

What factors affect the gender pay gap in the uk industries

[Business](#)



Factors Affecting Gender Pay Gap- Literature Review Factors Affecting Gender Pay Gap- Literature Review The issue of Gender Pay Gap has been a center of many economic studies in the UK, Europe and in other parts of the world. From the look of it, Gender Pay Gap (GPG) involves inequalities in wages and salaries between men and women, but at its core, GPG involves deeper issues on discrimination, culture, economics, and politics (Russell, Oconnell, & Smyth, 2005, pp. 56). While several steps have been taken over the years to mitigate the issue and promote equality in employment, there are still some companies and industries with huge discrepancies between salaries of men and women for equal amount of work. Recent statistics indicate that the percentage for GPG has increased exponentially in recent times as compared to the previous five years despite the measures taken to abate the differences. Women begin to experience these wage differences with their male counterparts in their first jobs and the gap continues to widen as the women continue to rise in their careers (Blau, Brinton, Grusky, 2009, pp. 121). This literature reviews examines the different factors that have resulted in such discrepancies in the labor force in the UK. The factors contributing to gender pay gap among women in full time employment can be grouped in to four main categories namely education, experience, occupation, and unexplained factors.

Educational Factors

Over the years, the number of women accessing higher education has been minimal as compared to the number of men. This has negatively affected both employment and wage rates for women because men often most men have higher educational qualifications. As a result, women need to have

slightly superior degrees, for instance a masters or a doctorate degree in order to earn the same amount as their male counterparts with only a first degree (Chant, 2010, pp. 73). The government has taken several measures to promote higher education for women in the country and the situation is likely to be remedied in the future.

Professional Experience

Another factor related to experience is professional experience. Women tend to have less professional experience as compared to their male counterparts in similar positions. Women's professional experience is cut down due to various factors including duration spent on maternity leaves, or time taken off to take care of children. This has in turn affected the wages and salaries that women get in similar positions held by men.

Occupation

One other factor that contributes to the GPG is occupation. The society generally classifies various occupations as male or female professions. Most women would therefore be absorbed in occupations that are less demanding and less technical as compared to their male counterparts. This has resulted in overrepresentation of women in some occupations while underrepresentation in others. Women are mostly overrepresented in clerical and administrative professions while they are underrepresented in fields such as engineering (Farrell, 2004, pp. 38). These female dominated occupations tend to attract lower wages when compared to men holding similar positions in other industries. A female clerk in a female dominated industry for instance would earn less than a man in holding a similar position in a male dominated industry.

There are also other industries such as blue-collar industries like mining and manufacturing that tend to attract more men than women. Women employed in these industries often earn less than their male counterparts because the work is often considered to be for men.

Unexplained Factors

There are also unexplained factors that contribute to differences in pay for both men and women. These factors do not come up explicitly but they do play a significant role in understanding the differences between men and women's pay. These factors include cultural values that discriminate against women and other forms of discrimination based on race and disability that are often extended to women (Athanasou, & Esbroeck, 2008, pp. 61).

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