

# Career Perception of American Workers: Career Statuses During the Pandemic

by

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## Contents

Executive Summary .....	3
Introduction .....	4
Demographics of Participants .....	4
Decision to Change Careers Based on Demographic Data .....	7
Summary .....	10

## Executive Summary

The onset of the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic in early 2020 has fundamentally changed many businesses, politics, and even personal practices. People and organizations experienced a culture shock. A survey of over 11,000 people was conducted across the United states. The survey consisted of 48 questions, as well as extensive demographic questions. One question that was asked was whether the pandemic had made a difference in how people view their careers. Understanding what factors are involved in career path decision making



Non-  
binary                    37    0.34%

### Ethnic Background

The survey offered nine choices for ethnic background. The responses were as follows.

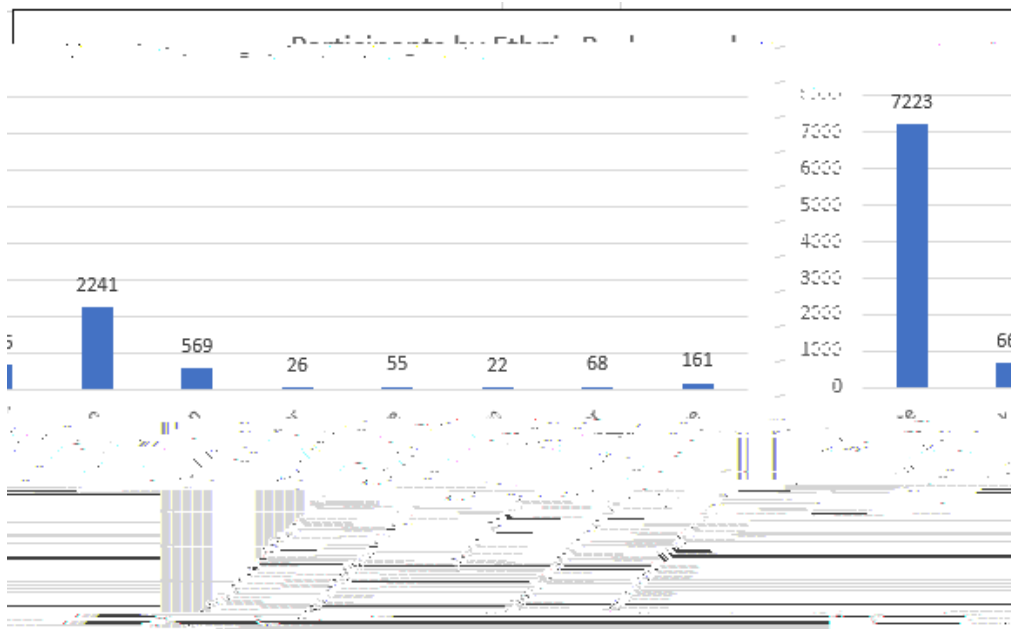
Table 1

*Ethnic background of participants*

Ethnic Background	Percent of Survey Population
White	65.5%
African or African descent	6.0%
Hispanic/Spanish American/Latino	20.3%
Asian-American or Asian	5.2%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.5%
Middle Eastern	0.2%
Other	0.6%
Mixed race	1.5%

Figure 1

*Bar chart of the ethnic background of the participants*



## Age Groups

### Figure 2

*Ages of participants by group*

## Participants by Education

### Table 2

*Participants had seven categories for consideration of their education.*

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Level of Education	Responses	Percent
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### Figure 3

*Graphic representation of the spread of educational levels*

### Decision to Change Careers Based on Demographic Data

The number of people who had considered a career change was almost the same as those who had not. There is research based on the demographic profiles considered in this paper, so questions as to age (Holly Slay et al., 2018) and gender (Ali et al., 2018) and how those issues might moderate a decision to make a career change could be important. Using data from the University of Phoenix Career Optimism index survey, correlational studies were run to see if there was a significant association between the demographic factors mentioned and the consideration of changing careers. Four correlational analyses were run as shown below:

- 1)  $r$  between having considered a career change and gender = 0.0522.
- 2)  $r$  between having considered a career change and ethnic background = -0.060960.00000912 0 612 792

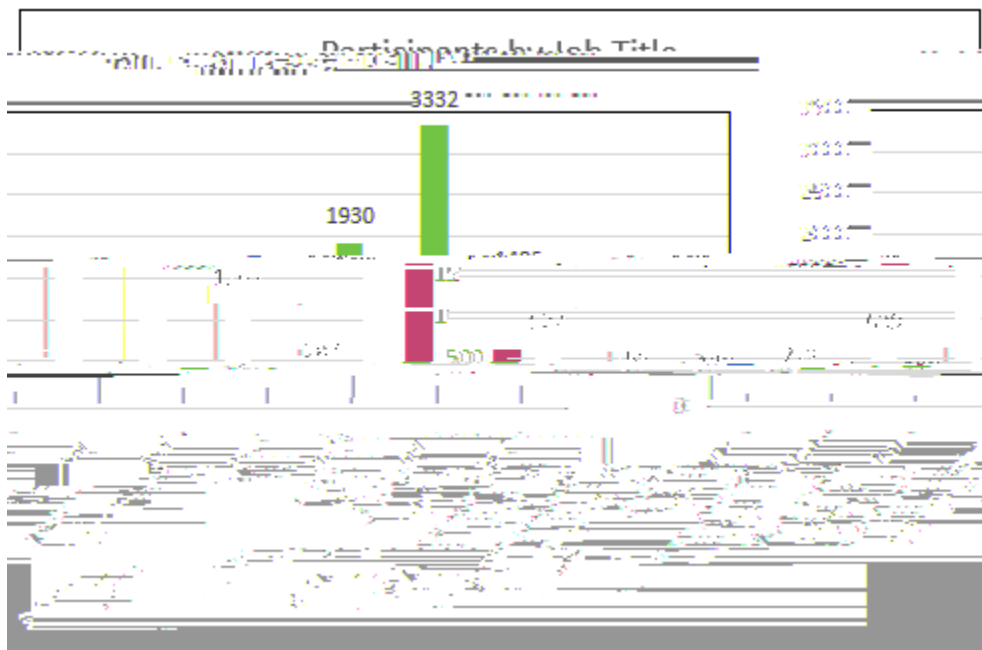
**Table 3**

*Participants had 10 choices for various job titles which were used as an indicator of seniority within their company.*

1=C-Suite	4=Vice President	7=Mid-level employee	10=Other
2=President	5=Director	8=Entry-level employee	
3=Executive VP	6=Manager/Supervisor	9=Other	

**Figure 4**

*Distribution of participants by job title. 9905 participants responded.*



A correlational analysis was run between the first question and the second question. The assumption is that those who were more secure might be less likely to consider a career change. The correlation between job title and whether the participant had considered a career change was not significant with a  $p$ -value of 0.000451.

If employees were more optimistic and secure the more senior they were in their current position, would they be more likely to remain in that position? An analysis of the average time they reported having held the current position is indicated in Table 4. Based on the information as noted in the University of Phoenix Career Optimism index survey (Edelman, 2021) below, there is very little variation in the time in position and job title.



Table 4

Job Title	Years in Position
C--Suite Average time in position	3.58
President Average time in position	3.42
Exec VP Average time in position	3.14
VP Average time in position	3.32
Director Average time in position	3.44
Manager/Supervisor Average time in position	3.49
Mid-Level employee Average time in position	3.41
Entry-level employee Average time in position	2.66
Other Average time in pos	

financial assistance to employees did not offer a benefit to the organization and could drain needed funds. In another study by Lee et al. (2018), the topic of financial support was discussed as a tool in helping employees forced to leave due to downsizing. There have been other studies related to healthcare and younger generational employees, but the information is mixed. In a focused study of one company with high turnover (Sutton, 2020), tuition reimbursement did make a positive difference in retaining and recruiting.

In the University of Phoenix Career Optimism index survey 2792 reW\*n/F2 12 Tf1 0 0 1 479.5 reW\*nBT/F2 12 Tf1 0

## References

Akkermans, J., Seibert, S. E., & Mol, S. T. (2018). Tales of the unexpected: Integrating career shock in the contemporary careers literature. *South African Journal of*