

Chapter 1 - Demographic, Socioeconomic and Health Profile of Utah

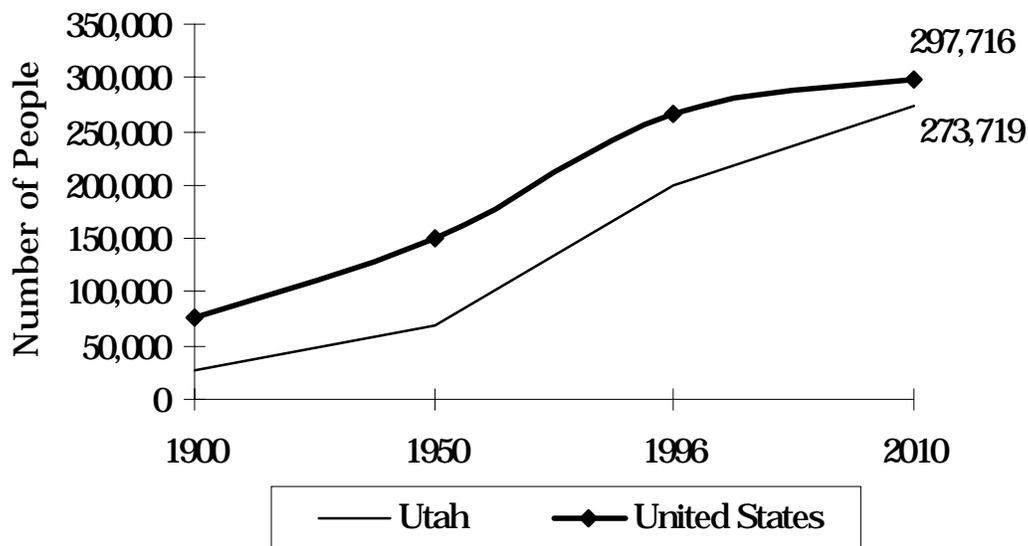
Health is influenced by genetic, socioeconomic, demographic (human population), and risk factors (e. g. stress). Changes in population size, distribution, and characteristics also have a subtle effect on our health and lives. Chapter 1 describes various features of Utah’s population. These population features include: size, growth and density, age and racial/ethnic composition, family structure, income, unemployment, poverty, and health care coverage. These factors broaden a traditional view of health from an individual to a community-level. Background factors can have an impact on the physical, mental and emotional health of Utah’s mothers and their infants.

Population Growth, Structure, and Characteristics

Population Growth

Utah is the fourth fastest growing state in the United States.¹ Utah’s population has increased six-fold since 1900, from 276,249 to 2,048,002 in 1997 (Figure 1.1). The primary source of Utah’s

Figure 1.1 Population Size: Utah (in 10s) and United States (in 1,000s), Selected Years



Source: Population Division, Population Paper Listing #47, Population Electronic Product #45, U.S. Bureau of the Census

population growth is natural increase (births minus deaths), which accounts for nearly 77 more births than deaths each day (28,000 more people annually). The population projections suggest that between the years 1990 and 2000, the rate of population increase in Utah will be more than twice (42.9%) that of the United States as a whole (20.8 %).¹

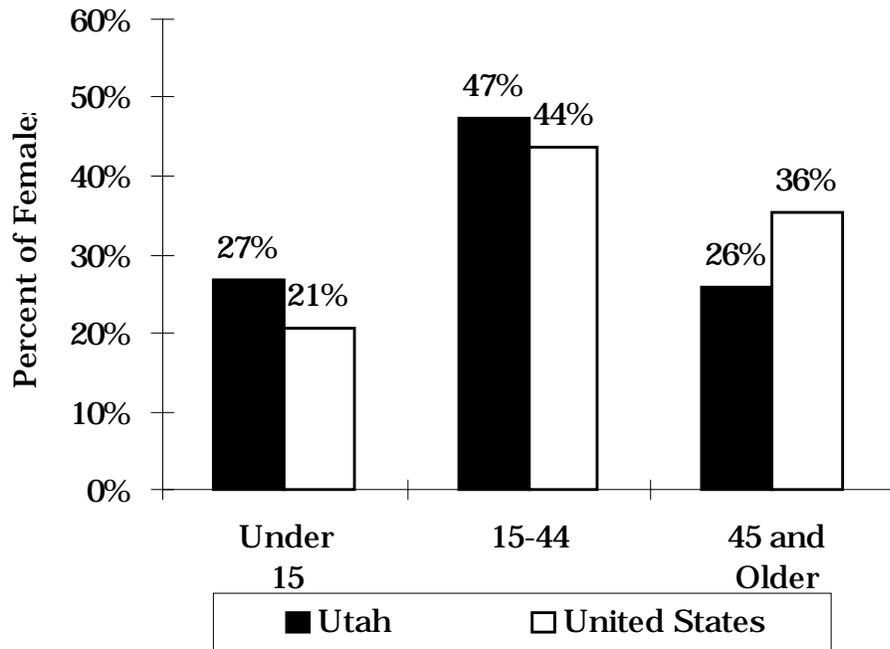
Population Distribution

Living in or near a city may reduce the risk of maternal and infant morbidity and mortality due to three factors associated with urban centers—distance, cost, and quality of health care.² Utah is one of the most urban states in the country. The urban concentration of the Utah population increased dramatically since 1950. In 1950, 65% of Utah’s population resided in urban areas compared to 64% of the United States’ population. In 1990, 87% of Utah’s population was concentrated in the urban areas (a territory including 25,000 or more inhabitants³) mainly comprised of Weber, Davis, Salt Lake, and Utah Counties or the “Wasatch Front,” and the cities of Logan and St. George. In comparison, 75% of the population of United States in 1990 lived in urban areas.⁴

Sex and Age Composition

Utah has a greater proportion of women in the reproductive ages (15-44) than the United States. In 1997, 47% of Utah women compared to 44% of U.S. women were in reproductive ages (Figure 1.2). The estimated number of women in Utah in reproductive ages (15-44) is 485,705 for 1997.

Figure 1.2 Age Composition of Female Population: Utah and United States, 1997



Source: Utah : Utah Population Projections, Public Internet Query System, Utah Department of Health
 U.S.: Population Division Home Page, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Utah has a unique age composition and remains a young state primarily because of its high birth rate. The Utah median age of 26 years in 1994 was the youngest among all states and 8 years younger than the national median age of 34 years.¹ The large proportion of Utah children under age 5 makes great demands of time and attention of parents, especially mothers. Many children also leads Utah to have a high dependency ratio^A (77) compared with the United States (64). Every 100 working-age Utahns (18-64 years of age) support 77 dependents.⁴

The racial composition of Utah in 1994 reveals a greater proportion of non-White population than in previous years (Table 1.1). Nevertheless, Utah still has a greater proportion of White people than the United States.

Table 1.1 Racial and Ethnic Composition: Utah 1980, 1990, 1994 and United States 1990

Race/Ethnicity Category	Utah 1980	Utah 1990	Utah 1994	U.S. 1994
White, Non-Hispanic	92.7%	91.2%	89.4%	73.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.3%	1.9%	2.4%	3.3%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%	0.7%
Black	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	12.0%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	4.1%	4.9%	6.1%	10.1%

Source: Race and Ethnicity Data: Understanding the Issues, Meeting the Demand in Utah. Department of Demographic Analysis, Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget.

Births and Deaths

Utah’s crude birth rate in 1995 was 20.2 births per 1,000 population, the highest rate in United States, while the crude death rate (number of deaths per 1,000 population) was 5.5 deaths/1,000 population, the second lowest in United States. (See Chapter 3, pages 3.9-3.10 for a comparison of fertility rates between Utah and the U.S.) The infant mortality rate^B in Utah was 5.2 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1995, which is also lower than the national average of 7.5 deaths per 1,000 live births.^{4,6} Infant mortality is an important measure of the health of infants and mothers and also assesses the health care delivery to infants and mothers.

^A Ratio of economically dependent population (those under 18 years of age plus those 65 years and over) compared to the working-age population (those 18-64 years of age).

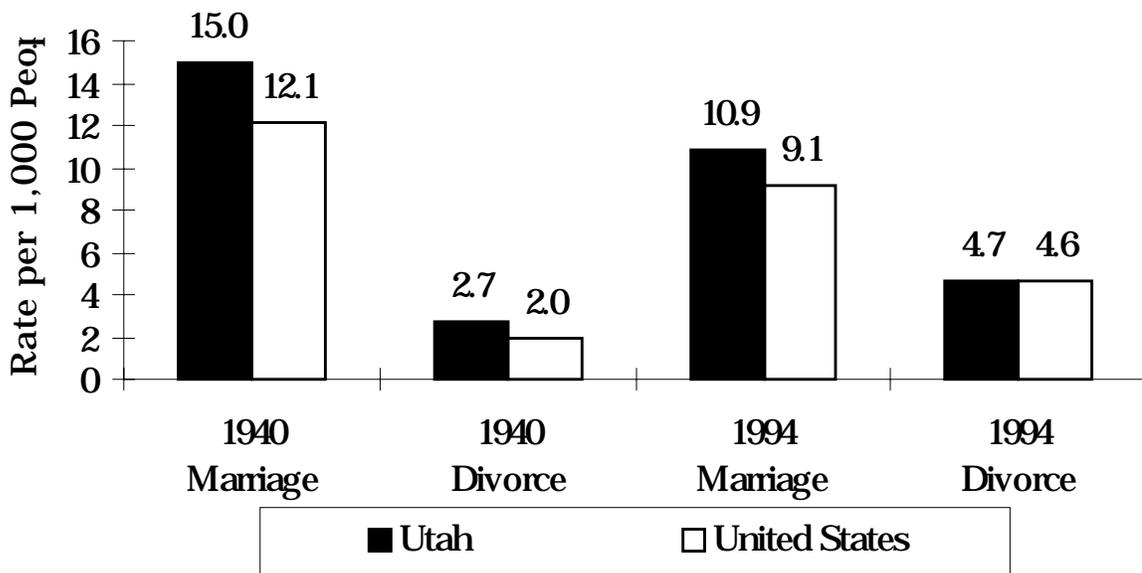
^B The number of deaths to infants under one year of age in a given year per 1,000 live births in that year.

Marriage and Divorce

Delaying marriage and childbearing is a national trend. Teen brides are likely to have more children than women who delay marriage, their marriage is more likely to end in divorce, and their children are more likely to die in infancy.^{3,7} Utah women and men are younger at the time of their first marriage than other American women and men. In 1965, the average ages at first marriage for Utah women and men were 20.0 and 22.3 years, respectively. By 1990, both Utah women and men had a median age of 21.0 years at first marriage. In contrast, the median age at first marriage for both women and men in United States rose to 23.9 years and 25.9 years, respectively, in 1990.^{7,8} In 1995, 22% of Utah marriages involved a bride under 20 years of age compared with just 11% of marriages nationally in 1990.⁸ Utahns are slightly less likely to be married today than in previous decades.

Marriage is associated with lower risks of death, disease, and injury resulting from risky behaviors such as suicide, reckless driving, use of alcohol and other factors called “socially approved narcotics”.⁹ Divorces are not only stressful but divorced people are also at a greater risk of mortality and morbidity.¹⁰ Utahns were more likely than an average American to divorce in 1940. Currently, the Utah marriage rate is higher than the U.S. rate and the divorce rate of 4.7 per 1,000 people is similar to the U.S. rate (Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3 Marriage and Divorce Rates per 1,000 Population Utah and United States, 1940 and 1994



Source: Utah’s Marriage and Divorce, 1995, Bureau of Vital Records, Utah Department of Health

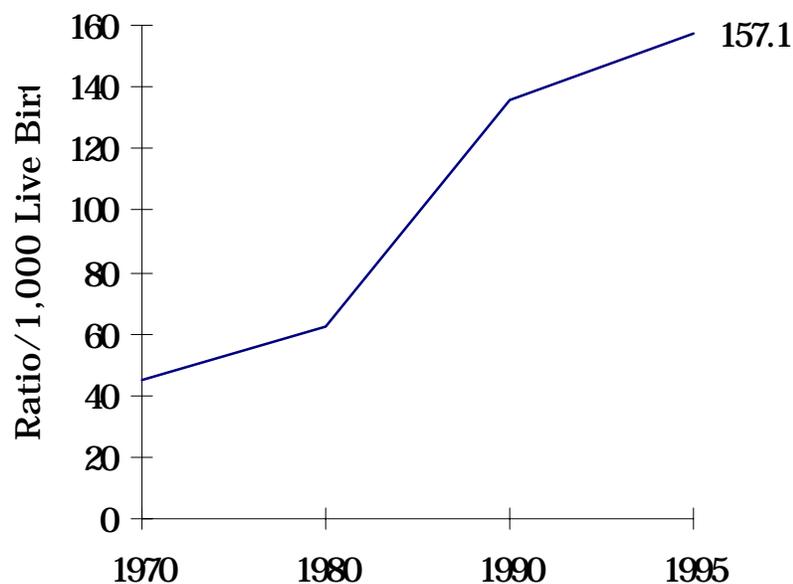
Household and Family Characteristics

Utah households are larger than the national average household size. Utah households in 1996 had an average of 3.06 persons whereas the average U.S. household size was 2.62 persons.⁴ Households headed by single parents, particularly those headed by single females, are generally poorer and economically disadvantaged. In 1990, 11% of Utah households were headed by a single female, a lower proportion than the national rate of 17%.¹¹

Children Born Outside of Marriage

Having a child outside of marriage hinders young parents, especially mothers, in educational and career opportunities. The percentage of children born to parents who are not married to each other has risen in Utah for several decades (Figure 1.4). The overall outside-of-marriage birth ratio in Utah was 45 per 1,000 live births in 1970, which rose nearly four-fold to 157.1 per 1,000 live births by 1995.¹² The number of such births in Utah during 1995 was 6,216. Nearly two thirds (4,513) of these births were to women 15 to 24 years of age. The outside-of-marriage birth ratios in Utah are higher for women in younger age groups, particularly those under 15 years of age.^{7,12}

Figure 1.4 Ratio of Births to Unmarried Mothers: Utah, 1970-1995

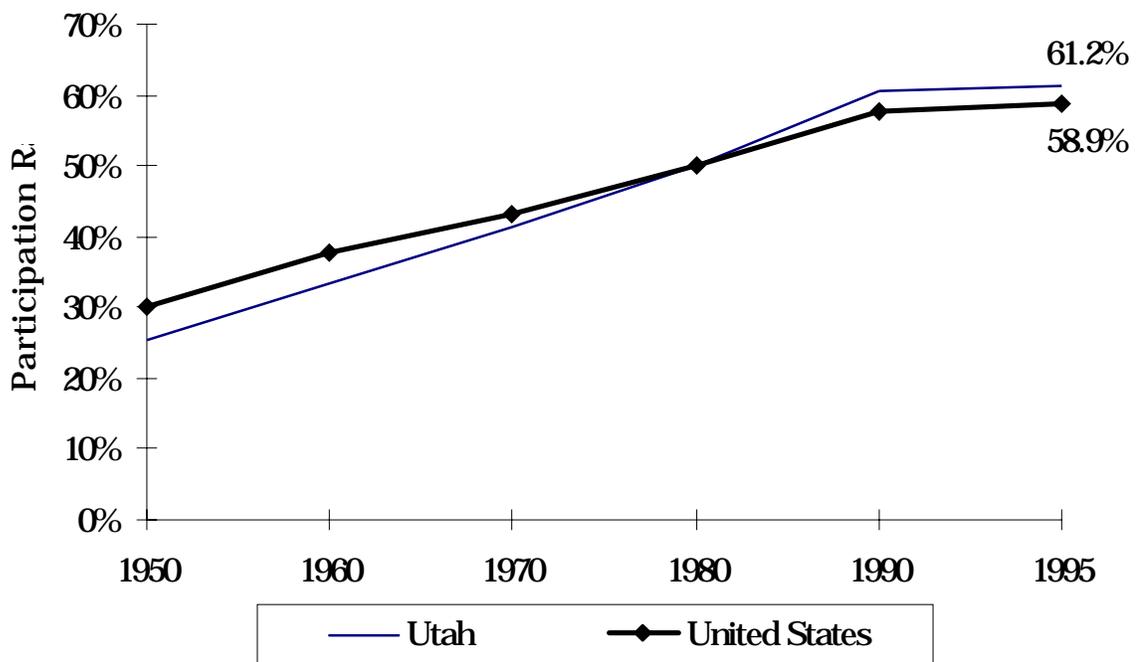


Source: Bureau of Vital Records, Utah Department of Health.

Income, Poverty and Unemployment

The 1996 per capita personal income for Utahns (\$19,243) was 80% of the per capita income in U.S. (\$24,243). Nevertheless, a smaller proportion of Utahns live below poverty (8%) than the average for the United States (14%).^{13,14} Female labor force participation has increased in Utah as well as in U.S (Figure 1.5). The 1995 labor force participation rates (number of persons working year-round, full-time, per 100 persons in ages 18-64) for Utah women and men were 61% and 83% respectively.

**Figure 1.5 Female Paid Labor Force Participation Rates
Utah and United States, 1950-1995**



Source: 1997 Economic Report to the Governor, Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

In 1995, 15,000 Utah women were unemployed (persons not employed but seeking work). Utah's 1995 total unemployment rate (number of unemployed men and women per 100 persons in the civilian labor force) of 3.6% was the lowest rate in 40 years.¹⁵ The unemployment rate in the United States in 1995 was 6.1%.¹³

Health Care

Health Care Resources

Utah ranks low on the ratio of health care professionals and facilities to population. In 1992, the ratio of nurses per 100,000 civilian population was 545 in Utah versus 731 in the United States. Similarly, Utah has fewer doctors per 100,000 civilian population (187 in 1992) than the U. S. (225 in 1992). There were fewer number of hospital beds per 100,000 persons in Utah (226) than in United States (352) in 1993. However, in the same year, Utah had more hospitals per 100,000 persons (2.258) than the U. S. (2.041). This indicates that the average hospital size in terms of number of beds is smaller in Utah than in the United States.¹⁶

Health Insurance

Utahns are healthier than residents of most other states in the United States. Utahns also fare better than the U. S. in terms of health insurance coverage. The proportion of Utahns without health insurance in 1994 was 12% compared with 15% nationally. Generally, low-income households with children are much less likely to have health insurance compared with low-income households without children. Utahns living in households earning less than \$35,000 per year (nearly 190,000 people) were substantially more likely not to have health insurance.¹⁷

Health Insurance for Women

The 1996 Utah Health Status Survey found that almost 55,000 women (versus 63,800 men) between 18 and 49 years of age carried no health insurance. A higher percentage of women under age 35 were uninsured compared with older women. Among Utah women 18-34 years of age, 19% had no health insurance during 1996 while 10% of women 35-49 years lived without insurance.¹⁷ Nationally, about 13% of women 18-64 years of age had no health care insurance.¹⁸

Nearly one-quarter of reproductive-age Hispanic women in Utah do not have health care insurance. Common reasons stated by Hispanic Utah women for not getting needed health care sometime during 1995 were: insurance did not cover care (30%), no insurance (26%), could not afford care (18%), or inconvenient doctors hours (17%).¹⁷ Fourteen percent of Utah women 18-24 years and 12% of women 25-44 years of age reported that there was a time during the past year when they felt that they needed medical care but could not afford to see a doctor.¹⁷

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