

Surveying the Culture: Women's Representation and Workplace Climate in Economics



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The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position of Banco de España, or the Eurosystem.

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aee Asociación Española de Economía

AEE Survey on the **Work Environment in Economics**

Maria Cubel, Laura Hospido and Judit Vall Castelló

Surveys on the Professional Climate in Economics

- In October 2023, the [Spanish Economic Association](#) (AEE) implemented its first professional climate survey.
- It follows the [American Economic Association](#) (AEA) and the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Professional Climate in Economics.
- The **aim** was to **assess the status of the profession** concerning inclusiveness, harassment, and toxic work environments and to monitor changes over time through a repetition of the survey in regular intervals:
 - The first survey was sent in December 2018 to current and recent members: 45,435 invitations and 10,406 respondents (23%).
 - The second survey was sent in September 2023.
- In January 2024, the Minorities in Economics Committee (MinE) of the [European Economic Association](#) (EEA) and the [German Economic Association](#) also implemented a professional climate survey (861 respondents).

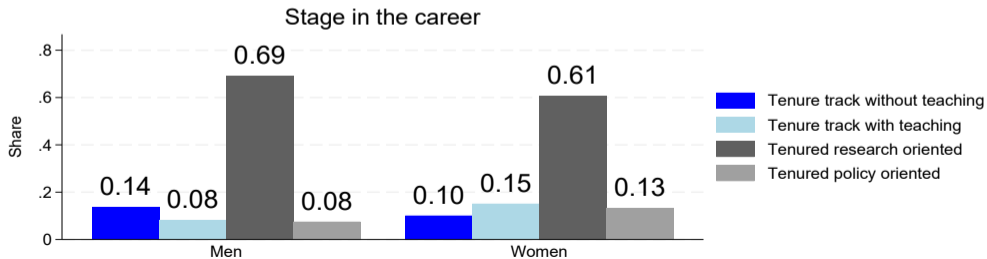
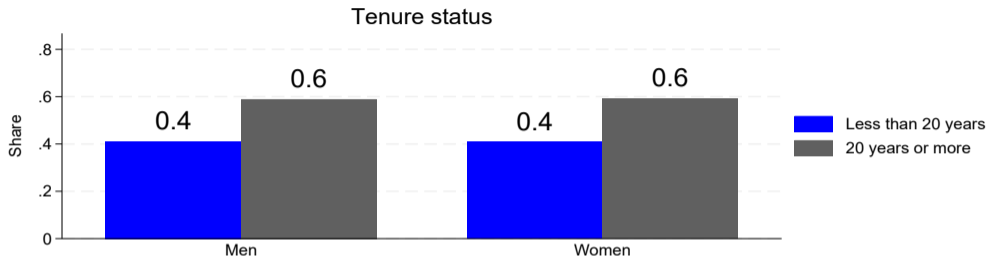
The AEE Survey on the Work Environment in Economics

- Under the umbrella of the AEE, we design an online questionnaire with 20 questions, most of them coming from the AEA survey.
- Got the approval of an external ethical committee.
- Sent by email to all (ever) members of the AEE: 1,800 invitations and 292 respondents (16%).
- The fieldwork went from October 16 to November 7, 2023.
- Median duration was 8.3 minutes (7.6 minutes for men and 9.1 for women).

Sample characteristics (comparison)

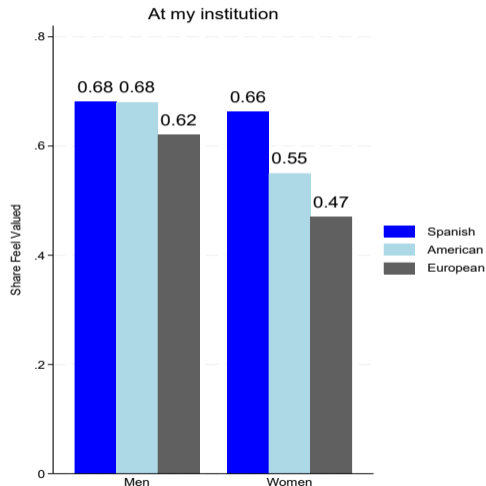
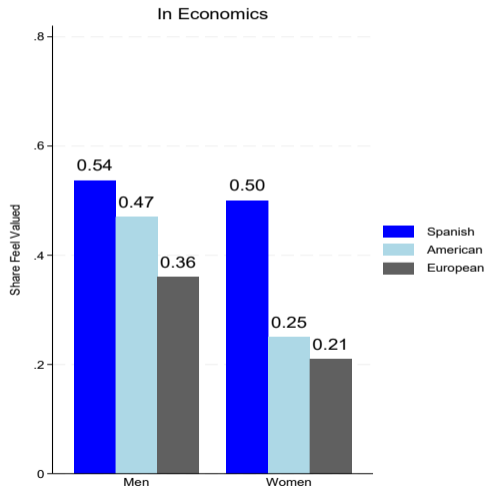
	2023 AEE Survey on the Work Environment in Economics (Spanish)	2019 AEA Survey on the Professional Climate in Economics (American)	2024 EEA Survey on the Professional Climate in Economics (European)
% Women	40	30	46.5
% Students	6.5	6.0	7.4
% LGTB	2.5	6.0	17.3
% Married	78	80	72.5
% White		79	76.5
% Living in Spain	85		
Average age	48	47	39.4

Sample characteristics (Spanish)



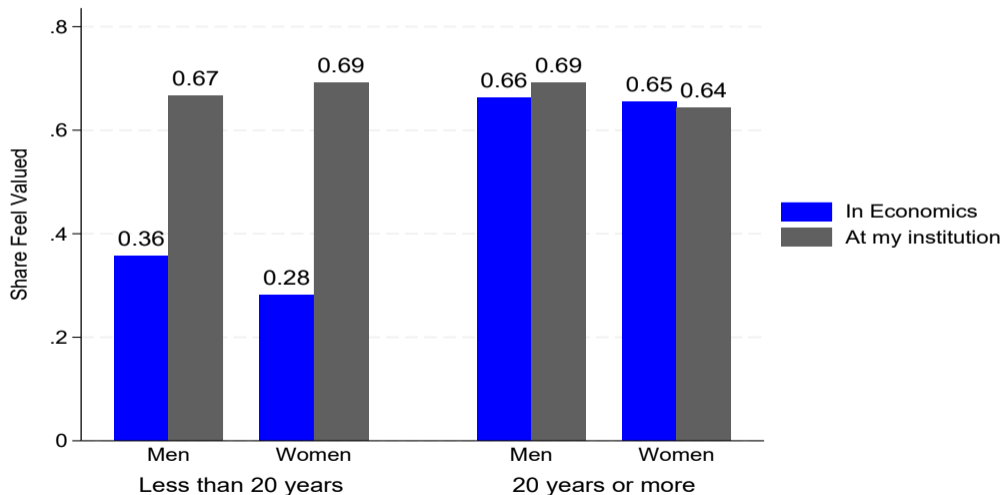
R1. General climate: I feel valued... (comparison)

Women feel less valued than men in both the economic profession and their institutions, being the differences larger in the other surveys.



R1. General climate: I feel valued... (Spanish)

Among respondents who have been in the profession for less than 20 years, 36% of men and 28% of women feel valued.

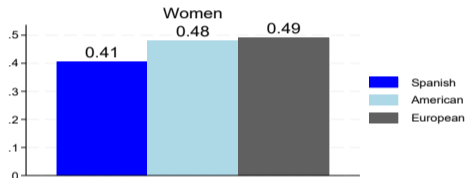
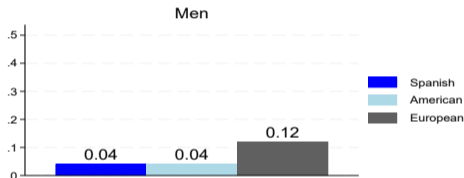


R2. Global assessment of discrimination (sex)

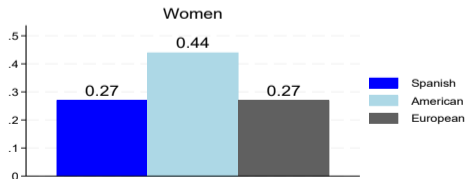
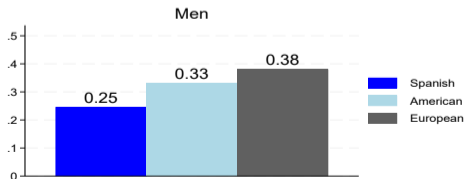
Almost half of the women in the survey have been personally discriminated based on sex versus 4%-12% of men. More similar shares witnessed discrimination.

Sex

Personally discriminated

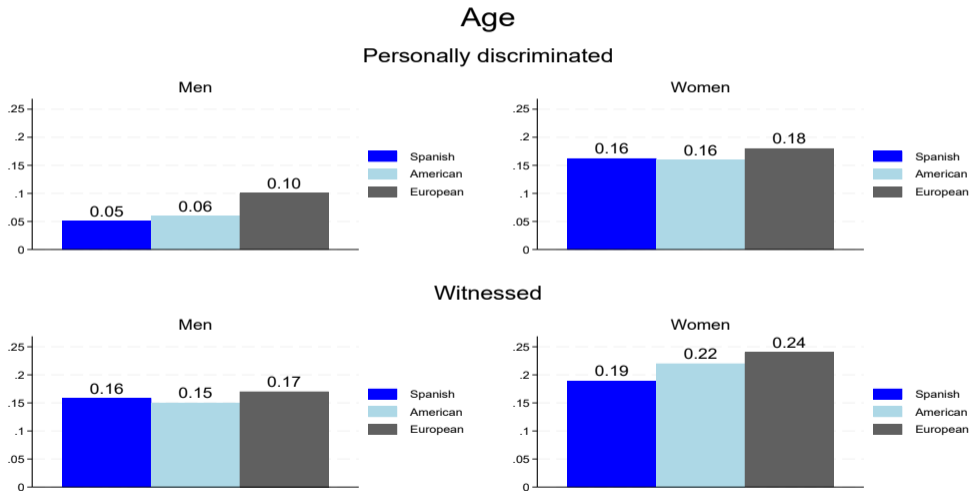


Witnessed



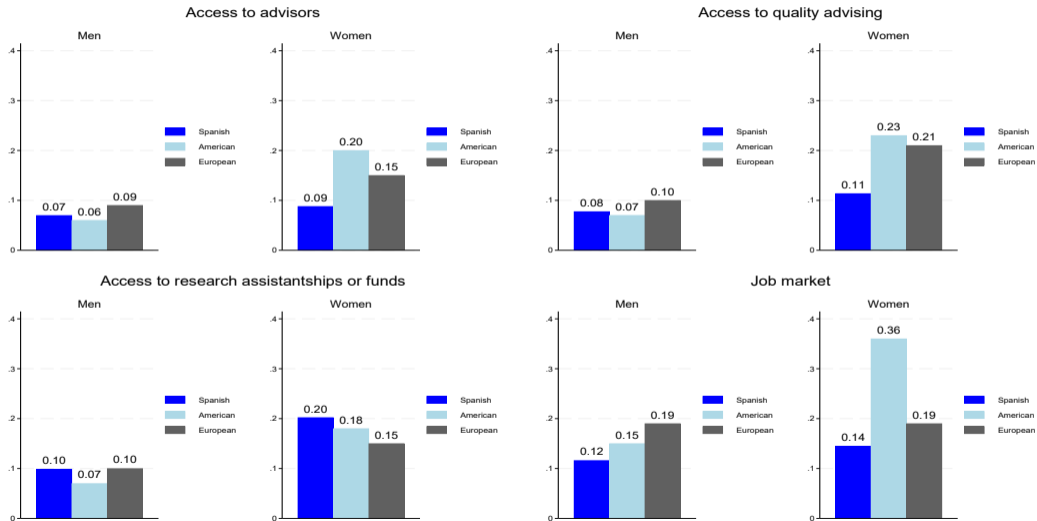
R2. Global assessment of discrimination (age)

Lower proportions and smaller gender differences in the case of age-based discrimination.



R3. In your student years, personally experienced discrimination

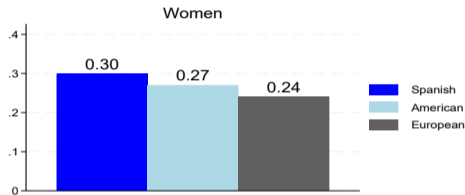
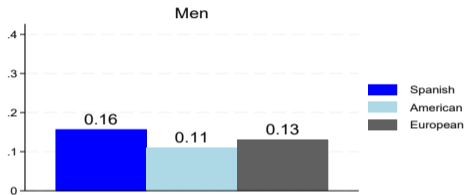
Higher rates for female students than male students, especially in the US.



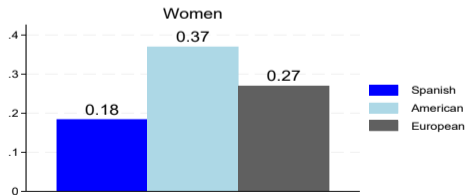
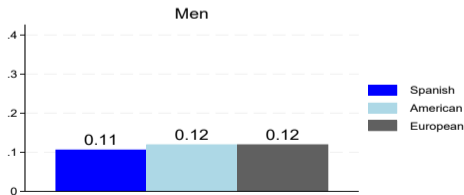
R4. While in the profession, personally experienced discrimination

Higher incidence for women than for men, especially in compensation in the US.

Promotion decisions

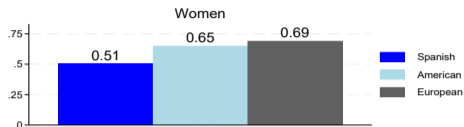
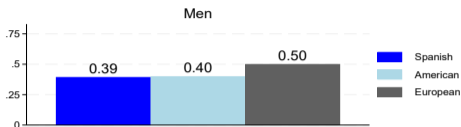


Compensation

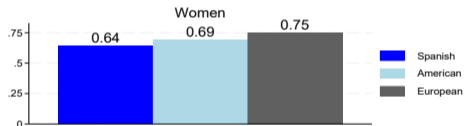
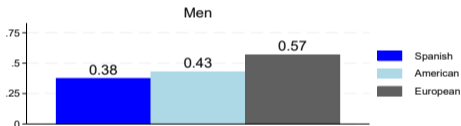


R5. During your time in economics, ever experienced...

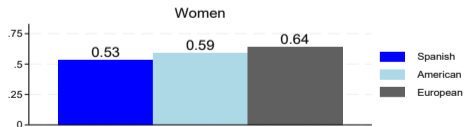
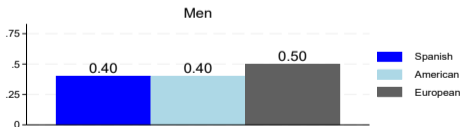
Excluded at a meeting or event in the field



That your work was not taken as seriously as that of your colleagues

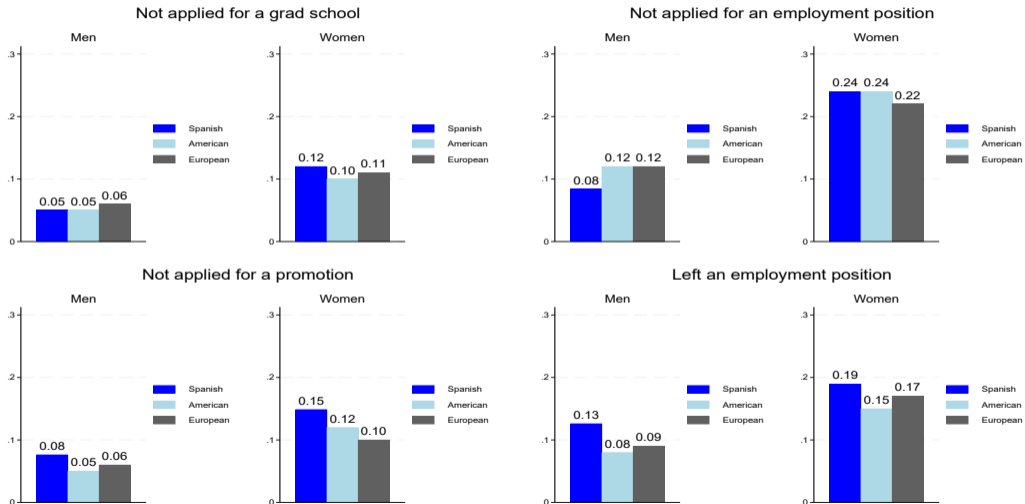


That your subject or methodology was not taken as seriously as that of your colleagues



R6. Ever done to avoid harassment, unfair treatment, or disrespect

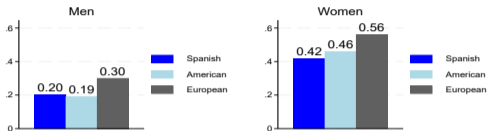
Stronger avoidance behavior among women than among men.



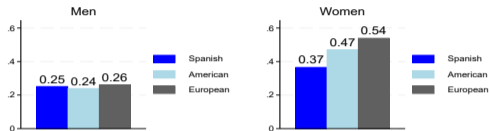
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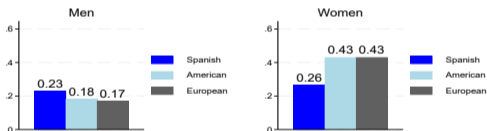
Not spoken during a seminar



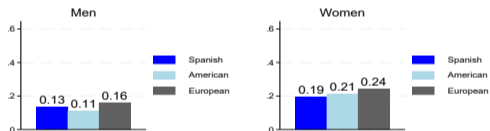
Not presented your idea or view



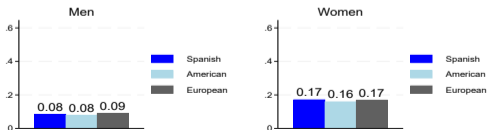
Not attended social events



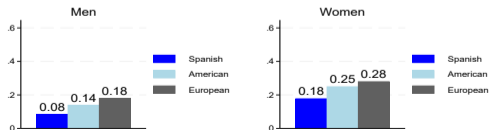
Not participated in a conference



Not made a professional visit

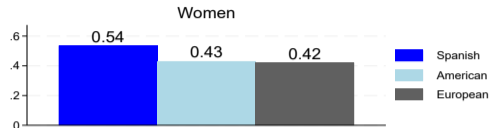
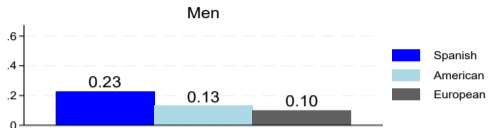


Not done research in a field

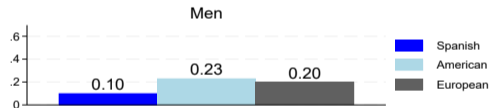
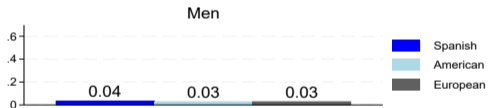


R7. Prevalence of uncomfortable and inappropriate interactions

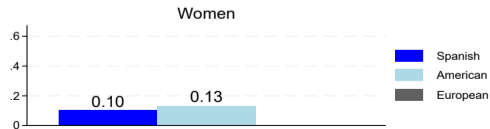
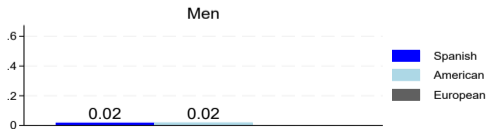
Commented flirtatiously, made direct or indirect sexist remarks/jokes that made you feel uncomfortable



Made unwanted attempts to establish a dating, romantic or sexual relationship with you despite your efforts to discourage it

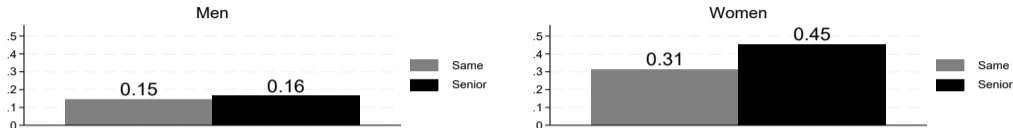


Touched you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable

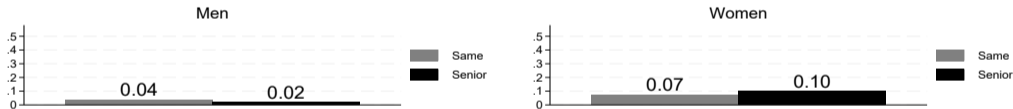


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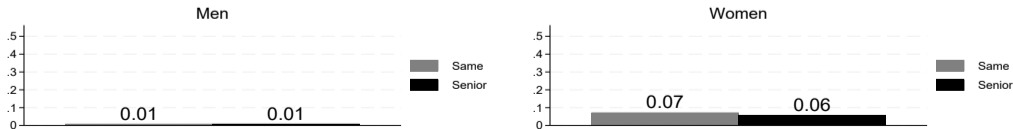
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EUROPEAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION

Developing and Applying Economics as a Science in Europe

Survey Questions on **Caring Responsibilities** included in the registration of the 2023 EEA meeting in Barcelona

WinE Women In Economics Committee
(Reference period of the survey: May 2023)

Questions included

Q1 What is your gender?

Among 1,419 responses: 29.25% females, 63.50% males, and 7.26% missing or prefer not say

Q2 What stage are you in your career?

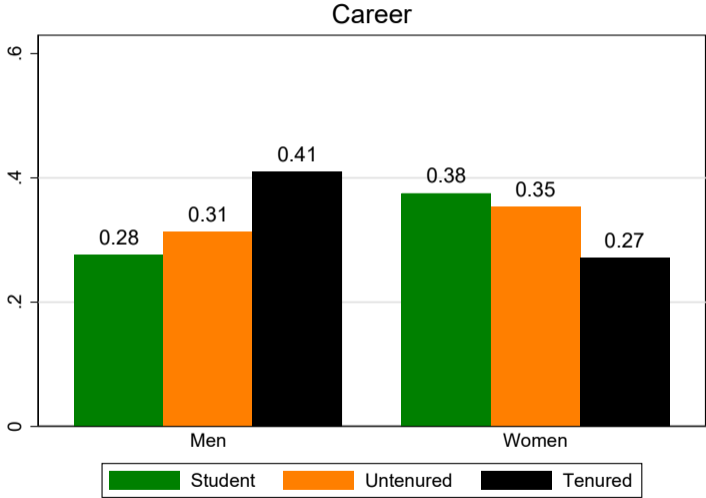
Q3 In the last three months, what proportion of your time do you typically work from home?

Q4 Do you have caring responsibilities?

Q5 (If yes to Q4) Do you feel that those caring responsibilities limit your professional development?

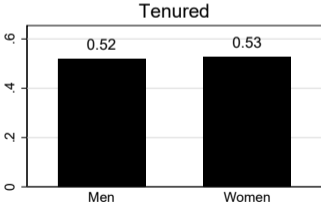
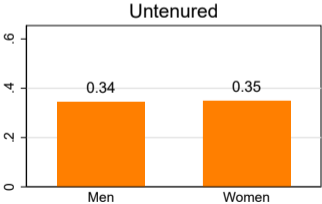
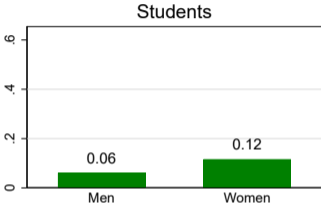
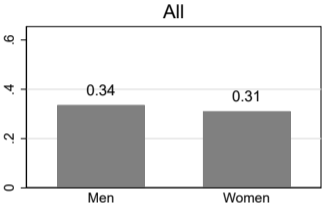
Q6 (If yes to Q5) How and what would help you?

Q2: What stage are you in your career?



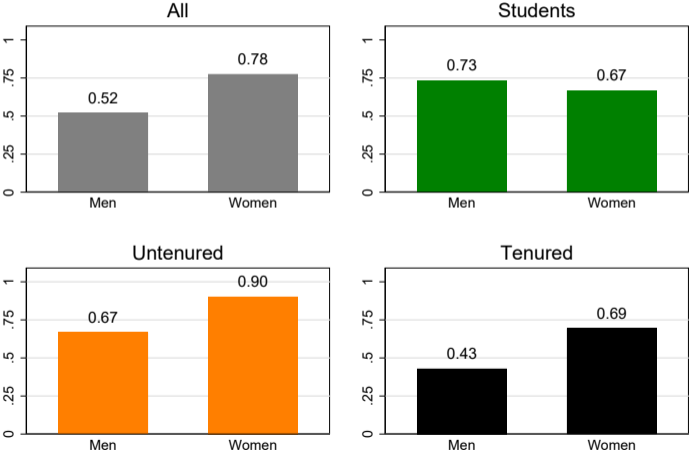
Q4: Do you have caring responsibilities?

Caregivers



Q5: (Among 432 caregivers: 30% females, 70% males) Do you feel that those caring responsibilities limit your professional development

Limit



Q6: (Among 258 respondents that replied yes to Q5) 51% provide answers to how and what would help you (48% men and 55% women)

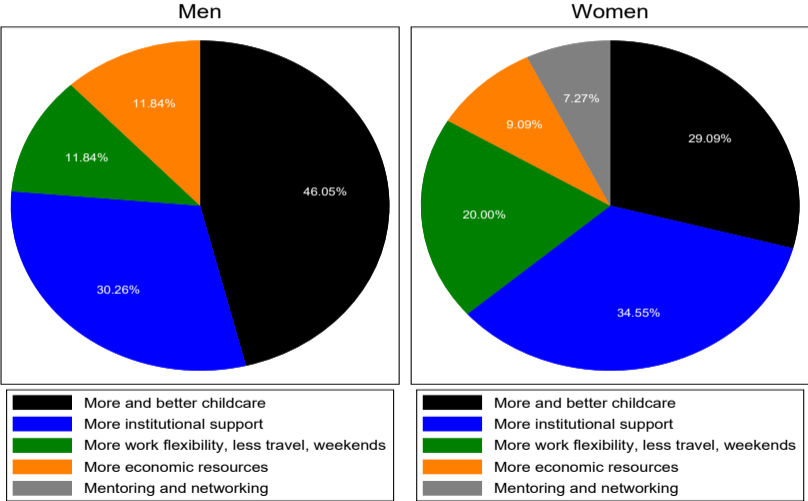
Some examples of not providing an answer:

- Healthy children that sleeps through the night
- It would also help if I did not need to sleep. Alternatively, it would help if other people without children would stop working 14 hours a day so that I can keep up with them
- Getting older children
- If a day could have more hours / More than 24 hours in a day
- A miracle
- Nothing. It's just that colleagues without children have more opportunities to work in evenings and weekends, and this is just what it is
- Nothing. I love my children and enjoy spending time with them/caring for them. Without children I would have much more time to work. Still, I am happy to trade professional goals for a family life

Q6: (Among 131 respondents that provide answers to how and what would help you) Some examples for each category

- **More and better childcare (39%):** more availability of caregiving facilities; reliable childcare; Child care facilities at my workplace that are reasonably priced; Free daycare in conferences
- **More institutional support (32%):** Administrative responsibility reduction; Lower teaching load; Help for relocating internationally with elderly parents; Mental health support, understanding and empathy
- **More work flexibility, less travel, work evenings and weekends (15%):** more flexible teleworking policy; more flexible working schedule; Better teaching schedule (not necessarily less teaching load); Time is limited and travelling is also much more complicated when you have caring responsibilities
- **More economic resources (11%):** Higher salary; Price discounts for summer schools, conferences, etc.; More funding for students that have dependents
- **Mentoring (3%):** I find that having children limits my ability to travel and network aggressively. So providing more meaningful mentoring and exposure opportunities, both in person and in virtual format, would certainly help

Q6: (Among 131 respondents that provide answers to how and what would help you) Replies by gender



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Main Take Aways...

The results highlight systemic challenges in the profession:

- Experiences of exclusion are common in Economics, both among women and men (smaller): 51% (39%) of female (male) respondents feel excluded at meetings/events, 64% (38%) feel that their work was not taken seriously.
- Younger professionals report worse numbers: 36% of men and 28% of women with less than 20 years in the profession feel valued.
- Women, particularly caregivers, report higher rates of exclusion from key professional opportunities.
- Among caregivers, half of men and 80% of women felt that caring responsibilities limit your professional development.
- Why is this important? We need to understand the magnitude of the problem and the areas and groups where it is more prominent before designing policies.

Many thanks!

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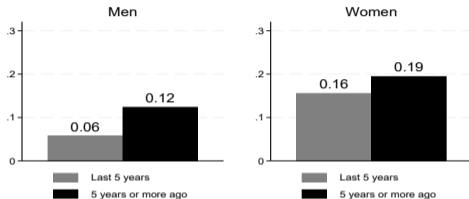
Take Aways

Appendix

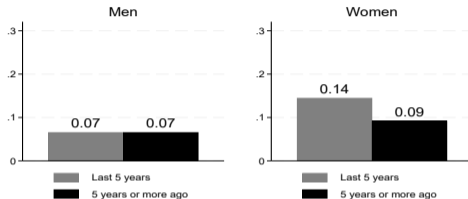
R4. While in the profession, personally experienced discrimination

For women worsening over time, in 3 out of 4 aspects.

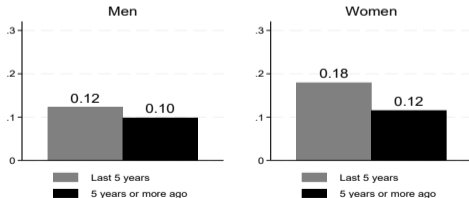
Promotion decisions



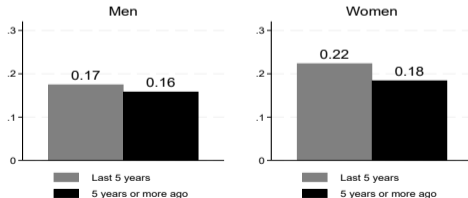
Compensation



Professional development opportunities



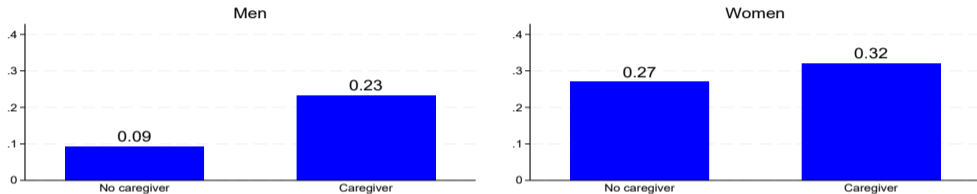
Publishing decisions



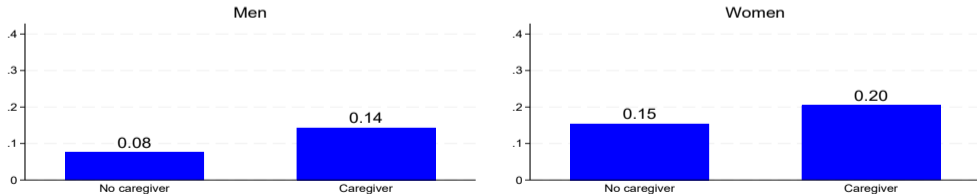
R4. While in the profession, personally experienced discrimination

Caregiving status is associated with greater discrimination for men and women.

Promotion decisions

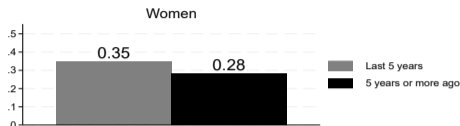
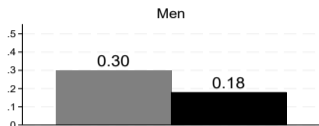


Compensation

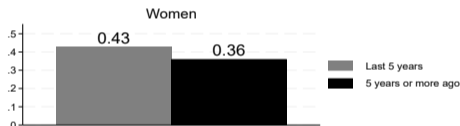
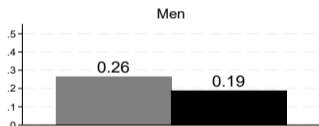


R5. During your time in economics, ever experienced...

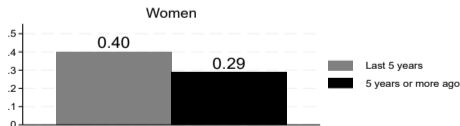
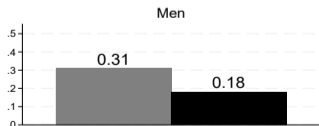
Excluded at a meeting or event in the field



That your work was not taken as seriously as that of your colleagues

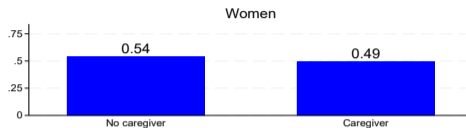
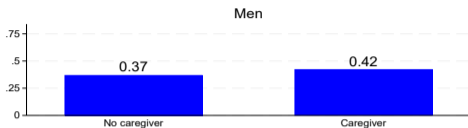


That your subject or methodology was not taken as seriously as that of your colleagues

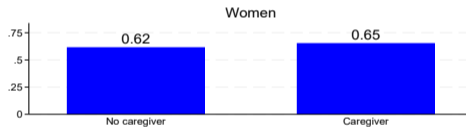
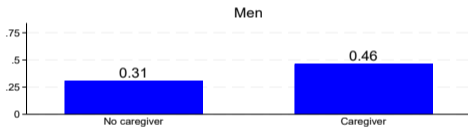


R5. During your time in economics, ever experienced...

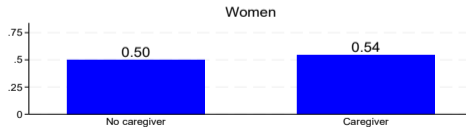
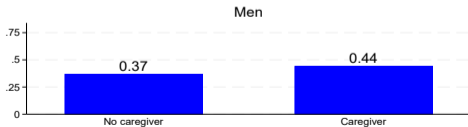
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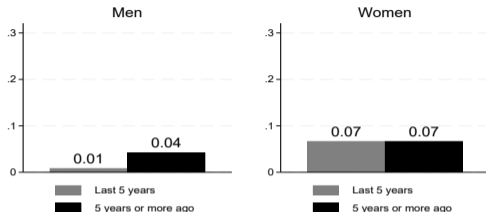


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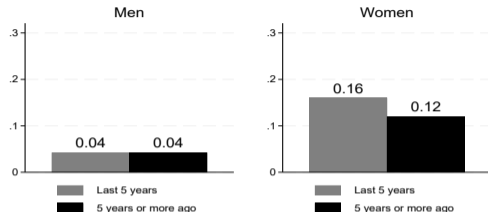


R6. Ever done to avoid harassment, unfair treatment, or disrespect

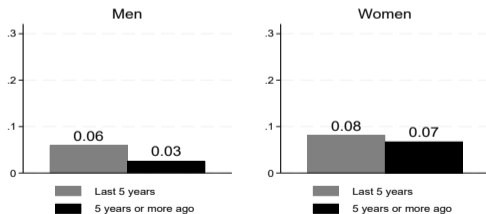
Not applied for a grad school



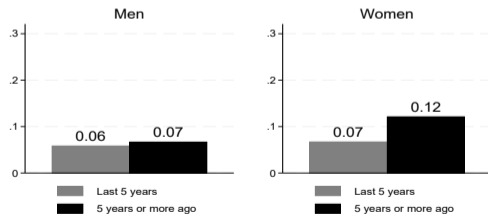
Not applied for an employment position



Not applied for a promotion

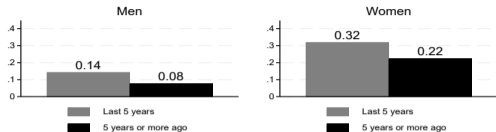


Left an employment position

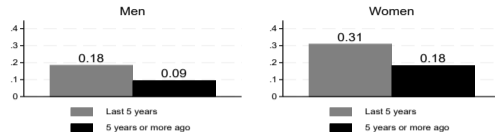


R6. Ever done to avoid harassment, unfair treatment, or disrespect

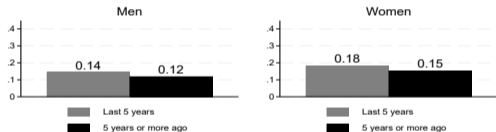
Not spoken during a seminar



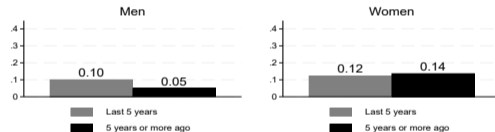
Not presented your idea or view



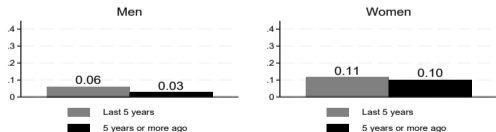
Not attended social events



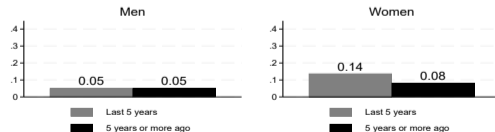
Not participated in a conference



Not made a professional visit

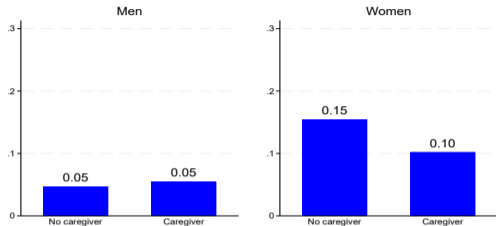


Not done research in a field

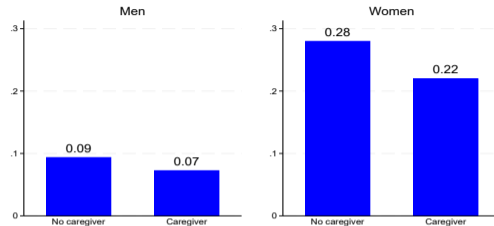


R6. Ever done to avoid harassment, unfair treatment, or disrespect

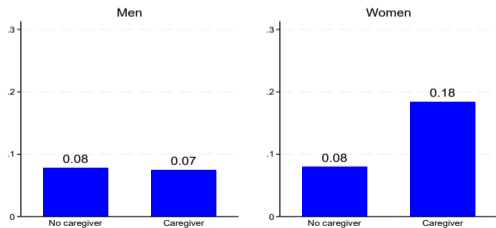
Not applied for a grad school



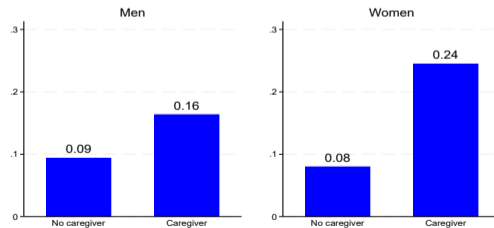
Not applied for an employment position



Not applied for a promotion

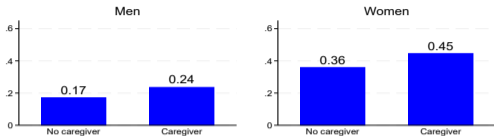


Left an employment position

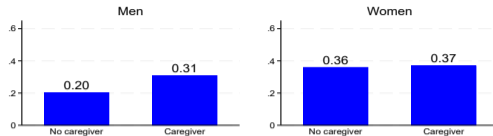


R6. Ever done to avoid harassment, unfair treatment, or disrespect

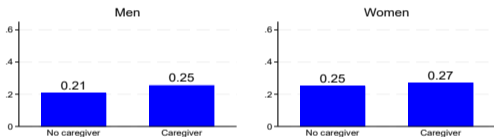
Not spoken during a seminar



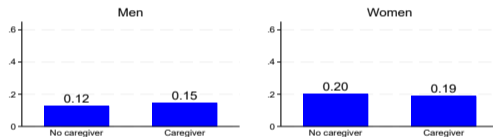
Not presented your idea or view



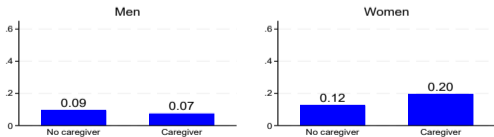
Not attended social events



Not participated in a conference



Not made a professional visit



Not done research in a field

