

THE DECLINE OF MEN IN THE WORKFORCE: A VOCATIONAL INTEREST VARIABILITY PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

We examined differences between men and women regarding their interest variability (differentiation) to understand the decline of men in the workforce. We used local structural equation models to examine this differentiation across the life span ($n = 79,361$; 18 to 80 years). We find that (1) women have more differentiated interests, (2) women have a higher differentiation of interests across the life span, and (3) men's lower levels of differentiation increase but plateau in their late twenties. These results provide insight into the lower enrollment/completion rates of men in college and lower participation rates of men in the workforce.

Keywords: Vocational interests, Personality, Structural Equation Modeling, Gender Differences, Lifespan.