



SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

This survey was conducted by Jobson Research in conjunction with Latinos en Optometry and Transitions Optical Limited.

Many factors go into choosing a medical specialty such as Optometry, including personal history, clinical interests, duration of the training involved, career opportunities, and financial and work-life balance considerations. For individuals pursuing a career in healthcare, it is crucial that they thoroughly evaluate their options and make a well-informed decision.

The purpose of this survey is to provide individuals who might be considering becoming an Optometrist with a look at some critical factors that might help influence their decision to pursue Optometry as a profession.

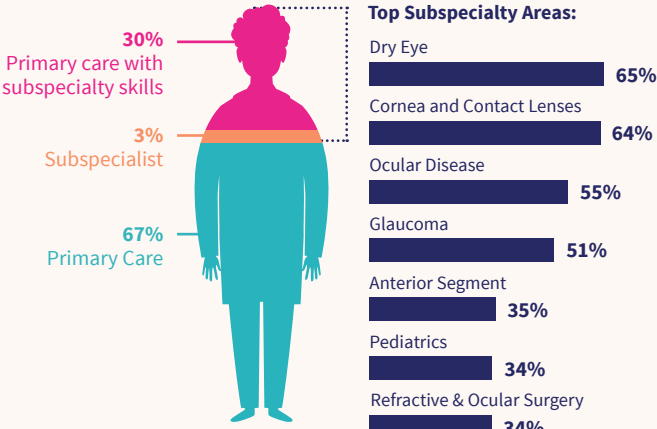
Career Considerations in Optometry

Doctors of Optometry (ODs) are the independent primary health care professionals for the eye. Optometrists examine, diagnose, treat, and manage diseases, injuries, and disorders of the visual system, the eye, and associated structures as well as identify related systemic conditions affecting the eye. If a disease or other conditions are detected, Doctors of Optometry can help navigate patients to the right prevention plans or the next steps in official diagnosis and treatment. *(Source: American Optometric Association).*

Optometry

Satisfaction With Being an Optometrist

Overall, **more than half (54%)** of respondents report being **“very satisfied”** with being an Optometrist, while **four-in-ten (39%)** are **“Somewhat Satisfied.”**



Type of Optometrist

While some Optometrists describe themselves as primary eye care providers, others concentrate on particular aspects of care within the profession. One-third of survey respondents identified themselves either as a primary optometrist with **subspecialty skills (30%)** or a **subspecialist (3%)**.

Patient Relationships & Continuity of Care

Doctors individually and collectively share the obligation to ensure that the care patients receive is safe, effective, patient centered, timely, efficient, and equitable. While specialties like surgery might have a one-time interaction, optometrists seek to develop long-term relationships with their patients to manage their health over time.

- **Four in five (82%)** Optometrists surveyed say they have a **great deal of returning patients. Eight in ten respondents (84%)** said they spend **virtually all of their time seeing and caring for patients.**

- **Nearly 8 in 10 survey (78%)** respondents agree that Optometry provides a **great deal of opportunity to see the end results of diagnosis/treatment.** The vast majority (**82%**) of Optometrists say they primarily have **sole responsibility for patient outcomes** in their work.

See End Results of Diagnosis/Treatment

- Great deal of opportunity
- Some opportunity
- Little to no opportunity



On the Job

Autonomy

Autonomy can include the ability to make decisions about practice without being limited by organizational procedures, financial concerns, or managerial control. For example, doctors can set their hours, the number of patients they see, which tests and examinations to order, which drugs and procedures to prescribe, and to whom referrals should be made.

- **Nearly nine in ten respondents (85%)** say they have a **great deal of autonomy** in decision making and working independently.

Routine/Similar Work vs. Diversity

While some elements of the job may be repetitive such as eye examinations and determining prescriptions and fitting patients for corrective lenses, the diversity of patient interactions, specialties, and advancements in the field can make being an optometrist an engaging and fulfilling career.

- **One in three Optometrists surveyed (33%)** agree that they have a **great deal of diversity** (different tasks/activities) in their work, compared to **15%** who say they have a **great deal of routine** (similar work).

- Great deal of diversity
- Some diversity
- Little to no diversity

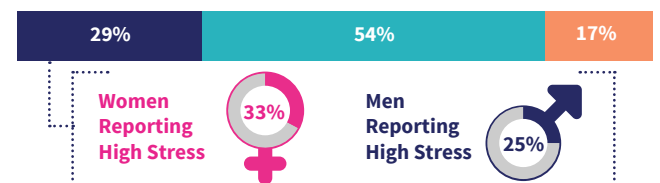


Stress/Pressure

Stress/Pressure at work can be caused by many factors, including long hours, heavy workloads, and poor relationships with colleagues.

- Overall, about **three in ten respondents (29%)** say they feel **high stress/pressure** in their work, while about **one in five (17%)** say there is **minimal stress/pressure** in their work. **Women (33%)** are more likely than **men (25%)** to report feeling high stress/pressure.

- Great deal of stress
- Some stress
- Little to no stress



Collaborative efforts

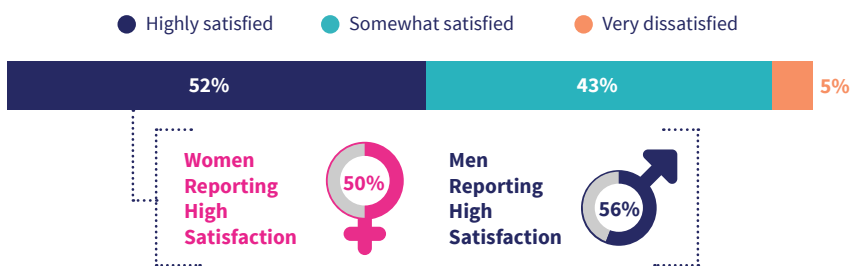
Collaborative efforts between optometrists and other healthcare providers ensure comprehensive and specialized patient care through shared responsibilities and complementary expertise.

- **Four in ten (43%)** respondents say Optometry provides a **great deal of opportunities for collaboration** with other Optometrists or other medical specialists.

Personal Time/Work-Life Balance

More than half of respondents (56%) say their work provides them with a great deal of flexibility in controlling their schedule and the amount of time they take off from work.

- When it comes to scheduling and time off, **men are significantly more likely than women (62% vs. 51%)** to report having a **great deal of flexibility**.
- **About half (52%)** of Optometrists surveyed are **highly satisfied** with their current work-life balance. **Men are more satisfied than women (56% vs 50%)**.



Creativity/Innovation & Technology

Creativity can be a valuable skill for Optometrists in a variety of ways, such as clinical reasoning to make diagnoses and suggest treatments and problem solving to come up with original solutions to care for patients. Technology has been transforming optometry in many ways, including diagnostic equipment, telemedicine, and artificial intelligence (AI).

- **About one-third of respondents (34%)** say Optometry provides a **great deal of opportunity for creativity and innovation** compared to 11% who say it provides little opportunity.
- **Nearly half of all respondents (48%)** say advances in new technology in Optometry are **frequently changing**, allowing them to change the way they diagnose, manage and treat eye-related problems.

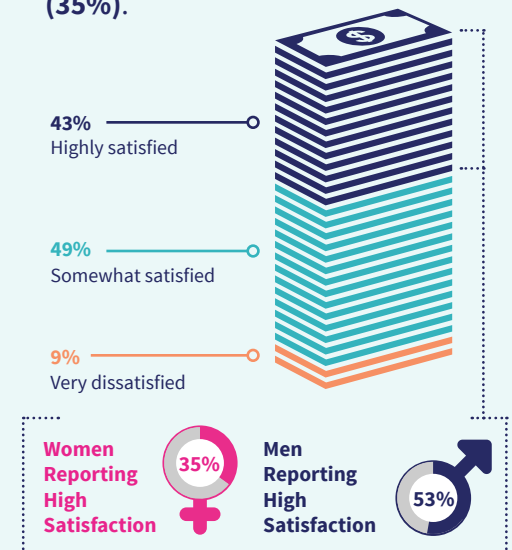
Personal Growth/Security & Income

Optometry is a growing field, with the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projecting 9% employment growth between 2022 and 2032, which is much faster than the average for all occupations. This growth is expected to create around 1,700 openings for optometrists each year.

- **Most respondents (69%)** agree that they have a **great deal of security** in their position (i.e., know where they stand; certain of their future professionally; confident of their position and income and need for services in the future). **Men (72%)** are **slightly more likely than women (68%)** to agree with this statement.



- **Four in ten respondents (43%)** say they are **highly satisfied with the compensation** they receive as an Optometrist while one in ten (9%) say they are highly dissatisfied. **Men (53%)** are significantly **more likely to report being highly satisfied** with their compensation than **women (35%)**.



Future of Optometry

The field of optometry is experiencing a growing emphasis on specialization to meet the changing needs of patients. Specialization allows practitioners to address specific patient needs and provide more targeted care. Optometrists are also experiencing diversification in optometry roles, expanding beyond traditional practice settings with opportunities in various sectors, including corporate, academia, research, and public health.

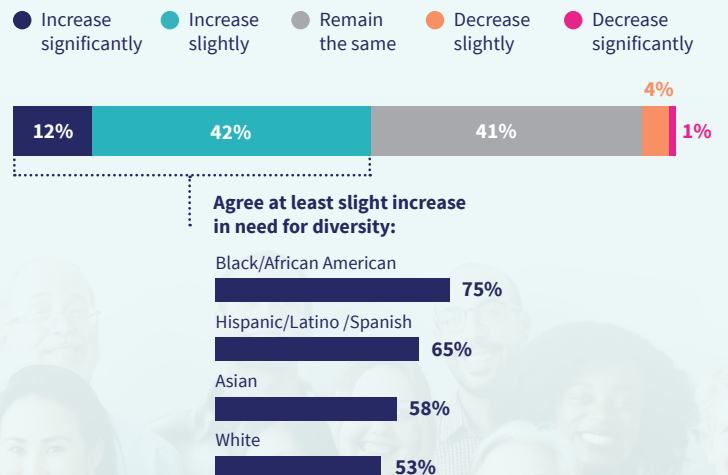
- **About one in five (20%)** respondents say the need for Optometrists and Optometry subspecialists will **increase significantly in the future**, while **about half (46%)** believe it will **increase slightly** and **one in five (22%)** think it will **remain about the same**.



As visual impairment rates are expected to increase in the United States by 2050, especially among minority populations, diversifying the optometry workforce can help reduce disparities in access to vision health care. A diverse optometry workforce can help improve access to and quality of vision care for all patients, especially for underserved minorities.

- **More than half (55%)** of respondents agree that there will be at least a **slight increase in the need for Optometrists with diverse ethnic backgrounds** in the future, while **one in five (12%)** say there will be a **significant increase**. **Four in ten (41%)** believe it will **remain the same**.
- Respondents who identified themselves as **Black or African American** are **more likely (75%)*** than those who identified themselves as **Hispanic, Latino** or of **Spanish Origin (65%)***, **Asian (58%)** or **White (53%)** to agree that there will be at least a slight increase.

*Note: Small sample size



SURVEY METHOD AND SAMPLE

This study was conducted by Jobson Optical Research; fielded in July-August 2024. Eye Care Professionals were contacted via email and invited to click on a link to complete a survey. An incentive of a chance to win an Amazon.com Gift Card was offered to entice participants. Respondents rated each category on a 10-point scale. Their responses were grouped together into 3 boxes. Ratings of 1-3 in the bottom box, ratings of 4-7 in the middle box and ratings of 8-10 in the top box. A total of 323 qualified respondents completed the survey.

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Survey respondents were all practicing Optometrists. Just over half (56%) respondents identified as female and 43% as male. Just over half (56%) say they are currently practicing in a single location practice, with the remaining respondents reporting working in practices with 2-3 locations (21%), Small/Regional Chain with 4 to 20 locations (4%), Large/National Chain with 20+ locations (12%), and 6% in a Hospital/Clinic. About 4 in 10 (44%) of respondents have been in practice for more than 20 years, 31% for 11-20 years, 10% for 6-10 years and only 7% for 2-5 years.

This sample size yields a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error.