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Siena College Study: Women at Work

NY'ers and Upstate CEO's See Balancing Work & Family as Biggest Problem for Women at Work

Large Majority Say Women Struggle to Receive Equal Pay and With Workplace Sexual Harassment; CEO's See Different World

60% Think Women Have as Much or More Opportunity to be Successful; 70% of All CEO's, 38% of Female CEO's: 'Women Have as Much Opportunity Today as Men do'

Loudonville, NY. Balancing work and family is the biggest problem facing women in the workplace, according to a new Siena College Research Institute Study combining surveys of New York State adults and Upstate CEO's released today. Seventy-one percent of New Yorkers say that receiving equal pay is at least somewhat of a problem for New York's working women and 69 percent see sexual harassment as either somewhat (43 percent) or a very big (26 percent) problem. Only 27 percent of Upstate CEO's see receiving equal pay as a problem while 30 percent think sexual harassment is a problem for women in the workplace.

Sixty percent of New Yorkers, 70 percent of men and 50 percent of women currently believe that women have either as much, or more opportunity to be successful in the world of work as do men. Seventy percent of Upstate's CEO's but only 38 percent of female CEO's agree that the old days are over and women have as much opportunity as men do while 26 percent of all CEO's and 61 percent of female CEO's say that things have changed, but in so many circumstances, it remains a man's world, and that it is harder for a woman to succeed than it is for a man.

"Both citizens and CEO's recognize the demands women face in balancing work and family. But while disturbingly high numbers of men, and especially high percentages of working or younger women see sexual harassment as a workplace problem, two-thirds of all CEO's, including a majority of female CEO's, say it is not very much or not at all a problem," according to SRI's Director, Don Levy.

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“While large majorities see not only balancing work and family, sexual harassment and pay equity but also being equally respected, age discrimination and encountering the glass ceiling as problems for working women, no more than a third of all CEO’s agree on all but the work and family balance,” Levy notes. “Either the CEO’s, even the female CEO’s whose views most closely resemble those of men in the general sample, live in a different world or they just see the workplace experience differently.”

Percentage of Upstate CEO’s and New Yorkers that Say Issues are Somewhat or a Very Big Problem for Women in Similar Companies or in New York’s Workplace

	CEO’s	Female CEO’s	All NY’ers	Men	Women	Working Women	Women 18-40
Receiving equal pay	27	56	71	58	83	82	87
Encountering the glass ceiling	31	52	55	51	58	61	61
Sexual harassment	30	45	69	66	71	64	84
Balancing work & family	68	75	78	73	83	87	83
Age discrimination	24	50	63	52	73	67	67
Being equally respected	33	57	64	53	74	73	74

Asked about nine different positions in companies like theirs, at least 71 percent of CEO’s say that women have the same or more opportunity as do men. The areas where they felt women have more opportunities at the highest rates were: clerical (35 percent), human resources (25 percent), marketing and public relations (21 percent) and data processing (19 percent). The positions in which all CEO’s and especially female CEO’s feel women have the least opportunities are: senior management (22 percent), ownership (20 percent) and line staff supervision (16 percent).

“Although most CEO’s and a majority of New Yorkers think that, in specific positions or overall, women have as much or more opportunity to succeed as men do, half of all women and slightly more than half of those between 18 and 40 say that they have less opportunity to be successful,” Levy said.

This Siena College Study is drawn from polling conducted March 2-26, 2015 by telephone calls conducted in English to 804 New York State residents and interviews with Upstate New York CEO’s conducted from October 22, 2014 – January 7, 2015. Respondent sampling in March was initiated by asking for the youngest male in the household. It has an overall margin of error of ± 4.0 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample provided by Survey Sampling International of landline and cell phone telephone numbers from within New York State weighted to reflect known population patterns. Data was statistically adjusted by age, region, race/ethnicity and gender to ensure representativeness. CEO sampling was conducted by telephone, mail and internet interviews with 524 Business Leaders from the Albany, Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse MSA’s. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in NYS. SRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Dr. Don Levy at (518) 783-2901. For survey cross-tabs: www.Siena.edu/SRI/Research.