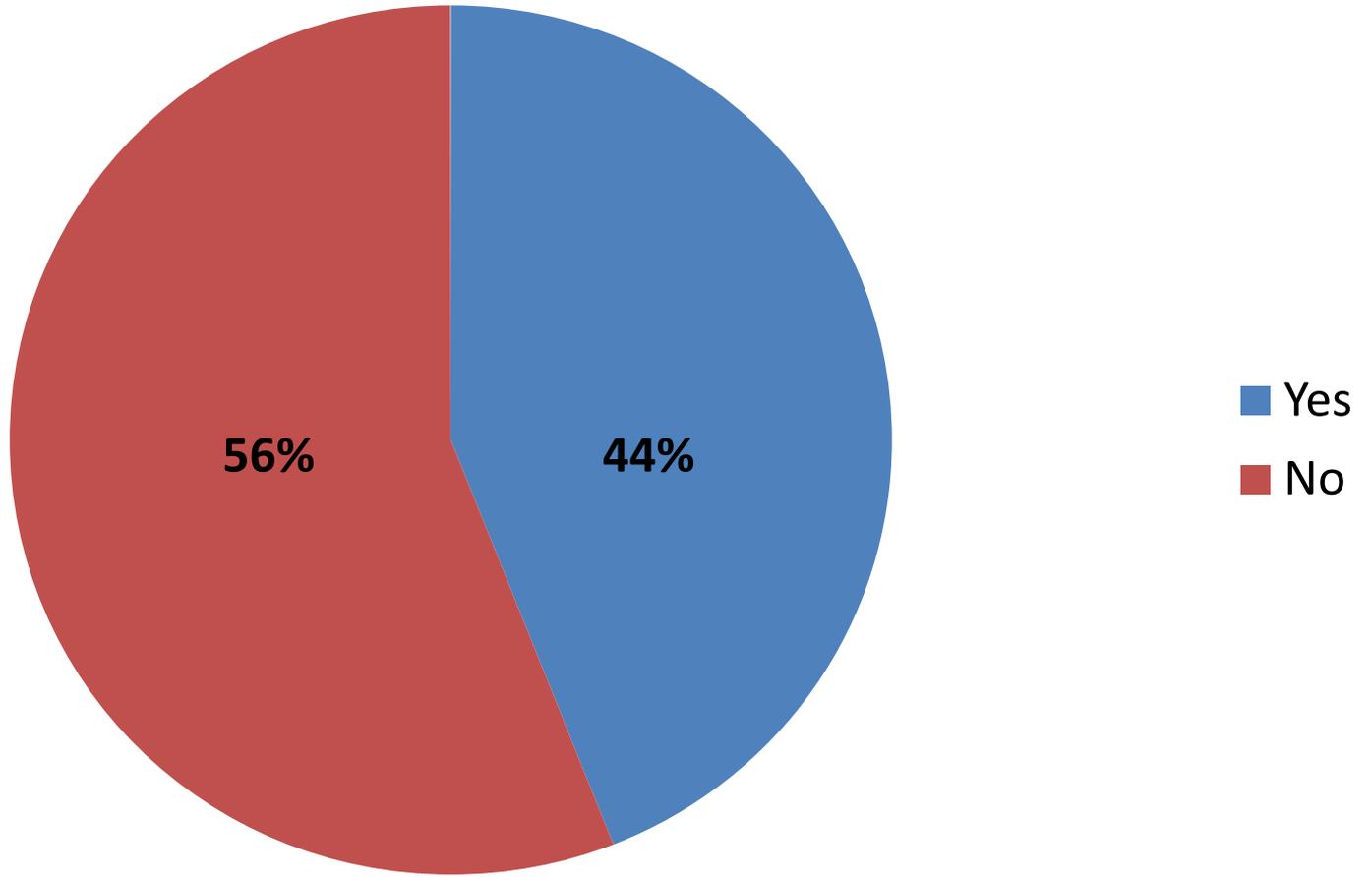
Common Perception—Diverse Job Opportunities are Lacking in Pinal County

- *“There are not many jobs, inside of Pinal County, that would interest me. I don't see that changing, that much, in the next 5 years.”*
- *“I don't foresee Pinal County becoming a job hub anytime soon.”*

Likelihood to Recommend Living in Pinal County



Is your place of employment within Pinal County



Place of Employment

- 47% of respondents work in Maricopa County
- Only 44% worked in Pinal County
 - San Tan Valley (29%)
 - Apache Junction (11%)
 - Florence (2%)
 - Gold Canyon (1%)

Commuting is an *A Priori* to a Quite, Rural Lifestyle in Northwestern Pinal County

- *“My commute is the worst part of my current living and working arrangement. Pinal County does not have jobs in the design and engineering high tech industry.”*

Skills/Interest Highlights

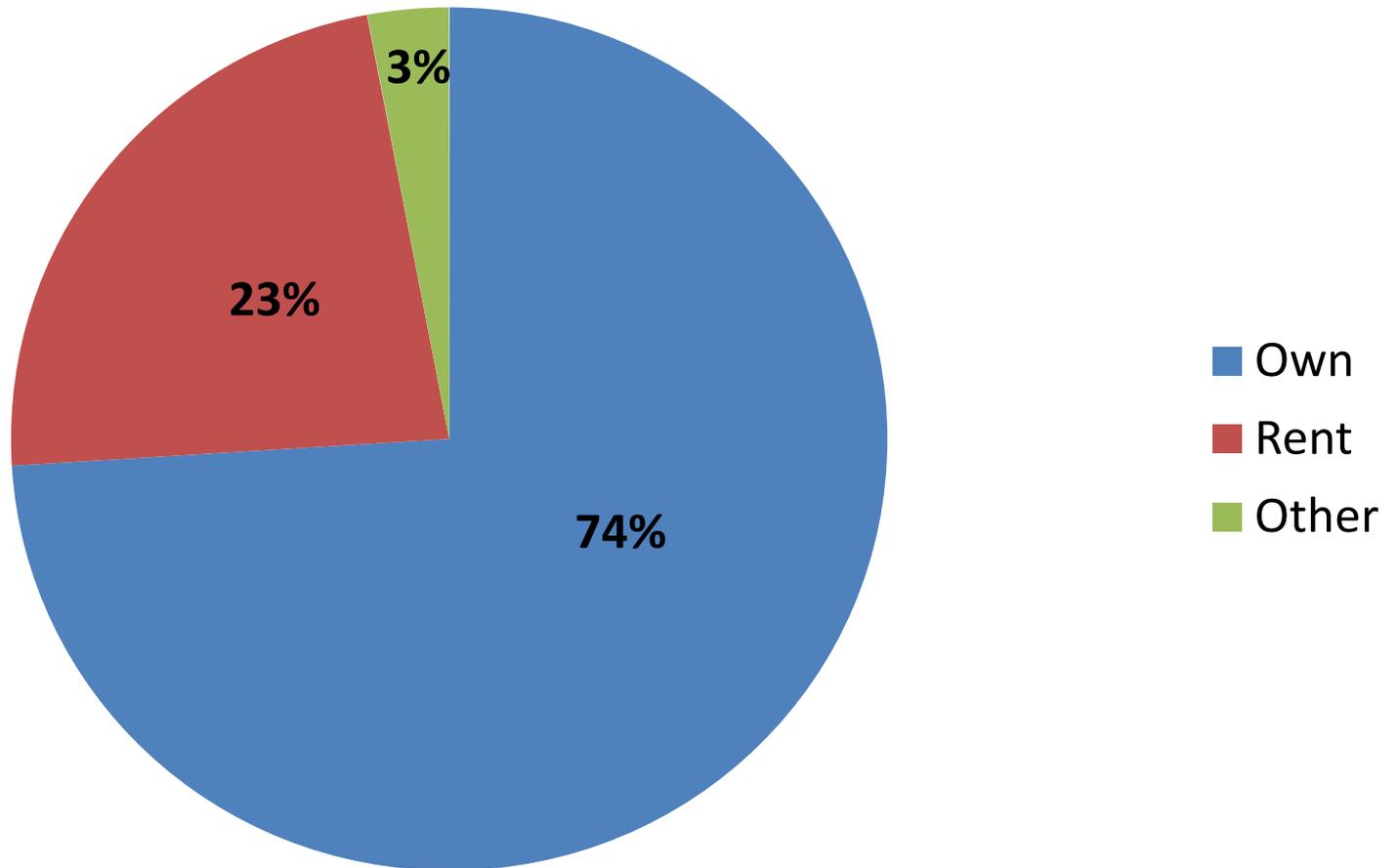
- Those with a high positive difference (more interest than current experience) include:
 - Science Applications (+19 percentage points difference)
 - Inventing New Products and Services (+14)
 - Selecting/Creating the Right Product Design (+12)
 - Designing Equipment or Technology (+10)
 - Programming Computers (+9)

Skills/Interest Highlights--Continued

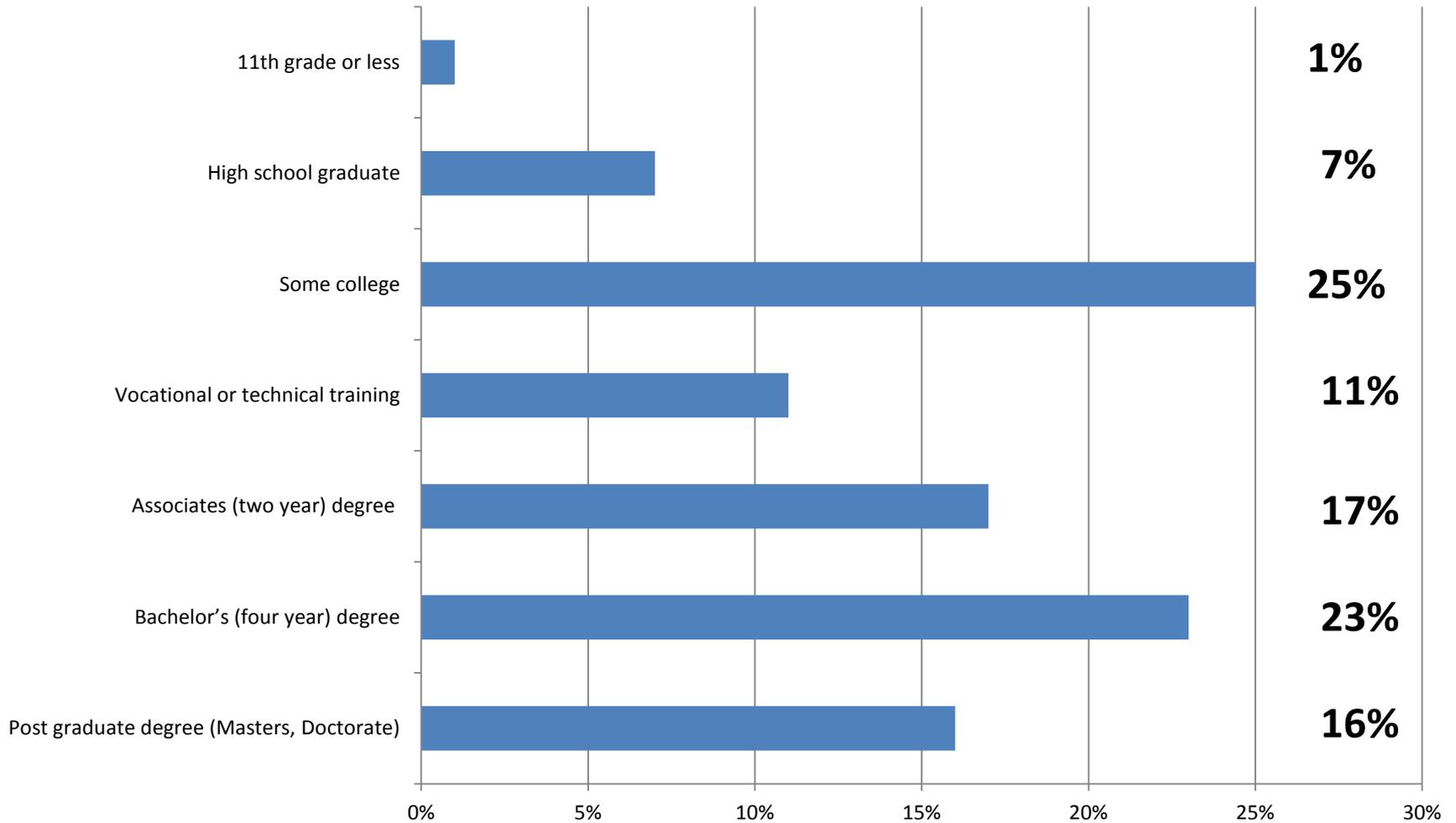
- Those skills with strong negative differences (more current experience than interest) include:
 - Customer Service—Telephone/Internet (-20 percentage points difference)
 - Locating Information (-13).
 - Persuading others (-9)
 - Speaking (-9)
 - Thinking critically (-8)
 - Working effectively in teams (-8)

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Do you own or rent your primary residence?



Education



Next Steps

- Later this year, similar studies will be conducted in:
 - Arizona City, Florence, Coolidge and Eloy
 - Central Pinal/Copper Corridor (Superior/Saddlebrooke)
 - Maricopa
 - Casa Grande
- The plan would be to repeat all 5 studies on a 2 year cycle: 2016, 2018, 2020, etc.

Recommendations

- A key element for Pinal County's Economic Development Team is to counter the strong perception that there are: "*Not great job prospects in Pinal.*" Some strategies to offset this feeling include:
 - Extensively publicizing recent wins like Tractor Supply building a warehouse in Casa Grande or the bid for the Tesla Battery Plant in Eloy.
 - Distributing information of the types of companies and potential job gain that Pinal County or the municipalities are bidding on (when possible).

Possible Study of Prospective Businesses

- A study of current and prospective Pinal County employer's needs, to better understand the skills, academic qualifications, certifications and job experience that they are looking for from new hires, particularly when they relocate to new areas.
- This study could include interviews with prospective companies based in Maricopa, Pima or even in other States, which are representative of the types of industries that Pinal County is trying to attract.



Strategic Research Initiatives

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Keep your business focused in the right direction