
Solving Of The Problem Of Gender Wage Gap

Gender pay gap is a complex issue that has several causes that are often related. Reports have found that women earn 75 cents for every one dollar that men earn. The data seems clear about the wage gap between men and women. There are several causes for the differences in earnings between men and women. This research paper is a presentation of the reasons why there exist gender wage gap in the society.

Gender Discrimination

Direct Discrimination

Women have experienced discrimination in the field of employment where they are looked down upon in terms of payment. They are offered salary choices that are evidently lower than the salaries men would be paid for doing the same job. Direct discrimination is a factor that explains a small part of the gender pay gap due to the existence of labor unions and national legislation.

Discrimination at places of work is intangible, but it is there. Discrimination has taken a more subtle yet pervasive form. For instance, in the class action sex discrimination suit filed against Merrill Lynch, female employees complained that most lucrative opportunities were steered towards men in the company (Selmi 1). From the case study, it is clear that women are directly discriminated at places of work in terms of payment of wages.

Women are not offered career shaping assignments thus they do not grow according to their career. Since experience is useful for the advancement of employees, women cannot make a step towards advancement in their career as they lack the necessary knowledge to lead others. At their places of work they remain in their positions as men are favored with promotions and career shaping assignments. The discrimination at workplace plays a role of encouraging the wage gap between women and men.

Old Stereotypes Die Hard

Some communities still hold the idea that women do not need to look for jobs tirelessly. Women in such communities are told that it is the responsibility of men to care and support their families. Women are made to believe that they do not work to pin money, which should not be the case. There are stereotypes about the kind of work that is meant for women. Such stereotypes discriminate women against getting educated and seeking for employment in the lucrative sectors of the economy. Women, therefore tend to lag behind in terms of the wages they get from the job due to the old stereotypes that discriminate them from working hard to pin money (Eagly, Alice and Wood 915).

Sex difference is still given a priority in some communities where not all jobs are open to women. Currently, over half of all the women are concentrated in the broad categories of sales, clerical, and service jobs. It is evident in the department of labor audits and federal contractors that most companies refuse to hire women in some departments. In case they get the opportunity to be employed in the male-dominated jobs, they get little support from workmates

and their bosses. Women are therefore discouraged from seeking employment in the male-dominated jobs that are well paying; thus the existing wage difference.

Undervaluation of Women's Job

In several occasions, women take home less payment for doing the same job that men did to earn their higher wages. A primary reason for the existing gender wage difference is the way women's competencies are valued compared to men's. Most employers take advantage of the existing stereotype that women cannot carry out some activities. They employ women in their companies but end up paying them less money with the claims that the work they did never met the required standards. Upon keenly following the wages that men earn for doing the same job to the same standards as those of the women, one would find out that there is a difference in what men and women take home.

Jobs that require same skills and experience tend to be poorly paid and undervalued when they are done by women. The discrimination in the quality of work done by women leads to low wages paid to the women. For instance, female cashiers at supermarkets earn less than the male cashiers. It makes no sense since both the cashiers do the same job of stacking shelves and other physical duties yet they are paid different amounts.

For example, in a study carried out on the composition and employment status of Boston City indicate that the majority of the inhabitants are women. They are still paid less money than their male counterparts who are paid good amount of money for doing the same job. The study reveals that women are the greatest contributors to the city's economy since their population has outnumbered the men's population. The economy of Boston is to extent affected by the fact that the women who contribute substantially to the city's economy are underpaid (Menino 6).

Additionally, the evaluation of performance as well as the pay level may be in favor of men thus giving men the opportunity to advance more quickly than women. The more level of advancement in men, the more the wage difference between men and women widens. According to studies in a journal article about industrial relations in Britain, many people join labor unions so that their rights may be protected at their places of work. A large number of those joining the labor unions are women whose value of work is discriminated by some employers (Wajcman 183).

Effect of Weak Laws

Weak laws in a country encourage employers to exploit those who are working under their control. Gender wage difference has continued to widen since there are no strict laws that control the working conditions of employees, more so female employees who are discriminated at work. The existing laws are hard to prove and win when employees sign a legal case against their employers. Additionally, some elements of the constitution of different countries do not allow for women to file class-action lawsuits. The sections of the Constitution in such countries do not provide very substantial damages to those who have been offended. For instance, in a book about rights at work, it is argued that no edicts are of a super power nature to decide on the laws that ought to rule the world. The laws of most countries tend to go by the belief in inspirational books such as the Bible and Quran (McCann 23).

Economic Causes of Gender Wage Gap

There are several other factors apart from discrimination that lead to gender wage gap. Researchers use economic variables such as industry, level of education, experience, occupation and other demographic factors to explain why there exist a difference in the wages earned by men and women. Studies show that economic variables significantly contribute to the existing gender wage gap in the society. Different economic variables have contributed to the existing international differences in the gender wage gap (Blau and Kahn 3).

Difference in Occupation

According to studies on the types of occupation men and women choose, men are more likely to choose careers that are more dangerous; hence they naturally pay more. Women have an inbuilt character of having the fear of hard tasks thus they would go for easy jobs that do not pay more as compared to the jobs men go for. Statistics on labor indicate that the most dangerous jobs include fishing, piloting, roofing, industrial machinery installation and repair, construction and logging. It is evident in the society that the named jobs are mostly occupied by men. Some jobs have no representation of women at all.

A study on the employment of men and women in America indicate that women are three times more likely to working administrative support jobs than men, who mostly work in construction, production and transportation jobs. The study revealed that women are highly represented in the low-paying jobs with an average of 887 dollars to 970 dollars per week. According to the study, in 2009, only 7 percent of female professionals were in the high paying computer and engineering fields compare to 38 percent of the male professionals. The study also showed an increase in the number of women working in management, business, and finance jobs since 1983. The study revealed how women continuously get into the management jobs compared to the computer and engineering jobs that are well paying (US Executive Office of the President 33).

Level of Education

In the field of employment, employees are paid more if their level of education is high. High level of educations means a lot of knowledge and skills in the sector. More education is, therefore a useful tool for increasing earnings to individuals. On the contrary, it is not an effective tool against the gender pay gap in the society. At every level of academic achievement, the earnings of women are less than men's earnings. What is implied by the above statement is that as the gender gap becomes larger at higher levels of education for men. Most women find it hard to pursue higher learning due to a lot of challenges that are not under their control.

Most women who are married find it difficult to balance their studies, their career, and their families. Marital disruptions hinder women from working for longer hours in order to compensate for the work time lost in studies. Unlike men, women cannot afford to work any longer than six hours which is the average working hour requirement. Women are assigned various roles at home unlike men who can simply send money home for the daily expenses even if they arrive late from job. Women have to look after their children and do some cleaning of their houses. Men can also work on weekends when they compensate for the time lost while they were attending the extra classes. Most women cannot work on weekends as explained above, due to

the several responsibilities they have. The advantage men have over women in pursuing higher education gives them the opportunity to earn more than women who are prevented from fixing their schedule due to their daily chores at home (Houseknecht, Spanier and Sharon 375).

Experience

Women often have less work experience than men even though their educational levels are converging, mostly for unmarried women. Studies indicate that a higher percentage of women than men have at least a high school education. In the modern world, women have caught up with men in the percentage of those who have at least a university degree. Statistics has it that the percentage of women with a bachelor's and master's degree in 2008 was above that of men. Besides, women account for the majority of graduate enrollment across the globe.

Despite the converging level of education between men and women in the modern world, most men still have a lot of experience than women. The difference in experience between men and women plays an important role in the gender wage gap. Studies have estimated that almost a half of the observed gender wage gap can be justified by differences in productivity, measured by job experience and educational achievement. It has been observed that a higher percentage of women work between the age of 16 and 19, a factor that makes men have more experience than women. Men tend to have the energy for work at almost every age range in their lifetime (Kalleberg and Loscocco 78).

Demographic Variables

Studies do not major on demographic variables as a cause of gender wage gap. Demographic factors such as the age of an individual and the number of children an individual has play much smaller roles in accounting for the gender wage gap. Such variables can affect both men and women relatively equally.

Other coefficients are statistically important in creation of gender wage gap. Variables such as age, number of children one has, living in a metropolitan area, living in the south or being black affects the wage rate of individuals. The importance of the benefits workers obtain from job such as health care and other fringe benefits are explanatory to the existing wage gap. Studies indicate that the wages of women of childbearing age offsets increased costs of health insurance coverage that leads to low wages for women who are in childbearing age (Hellerstein, Neumark and Troske 2).

Conclusion

Gender wage gap is largely due to looking down upon women at their places of work. Wage gap occur at all educational levels and occupations. Most governments ought to strengthen the laws by prohibiting retaliation against employees for discussing their wages. Remedies should be put in place for various types of discrimination and closing the loopholes in employer defenses to equal pay claims. Economic variables also contribute significantly to the existing gender wage gap. Variation in the variables between men and women has led to a difference in the pay that both men and women pocket from their jobs. In solving the issue of varying economic variables, every individual should be provided with equal opportunities to avoid blame game on the causes of gender wage gap.

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