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A Fair Wage



Introduction

Did you know that:

- In 1963, President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act prohibiting employers from paying women less than men for the same job? [NOTE: You can read the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (<http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/epa.cfm>.)] But the reality is that while the Equal Pay Act prohibited discrimination against women in terms of wages, substantial pay disparities continue to exist.



In this lesson you will examine several resources that address gender equity to determine if these disparities in pay for men and women are indeed discrimination or if they are justified. At the end of this lesson you will be asked to form and justify your opinions.

Task

In this lesson you will recognize that wages and salaries, determined by the supply of and demand for labor, are impacted by discrimination. You will also collect and review data to determine if there is substantial evidence that women earn significantly lower pay than men for work on jobs that require equal skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions. You

will then evaluate proposed solutions for gender discrimination in the workplace, and form an opinion on the issue of fair pay and defend it with empirical evidence.

Process

The issue: Are wages in the modern workplace "fair"?

Listen to the following Morning Edition audio clip on Income Discrepancy and answer the **Think About It** questions that follow.

- Click here for low band width (<http://www.npr.org/ramfiles/me/20000207.me.08.ram>)
- Click here for high band width (<http://www.npr.org/ramfiles/me/20000207.me.08.rmm>)

Think About It:

1. On average a woman makes \$.75 on a man's \$1.00. Diana Furchgott Roth doesn't think this is unfair. Why?
2. Why do women traditionally have different work histories than men?
3. Why do women traditionally choose different careers than men?

Is there evidence that women and men are paid differently?

Here's some data to review:

Median Weekly Earnings (1997) of Women and Men in the 10 Leading Occupations for Women		
Occupations	Women	Men
1. Secretaries	\$409.00	\$*
2. Cashiers	\$248.00	\$269.00
3. Managers and administrators	\$658.00	\$934.00
4. Registered nurses	\$705.00	\$778.00
5. Sales supervisors and proprietors	\$438.00	\$619.00
6. Bookkeepers, accounting/auditing clerks	\$418.00	\$446.00
7. Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	\$296.00	\$341.00
8. Elementary school teachers	\$655.00	\$719.00
9. Waiters and waitresses	\$268.00	\$328.00
10. Sales workers	\$280.00	\$381.00
Median of All Occupations	\$431.00	\$579.00
*Median not given because base is less than 50,000		

This table is taken from a document titled: Equal Pay: A Thirty-Five Year Perspective prepared by the U.S. Department of Labor - Women's Bureau, dated June 10, 1998. This document can be found in its entirety at Highlights of Women's Earnings in 1998 (<http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpswom98.htm>).

Read this excerpt from a speech given by District of Columbia Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton at the U.S. House of Representatives on March 05, 1997:

To illustrate the currency of the issue of equal pay and comparable pay, let me finally cite the case of Marianne Stanley. Marianne Stanley is now coaching at Stanford. The sports aficionados will, of course, recognize who Marianne Stanley is. She was known especially for her work as head coach at Old Dominion, where she had a winning percentage of 351 to 146 during her stay there. The school won the AIAW titles in 1979 and 1990 and added an NCAA title in 1985 to her credits.

Until this season, by the way, when Tennessee's Pat Summit won her fourth national title, Stanley and Summit were tied for the most national women's basketball titles. Marianne Stanley has now brought an Equal Pay Act suit.

She brought that suit when she left Old Dominion, and she became head coach at USC, and she was there from 1990 to 1993. She was considered a national treasure, and led USC to the final eight of the NCAA tournament in 1992. Her teams, her Trojan teams, reached the NCAA tournament in each of her final 3 years there. This woman is a winner. But she was fired following the 1992 season, reportedly because of a dispute with her athletic director over not receiving a salary equal to the salary that men's coaches were paid. She brought a lawsuit. That lawsuit is now on appeal.

Here is a woman who has broken through as coach in a sport where women got scant attention until recently, but as everyone knows, women's basketball is the coming sport, and here we have a champion in her own right who goes on to be a champion coach.

All I can say, without knowing the outcome of the suit that is on appeal, is that she was not paid the same as men's coaches. I do not think that one who won games the way she did should be subject to less pay than men's coaches who, by the way, had not, so far as I understand, won or had the championships as she had.

Now, collect some information of your own. Use the following link to take you to a worksheet that you will be able to use to record your information and then print it to report your findings. A Fair Wage? worksheet (/lessons/docs_lessons/203_A_Fair_Wage_Worksheet1.pdf) (/lessons/docs_lessons/203_A_Fair_Wage_Worksheet1.pdf)

Use this .pdf on the Gender Wage Gap (<http://www.pay-equity.org/PDFs/occupation2000.pdf>) (Presented by the National Committee on Pay Equity, statistics from Department of Labor) to collect information on mean weekly and annual earnings for men and women. Complete the tables in your worksheet by gathering information on three occupations. Choose one occupation that you think of as a "man's job," a second occupation that you think of as a "woman's job," and a third occupation that is not one that is traditionally male or female, a job you consider "gender neutral"

Note: In order to complete the worksheet, you must calculate the yearly earnings from the weekly earnings given. Simply take the weekly earnings for the job you have selected and multiply that number by 52 to get a rough estimate for the annual earnings. (Remember there are 52 weeks in one year.)

Think About It:

1. Do the data in the "10 Leading Occupations for Women" table support or refute the existence of gender discrimination in the workplace?
2. Does the story about Marianne Stanley support or refute the existence of gender discrimination in the workplace?
3. Does your research on the three occupations support or refute the existence of gender discrimination in the workplace?

Assessment

It's not fair, or, is it?

Should anything be done about gender discrimination?

In the audio clip you listened to Diana Furchogott-Roth claim that there really isn't much of a pay differential between men and woman if you look at equal skill, etc.

- Click here for low band width (<http://www.npr.org/ramfiles/me/20000207.me.08.ram>)

- Click here for high band with (<http://www.npr.org/ramfiles/me/20000207.me.08.rmm>)

If yes, click here.

(/lessons/docs_lessons/203_pay1.html)

**Do
you
agree
with
her?**

If no, click here.

(/lessons/docs_lessons/203_Pay_Check_Fairness1.html)

Think About It:

1. In your opinion, does gender discrimination exist in the workplace? Why do you believe this?
2. In your opinion, should the government become more involved in pay check equality issues in the workplace? Why or why not?

Extension Activity

1. Evaluate some programs that have worked in creating Fair Pay. (<http://www.dol.gov/compliance/topics/wages.htm>)
2. Review the article Earnings Differences Between Men and Women (<http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/lps49666/wagegap2.htm>) prepared by the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor and discuss with classmates.

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