

Gender Inequality in the Workplace

Gender Inequality in the Workplace – Study Notes

1. Overview

Aspect	Key Point
Definition	Unequal treatment or outcomes for employees based on gender, affecting hiring, pay, promotion, responsibilities, and work environment.
Scope	Exists across industries, levels (entry?to?executive), and regions, though intensity varies with cultural, legal, and economic contexts.
Core Drivers	Structural (laws, policies), cultural (stereotypes, norms), organizational (practices, leadership), and individual (biases, negotiation behavior).

2. Historical Context

Period	Milestones
Early 20th c.	Women entered factories during WWI/WWII; post?war push to return to “home” roles.
1960s?1970s	Second?wave feminism; Equal Pay Act (US, 1963), Sex Discrimination Act (UK, 1975).
1990s?2000s	Introduction of affirmative action, diversity programs, and gender?pay?gap reporting in some countries.
2010s?Present	#MeToo movement, increased transparency (e.g., pay?gap audits), and corporate ESG (Environmental?Social?Governance) focus on gender equity.

3. Main Dimensions of Inequality

Dimension	Typical Manifestations	Evidence (selected)
Wage Gap	Women earn less than men for comparable work; gaps widen at senior levels.	Global Gender Gap Report 2023: average 16?% pay gap; 30?% gap for CEOs.

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Dimension	Typical Manifestations	Evidence (selected)
Representation	Fewer women in leadership, STEM, and high-pay occupations.	Women hold ~28% of board seats worldwide (2022).
Career Progression	Slower promotion rates, “glass ceiling” & “sticky floor” effects.	Women reach senior manager roles 2-3 years later than men, on average.
Occupational Segregation	Concentration of women in “pink-collar” jobs (e.g., caregiving, admin).	70% of health-care workers are women, yet only 25% of CEOs in health sector are women.
Work-Life Balance	Disproportionate caregiving responsibilities limit flexibility.	65% of working mothers report career sacrifices due to family duties.
Harassment & Hostile Climate	Higher incidence of sexual harassment, micro-aggressions, and exclusion.	1 in 3 women report experiencing workplace sexual harassment.
Access to Benefits	Unequal parental-leave policies, lack of childcare support.	Countries with generous parental leave see smaller gender gaps in senior roles.

4. Root Causes

1. Structural & Legal Factors

- Inadequate enforcement of equal-pay legislation.
- Lack of mandatory gender-pay-gap reporting in many jurisdictions.

2. Cultural & Social Norms

- Stereotypes: “Leadership = masculine”; “Women are primary caregivers.”
- Implicit bias in hiring, performance evaluation, and networking.

3. Organizational Practices

- Biased recruitment (e.g., gendered job ads).
- Promotion criteria that favor continuous, uninterrupted work histories.
- Limited mentorship/sponsorship for women.

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4. Economic Incentives

- Pay structures that reward overtime or “face?time,” disadvantaging