

The Diverse Employment Experiences of Older Men and Women in Workforce

Fact Sheet

Male wage and salaried employees, 50 years and older, are more likely to have four-year college degrees (38 percent) than women of the same age (28 percent).

Women under 50 have outpaced older women in their educational attainment:

- Thirty-two percent of women *under* 50 years old had four-year college degrees, compared to only 23 percent of men of the same age.

Older male workers (80 percent) are more likely than female workers (62 percent) to be married or living with a partner:

- Four percent of older women are single/never married, 14 percent are widowed, and 20 percent are divorced or separated.

Older male workers earn more than female workers:

- Older women earn 55 cents for every dollar that men earn from *all hours* worked at *all* jobs.
- When comparing hourly rates at main jobs, older women earn 69 cents for every dollar older men earn.

Older women in the workforce live in households with lower family incomes than their male counterparts:

- In 2002, the average annual income of older men is \$80,839 compared with \$64,444 for women.
- There is a similar disparity in median annual family income: \$66,300 for older men versus \$51,134 for older women.

Women, 50 and older, are less likely to have had continuous employment throughout their adult lives than men of the same age:

- Older men have been in the labor force for 37.7 years, compared to 32.3 years for women.
- Men have longer tenure with their current employers (mean 14.2 years), compared to women (10.9 years).
- Older women are more likely to work part-time (25 percent) compared to men (8 percent).

Older women and men have different work situations:

- Older female employees are *more* likely than their male counterparts to have too many tasks to do at the same time.
- Older female employees are more likely to feel overwhelmed by the amount of work they have to do on the job.
- Older female employees are also less likely to have autonomy on the job.
- Older female and male employees are similar in their access to flexibility on the job—26 percent of women and 28 percent of men have access to high levels of workplace flexibility.

The majority of older women (58 percent) and men (53 percent) are highly satisfied with their jobs.

Older women are more committed—loyal and willing to go that extra mile for their employers—than older men (37 percent versus 27 percent).

Most older workers don't want to reduce their responsibilities.

- The majority of men (74 percent) and women (66 percent) want to continue to work at the same level of responsibility in the future.

Older women don't fare as well when it comes to their personal well being.

- Among those who are married or living with a partner, fewer older women (58 percent) than older men (49 percent) are very satisfied with these relationships.
- Fewer older women (40 percent) than men (26 percent) are in good mental health.

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