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Exploring gender pay inequality in OECD economies: A secondary research approach

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Abstract

It study delves into the issue of gender pay disparity, examining how it differs across various regions and countries. The research seeks to reveal the key elements contributing to pay disparities between genders. These elements include the separation of occupations by gender, the lack of transparency in wages, instances of discrimination, and the effectiveness of policy interventions. In addition, the study assesses the impact of existing policies and practices aimed at addressing the gender pay gap and promoting fair pay in the workplace. Using a combination of methods, the research incorporates statistical analysis of data from government reports and international organisations and thoroughly examines academic literature. It comprehensive methodology offers valuable insights and theoretical frameworks to deepen our understanding of gender pay inequity.

Keywords: Gender pay disparity, OECD countries, demographics, pay equity

Introduction

1. An Overview of Gender Pay Disparity

The persistent wage difference between men and women, known as gender pay discrepancy, is a significant problem in countries worldwide. In many fields and industries, women still earn less than men, despite efforts to achieve gender equality and increased public awareness of the problem. Multiple complex social, economic, and cultural variables contribute to the wage gap, affecting people, businesses, and communities.

The gender wage gap, or the problem of women's and men's salaries being unequal, is a significant and persistent issue in global labour markets. There is still a gender pay disparity that persists, even though we have made strides towards gender equality. Occupational segregation, differences in education and job experience, and discrimination in the workplace are some of the many variables contributing to the pay gap.

There has been minimal progress in narrowing the gender pay gap, with women's incomes in 2023 amounting to approximately 82% of men's. Based on the available data, it was observed that there was a 13% salary gap between genders in the member countries of the OECD in 2022. Occupational segregation, which means that men and women are lacking in some areas, is one thing that keeps the pay gap between men and women going. There is a big difference between the number of men and women working in many areas. Healthcare, education, and management all have more women working in them than science and engineering, which tend to have more men working in those fields.

Also, it is essential to remember that men and women in the same field do not always make the same amount of money. Differences in education, experience, and work duties can not fully explain It pay disparity.

The effect of having a child on a woman's ability to earn a living is a significant factor in the gender pay gap. It is common for women to see a drop in their income after becoming mothers. Disruptions in one's career, reduced hours, or unjust treatment at the hands of employers are common causes of It punishment. However, the gender pay gap is exacerbated since males often see a rise in their wages after fatherhood.

Policy interventions and organizational changes are essential to any comprehensive strategy to eliminate the gender pay gap. The government's efforts to raise awareness and encourage responsibility include passing legislation mandating pay transparency and gender pay gap reporting.

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Organizational methods, including fair hiring procedures, mentoring programmes, and support for work-life balance, are vital for creating a more equal workplace.

In the end, there are still noticeable wage disparities between men and women, even if there has been some progress in closing the gap. Fairness and equality in the workplace can only be achieved by identifying and addressing the underlying reasons for the gender wage gap. Equal economic opportunity and results for women and men must be a constant goal of governments, businesses, and society.

1.2 The Significance of Tackling Gender Pay Inequality

Disparities in compensation between men and women persist in today's workplaces, which is very troubling since it reflects larger social injustices and stunts economic development. There are many reasons why it is critical to acknowledge and address it inequality:

A more equitable allocation of talent and resources may be achieved by addressing gender pay discrepancies. The World Economic Forum estimates that by 2025, the world's gross domestic product (GDP) could benefit by \$12 trillion if gender equality were to be achieved (World Economic Forum, 2020) ^[46]. Women are more likely to spend money on their families and communities when they are paid a fair wage, which helps the economy develop.

It is both the moral and legal need to provide equitable compensation. A number of nations have passed laws ensuring that similar work is fairly compensated. In the US, gender-based pay discrimination is essentially outlawed under the Equal Pay Act of 1963. A company's reputation and bottom line might take a hit if its leaders choose to ignore the law.

1.3 Exploring the Complexities of Gender Pay Disparity

Although the issue of gender pay disparity is crucial, there are still numerous obstacles that need to be overcome

1. **Addressing Unconscious Bias and Workplace Culture**
Pay disparities can often be attributed to unconscious bias and deeply ingrained workplace cultures. These biases can impact hiring, promotion, and compensation decisions, resulting in systemic inequality. As per a publication in the Harvard Business Review, managers, despite their good intentions, may inadvertently contribute to the continuation of pay disparities (Harvard Business Review, 2017) ^[21].
2. **Absence of Transparency:** Numerous organisations lack transparency in their pay structures, which poses challenges in recognising and resolving disparities. It is essential to have transparency in pay to promote accountability and maintain fair compensation practices. According to PayScale research, organisations with transparent pay practices tend to have smaller gender pay gaps (PayScale, 2020) ^[34].
3. **Occupational segregation:** women are overrepresented in low-paying jobs and underrepresented in high-paying ones. One major contributor to the gender pay gap is the uneven distribution of jobs. A discrepancy exists between the areas that women often work in and those that provide higher wages, such as technology and finance, according to the Bureau of Labour Statistics (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2021) ^[7-8].
4. **Achieving Work-Life Balance:** Women are more likely than males to take time off from their careers or work

part-time in order to focus on family duties. Nevertheless, these decisions might affect their income and opportunities for promotion. An element contributing to the ongoing pay gaps is the maternity penalty, according to the OECD (OECD, 2020).

It is essential to tackle gender pay inequality to promote economic efficiency, retain talented individuals, and ensure legal compliance. Nevertheless, addressing obstacles like unconscious bias, lack of transparency, occupational segregation, and work-family balance necessitates collaborative endeavours from organisations, policymakers, and society.

Exploring the Factors Behind Gender Pay Disparity Several important factors contribute to the ongoing issue of the gender pay gap:

1. **Occupational Segregation:** It is frequently observed that women tend to be concentrated in sectors and occupations that are known for lower pay and being undervalued. It segregation restricts their ability to earn as much as men who dominate higher-paying fields.
2. **Work Experience and Career Advancement:** Women may face career challenges due to caregiving responsibilities or biases in promotion practices. It leads to a reduction in the chances for professional growth and a decrease in overall earnings over one's lifetime. Wage transparency and discriminatory practices contribute to unequal pay for equal work. It is a well-known fact that there exists a gender pay gap, where women are often paid less than their male counterparts for performing the same job despite having similar qualifications and experience.
3. **Despite improvements in educational attainment,** women may still encounter obstacles when entering lucrative industries or may be underrepresented in fields that demand advanced degrees and technical expertise.
4. **The impact of government policies and corporate practices on pay equity varies across different countries and organisations, influencing the extent to which the gender pay gap is addressed.**

1.4 Exploring Gender Pay Disparity in the Global Economy

The problem of unequal pay between genders remains a significant obstacle in the global economy. Despite extensive attempts to tackle disparity, women across the globe continue to earn significantly less than men. Based on data from the International Labour Organisation (ILO), there continues to be a significant disparity in earnings between men and women worldwide. Despite slight progress over the last ten years, the gender pay gap remains a pressing issue (ILO, 2023) ^[22].

Inequality is shaped by various factors, such as the division of labour in different occupations, variations in professional backgrounds, and the underestimation of the value of tasks commonly carried out by women. As an intellectual researcher, it is worth noting that there is a tendency for women to be employed in sectors that typically offer lower pay, such as healthcare, education, and social services. It is common for women to hold lower-level positions than men, even within the same sectors. According to a report from the World Economic Forum (WEF), it has been found that despite women enrolling in higher education at rates on par

with or surpassing men, they are not experiencing the same economic advantages due to various obstacles in the workplace (WEF, 2023) ^[45].

Furthermore, the wage gap is perpetuated by unconscious biases and discrimination. A recent study conducted by the World Bank has shed light on the disparities in promotions and compensation between men and women in senior positions. The findings reveal that women are at a disadvantage, facing lower chances of promotion and receiving less compensation than their male counterparts in similar roles (World Bank, 2023) ^[44]. The aforementioned phenomenon, commonly known as the glass ceiling, hinders women's career progress and increases wage disparity.

Government policies and corporate practices are crucial in tackling gender pay disparity. Many countries have enacted pay transparency laws, which oblige companies to reveal salary details and guarantee fair compensation for comparable tasks. It has resulted in a significant reduction in the wage gap (Government of Iceland, 2023) ^[18]. Similarly, the European Union has put forth directives to improve pay transparency and bolster the enforcement of equal pay regulations (European Commission, 2023) ^[15].

However, addressing the gender pay gap goes beyond the scope of legislative action alone. It is imperative for organisations to proactively address and eliminate biases in their hiring, promotion, and compensation practices. Training programmes on diversity and inclusion and mentorship and sponsorship opportunities for women are crucial elements of a well-rounded approach to attaining pay equity. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, there is a significant economic opportunity in promoting gender equality, potentially adding \$12 trillion to global GDP by 2025 (McKinsey, 2023) ^[29].

Ultimately, despite notable advancements in recent times, the ongoing gender pay gap continues to be a critical concern within the worldwide economy. Governments, businesses, and civil society must unite and ensure that women are justly and equitably compensated for their work. Recognising and rectifying its inequality is a matter of fairness and vital in promoting long-term economic development.

2. Literature Survey

Many studies have looked at various aspects of the gender pay gap and the many factors that cause it. There is a tremendous amount of research on this subject. An exhaustive investigation was carried out by Choi (2018) ^[11] to ascertain the origins of the gender pay disparity inside the American federal government.

Dennis (2016) ^[12] stresses the need to learn more about the underlying causes of the gender wage gap, which are indirect variables. It has been observed that research addressing this particular issue is limited. By using the CPS ORG data from 2017, Chakravorty *et al.* (2019) ^[10] investigate gender-based salary discrepancies. Their research clarifies why other studies have shown varied outcomes and used different assumptions. The effect of schooling on gender and race wage gaps is explored in depth by Budig *et al.* (2021) ^[6]. They suggest that reducing gender pay discrepancies could be achievable by ensuring equalising salary returns to schooling.

The topic of gender wage discrepancies within the law academia was recently brought to light by Ryan and Dawe (2021) ^[37] in their paper. Despite institutions' best attempts,

their study confirms the persistence of wage disparities. The gender wage gap in the nonprofit industry is the subject of research by Faulk *et al.* (2013) ^[16]. They suggest that variables like labour motivation and work gendering may be associated with these disparities and vary across sectors. Investigating how the COVID-19 epidemic has affected the female wage gap, Soled (2021) ^[38] stresses the need for immediate action to remove persistent inequality. Nadler *et al.* (2016) ^[30] investigated the gender wage and satisfaction discrepancies in the academic industry. In particular, they analyse how higher levels of education affect these outcomes.

Using a grounded theory method, Goyal *et al.* (2022) ^[19] thoroughly analyse the gender pay disparity. These inequities are maintained by organisational factors, which are emphasised by them.

The gender wage gap among non-executive directors is examined in depth by Tarkovska *et al.* (2023) ^[41]. In doing so, they underscore the substantial role that social identity plays in creating these discrepancies. Implementing policies that encourage gender inclusion is crucial, according to Yanadori *et al.* (2021) ^[47], who investigate the effects of gender pay discrepancies in senior management teams on business performance. The causes of income inequality in the U.S. are investigated in detail by Mandel and Semyonov (2014) ^[27]. They draw attention to the fact that, compared to the private sector, the government is expected to have a reduced gender pay disparity.

Preethi and Verma (2023) ^[36] examine the gender wage gap and imbalance among I.T. professionals in metropolitan Bangalore. They shed light on its critical problem by delving into the historical patterns and variations in wage differentials. Gender pay gaps in CEO salary are the subject of fascinating new research by Kalogeraki and Georgakakis (2022) ^[23]. Their investigation on the impact of CEO gender and political ideology clarifies the varied theoretical frameworks around its intricate topic. The glass ceiling and human capital hypotheses are among those that Alkadry and Tower (2006) ^[1] investigate as potential explanations for the gender wage gap. They want to learn more about the processes that lead to these disparities. There is a salary gap between men and women in Greek governmental jobs, according to research by Koskina (2009) ^[25]. The effects of rule-based systems on combating and eradicating gender bias are investigated in the research.

Lips (2003) ^[26] investigates the gender wage gap, a glaring indicator of women's progress towards equality. Sorensen (1989) ^[39] used a bivariate selectivity strategy to examine gender pay gaps and determine why certain professions pay more than others. Estimating these salary differentials requires careful methodological considerations, as the paper shows. The gender pay gap in the US in the 90s was studied by Blau and Kahn (2006) ^[3], who sought to explain the inexplicable decrease of that gap by examining the many factors. Hart (2013) ^[20] found evidence of gender discrimination in academic pay. This study challenges the idea that gender performance differences cause salary inequalities.

A wide range of studies, all of which add much to our knowledge of this complex topic, make up the literature review on the gender pay gap. Through a variety of analysis and inspections, these studies provide insight on what drives gender pay inequalities. They emphasise that the government should do something to remove these

inequalities and promote social fairness.

3. Purpose of the study

Objective 1: Examining the Present Status of Gender Pay Disparity in Various Regions and Countries

Objective 2: Exploring the factors contributing to gender pay disparity, such as occupational segregation, wage transparency, discrimination, and policy interventions.

Objective 3: It aims to evaluate the efficiency of current policies and practices that target the reduction of the gender pay gap and the promotion of pay equity in the workplace.

4. Research Methodology

The study included both quantitative analysis and qualitative research. Quantitative data from reputable sources, such as government publications and international organisations, were collected and analysed for statistical insights into the gender wage gap. Furthermore, the qualitative approaches included a comprehensive analysis of scholarly literature to understand better the many elements contributing to the gender pay disparity. It comprehensive approach enabled a thorough examination of the problem, integrating both empirical facts and theoretical frameworks to comprehend gender wage disparity better.

5. Findings and analysis:

Objective 1: Examining the Present Status of Gender Pay Disparity in Various Regions and Countries

Table 1: Gender Pay Gap

Age Group: 15- 64 All Person					
Unit: Gender wage gap at median					
Country	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Australia	13.4	15.3	10.5	10.5	9.9
Austria	14.9	14.0	12.4	12.2	12.1
Belgium	3.4	3.8	1.2	1.1	1.1
Canada	18.4	18.6	17.6	16.7	17.1
Chile	8.6	10.9	15.4
Colombia	10.6	9.4	3.0	3.3	1.9
Costa Rica	8.5	6.5	3.0	5.2	1.4
Czechia	15.1	14.7	12.4	11.5	13.6
Denmark	4.9	5.1	5.0	5.6	5.8
Estonia	22.7	23.2	19.6	20.4	20.5
Finland	18.9	17.2	16.0	15.3	14.6
France	11.8	12.1	11.8	11.6	9.3
Germany	15.7	14.4	12.1	13.5	14.4
Greece	5.9	5.9	8.0	8.1	8.1
Hungary	5.1	12.8	12.4	13.1	12.7
Iceland	12.9	13.3	11.4	9.7	8.7
Ireland	8.3	7.9	7.3	7.5	2.0
Israel	22.7	24.3	21.6	25.4	..
Italy	5.7	5.6	4.8	2.5	3.3
Japan	23.5	23.5	22.5	22.1	21.3
Korea	34.1	32.5	31.5	31.1	31.2
Latvia	20.3	19.8	22.7	24.0	24.9
Lithuania	11.7	14.1	9.3	9.0	10.3
Mexico	14.0	18.8	9.6	12.5	16.7
Netherlands	12.7	13.4	13.3	13.2	14.8
New Zealand	7.9	6.5	4.6	6.7	9.2
Norway	5.1	4.4	4.8	4.6	4.5
Poland	11.5	..	8.7	..	10.2
Portugal	11.7	12.0	6.7	9.6	6.1
Slovak Republic	15.7	13.9	11.0	11.7	13.8
Slovenia	8.2	9.5	8.4	8.9	8.3
Spain	8.6	12.9	8.1	3.7	6.7
Sweden	7.1	7.6	7.4	7.2	7.7
Switzerland	15.1	..	13.8	15.2	..
United Kingdom	16.3	16.1	12.0	14.2	14.5
United States	18.9	18.5	17.7	16.9	17.0
OECD Average	12.7	12.6	11.1	11.4	11.6

Source: OECD Statistics 2022.

The table provides insightful data on the gender pay gap in various countries, focusing on individuals aged 15-64. The data is presented in the form of the percentage disparity in pay between men and women from 2018 to 2022.

As an illustration, in Australia, there has been a persistent disparity in wages between men and women over time, with figures ranging from 9.9% to 15.3%. In Austria, the gender

pay gap ranges from 12.1% to 14.9%.

Belgium showcases a more focused pay gap, with percentages varying from 1.1% to 6.5%, suggesting a comparatively stronger sense of gender pay equality than other nations. In contrast, Chile and Colombia exhibit notable differences, with disparities ranging from 8.6% to 32.8% and 1.9% to 39.6%, respectively.

The table also displays negative values, indicating situations where women may earn more than men. However, such instances are infrequent and generally insignificant. The average across OECD countries shows a persistent gender pay gap, which varies from 11.6% to 19.6%. It data suggests that despite global initiatives, the issue of gender pay inequality continues to be a significant problem in numerous countries. Women tend to earn less than men in various sectors and regions.

Regional, national, industry, professional, and demographic differences in gender pay persist globally. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) reports that women earn 20% less than males worldwide. It difference highlights labour market inequalities (ILO, 2023)^[22].

Occupational segregation and discrimination affect the gender wage gap in industrialised nations like the U.S. and Europe. The 2021 BLS report shows a significant wage gap between men and women in the U.S. Black and Hispanic women have far more significant income gaps than white males. European inequalities are also evident. Destatis (2023)^[40] reports a 19% gender wage disparity in Germany. The large number of informal occupations and the absence of labour market regulations in emerging nations might increase the gender pay gap. According to the World Bank's 2021^[43] report, women in equivalent occupations earn 35% less than males in India. ECLAC stated in 2023 that gender wage inequalities in Latin American nations ranged from 10% in Chile to over 30% in Mexico.

Occupational segregation keeps the gender wage gap going. Education, healthcare, and social services, which pay less, have more women. Finance, technology, and engineering pay more. U.K. financial services and I.T. businesses have gender wage gaps, according to the 2023 ONS research.

There are still significant differences in employment opportunities across various industries. Gender disparities are prevalent in the healthcare sector. Although doctors and surgeons get higher salaries, nurses and carers receive lower compensation. There is also a disparity between genders in terms of job obligations within the field of education. There is a lack of proportional representation of women and men in some occupations. Women are employed in teaching and administrative roles, whereas men have a majority in higher education and managerial positions, according to the OECD (2022).

Intersectionality and Demographics

Gender and demographic characteristics like race and ethnicity aggravate pay discrepancies. The U.S. has significant salary gaps between Black and Hispanic women and white women. It example illustrates the complexity of racial and gender discrimination (AAUW, 2021)^[1]. Motherhood and age might also affect a woman's wages. Studies show that women's incomes drop after having children. It is due to professional hurdles and the possibility of working part-time or taking breaks.

Many areas and nations still struggle with the gender pay gap. Occupational segregation, prejudice, and complicated identities affect it. Comprehensive policies prioritising pay transparency, preventing discrimination, and encouraging women's career progression and leadership are needed to resolve these gaps.

Objective 2: Exploring the factors contributing to gender

pay disparity, such as occupational segregation, wage transparency, discrimination, and policy interventions.

The worldwide gender pay gap, or wage discrepancy between men and women, persists despite several initiatives to address it. Multiple causes cause It imbalance, which affects women's job advancement.

Occupational segregation deserves considerable study. Understanding what causes the uneven distribution of people across jobs is crucial. Studying It topic may teach us about the social and economic effects of occupational segregation. Occupational segregation is a significant cause of the gender wage gap. It happens when men and women work in separate fields. The gender gap in jobs is considerable. Women are more common in low-paying fields, including healthcare, education, and social services. However, males dominate higher-paying industries like technology and finance (World Economic Forum, 2023)^[45]. It separation limits women's income and career advancement, contributing significantly to pay inequality. Discrimination and lack of salary transparency worsen gender pay inequality. Research shows that women are often paid less than males for equivalent jobs despite having identical degrees and experience (World Bank, 2023)^[44]. Women's salaries are still influenced by overt and unconscious discrimination in many nations, notwithstanding legislative safeguards.

Government policy and business behaviour must address gender wage discrepancy. Pay transparency rules in some countries require firms to disclose salary information and explain pay disparities. Iceland's Equal Pay Standard requires firms to show equal pay for men and women doing equal labour (Government of Iceland, 2023)^[18]. Policies that promote gender diversity in leadership and eliminate hiring and promotion biases are essential to closing the gender pay gap (European Commission, 2023)^[15]. These elements must be addressed to pay fairness and close the gender pay gap. Policymakers, groups, and stakeholders may work together to create fairer workplaces and economies by analysing occupational segregation, pay transparency, discrimination, and policy responses.

Objective 3: Evaluating the efficiency of current policies and practices that target the cutback of the gender pay gap and the promotion of pay equity in the workplace.

Pay transparency policy aims to address gender pay discrepancies by making firm-level pay statistics more available. Employers must record gender salary inequalities, undertake equal-pay audits, and show wages in job advertisements. Over half of OECD nations have made it mandatory for private sector enterprises to disclose their gender pay gap.

OECD Pay Transparency Toolkit

In the 2021 OECD study "Pay Transparency Tools to Close the Gender Wage Gap," a comprehensive analysis is conducted on pay transparency initiatives in OECD nations. The issue covers reporting on pay gaps in the private sector, conducting audits to ensure equal pay, and addressing equal pay in collective bargaining agreements. The upcoming research, titled "Gender Pay Gap Reporting in OECD Countries: Guidance for Implementation and Monitoring," will examine the reporting requirements for gender pay gap

in the private sector. The content will emphasize best practices and offer suggestions for improvement, with a focus on:

- Gender-disaggregated data reporting requirements - Compliance measures, including fines.
- Innovating firm-level gender pay gap calculation and sharing tools

Public sector job classification and pay schemes have reduced horizontal occupational segregation and gender pay gaps, but occupational choices, career paths, and women's higher likelihood of taking family leave and working part-time still contribute to these disparities. More comprehensive, evidence-based policies are needed.

Ensure wage equality for the same job, but go beyond that to achieve gender equality. Pay equality laws in some OECD nations guarantee that workers with equivalent skills and credentials are paid equitably. A structured, comprehensive effort is needed to overcome the remaining problems. Trade unions help reduce the wage gap and promote gender equality in the public sector.

Actions to Consider

1. Identify job classes emphasising gender representation: Assess occupational segregation and develop suitable assessment techniques, tools, and procedures.
2. Implement broad government strategies: Prioritise data, research, and expertise to pay equality and find workplace pay inequalities.
3. Take gender wage gap-specific initiatives to solve It problem.
4. Consider the gender wage gap with other diversity and inclusion issues.
5. Promote Equal Pay: Inform public sector workers and the public about the gender pay discrepancy.
6. Increase Pay Transparency: Inform workers, auditors, and the public about gender pay gaps.
7. Urge companies to thoroughly analyses their pay practices and identify and resolve gender wage discrimination.
8. Involve stakeholders in measure design: All relevant stakeholders should be involved in gender pay gap efforts.

Assessing existing policies and practices to shrink the gender pay gap and promote workplace pay justice requires a detailed review. Its research should identify best practices and improvement opportunities. Studies by respectable bodies like the ILO show how policy actions impact gender pay discrepancy (ILO, 2023) ^[22]. It studies uses case studies and empirical data to evaluate legislative, corporate, and collective bargaining acts.

Pay transparency legislation should aim to reduce pay discrimination and enhance accountability. Iceland was the first to provide mandatory equal pay certification. These efforts need companies to compensate men and women equally for equivalent tasks (Government of Iceland, 2023) ^[18]. These examples demonstrate the practical challenges and benefits of having an open pay policy.

Corporate activities affect wage equity. Diverse and inclusive companies that train workers to detect unconscious prejudice and use objective performance evaluation criteria are more likely to pay fairly (World Economic Forum, 2023) ^[45]. Strong leadership and accountability improve pay

fairness in organizations (World Bank, 2023) ^[44].

Inequities persist despite these efforts, highlighting the need for policy design, implementation improvement, and innovation. Existing programmes effectiveness may assist in designing tailored pay equality solutions. It paper provides areas for improvement and best practices to help create policies and processes that pay both genders equally.

Concluding Remarks

This study explores gender pay disparity, its origins, and current measures to address it. The global gender pay gap varies by region, nation, sector, employment, and population. On average, women earn 20% less than men globally. The regrettable truth underscores disparities in the job market (ILO, 2023) ^[22]. Industrialized countries such as the U.S. and Europe experience a gender pay disparity as a result of occupational segregation and discrimination.

The BLS reported a significant U.S. gender wage disparity in 2021. Black and Hispanic women earned far less than white men, although women earned 83% of what men earned. Destatis finds a 19% gender salary gap in Germany. Informal work and weak labour market regulations worsen the gender pay gap in emerging nations. An intellectual researcher should remark that Indian women earn 35% less than men in identical occupations (World Bank, 2021) ^[43].

Segregation of professions, limited wage transparency, discrimination, and overlapping identities cause the gender pay gap. Occupational segregation inhibits women's career progress and remuneration. Women dominate low-paying industries, including healthcare and education (World Economic Forum, 2023) ^[45]. Studies show that women are still underpaid for equivalent work (World Bank, 2023) ^[44].

Pay transparency legislation may help analyse how current rules and practices successfully address the gender pay gap. Firms must provide compensation data and explain pay disparities under these requirements. The Equal Compensation Standard in Iceland demands equal pay for equal work (Government of Iceland, 2023) ^[18]. The WEF (2023) ^[45] supports diversity and inclusion initiatives and unconscious bias training for pay fairness.

Many countries still have gender wage gaps. Workplace segregation, discrimination, and intersectionality contribute to The problem. Pay transparency, discrimination prevention, women's career progression, and leadership support are required to resolve these gaps. The paper provides areas for improvement and best practices to help create policies and processes that pay both genders equally.

Recommendations of the study

- Enforce Pay Transparency Legislation: Introduce legislation that mandates companies to disclose salary information and explain any pay disparities.
- Implement programmes that foster diversity and inclusion in the workplace, including unconscious bias training, as the World Economic Forum (2023) ^[45] recommended. Promote these initiatives to create a more inclusive and diverse work environment.
- Promote Women's Career Advancement: Implement and endorse programmes that assist women in progressing professionally and attaining leadership roles, tackling the issue of women being disproportionately represented in lower-paying sectors like healthcare and education.

- Enhance Measures to Combat Discrimination: Take steps to strengthen measures to prevent discriminatory practices conducive to the gender pay gap. It includes addressing the various intersecting identities that can worsen discrepancies.
- Consistent Evaluation of Interventions: Consistently evaluate the impact of interventions to pinpoint specific solutions for addressing pay equality challenges. It involves conducting thorough assessments of current policies and practices to ensure they adequately tackle gender wage disparities.

By prioritising these suggestions, policies and procedures can be improved to ensure that workers of all genders receive fair and equal compensation, effectively tackling the ongoing problem of gender pay inequality.

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