

Men are 45% more likely to lose their jobs than women, report finds

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Men are more than forty per cent more likely to lose their jobs ‘involuntarily’ than women, thanks to the types of jobs they choose and the industries they work in.

And according to the University of Melbourne study by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, this statistic could partially account for the gender pay gap that sees women earning less than similarly-qualified men.

The study, using longitudinal data collected over the past ten years by the Household Income and Labour Dynamics (HILDA) survey, will be among several presented at the bi-annual HILDA Research Conference to be held at the University over the next two days.

Study Co-Author Associate Professor Roger Wilkins said gender differences are a significant feature of the labour market, especially when it comes to wage gaps. “While it is widely recognised that occupational and industrial segregation continues to play an important role in contributing to the gender pay gap in most industrial nations, gender differences in involuntary job loss have received little attention in labour market research.”

“Various explanations for the gender pay gap that often favours men have been offered by researchers, including discrimination against women and also compensation of men for other work attributes, such as a lesser degree of flexibility in hours, greater times taken to travel to

work, as well as greater health and safety risks.”

“But we found that the higher rate of involuntary job loss among men suggests that part of the wage gap may also reflect compensation for lower job security.”

The study shows that women are more inclined to choose [jobs](#) in industries where the risks of dismissal are relatively low. “Women may be more averse to jobs with greater dismissal risks because of differences in the perceived costs and benefits of occupations with less job security,” said Associate Professor Wilkins. “For example, costs of dismissal may be higher for women if they are more restricted by the distance they can travel for work due to family responsibilities.”

Factors such as age, educational skills, work experience and ethnicity were also considered, and while the study found that while they could affect workplace and employee behaviour - and by extension, the likelihood of job loss overall - they did not account for the higher rates of job loss for men.

The study also investigated the effects personality traits could have on the likelihood of dismissal; extroverts were generally associated with greater probabilities of job loss, while conscientious workers had a much lower probability of job loss. However the study found that personality differences between men and women did not explain the difference in likelihood of job loss.

Provided by University of Melbourne

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