

The income gender gap sociology essay



Income gender gap can be reviewed at both the individual and institutional level. It refers to the prejudicial beliefs and discriminatory of individuals, and the policies that restrict the opportunities of minorities respectively.

SECTION II - THE ISSUES AND WHO ARE INVOLVED

Income gender gap is also known as the disparity of income between sexes. It has been a debatable issue ever since globalization takes place. In the context of economic inequality, gender gap generally refers to the differences in the wages of men and women. This can be calculated as a ratio of female to male wages (often expressed as a percentage). The female population has been showcasing their talents and it is depending on how the world accounts and utilizes such talent pool to determine the competitiveness of the economies.

Gender disparity in income is an issue that has been surfacing worldwide and economies would have been affected as a result. Thus, it was chosen as I openly felt that corrective measures might not have been designed to address the issue on a global scale. Besides, reports have also shown that the gender pay gap has not been fully resolved as many countries' workplaces are still faced with the problem of gender discrimination. In this income gender gap report, I aim to highlight the importance of promoting gender equality. This is in hope that creation of greater awareness among a global audience is present, with implementation of good practices and effective measures drawn that can help further reduce gender inequality.

An example of common stereotypes stating males being more dominant and females seen as the weaker sex are present. This happens when both sexes

working in the same field are being remunerated differently – the male with a higher wage as compared to the female. Singapore is not spared in this aspect. Statistics have shown that there is a closing of gender income gap. However, this is only relevant in the occupations of professionals, services/sales and cleaners/labourers.

Statistics have shown that employers tend to empower males with prospective occupation tracks that lead them to having high flying careers; however this isn't so for the females. There is more likelihood that employers entrust women with occupation positions that are deemed to be dead-end, or have very little mobility for advancement. This is due to the perception that women will leave their jobs or labour force at times of marriage or pregnancy.

SECTION III – WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR US TO TALK ABOUT IT?

The principle of equality of opportunity is one of the basic tenets of human development. However, the differences in wage between genders speak about how discrimination brings about inequality and places one at an advantage or vice versa. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), progress in reducing the gender pay gap is very slow in Europe and Central Asia. The gender income gap may have narrowed in some countries, but on an international level, it is still not evident as proven by ILO.

Improvising of stricter policies and measures should be done in the light of significance in every country and the most effective means of doing so is through governments' intervention.

The 'talents' of women which involved the capacity for and skills are not equally rewarded. Also, division of work has always been gendered, which left women often experiencing a disparity in the labour market - limited positions and rights in companies. Constrain on the economic growth is one of the impacts contributed by gender inequalities in society.

In the long run, society will experience greater negative consequences economically, resulting from this discrimination - gender inequalities at work. This is because income inequality diminishes growth potential. With gender inequalities reduced, it benefits men and women, children and the elderly, for the poor and as well as the rich. This in turn would lead to the better advancement in economic growth.

However, research begged to differ that such reduction in income disparity between genders would be positive. It is argued that higher inequality would be an advantage in encouraging growth in well developed regions although it will hinder growth in poor countries (Robert Barro, 1999). Although the economy at large is still affected, inequality and growth were believed to have no correlation-concluding that inequality neither drives nor impairs growth ("World Development Report", 2000). This is also supported by a recent study on income inequality; a society in which income was distributed perfectly equally with respect to gender would not be a desirable place either (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2008).

On a fair note during entry level for both sexes, earnings of women's pay have been analyzed in some countries and the increase in earnings is

substantial, in addition, even higher than those of men because of their qualifications. This explains that income is based solely on merit of individuals. Still, I believe that this is not practiced internationally, with Singapore – a globalized developed country, ranking 84 out of 134 countries, with a score of 0.666 (0.00 = inequality/1.00 = equality). And for wage equality for similar work, she's ranked 9th (World Economic Forum, 2009). Yet Singapore is still facing these problems at present. For this reason, the gender gap plays a significant magnitude in determining wage.

In the perspective of Singapore, females still earn less than males in all occupations. Disparity is even wider when comparing of mean incomes, which implies that males still receive higher wages than their female counterparts as a whole. This is backed by structural constraints in Singapore's economy preventing women from attaining similar income. Comparison of the monthly gross salary in the managerial roles shows signs of glass ceiling. The mean gross wage is \$7272 for a female, compared to \$9065 for a male, and the median gross wage is \$5673 for a female, compared to \$6450 for a male (Singapore Yearbook of ManPower Statistic, 2009).

Predetermined conception that women have shorter employment life-spans and experiences on the job due to pregnancy and traditional domestic duties, such as child rearing and housekeeping is the contributing factor bringing about stereotype against women at the workplace. Studies have shown that these factors accounts for a considerable component of the gender wage gap. Due to women's family-related commitments and priorities, the average woman on the labour market has fewer years of

experience than the average man, which contributes to the difference in pay between men and women.

Furthermore, an equal position whereby both genders are employed takes into the consideration of National Service. Men trained in the National Service were being favoured, which played a part in the salary differentials. A strong argument cited that because National Service provides men with essential skills such as in leadership, organisation, and decision-making, which is said as to be a pre-requisite in the job market. Awarding them a higher starting salary in the public and private sectors is justifiable. Since National Service is unavoidable, it is deemed as a result that women may be left with little power in the public and private sectors in terms of representation.

SECTION IV – WHERE CAN WE START TO FIX THE PROBLEM?

With males given a higher edge above their female counterparts in the context of wage, it is a prejudice as men is seen as the domineering sex. Thus, with no qualms that such an issue creates inequality in society. Men would be given perks at the expense of the degree and opportunity of women's representation; which are considerably affected by social norms and perceptions regarding women's roles in society. I take the stand that both genders should be given equal benefits based on their qualifications, and hence the pay differentials should not surface.

At the individual level, adopting different educational-informational means to alter the aforementioned public perception of women's role in various

spheres of society is essential. Using these strategies may boost public awareness of gender stereotyping, ensuring there is minimal social prejudice against women, as well as strengthening a positive insight.

With the aim of overcoming uncertain societal nature of women's representation in the labour force, it is necessary to adopt legal constitutional provision on the principle of women's 'right to be represented'.

In Singapore, the Government and social partners commitments' are affirmed by the addition of an appropriate clause in collective agreements to certify that employers conform to the principle of paying their employees the remuneration based on merit.

To conclude, with the implementation of various means would improve the status of female representation and gender equality.