

# Job tenure: how it relates to race and age

Special Labor Force Report shows  
that, among men,  
in urban nonpoverty areas  
time on job was longer for  
whites than nonwhites

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THE OPTION to offer or withhold his services is one of the cherished prerogatives of a worker in a free labor market. It enables him to change occupations when he is bored with his work, sets him free to switch employers when he cannot get along with his supervisors, and encourages him to break camp when better opportunities appear on the horizon. At the same time, mobility and any unemployment that may ensue are byproducts of an economic system that allows the employer to adjust his work force to changes in market demand, production techniques, and the cost of capital and labor. Further, curbing the free hand of the employer in order to control production and to eliminate joblessness frequently jeopardizes the freedom of choice of the worker. Thus, a society that prizes freedom in the labor market must pay for it in the coin of unemployment.

This trade off, over the years, prompted research into the extent of job changing, the reasons for changing jobs, the amount of unemployment between jobs, and the job attachment of workers. Clearly, job tenure research is the natural complement of job mobility studies.

Job tenure, the length of time a person has worked without interruption for the same employer, is the subject of this article. Unlike some economic indicators, tenure does not have a normative element. Thus, we do not ask whether tenure is too long or too short. Instead, we simply measure length of job attachment and discuss why it differs from one group to another.

This article is divided into four major parts. The first section discusses the determinants of tenure and its relationship to mobility. Section two presents the survey findings on the tenure of persons who were employed in January 1968.<sup>1</sup> The

third section introduces evidence from other surveys that bears directly on the question of tenure. The last section takes up the probability that a person who had been employed in January 1963 was working for the same employer 5 years later.

## Determinants of job tenure

Many factors govern the attachment of workers to their employers. At any point in time, these factors will vary from one person to the next. With the passage of time, different sets of forces are likely to influence the job attachment of the same individual. Nevertheless, all of the determinants can be classified as either labor demand or labor supply elements.

### *Labor demand factors*

Wage agreement  
Wages  
Hours  
Working conditions  
Job duties and responsibilities

### *Labor supply factors*

Worker preferences  
On-the-job performance

In the broadest sense, job tenure is determined by the interaction of this pair of factors.

The demand for labor at a given establishment is derived from the demand for its product or service and the productivity of its work force. In turn, the competition for labor among employers defines the general features of the wage agreement. However, specific items in the wage agreement are open to bargaining between the employer and his work crews. For example, both sides may agree to lower hourly pay rates (wages) for guaranteed employment (hours). Or an environment that is contaminated by dust, smoke, or fumes (working conditions) may be tolerated only if the employer provides personal safety equipment, health and insurance protection, or clothing allowances (wages).

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Worker preferences regarding the wage agreement are shaped by such factors as age, sex, family responsibilities, investment in education and training, health status, military obligation, and attachments to family, relatives, friends, and community. For instance, promotional opportunities and education allowances may be far more important to a young adult than retirement benefits. Or additional rest periods and convenient commuting arrangements may be more significant to a handicapped person than paid vacations or profit sharing.

Likewise, these constituents influence attitudes toward job duties and responsibilities. To illustrate, a young man may select police work over a better paying job simply because his father, and his father before him, were police officers. Or an older man may switch from long-haul trucking to engine repair because of a strong attachment to home and family.

Worker preferences aside, the employer affects job tenure through his evaluation of the worker's performance on the job. Thus tenure can be broken for reasons such as excessive absenteeism, chronic illness, or general incompetence. However, this prerogative of management usually is circumscribed by grievance procedures that protect the worker from discharge without cause.

The task of identifying the controlling element in the job tenure of any segment of the working population is complex. A lack of detailed information along the lines suggested above limits the scope of the analysis in this article. In any case this sketch will serve as a roadmap to guide the reader across the relatively unfamiliar terrain of job tenure. It is hoped that it will also suggest the path of future research.

### Tenure and job mobility

Tenure is one of several measures of job attachment. Foremost among the other types are measures of regional, occupational, and job mobility. Each contains elements of the other two, but none is more closely associated with tenure than job mobility. This section spells out the relationship between these two measures of job attachment.

Job tenure measures the length of time that an employed person has worked on the job he held at a particular time. It is a duration concept. Job mobility, on the other hand, measures the extent

of job changing over a given period of time: that is, the number of persons who changed employers (jobs) at least once during a specific period of time as a proportion of all who worked. Mobility, therefore, is a rate concept.

All of the circumstances surrounding a person's work history and labor force status and, thereby, his job tenure can be reduced to four basic types. Similarly, job mobility is of two basic types. In the case of tenure, the four types are: (1) A person who worked continuously for one employer and did not experience unemployment or withdraw from the labor force for 30 days or more; (2) a person who worked for more than one employer with no loss of working time between jobs (although his tenure was broken with each change in jobs) and did not experience unemployment or withdraw from the labor force; (3) a person who worked for one employer but had his tenure broken by at least one spell of unemployment lasting 30 days or more or one period of nonparticipation in the labor force, or both; and (4) a person who worked for more than one employer and had his tenure broken by at least one spell of unemployment or one period of nonparticipation, or both.

In the case of mobility, the two types are: (1) A person who changed employers with no loss of working time, and (2) a person who had at least one spell of unemployment or one period of nonparticipation, or both, between jobs.

Thus, changing employers always severs tenure. But tenure can also be broken by a spell of unemployment or a period of nonparticipation even when the person returns to work for his former employer.

When we examine cross-sectional data for specific age-sex groups, it follows that shorter (longer) job tenure *suggests* an increase (decrease) in job mobility. Conversely, a change in the rate of mobility *points to* a change in job tenure.

### Influence of age

The January 1968 findings confirmed the strong correlation between age and tenure reported in previous surveys. In general, older workers had longer tenure than younger workers (table 1). Specifically, among 18- to 64-year-old white men, 98.9 percent of the differences in tenure were correlated to differences in age. Similarly, differences

in age explained more than 90 percent of the differences in tenure among nonwhite men as well as among white and nonwhite women.

The typical teenage worker had been on the same job for 6 months at the time of the survey. For persons in their early twenties tenure was twice as long. These findings held for the four sex-color groups in the working population. The available information pointed to like patterns of tenure among young jobholders living in the poverty and nonpoverty areas of the Nation's 100 largest cities. Tenure averaged less than 1 year for women 16 to 24 years of age, whether they were married or single and whether they usually worked full time or part time.

Among all workers 25 years of age and over, several significant and consistent differences appeared. In every successive 5-year age interval, tenure was longer (or not significantly different) regardless of sex or color. Only among 65- to 69-year-old white men was tenure significantly shorter than among those who were 5 years younger. The reasons for their shorter tenure will be discussed later in the article.

**WORKING MEN.** Among men age 25 and over, tenure was longer for whites than nonwhites in almost every age group. The relative gap was widest for 40- to 44-year-olds, where whites had held their current job for 8.7 years or 50 percent longer than nonwhites. The survey uncovered similar but not quite as marked differences in urban nonpoverty districts. On the other hand, length of job attachment was nearly identical for white and nonwhite men living in metropolitan poverty areas. Thus, differences in tenure between residents of poverty and nonpoverty neighborhoods were much greater for whites than nonwhites.

In every 5-year age interval, average job tenure was considerably longer for men than for women. Comparing white men and women, the relative difference was greatest for 40- to 44-year-olds; men were continuously employed nearly 3 times as long as women. Among nonwhites, the largest relative difference was found in the 45- to 49-year age group, where men had been working for the same employer about twice as long as women. Comparing men and women in the same age group, the relative gap in tenure was wider between whites than nonwhites. These findings held in the nonpoverty areas of the Nation's cities but not in the

Table 1. Median years on current job, January 1968

Age	All persons		Men		Women	
	Men	Women	White	Non-white	White	Non-white
Median years on job.....	4.8	2.4	5.0	3.3	2.4	2.0
16 and 17 years.....	.5	.5	.5	.4	.5	(1)
18 and 19 years.....	.5	.5	.5	.4	.5	.4
20 to 24 years.....	.8	.9	.8	.7	.9	.8
25 to 29 years.....	2.1	1.4	2.2	1.9	1.4	1.3
30 to 34 years.....	3.9	1.8	4.0	3.1	1.8	1.8
35 to 39 years.....	5.8	2.6	6.0	4.1	2.4	3.2
40 to 44 years.....	8.4	3.2	8.7	5.8	3.2	3.4
45 to 49 years.....	10.2	4.4	10.4	8.8	4.4	4.1
50 to 54 years.....	12.6	6.2	12.8	10.1	6.1	6.8
55 to 59 years.....	14.7	8.2	14.9	11.9	8.3	7.4
60 to 64 years.....	15.1	9.4	15.5	11.7	9.6	8.6
65 to 69 years.....	12.4	10.5	12.6	11.1	10.5	(1)
70 years and over.....	16.0	9.1	16.3	(1)	8.7	(1)
Total employed, 16 years and over:						
Number (in thousands).....	46,472	26,803	42,007	4,465	23,542	3,261
Results of simple linear regression (18 to 64 years):						
Standard error of estimate.....	0.668	0.862	0.634	0.775	0.931	0.667
Coefficient of determination.....	.987	.932	.989	.973	.924	.953
Coefficient of regression.....	.374	.202	.381	.296	.205	.191
Standard error.....	.015	.019	.014	.017	.021	.015

<sup>1</sup> Median not shown where base is less than 75,000.

poverty districts. The relative differential between white men and women was substantially smaller in distressed neighborhoods.

**WORKING WOMEN.** Among women 25 years and over, there was no statistically significant difference in tenure for persons in the same age group, whether they were white or nonwhite and whether they lived in urban poverty or nonpoverty precincts. Among those who usually worked full time, single women had longer tenure than married women in every comparable age group. Both, in turn, were employed longer than widowed, divorced, or separated women of like ages. Among part-time workers, tenure was roughly the same for 25- to 34-year-olds and for 35- to 44-year-olds. Older married women, however, generally had longer job attachment than all others. Women who normally worked full-time schedules had been on the same job longer than those on part-time schedules. This finding held in nearly all the comparisons between women in the same age-marital status group.

### Deeper exploration

The last section established a strong correlation between tenure and age. The skeptical reader might ask whether we have identified a genuine relationship or merely stumbled on a spurious as-

sociation. That is, do older persons have longer tenure simply because they are older? Or are there other differences between younger and older workers that account for the longer tenure of older persons? In this section we undertake to scrutinize this relationship by industry, occupation, and educational attainment.

**INDUSTRIAL ATTACHMENT.** In every major industry group for which data were available, older workers had held the same job longer than younger workers (table 2). In nondurable goods, for example, men 45 years and over had been continuously employed almost 3 times as long as 25- to 44-year-old men. Tenure for this group, in turn, was nearly 8 times as long as for the 16- to 24-year-olds. As a rule, variances were greater between age groups in the same industry than between persons of the same age in different industries. Differences of like dimensions obtained among women.

The survey also disclosed that there were no major interindustry differences in tenure for 16- to 24-year-olds of the same sex. Contrasting

men and women in the same industry, no differences in tenure appeared. For the 25- to 44-year-olds, tenure was longer for men than women at work in the same industry or not significantly different. In agriculture, length of job attachment was nearly the same for both. However, in wholesale and retail trade the relative difference was more typical. Similarly, among persons 45 and over, tenure was longer for men than for women in the same industry. For nonagricultural wage and salary workers in both of the adult age groups, tenure was shortest for men working in construction and for women in trade and private households. It was longest for both in transportation and public utilities.

**OCCUPATIONAL ATTACHMENT.** Generally, similar patterns of tenure appeared throughout the major occupation groups. That is, tenure was longer for older men and women in the same occupation (table 2). To illustrate, among women in clerical positions, those who were 45 and over had been on the same job 2.8 times as long as the 25- to 44-year-olds. These women, in turn, had been employed about 3 times as long as the 16- to 24-year-olds.

In every major occupation, tenure averaged less than 1 year for 16- to 24-year-old men and women alike. Among persons 25 years and over, length of employment was never significantly greater for women than men in the same age-occupation group, except for farm laborers. Among farm laborers, women between 25 and 44, as well as those who were 45 and over, had held their jobs longer than their male counterparts. Among men in the two adult age classes, farm laborers and foremen had the shortest tenure and farmers and farm managers the longest. Among women, many of whom may have been unpaid family workers, farm laborers and foremen had the longest job attachment. Service workers had the shortest tenure.

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT.** Comparing persons with roughly equivalent educational credentials, tenure was usually longer for older workers (table 3). This finding held for white and nonwhite men and women. Contrasting workers in the same age group, the relationship between tenure and educational attainment was not as well defined. Job attachment was neither systematically longer nor shorter in the upper versus the lower attainment

**Table 2. Median years on current job, by major occupation, industry group and class of worker, January 1968**

Industry, class of worker, and occupation	Men			Women		
	16 to 24 years	25 to 44 years	45 years and over	16 to 24 years	25 to 44 years	45 years and over
Median years, all groups.....	0.7	4.2	12.7	0.7	2.1	6.6
<b>INDUSTRY AND CLASS OF WORKER</b>						
Agriculture.....	1.0	6.7	21.4	(1)	6.5	15.3
Nonagricultural industries.....	.7	4.1	12.1	.7	2.1	6.5
Total wage and salary workers.....	.7	4.1	11.6	.7	2.1	6.2
Mining.....	(1)	5.3	13.1	(1)	(1)	(1)
Construction.....	.6	2.8	5.4	(1)	2.8	(1)
Manufacturing.....	.8	4.7	14.7	.8	2.6	8.8
Durable goods.....	.9	4.5	14.3	.9	2.4	8.3
Non-durable goods.....	.7	5.3	15.4	.8	2.8	9.1
Transportation and public utilities.....	.9	6.1	18.4	1.0	4.3	13.5
Wholesale and retail trade.....	.5	3.3	8.8	.6	1.5	4.9
Service and finance.....	.5	2.7	7.4	.6	2.0	5.3
Public administration.....	.8	5.6	12.1	.9	2.7	8.1
Self-employed workers.....	.8	5.0	15.2	(1)	1.9	9.7
Unpaid family workers.....	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	4.6	11.1
<b>OCCUPATION</b>						
Professional, technical, and kindred workers.....	.7	3.9	13.4	.6	2.3	9.1
Farmers and farm managers.....	(1)	10.8	25.4	(1)	(1)	(1)
Managers, officials, and proprietors, except farm.....	.9	4.7	13.3	(1)	3.1	8.9
Clerical and kindred workers.....	.7	5.3	14.3	.8	2.5	6.9
Sales workers.....	.6	3.3	9.1	.5	1.5	5.1
Craftsmen and kindred workers.....	.9	4.6	13.0	(1)	3.8	9.4
Operatives and kindred workers.....	.6	3.8	12.8	.7	2.1	7.7
Private household workers.....	(1)	(1)	(1)	.7	1.7	3.6
Service workers, except private household.....	.5	3.9	6.7	.5	1.3	3.9
Farm laborers and foremen.....	.9	1.4	4.2	(1)	7.0	16.2
Laborers, except farm and mine.....	.5	2.7	8.8	(1)	(1)	(1)

<sup>1</sup> Median not shown where base is less than 75,000.

levels. In the 25- to 34-year age group especially, the influence of educational attainment was clouded because persons with more years of schooling permanently entered the labor force later in their lives than those with fewer years completed. For that reason alone their tenure was shorter. Only among white men 55 and over was there a hint of a consistent pattern. Here, men with more years of schooling had worked longer for the same employer than those with fewer years.

In every age-attainment level group for which data were available, tenure was generally longer for white men than for nonwhite men. Similarly, tenure was longer for men than for women in the same age-color-attainment level group. There was some indication, however, that job attachment for the better educated among the younger nonwhite women may be longer than for their white counterparts.

### The age-tenure hypothesis

Nearly all of the evidence examined indicates a strong correlation between job tenure and age in each of the four sex-color classes. The primary reason suggested is that the typical younger worker has had very little opportunity to accumulate long, continuous service with one employer. Manifestly, this opportunity increases as a person grows older. A thorough test of the age-tenure hypothesis calls

for longitudinal data not now available. Using cross-sectional data from other surveys, this section attempts to determine whether there are other factors that vary systematically with age and explain why tenure is longer for older persons.

A break in tenure almost invariably follows from a job separation (quit, layoff, or discharge). The major exception concerns the person on layoff who returns to his job within 30 days. Thus information on workers who have been separated bears directly on the question of the determinants of job tenure.

From surveys of job mobility and other research, we know why people leave their jobs, why women stop working, and why men do not work or look for work.<sup>2</sup> We cannot use the data on layoffs from these surveys to account for differences in tenure because length of service frequently determines whether or not a worker is laid off. The data on quits must also be rejected because some persons quit in anticipation of a layoff.

**JOB CHANGERS.** About 1 out of 10 who worked at some time in 1961 changed jobs at least once during the year. Roughly the same proportion of persons with work experience in 1955 changed jobs that year. Younger workers changed jobs much more often than older workers in 1961. For men and women alike the rate of job changing was highest for those 18 to 24 years of age. Further, the rate was lower in every succeeding 10-year age interval, reaching a low point among persons 65 and over. Similar results obtained in 1955. Plainly, these findings are in line with the data on job tenure.

Returning to school is one of the important elements in the jobholding experience of young men and women. Among 14- to 17-year-olds, returning to school was the reason for 18 percent of all job separations in 1961. About 10 percent of the separations among 18- to 24-year-olds were made for this reason. The 1961 findings closely matched the findings of the 1955 survey. Thus the job tenure of younger persons is short not only because they have recently reached 16, the minimum age for most jobs but also because returning to school frequently occasions a job separation. With increasing proportions of the Nation's young people finishing high school and enrolling in college, tenure 16- to 24-year-olds will remain short.

More jobs were left in 1961 to improve economic status (33 percent) than for any other reason.

**Table 3. Median years on current job, by years of school completed, January 1968**

[Persons 25 years of age and over]

Age, sex, and color	Years of school completed					
	Elementary	High school		College		
	8 years or less	1 to 3 years	4 years	1 year or more	1 to 3 years	4 years or more
<b>White men:</b>						
25 to 34 years.....	2.4	2.5	3.3	2.5	2.8	2.4
35 to 44 years.....	5.7	7.0	8.7	8.9	7.1	6.7
45 to 54 years.....	10.6	12.4	12.3	10.8	9.7	11.6
55 years and over....	14.4	14.5	15.1	16.3	15.6	17.1
<b>Nonwhite men:</b>						
25 to 34 years.....	2.4	2.8	2.4	2.2	3.0	1.7
35 to 44 years.....	3.6	4.8	5.7	5.6	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )
45 to 54 years.....	9.2	10.6	10.8	5.8	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )
55 years and over....	11.1	13.7	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )
<b>White women:</b>						
25 to 34 years.....	1.0	1.2	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.7
35 to 44 years.....	2.5	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.5	3.2
45 to 54 years.....	4.4	5.2	5.3	5.8	4.5	7.5
55 years and over....	7.9	7.8	8.9	11.3	9.9	12.5
<b>Nonwhite women:</b>						
25 to 34 years.....	.9	.9	1.6	1.9	( <sup>1</sup> )	2.5
35 to 44 years.....	3.3	2.8	3.0	5.8	( <sup>1</sup> )	7.1
45 to 54 years.....	4.6	4.8	6.0	5.8	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )
55 years and over....	9.1	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )

<sup>1</sup> Median not shown where base is less than 75,000.

This reason was more common among 18- to 44-year-old men than those 45 and over. Considering that 18 to 44 are the years when men are most likely to marry and to have growing family responsibilities, men in these ages may be more responsive to a better paying job than men further along in years, particularly when it involves moving to another community. For that reason younger men are more likely to break tenure. On the other hand, for women there was no strong evidence in 1955 or 1961 that leaving a job to improve status varied systematically with age. However, pulling up stakes may also break tenure for the working wife.

For the most part, younger men have less to lose in terms of seniority rights than older men. However, this is a circular argument because seniority rights are a direct derivative of tenure.

Tenure may be shorter for younger men for other reasons, too. In choosing between two equally qualified men with the same length of service at another establishment, the prospective employer may prefer the younger man to the older simply because he has more working years ahead of him.

Termination of a temporary job explained 13 percent of the job separations in 1961. Workers 14 to 17 years of age and those 65 and over left jobs more often for this reason than workers in the middle age groups. For some youths termination of a temporary job coincided with the end of the school year. Since most of those in school are young, this reason explains some of the difference in tenure between younger and older workers.

Termination of a temporary job, household responsibilities, and illness or disability were more often the reasons for separation among women than men of the same age. These reasons account in part for the consistently shorter tenure for women. The survey uncovered no evidence that leaving a job, but not necessarily dropping out of the labor force altogether, on account of household responsibilities played any part in the longer tenure of older compared with younger women. Similarly, there was no indication that leaving a job because of illness or disability contributed to the differences in tenure between younger and older persons, whether men or women.

**NONPARTICIPANTS IN THE LABOR FORCE.** Close to 850,000 married women 18 to 64 years of age left the labor force in 1962 or 1963 and had not re-

entered by February 1964. Of these, about 40 percent said that pregnancy was the reason they stopped working. Young women gave this reason more often than older women. This pattern stems from the general pattern of having children in the early years of marriage and to a degree accounts for the longer tenure of older women.

Illness more often than any other reason explained why older women, especially those 45 to 64, left their jobs and withdrew from the labor force. This follows from the greater risk of illness among older women which serves to narrow the gap in tenure between younger and older women.

A survey of 20- to 64-year-old men not in the labor force in February 1967 showed that for 2 of 3 of the more than 1 million who worked since 1962, illness, accident, or physical disability was the reason they left their last job. Retirement was the only other reason given with any significant frequency (19 percent) and nearly all of these responses came from 60- to 64-year-old men. Considering the central place of the work role for an adult man not in school, it is not at all surprising that the reason most of the nonparticipants with fairly recent work experience stopped working was illness or disability. Just as with women, this risk is greater for older workers and tends to reduce the variance in tenure between younger and older men.

**OTHER ELEMENTS.** For those with civilian jobs, military service breaks tenure. For those with no civilian work experience, entry into the Armed Forces prevents them from accumulating service with a civilian employer until a later age. In 1968 men between 16 and 24 years of age accounted for 63 percent of all persons in military service. Thus, serving in the Armed Forces explains a part of the difference in tenure between younger and older men. Military manpower requirements also work to reduce the difference in tenure between men and women in the same age group.

Tenure was shorter for 65- to 69-year-old white men than men who were 5 years younger as well as those 70 years and over. Three factors, which have to do with whether retirement at age 65 is compulsory and whether it is permanent, help to explain this difference. First, when retirement at 65 is compulsory, a break in tenure is inevitable. For all 65- to 69-year-olds who were forced to retire and who later found other jobs, tenure cannot ex-

ceed 5 years. Second, when retirement at 65 is voluntary, a break in tenure is not inevitable. Thus, it is only for those 65- to 69-year-olds who elected retirement at 65 and who later took jobs, because of inadequate retirement income or dissatisfaction with not working, that tenure cannot exceed 5 years. Third, the retirement income of long-service workers is more likely to be adequate to meet their needs. Thus, they may be more likely than short-duration employees to elect permanent retirement at age 65. This will lower the average tenure of all 65- to 69-year-olds. All three of these factors account for the shorter tenure of 65- to 69-year-olds compared with men who were 5 years younger. However, only the first and the second explain the longer tenure of men 70 and over compared with the 65- to 69-year-olds. For the older men tenure on the new job may exceed 5 years.

Two elements remain. First, labor force studies indicate that younger persons frequently move from job to job before finally settling on one. Whatever their reasons for changing jobs and whether or not their final selection is best, they may have discovered that the same conditions that led them to quit other jobs are really inherent in nearly all work situations (for example, commuting, discipline, routine). By the time they have made their final selection they may have learned to live with these conditions. Thus greater familiarity with the work role itself will contribute to longer tenure. Second, data on marital history and work experience suggest that, for the man, job changing may coincide with the death of his spouse or the breakup of his marriage. Research now under way in this area may compel us to revise our thinking about the determinants of job tenure.<sup>3</sup>

### Remaining on the job

Actuaries and other students of retirement plans have a special interest in the probability of a worker remaining with the same employer in the future. Estimates of this type are central to the problem of calculating the cost of provisions in nonportable pension plans (a worker loses his pension rights whenever he changes jobs). Drawing data from the 1963 and 1968 surveys, the final section of this article focuses on workers with continuous service of 5 to 10, 10 to 15, and 15 years or more as of 1963 who were working for the same employer 5 years later (table 4).

The probability of remaining with the same employer varies by age and length of time on the job. For men who were 30 to 59 years old in 1963 and had a minimum of 5 years of continuous service, at least 6 out of 10 held the same job 5 years later. Among men with 5 to 10 years of service in 1963, those 45 to 49 years of age were most likely to work for the same employer in 1968. In the 10- to 15-year service group, retention rates were highest among men between 30 to 49 years old. For those with continuous service of 15 years or more in 1963, more 30- to 34-year-olds and 40- to 44-year-olds than any other age groups were employed on the same job 5 years later. Thus, in all three length-of-service classes, retention rates were highest for men in their thirties and forties. They were lowest for those over 60 years of age.

Comparing men in the same age group, the proportion working for the same employer in 1968 was not consistently higher (or lower) for those with longer (or shorter) tenure in 1963. For example, among 30- to 34-year-olds in 1963, longer service employees were more likely to stay on the same job than men with shorter service. However, this did not hold for men in their fifties.

The survey found parallel rates of retention among women. At least 6 out of 10 of those who were between 35 and 54 years of age in 1963 and had a minimum of 5 years on the same job were

**Table 4. Persons employed in 1963 who worked for same employer in 1968**

Age in January 1963	Length of time on job in 1963		
	5 to 10 years	10 to 15 years	Over 15 years
MEN			
20 to 24 years.....	52.4	(1)	(1)
25 to 29 years.....	69.2	63.4	(1)
30 to 34 years.....	68.7	81.4	85.3
35 to 39 years.....	70.3	81.2	78.4
40 to 44 years.....	75.6	81.2	86.0
45 to 49 years.....	85.7	80.0	80.6
50 to 54 years.....	77.2	68.6	81.6
55 to 59 years.....	67.0	61.0	64.0
60 to 64 years.....	37.2	31.6	31.0
65 years and over.....	24.4	28.4	34.3
WOMEN			
20 to 24 years.....	49.1	(1)	(1)
25 to 29 years.....	59.7	(1)	(1)
30 to 34 years.....	79.6	54.0	(1)
35 to 39 years.....	63.1	90.2	78.1
40 to 44 years.....	68.3	62.8	75.8
45 to 49 years.....	72.4	61.1	78.1
50 to 54 years.....	71.3	73.9	64.9
55 to 59 years.....	49.9	62.2	68.0
60 to 64 years.....	39.8	34.4	33.3
65 years and over.....	31.5	(1)	32.7

1 Percent not shown where base is less than 100,000.

working for the same employer in 1968. Rates of retention were highest in these ages and lowest for those past 60. Contrasting women in the same age group, retention rates did not vary systematically with length of service. Finally, in most age-

length-of-service groups, men were more likely than women to be working for the same employer in 1968. As a rule, however, proportionately more women than men past their middle fifties held the same job in 1968 as 5 years earlier. □

-----FOOTNOTES-----

<sup>1</sup>This is the fourth in a series of articles on this subject. Earlier survey findings appeared in the January 1967 *Monthly Labor Review* (reprinted as Special Labor Force Report No. 77), the October 1963 *Monthly Labor Review* (reprinted as Special Labor Force Report No. 36) and in Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-50, No. 36.

<sup>2</sup>"Job Mobility of Workers in 1955," *Current Population Reports*, Series P-50, No. 70; Gertrude Baneroff and Stuart Garfinkle, "Job Mobility in 1961," *Monthly Labor Review*, August 1963, pp. 897-906; Carl Rosenfeld and

Vera C. Perrella, "Why Women Start and Stop Working: A Study in Mobility," *Monthly Labor Review*, September 1965, pp. 1077-82; Vera C. Perrella and Edward J. O'Boyle, "Work Plans of Men Not in the Labor Force," *Monthly Labor Review*, Part I, August 1968, pp. 8-14, and Part II, September 1968, pp. 35-41.

<sup>3</sup>Herbert S. Parnes and others, *The Pre-Retirement Years: A Longitudinal Study of the Labor Market Experience of the Cohort of Men 45-59 Years of Age*, Volume 1 (Center for Human Resource Research, The Ohio State University, October 1968), p. 145.

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### Special Labor Force Reports

Articles in the Special Labor Force Report series are based on special research projects of the Bureau of Labor Statistics or on information obtained from supplementary questions to the monthly survey of the labor force conducted for BLS by the Bureau of the Census through its Current Population Survey.

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