



Accommodation Use and the Aging Worker

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Background

- The Workforce is Aging
 - In 2012, 19% of all employees will be 55 or older¹
- Age is Highest Predictor of Disability
 - About 30% of those 65-74 have a disability²

1. Tossi, M. (2004) "Labor Force Projects top 2012: the Graying of the U.S. Workforce," Monthly Labor Review Online
2. Erickson, W., Lee, C. (2008) 2007 Disability Status Report: The United States. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics.

Purpose

Purpose: To determine who uses what accommodations.

Specifically looking at types of accommodation use and age factors.

Methods

- Survey relating characteristics of the individual to the accommodation
 - Administered dominantly electronically
 - Marketed through consumer lists, national publication lists, social networking venues.
 - Inclusion Criteria:
 - Presence of 1 or more functional limitations
 - Currently employee or volunteer

Job Characteristics

- EEOC Categorization
- Relationship to Employer
- Location of Work
- Pay Rate and Hours/wk

Functional Limitations

Functional Limitation delineations based on ICF categorizations expressed as activities.

Example: Mobility

“I have difficulty with walking, climbing stairs, bending, sitting, or standing.”

Accommodations

- Accommodations divided into 4 categories
 - Universal
 - Adaptations
 - Help or Assistance
 - Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology

Developed from the National Classification System on Assistive Technology

- 4 level hierarchy of assistive technology classification

Examples:

- Sensory Elements > Optical Aids > Specialized Writing Devices > Signature Guides and Stamps
- Computer > Hardware > Input Devices > Voice Input

Satisfaction, Importance, Frequency

- Recorded for each accommodation individually.
- Instrument was nominal Likert scale for each construct.

Population Demographics

232 responses of people who reported age

42% Male; 63% under 55

Race:

- 5% African
- 3% Asian
- 4% Native American
- 87% Caucasian

Ethnicity: 93% non-Hispanic

Population Demographics

Educational Background

Some High School / Diploma	2%
Some College / Associates Degree:	24%
Bachelors Degree:	34%
Master's Degree	34%
Ph.D. / Professional Degree	8%

Population Job Characteristics

Job Type

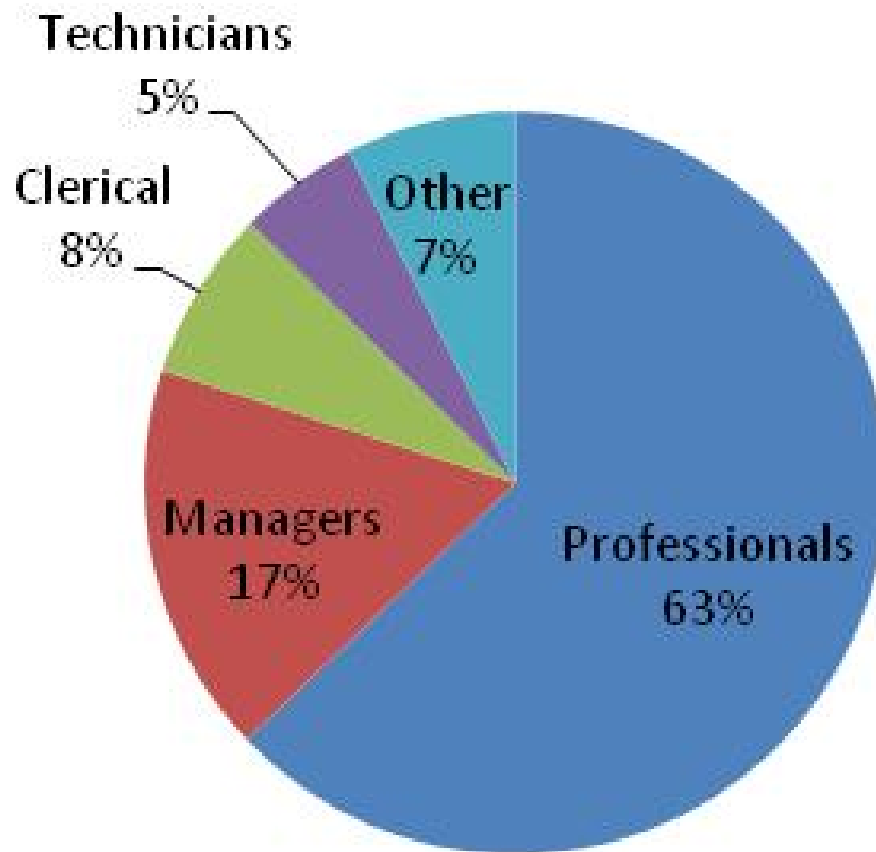
One full-time	67%
One part-time	19%
Multiple Jobs	14%

Employment Type

Employee	76%
Self – Employed	21%
Volunteer	2%

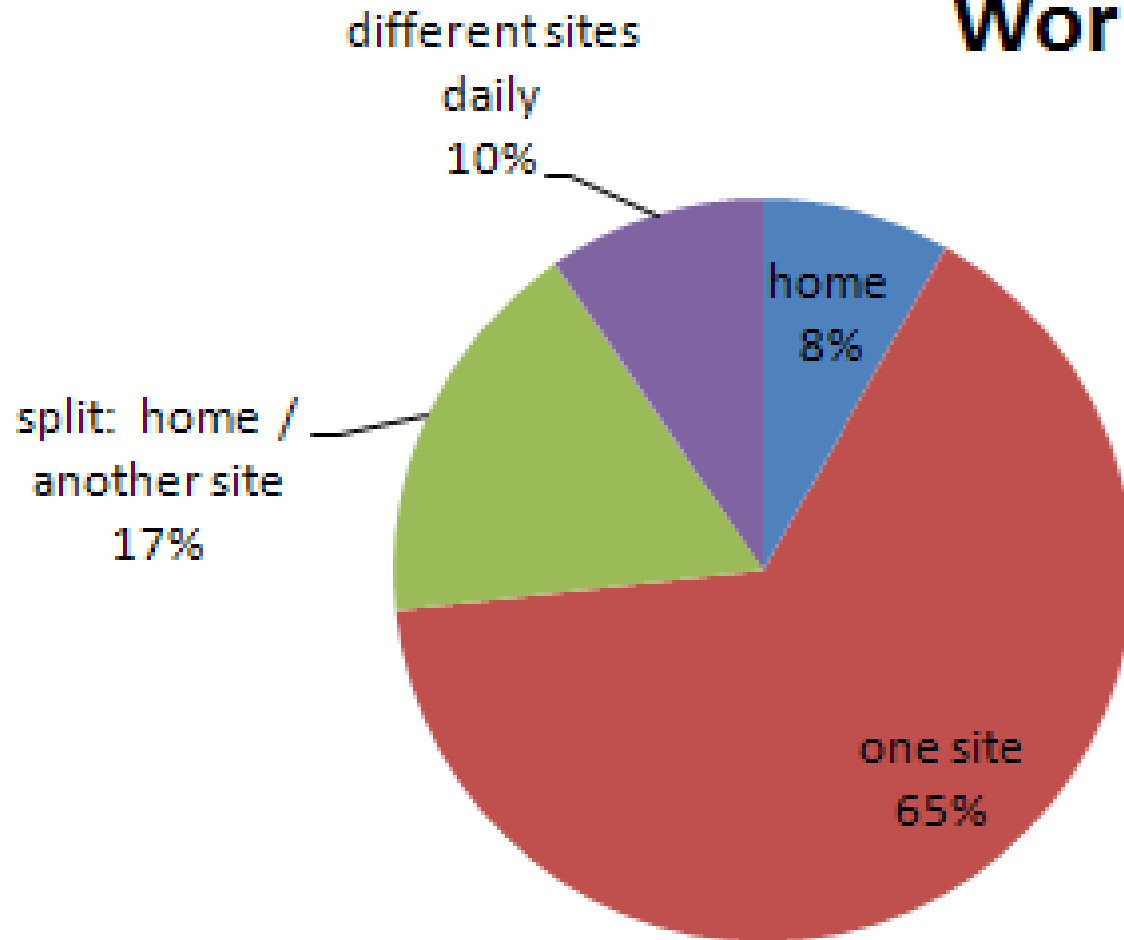
Population – Job Characteristics

Job Classification



Population – Job Characteristics

Work Location



Population distribution wrt Age and Functional Limitation

Functional Limitation	% under 55 w/ limitation	% over 55 w/ limitation	% of limitation population over 55
n	146	86	37
Mobility	56	58	38
Dexterity / Upper Extremity	29	27	35
Hearing	22	28	43
Vision	21	30	46
Speech	13	7	24
Mental Function	22	13	26

On average, 1.64 functional limitations / respondent were reported

Mobility				HEARING				SPEECH							
under 55				over 55				under 55				over 55			
avg freq	avg imp	avg sat	avg %	avg freq	avg imp	avg sat	avg %	avg freq	avg imp	avg sat	avg %	avg freq	avg imp	avg sat	avg %
0-2	0-3	0-3		0-2	0-3	0-3		0-2	0-3	0-3		0-2	0-3	0-3	
1.45	1.85	2.13	78%					1.71	2.57	2.57	44%				
0.90	1.82	2.27	62%					0.91	2.00	2.45	34%				
0.94	2.02	2.40	59%					1.82	2.45	2.27	34%				
0.96	2.17	2.56	57%					1.44	1.89	2.40	31%				
1.63	2.06	2.37	44%					1.33	1.89	2.56	28%				
1.50	1.75	1.50	37%					1.44	1.89	2.33	28%				
1.37	1.85	2.29	34%					1.75	1.50	2.38	25%				
1.40	1.77	1.92	32%					1.13	2.00	2.13	25%				
1.48	1.96	2.20	30%					1.22	2.33	1.84	25%				
1.57	2.09	2.35	28%					1.38	2.14	2.25	25%				
1.27	2.07	2.13	18%					1.00	2.00	2.50	19%				
1.13	1.93	2.07	18%					1.17	2.00	2.83	19%				
1.33	1.91	2.42	15%					1.20	2.20	2.20	16%				
1.38	2.42	2.42	15%								16%				
1.50	2.10	2.50	12%					1.60	2.20	3.00	16%				
1.50	2.63	2.44	11%					1.25	1.75	2.75	13%				
1.56	1.78	2.33	11%					0.75	1.50	2.25	13%				
1.44	2.13	1.71	11%					1.00	1.75	1.00	13%				
1.83	2.00	2.83	7%					0.67	1.67	2.50	9%				
1.46	1.89	2.28	5%					1.00	2.00	2.00	6%				
1.50	2.25	2.00	5%					2.00	3.00	3.00	3%				
1.00	2.33	2.00	4%												

UPPER EXTREMITY DEXTERITY				VISION				Mental function							
under 55				over 55				under 55				over 55			
avg freq	avg imp	avg sat	avg %	avg freq	avg imp	avg sat	avg %	avg freq	avg imp	avg sat	avg %	avg freq	avg imp	avg sat	avg %
0-2	0-3	0-3		0-2	0-3	0-3		0-2	0-3	0-3		0-2	0-3	0-3	
1.43	1.97	2.53	70%					1.73	2.81	2.38	74%				
0.76	2.00	2.52	67%					1.67	2.76	2.45	71%				
1.23	1.14	2.55	51%					1.47	2.47	2.06	58%				
1.64	2.36	2.59	51%					1.27	1.93	2.33	52%				
1.19	2.20	2.65	49%					1.00	1.56	2.27	52%				
1.65	2.40	2.55	49%					1.57	2.57	2.46	48%				
1.43	2.05	2.48	49%					1.27	1.87	2.69	48%				
1.50	2.23	2.50	33%					1.25	2.25	2.38	45%				
1.69	2.31	2.62	33%					1.62	2.62	2.33	42%				
1.67	2.56	2.67	23%					1.50	2.58	2.18	42%				
1.56	2.50	2.70	23%					0.92	2.08	2.50	42%				
1.56	2.56	2.67	21%					1.92	2.33	3.00	39%				
1.38	2.63	2.88	19%					0.83	1.67	1.83	39%				
1.86	2.43	2.43	16%					1.00	2.11	2.44	32%				
1.86	3.00	2.83	16%					1.38	2.38	2.43	29%				
1.33	2.17	2.83	14%					1.57	1.86	2.14	23%				
1.40	2.20	3.00	12%					1.67	2.83	2.67	19%				
1.75	2.25	2.75	9%					1.00	2.00	2.00	19%				
1.75	2.00	2.75	9%					1.00	1.80	2.25	16%				
2.00	2.33	2.67	7%					1.25	2.25	2.00	13%				
								1.75	1.75	2.25	13%				
								1.75	1.67	2.33	13%				
								1.33	1.67	2.00	10%				
								0.33	0.67	1.50	10%				
								6%							

Type of Accommodation

- In accommodating physical limitations, 1 of the top 5 most common were Assistive Technology
- In accommodating sensory limitations, 3 of the top 5 most common were Assistive Technology

Accommodations Use Described by Age and Functional Limitation

Functional Limitation	# used, under 55	# used, over 55
Mobility	6.0	4.7
Dexterity / Upper Extremity	6.2	4.4
Hearing	4.4	3.8
Vision	8.6	6.2
Speech	1.5	2.5
Mental Function	4.4	2.8
All Individuals	9.1	7.4

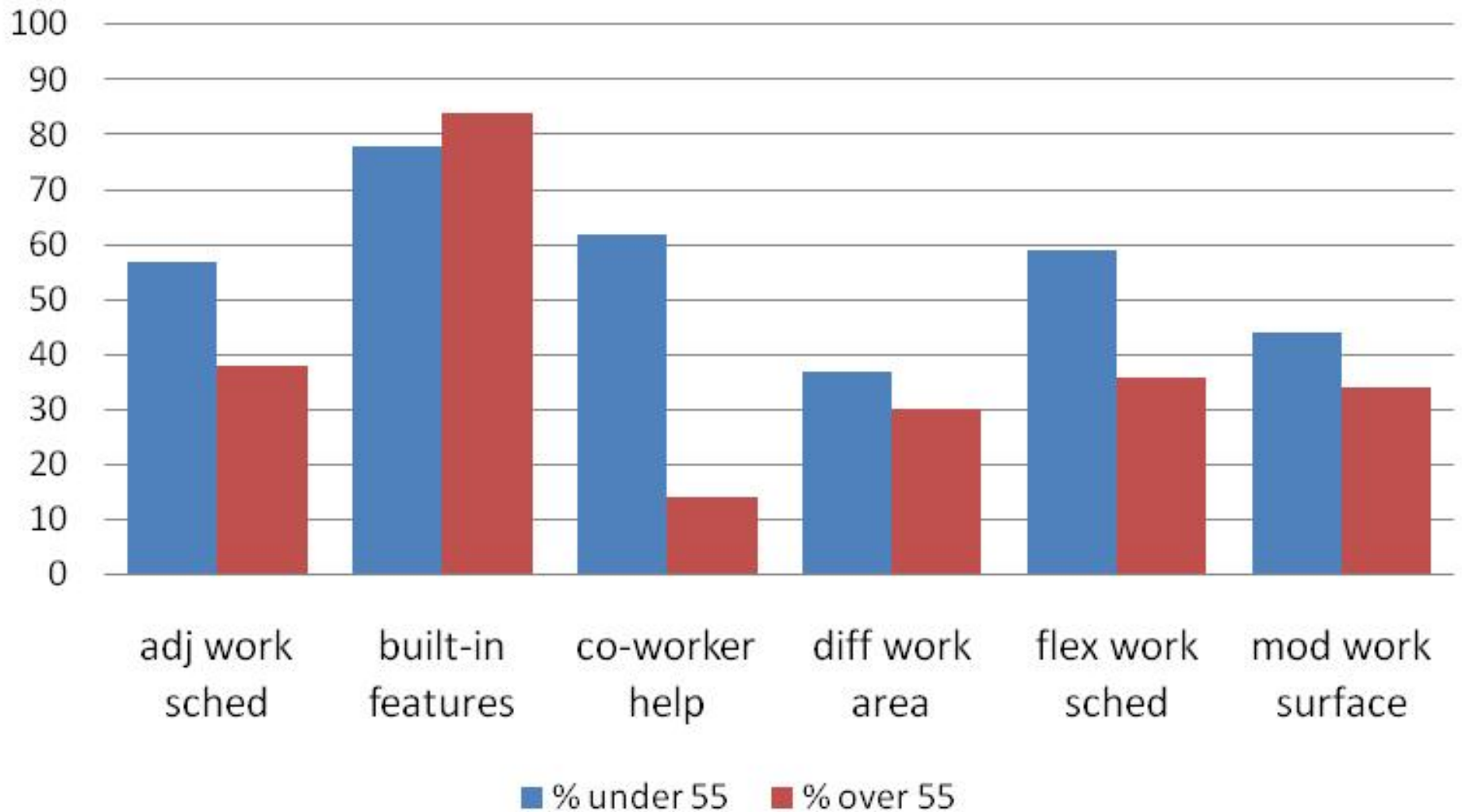
Accommodations for Physical Limitations

- Architectural features
- Flexible or adjustable work schedules
- Co-worker help
- Modified work surface

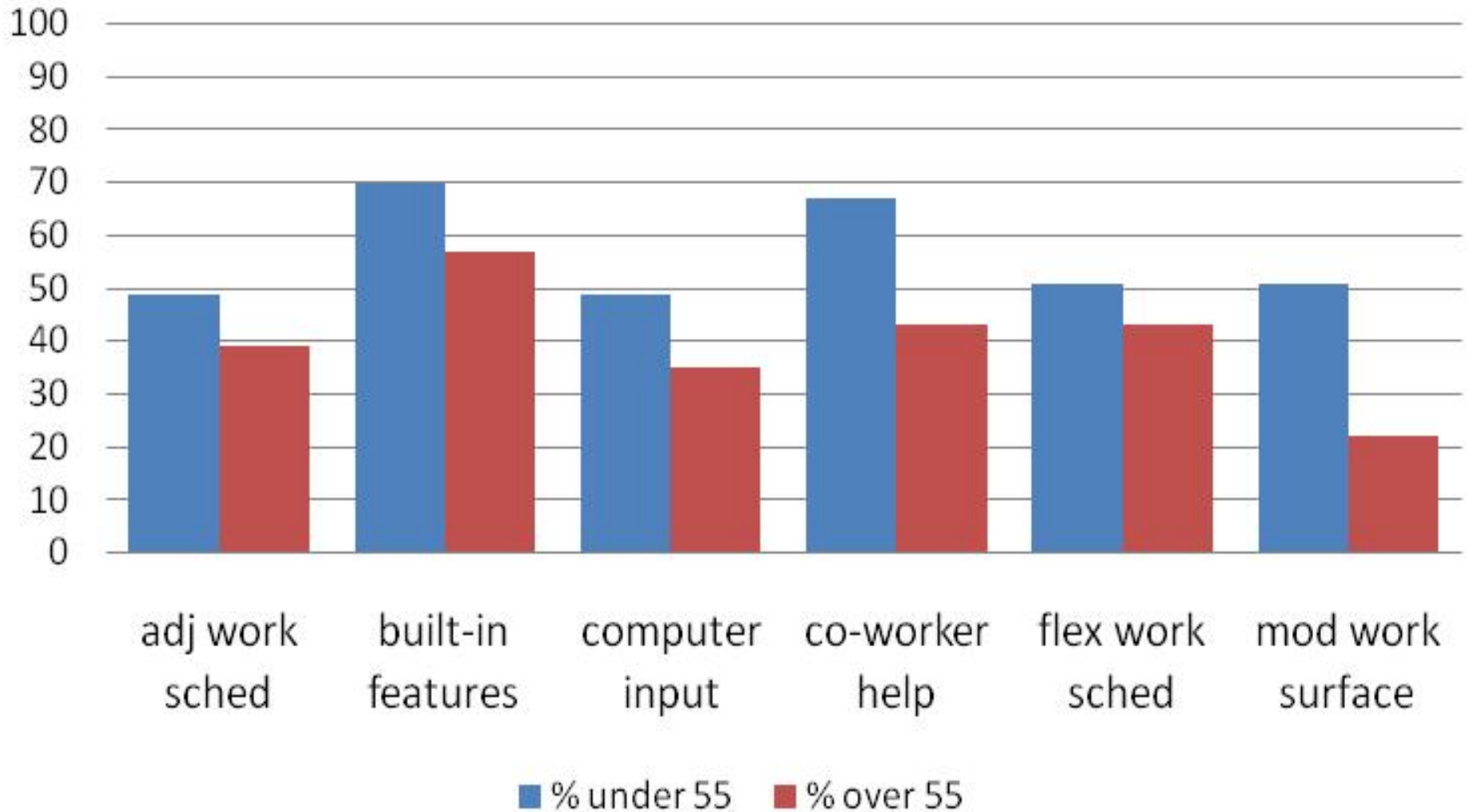
Those with mobility limitations were accommodated with different work areas

Those with dexterity/UE limitations used computer input devices

Commonly Used Accommodations for Mobility Limitations



Common Accommodations for Upper Extremity Limitations



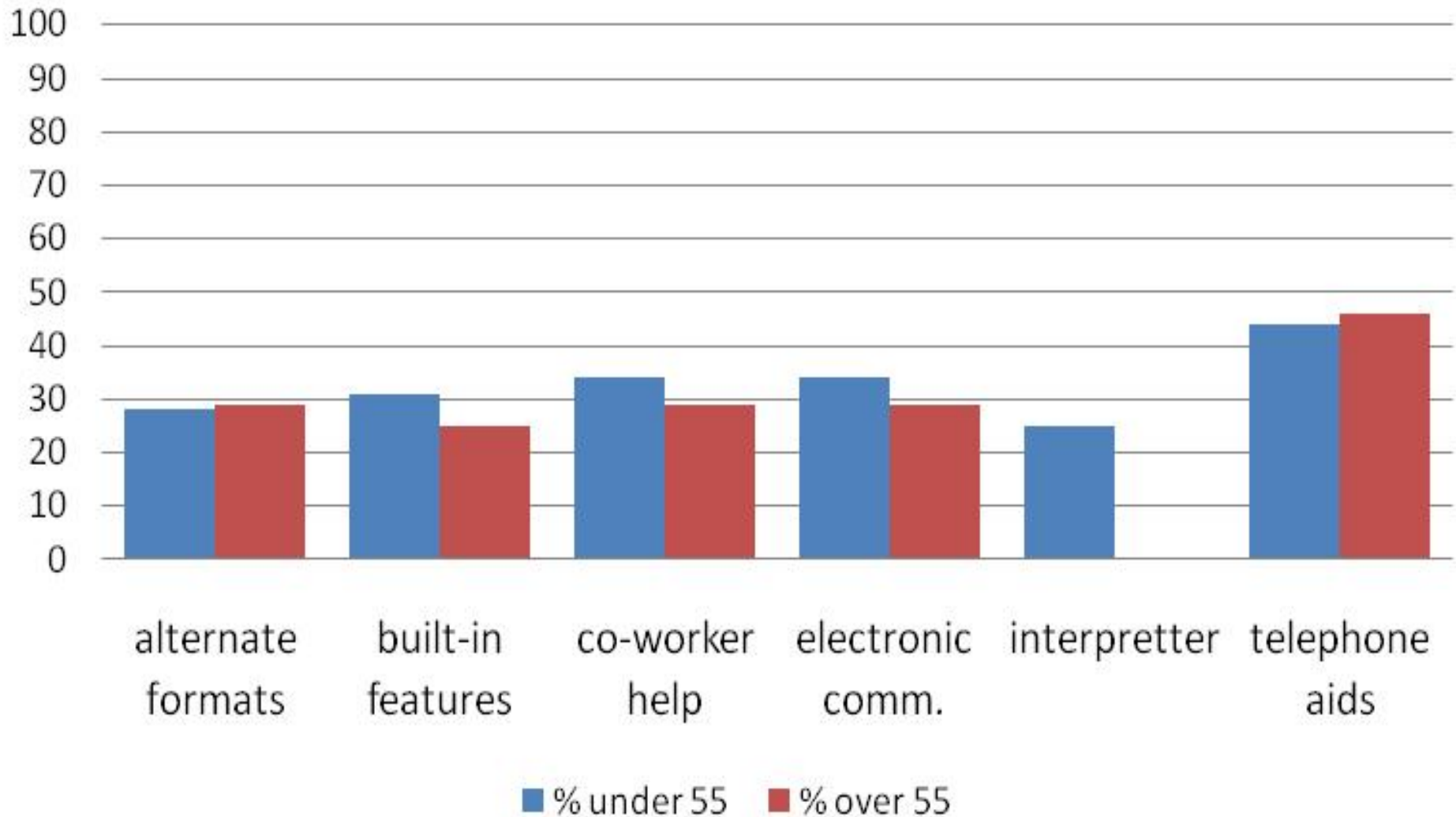
Accommodations for Sensory Limitations

- Alternate Formats
- Electronic forms of communication
- Relocated/Modified tools common to co-workers

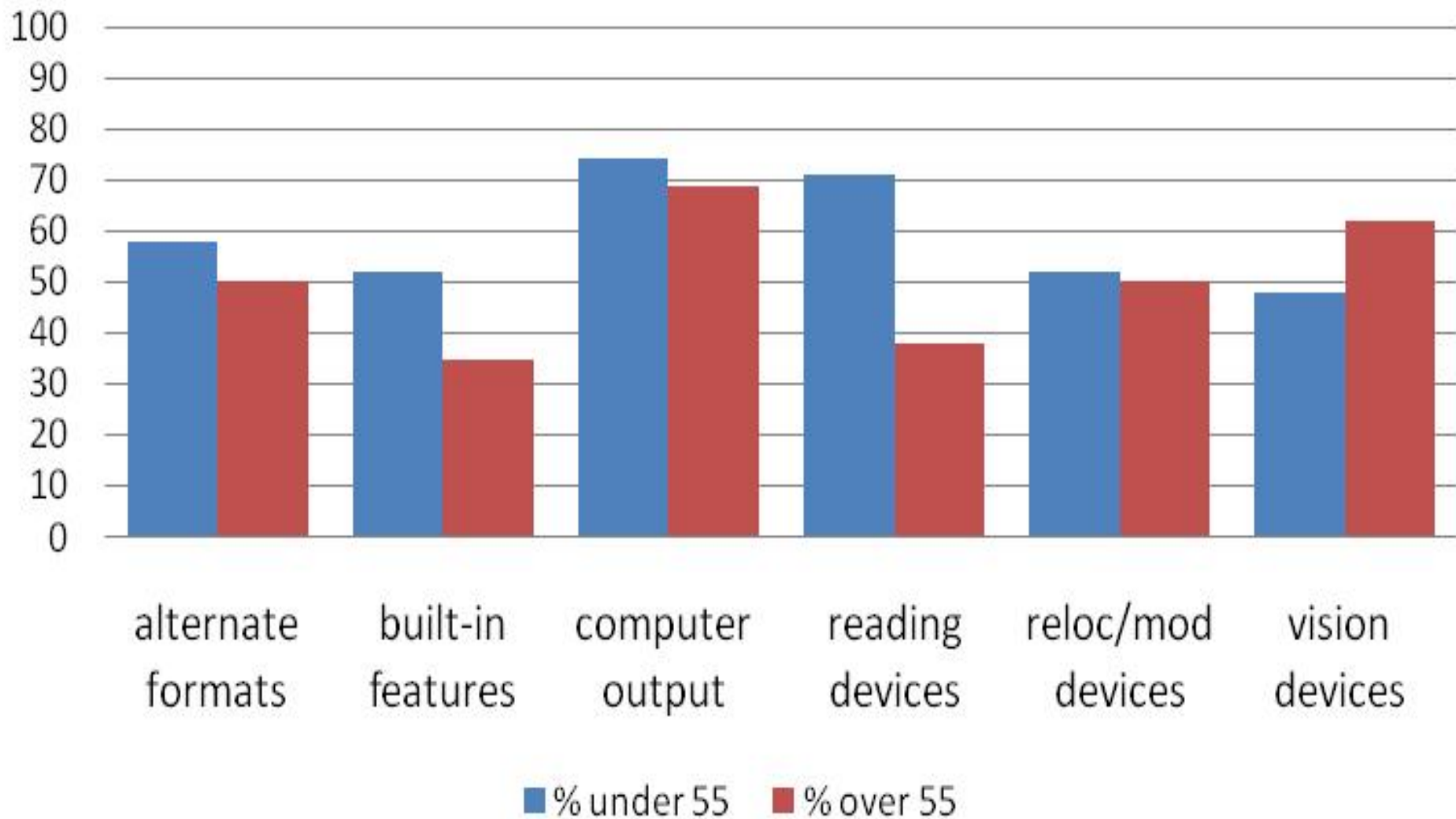
Telephone aids were used by approx 45% of those with hearing limitations in both age groups.

Computer Output devices used by 74% / 69 % of (younger / older) workers with vision impairment

Common Accommodations for Hearing Limitations



Common Accommodations for Visual Limitations

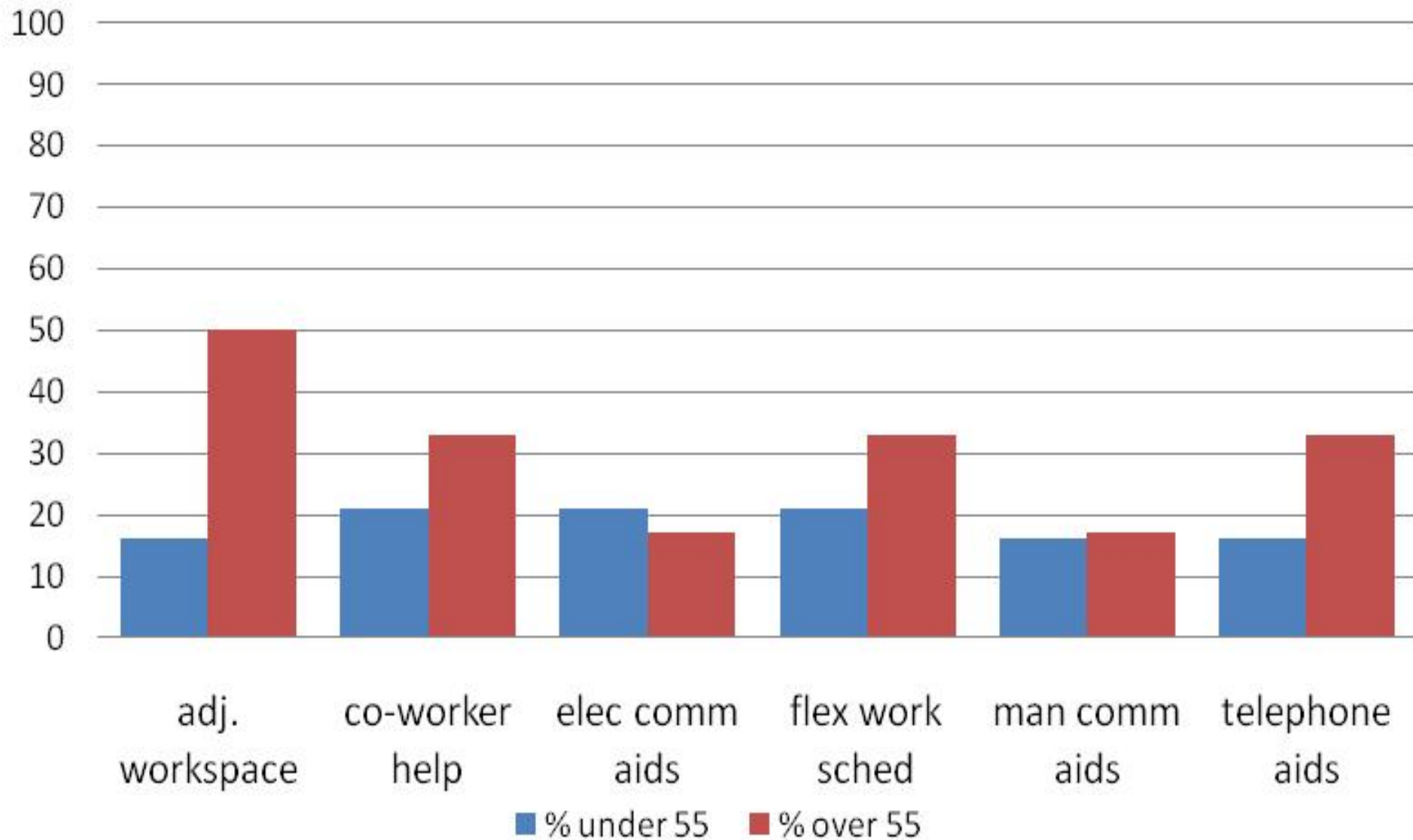


Accommodations for Speech Limitations

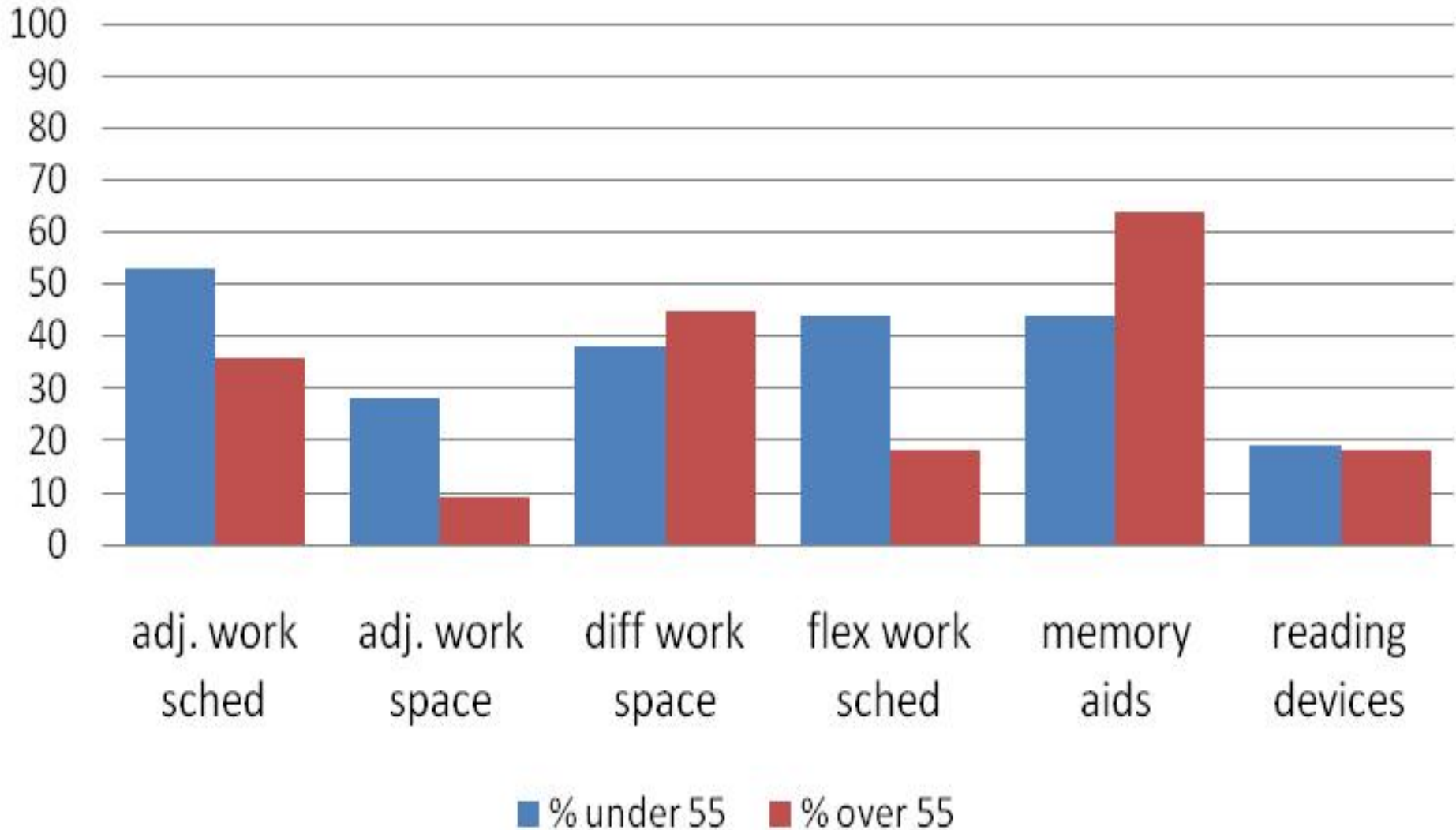
- Adjustable and flexible work schedules
- Co-worker help
- Telephone aids

- Older workers had used adjustable workspaces with much higher percentage than their younger peers.

Common Accommodations for Speech Limitations



Common Accommodations for Mental Function Limitation

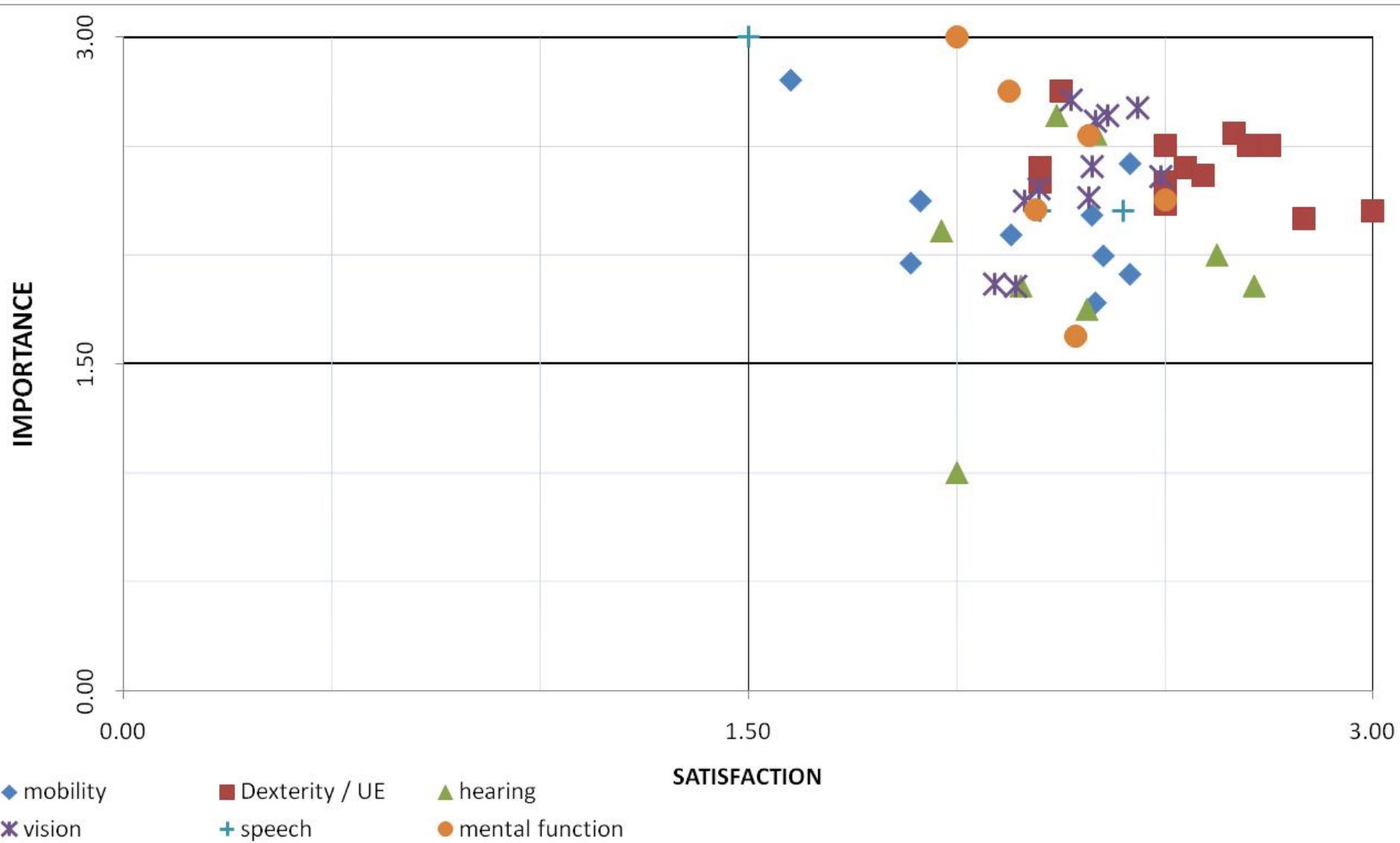


Results – Satisfaction, Importance, Frequency

- Scores were averaged where accommodations were used by more than 15% of the functional limitation population.
- Preliminary results show no difference in distribution of scores by age groups.

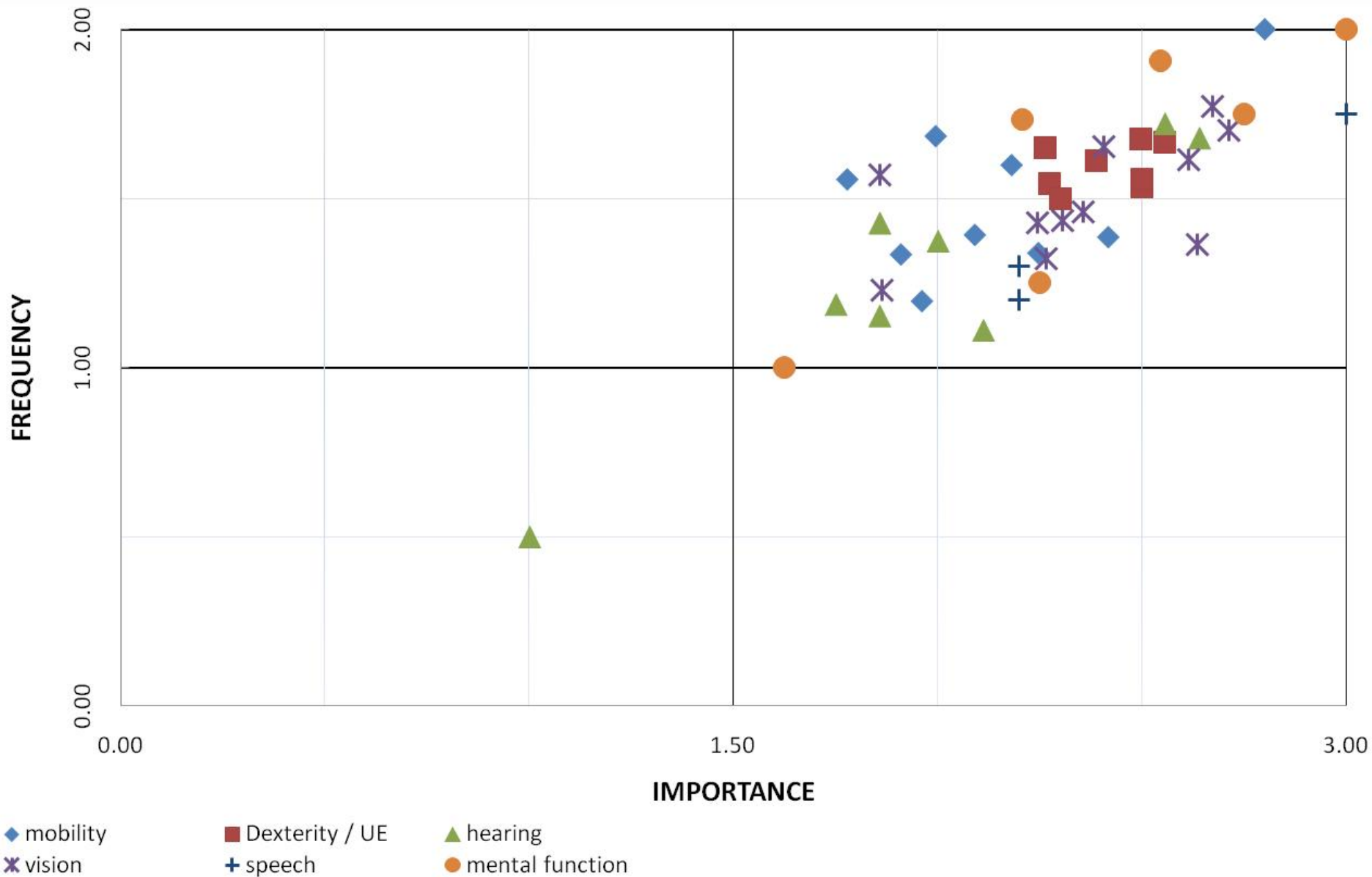
Satisfaction vs. Importance

AT Accommodations



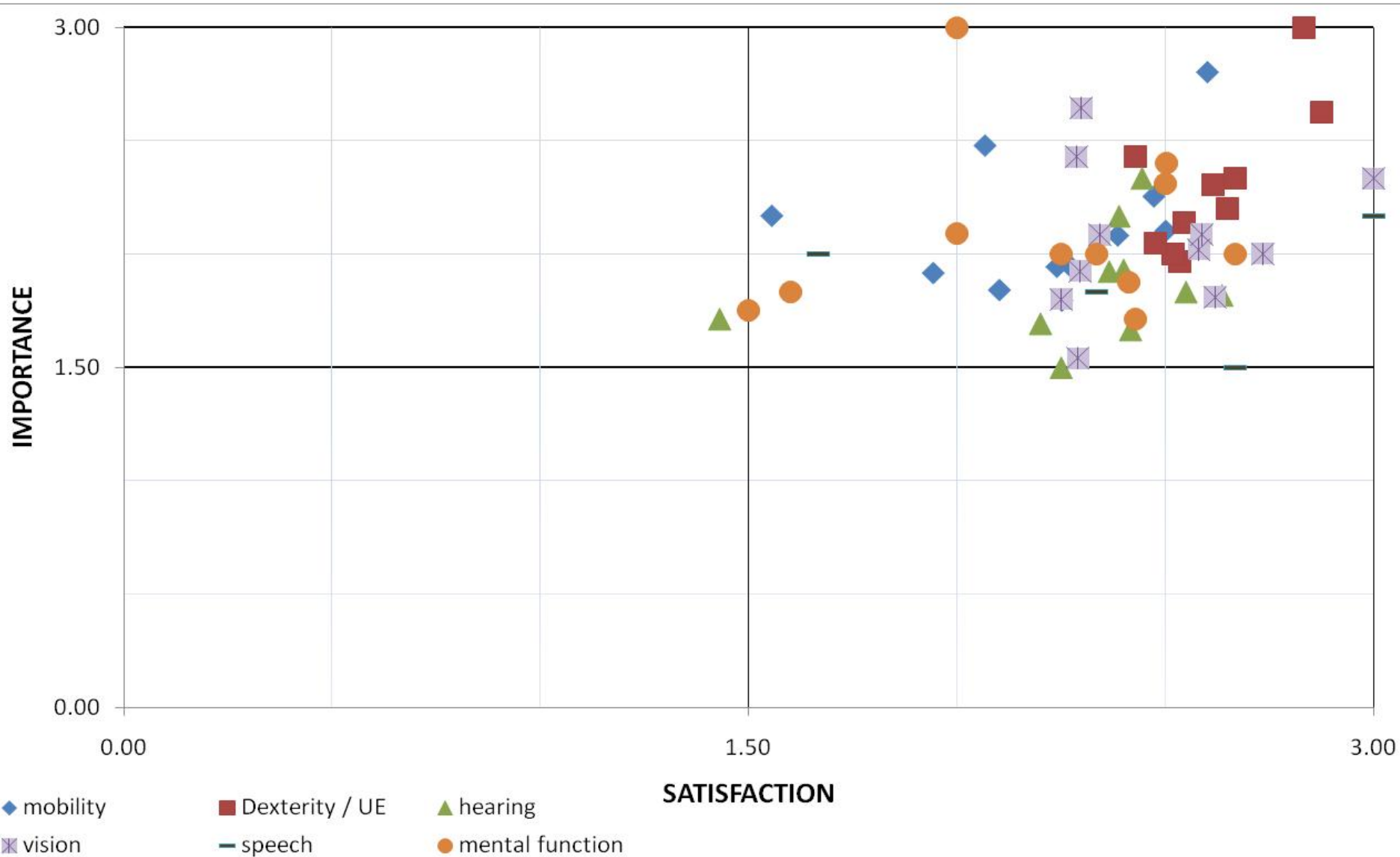
Importance vs. Frequency

AT Accommodations

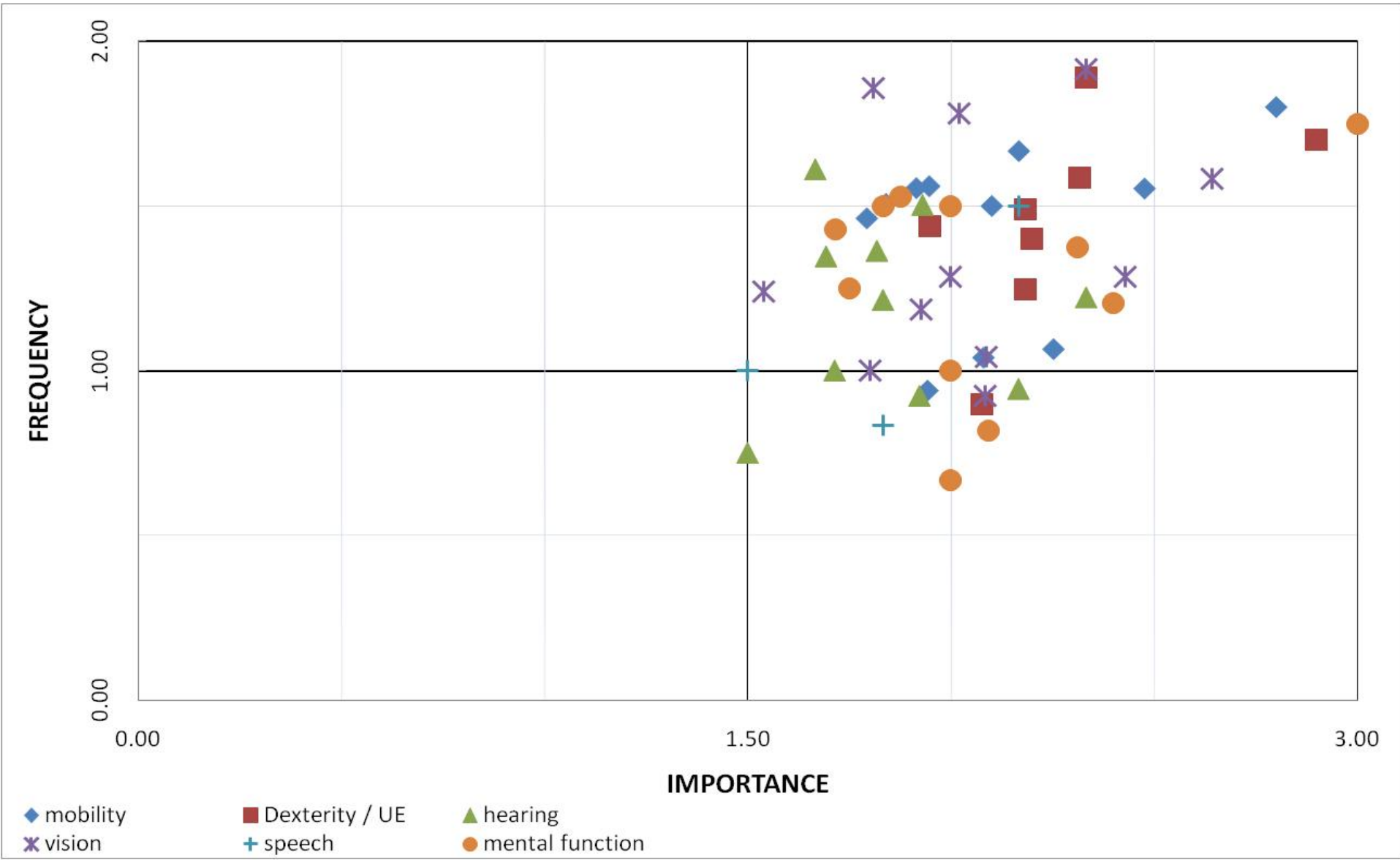


Satisfaction vs. Importance

Non-AT Accommodations



Importance vs. Frequency non-AT Accommodations



Discussion

- Older individuals do not use as many job accommodations as younger ones.
 - Those aging into disability may be unaware of what is available.
 - Those aging with a disability may have developed compensatory strategies that make accommodation unnecessary

Trend-Busters

- Older workers with speech limitations used MORE accommodations than younger.
 - EXCEPT: They used electronic communication devices less commonly.
- mobility ~ built-in features
- hearing ~ telephone aids
- visual ~ vision devices
- mental function ~ memory aids
- mental function ~ different workspaces

Discussion

- AT related accommodations:
 - Were not the most commonly used accommodations.
 - Rated high on satisfaction, importance, and frequency of use.
- Non-AT related accommodations
 - Did not always rate high on frequency of use.

Discussion - Limitations

- Demographics are homogenous.
 - Electronic based survey targets a specific demographic?
- Preliminary data on a large number of variables.
- Data collection still underway.



Thank you

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