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Gender discrimination comes in many forms for today's working women

BY KIM PARKER ([HTTP://WWW.PEWRESEARCH.ORG/STAFF/KIM-PARKER](http://www.pewresearch.org/staff/kim-parker)) AND CARY FUNK ([HTTP://WWW.PEWRESEARCH.ORG/STAFF/CARY-FUNK](http://www.pewresearch.org/staff/cary-funk))



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(http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/12/14/gender-discrimination-comes-in-many-forms-for-todays-working-women/ft_17-12-13_genderdiscrimination_women/) About four-in-ten working women (42%) in the United States say they have faced discrimination on the job because of their gender. They report a broad array of personal experiences, ranging from earning less than male counterparts for doing the same job to being passed over for important assignments, according to a new analysis of Pew Research Center survey data.

The survey – conducted in the summer before a recent wave of sexual misconduct allegations against prominent men in politics, the media and other industries – found that, among employed adults, women are about twice as likely as men (42% versus 22%) to say they have experienced at least one of eight specific forms of gender discrimination at work.

One of the biggest gender gaps is in the area of income: One-in-four working women (25%) say they have earned less than a man who was doing the same job; one-in-twenty working men (5%) say they have earned less than a female peer.

Women are roughly four times as likely as men to say they have been treated as if they were not competent because of their gender (23% of employed women versus 6% of men), and they are about three times as likely as men to say they have experienced repeated small slights at work because of their gender (16% versus 5%).

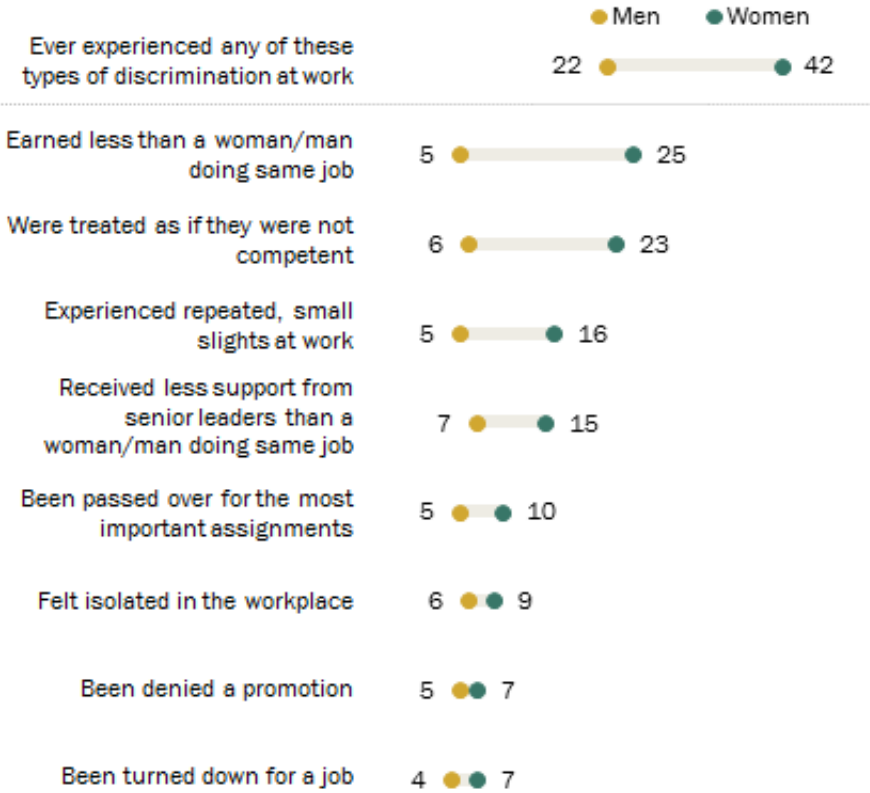
There are significant gaps on other items as well. While 15% of working women say they have received less support from senior leaders than a man who was doing the same job, only 7% of working men report having a similar experience. One-in-ten working women say they have been passed over for the most important assignments because of their gender, compared with 5% of men.

The survey, which was conducted July 11-Aug. 10, 2017, with a nationally representative sample of 4,914 adults (including 4,702 who are employed at least part time), also asked about sexual harassment in a separate question. It found that while similar shares of women and men say sexual harassment is at least a small problem in their workplace (36% versus 35%), women are about three times as likely as men to have experienced it personally while at work (22% versus 7%).

In more recent surveys conducted by other organizations, the share of women reporting personal experiences with sexual harassment has fluctuated, depending in part on how the question was asked. In an ABC News/Washington Post survey (<http://blogs.abcnews.com/Politics/unwanted-sexual-advances-hollywood->

Roughly four-in-ten working women say they've experienced gender discrimination at work

% of employed adults saying they have experienced each of these things at work because of their gender



Source: Survey conducted July 11-Aug. 10, 2017.

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weinstein-story-poll/story?id=50521721) conducted Oct. 12-15, for example, 54% of women said they have received unwanted sexual advances from a man that they felt were inappropriate whether or not those advances were work-related; 30% said this had happened to them at work. In an NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll (<http://maristpoll.marist.edu/1122-more-than-one-in-three-women-report-sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace/>) conducted Nov. 13-15, 35% of women said they have personally experienced sexual harassment or abuse from someone in the workplace.

The Center's survey asked about sexual harassment specific to the workplace. The survey was conducted as part of a broader forthcoming study on women and minorities in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.

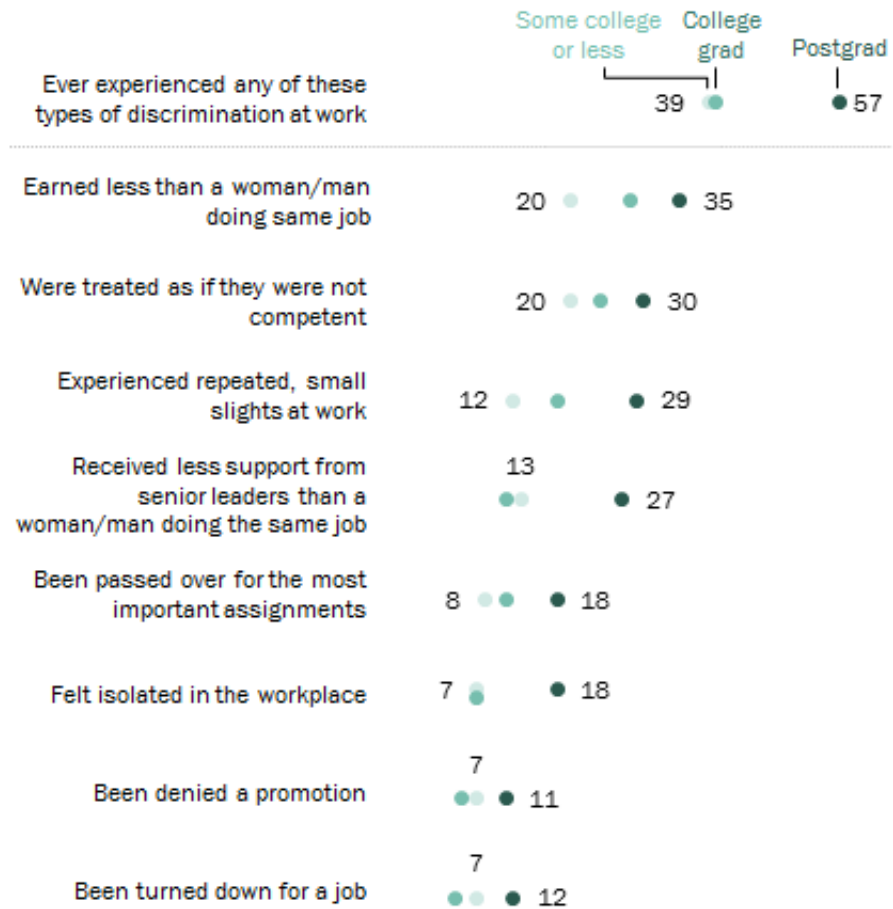
Differences by education

Among employed women, the share saying they have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace is roughly similar across racial and ethnic, educational, generational and partisan lines. But when it comes to specific forms of workplace discrimination tested in the survey, there are significant differences among women that are rooted mainly in their level of education.

Women with a bachelor's degree or more education report experiencing discrimination across a range of items at significantly higher rates than women with less education. And in some regards, the most highly educated women stand out. While 57% of working women with a postgraduate degree say they have experienced some form of gender discrimination at work, for example, the same is true for 40% of women with a bachelor's degree and 39% of those who did not complete college.

For postgraduate women, certain types of gender discrimination are much more commonplace

% of employed women saying they have experienced each of these things at work because of their gender



Note: "Some college" includes those with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree.

Source: Survey conducted July 11-Aug. 10, 2017.

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(http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/12/14/gender-discrimination-comes-in-many-forms-for-todays-working-women/ft_17-12-13_genderdiscrimination_postgrad/) Roughly three-in-ten working women with a postgraduate degree (29%) say they have experienced repeated small slights at work because of their gender, compared with 18% of those with a bachelor's degree and 12% with less education. Similarly, working women with a postgraduate degree are much more likely than their less-educated counterparts to say they have received less support from senior leaders than a man doing the same job (27% of postgraduate women, compared with 11% of women with bachelor's degrees and 13% of women with less education). The pattern is similar when it comes to being passed over for promotions and feeling isolated at work.

When it comes to wages, working women with a bachelor's degree or more are much more likely than those with less education to say they have earned less than a man who performed the same job. Women with family incomes of \$100,000 or higher stand out here as well – 30% of them say they've earned less than a

man who was doing comparable work compared with roughly one-in-five women with lower incomes (21%). But overall, women with higher family incomes are about equally likely to have experienced at least one of these eight forms of gender-based discrimination at work.

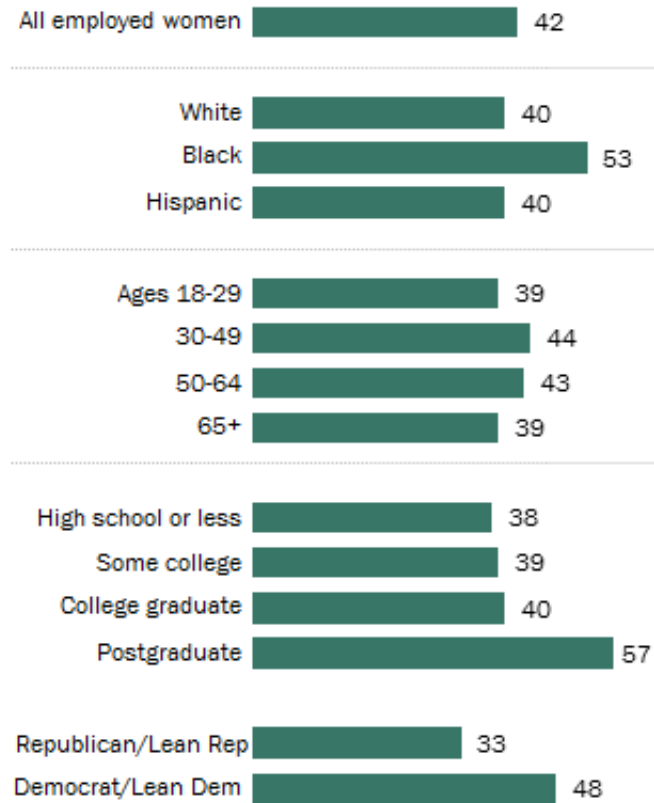
(http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/12/14/gender-discrimination-comes-in-many-forms-for-todays-working-women/ft_17-12-14_genderdiscrimination_amongwomen_new/) There are differences by race and ethnicity as well. While roughly half of employed black women (53%) say they have experienced at least one type of gender discrimination at work, fewer white and Hispanic women say the same (40% for each group). One area in particular where black women stand apart is in their reporting of having been passed over for the most important assignments because of their gender – 22% of employed black women say this has happened to them, compared with 8% of whites and 9% of Hispanics.

Women’s experiences with discrimination in the workplace also differ along party lines. Roughly half (48%) of working Democratic women and Democratic-leaning independents say they have experienced at least one form of gender discrimination at work, compared with a third of Republican and Republican-leaning women. These party differences hold up even after controlling for race. The partisan gap is in keeping with wide party differences among both men and women in their views of gender equality in the U.S.; a separate 2017 Pew Research Center survey (<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2017/10/18/wide-partisan-gaps-in-u-s-over-how-far-the-country-has-come-on-gender-equality/>) found Democrats largely dissatisfied with the country’s progress toward gender equality.

About the survey: These are some of the findings from a survey conducted among a nationally representative sample of 4,914 adults, ages 18 and older, from July 11-Aug. 10, 2017. The survey, which was conducted online in English and in Spanish through GfK’s Knowledge Panel, included an oversample of employed adults working in science, technology, engineering and math-related fields. The margin of sampling error based on the 4,702 employed adults in the sample is plus or minus 2.0 percentage points. The margin of sampling error based on the 2,344 employed women in the sample is plus or minus 3.0 percentage points. See the topline (<http://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/topline.pdf>) for exact question wording.

Among women, experiences with gender discrimination at work do not vary significantly by age

% of employed women saying they have experienced any of eight forms of discrimination at work because of their gender

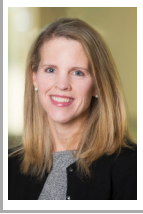


Note: Experience of gender-related discrimination based on combined responses to 8 items. Whites and blacks include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. "Some college" includes those with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree.
Source: Survey conducted July 11-Aug. 10, 2017.

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