

## The Effects of Gender Inequality

Gender inequality is defined as the gap in status, power, and prestige between people who identify as women and men. On August 26, 1920, American women were granted the right to vote. To celebrate the achievements of women and to further promote gender equality, each year the 44th President of the United States declared August 26 as Women's Equality Day. Gender inequality is still a problem in today's society, women are not being treated equally as their male colleagues in the work fields, pay grades, rights, etc. It is generally assumed women in America are better off than women in other countries, which in some instances are true, however there are still inequality problems that women face in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

### **Pay Equity & Discrimination:**

Women are almost half of the workforce, they are the sole or co-breadwinner in half of American families with children. They receive more college and graduate degrees than men. Yet, on average, women continue to earn considerably less than men. In 2015, full-time female, year-round workers made only 80 cents for every dollar earned by men, a gender wage gap of 20 percent. In 2015 the pay gap was the smallest in New York, where women working full time year-round were paid 89 percent of what men were paid and the largest gap was in Wyoming, where women were paid 64 percent of what men were paid.<sup>2</sup>

Women, on average, earn less than men in nearly occupation. In middle-skilled occupations, workers in jobs mainly done by women earn only 66 percent of workers in jobs

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<sup>1</sup> Moerman, C. J., J. A. Haafkens, M. Söderström, É Rásky, P. Maguire, U. Maschewsky-Schneider, M. Norstedt, D. Hahn, H. Reinerth, and N. McKeivitt. "Gender equality in the work of local research ethics committees in Europe: a study of practice in five countries." *Journal of Medical Ethics*. BMJ Group, Feb. 2007. Web. 06 Mar. 2017.

<sup>2</sup> MAKERS Team | August 25, 2016. "Women's Equality Day: Gender Inequalities that Still Exist Today in the U.S." MAKERS. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Mar. 2017.

mainly done by men. IWPR's report on sex and race discrimination in the workplace shows that outright discrimination in pay, hiring, or promotions continues to be a significant feature of working life. In not one country does a woman earn as much as a man for doing the same job, but in some nations, particularly poor countries, women make as much as 88 percent of what men make, CNN Money reported.

IWPR tracks the gender wage gap over time in a series of fact sheets updated twice per year.

According to their research, if change continues at the same slow pace as it has done for the past fifty years, it will take 44 years or until 2059 for women to finally reach pay parity. For women of color, the rate of change is even slower

### **Gender Inequality in the Work Force:**

In 2010, there were approximately 65 million women in the labor force and 53 percent of these women were concentrated in three industries education, health services, trade, transportation, utilities, and local government. (BLS 2011a).

Women were overrepresented in several industries and underrepresented in others. For example, in 2010, women represented 79 percent of the health and social services workforce and 68.6 percent of the education services workforce. However, women represented only 43.2 percent of the professional, scientific and technical services sector and 8.9 percent of the construction sector (DOL 2011).

### **Women and corporations:**

In terms of women in leadership positions, in 2009 only 24 percent of CEOs in the US were women and they earned 74.5 percent as much as male CEOs (BLS 2010 p.9). The Harvard Business School, in conjunction with Catalyst, recently released a research report regarding the

level of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of Fortune 500 companies with respect to the amount of women on the companies' Boards of Directors and serving as Corporate Officers. Of the Fortune 500 companies, in 2007, companies with three or more women on the Board of Directors averaged 28 times more money in philanthropic donations than those with no women, according to the report. Also, companies with 25% or more women in leadership positions as Corporate Officers averaged 13 times more philanthropic donations than those with none (Catalyst and HBS 2011).<sup>3</sup>

### **Women Reproductive Rights:**

State lawmakers introduced almost 400 bills to restrict women's access to abortion in 2015, according to Center for Reproductive Rights, an organization that advocates for access to abortion. Many defenders of legalized abortion argue that it is required by gender equality. The burdens of pregnancy and childbirth fall upon women but never upon men. So only with access to abortion can women be truly equal and able to determine the course of their lives. President Barack Obama has said, in the context of supporting abortion, "We must ... ensure that our daughters have the same rights, freedoms and opportunities as our sons to fulfill their dreams."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> "Gender Inequality and Women in the US Labor Force." Gender Inequality and Women in the US Labor Force. N.p., 23 Nov. 2011. Web. 24 Mar. 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Jablonski, Cleveland.com Ray. "Five reasons why gender inequality is worse in U.S. than elsewhere in the world." Cleveland.com. N.p., 20 Dec. 2015. Web. 06 Mar. 2017.

A way to slow down abortion rates would be by men owning up to their parental duties like women do, but the solution is not to allow the killing of human beings in the womb. Rather, men just taking responsibility and being held responsible by law if necessary. Women should not get shamed because they've had an abortion there are make situations that may be going on in that women's life, we should never judge someone by their actions when it's their body. It's like saying if you were to get a tattoo and someone doesn't agree with your decision to put permanent art on your body, at the end of the day it's your body and you can do what you want with it.

### **Maternity Leave:**

The U.S. and Papua New Guinea are the only two countries in the world that do not ensure any paid time off for new moms, according to a report from the (International Labor Organization.) Under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, women working at companies with at least 50 employees must be allowed to take 12 weeks off work following the birth of their child, but that time does not have to be paid. Currently, only 12 percent of American companies offer paid maternity or paternity leave, according to the (Society for Human Resource Management.)

Giving dads time off work helps evenly distribute childcare duties and allows women to take care of their health, earn more money, and maintain their careers. Some people don't believe in maternity leave they look at it as gender inequality, because women have to take time off to take care of their baby. This can have an advantage for men to get more jobs than women because of this, in today's society many companies are all about the phrase "Time is Money", this is known as job/gender inequality.

### **Violence against Women:**

The United Nations defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts etc. Domestic abuse is a big thing women go through women are less likely to leave the relationship because they are scared and less brave. From 2001 through 2012, 6,410 women were murdered in the U.S. by an intimate partner using a gun --more than the total number of U.S. troops killed in action during the entirety of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars combined, according to the report. Of all the women killed by intimate partners during this period, 55 percent were killed with guns. This shows how many women can be considered a target due to what society portrays women as.

Another thing women and girls go through that can lead to these types of situations are body image. Society gives us a number of reference points that shape our perceptions whether there positive or negative. Life today sees image upon image of fashionable clad women, perfect skin, tiny waist, etc. These are unrealistic images of beauty. This can lead to verbal abuse due to the fact that the male can say hateful comments that tear down the female mentally. Women should not be subjected to these harsh, cruel, elements of life, same goes for man it's not always the male that does the abuse it can also be the female in the relationship.<sup>5</sup>

Overall, Gender inequality is amongst us all in any given society according to the article "The Wealth of Nations" shows the advantages and disadvantages of the different employments of labor equality. Another article "We Can Do It" shows that women can do anything a man can do, this was in the time period where women were considered house wives and were supposed to cook, clean, reproduce, and take care of the husband. When brave women took a stand against it

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<sup>5</sup> "Women are better off today, but still far from being equal with men | Nikki van der Gaag." Women's rights and gender equality. Guardian News and Media, 29 Sept. 2014. Web. 06 Mar. 2017.

started a revolution where all women could work, and have the same rights as men. Which relates to gender inequality, there are a lot of other inequalities that can be found in the world that are just as important as gender inequality. In the future gender inequality should be decreasing in some areas around the world.

### Citations

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