

**81 Cents for a Dollar**  
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**Women in the Workforce**

Although women do the same jobs as men, women are not treated the same as men in the workforce because of unequal pay, lack of leadership positions and family responsibilities; therefore, women need to be paid more in the workforce. It appears that many more women in the United States of America graduate from college than men. Women take time off to take care of their families. Some companies use this against them. Women make 81 cents to the dollar. It is better than it was 20 years ago but more work needs to be done.

**Gender Equality**

Today, more American women than men graduate from college, yet current statistics show that the gender pay gap is greatest at the top income levels (Lee and Wagner 2). Gender equality is generally the promotion of rights and equal consideration for all genders (Rich and Walker 1). Most of the time it is to encourage women's rights in male-dominated cultures. Writers say that many of the religions believe women are less than men (Rich and Walker 2).

In the USA, only white men could vote for many years. New Jersey was the first state to give voting rights to women (Rich and Walker 3). Twenty-one women serve in the United States Senate ("Women in the U.S. Senate 2017" 1). The country of Saudi Arabia was one of the last to give women the right to vote. King Abdullah announced in 2011 that women would be able to vote in 2015. It is interesting that women are not allowed to vote in the Vatican City (Rich and Walker 4). This doesn't make sense as Vatican City is in Europe but maybe different because of religion. Women will have less wealth, fewer resources for retirement and women are likely to take time out of the workforce to do caregiving because they earn less than males (Vasel 1). A lot of women work in the USA now but only some women in a male-dominated field. Sixty-five million women in the labor force and 53% of women were concentrated in education,

trade and government ("Gender Inequality and Women in the US the Labor Force" 1). Although women do the same jobs as men, women are not treated the same as men in the workforce because of unequal pay, lack of leadership positions and family responsibilities; therefore, women need to be paid more in the workforce.

### **Not Gender Discrimination That Women Earn Less Than Men**

It is not gender discrimination that women earn less than men (Finley and Jacobs 1). Finley and Jacobs think that women are not committed to companies. They take breaks from work. Women earn less than men but women can do the same things men can do and should be paid equally. There is evidence to suggest the gender-wage gap is closing. Women receive 77.8 percent of what men receive in median annual earnings (Finley and Jacobs 3). Women whose skills and experience are closely matched to those of their male counterparts see a wage disparity of less than 10 percent (Finley and Jacobs 1). There is no reason for less pay by almost 10 percent. This means that women save less for the future.

### **Pay Gap Is Growing Faster**

Statics show that the gender "pay gap" is actually growing fastest among the better-educated workers. An example is women with college educations (Finley and Jacobs 2). This is not great as men and women pay the same amount to go to college and then they make less when they start working. Companies value the willingness of an employee to set aside his or her personal life in order to work long hours. Given the value of experience, for example, it is in a company's interest to cultivate workers who are able and willing to put the company's interests ahead of their personal interests (Finley and Jacobs 2).

### **Company's Approach**

So, a single woman who never takes time off for family reasons make more money. Women are more likely to work part-time and almost 85 percent of women who did so in 2000 cited non-economic reasons. Among part-time workers who never married, women actually earn slightly more than men (Finley and Jacobs 3). Companies use these types of values against

women. Taking time off for family means less money for women. Most women still earn only a portion of what men are paid for the same jobs (Lee and Wagner 1).

### **Department of Labor Statistics**

According to statistics from the US Department of labor, women are getting paid about 81 cents for every \$1 earned by men. Admittedly, this is an improvement over 65 percent ration prevalent in 1975, but a gap that steadily narrowed during the period 1975-1990 appears to have become stuck and by measures, has actually started increasing in the decade between the mid-1990s and today (Lee and Wagner 2). That is not great that the US has been walking on this since 1975 and it hasn't caught up completely. It is not right to think women make 19 cents per dollar in the 2000's.

A recent study found that the US ranks 27th among the world's developed countries in terms of women's economic achievement. The study found that while the US is number one in education of women, with more females receiving college degrees than other nations, women still lag far behind when it comes to jobs, particularly jobs in government (Lee and Wagner 2). Are American women not interested in working in government jobs or are they not getting government jobs? This needs to be looked at in the future.

### **Median Monthly Salary**

Women working full time earn a median monthly salary of \$2,665 compared to the \$3,289 earned by men. That's a difference of \$624 a month or \$7,488 a year (Lee and Wagner 2). This amount of money adds up to over 20 years. This is a lot of difference in money. Women make up a smaller percentage of corporate America at every single level than men (Scotti 1). Women are just as likely to request a raise as their male colleagues and that they do so more often than men at the senior level. But women are still 18% less likely to get a promotion. They're less likely to get advice from their managers and are less likely to interact with them, too (Scotti 3). These facts do not sound like much has changed for women in America. Why don't these women get promoted? Women lose around \$10,470 a year and that means she has to stay ten years longer than a man who makes the same (Vasel 2). A single mom's family will have less

money than a single dad's family. This affects the future of the children and the children will be able to go to college and make more money.

### **Not Many Female Company CEOs**

The US has never had a female vice president or president. The US has a few supreme court justices and some cabinet ministers. Women make up only 20% of C-suite executive positions (jobs that have "chief" in the title), 29% are vice presidents, just 37% of women are managers and less than half make up entry-level positions with 47% (Scotti 1). The numbers of women at each tier of corporate America are nearly unchanged from 2016 and have only inched up slightly from 2015 when women accounted for 17% of C-suite jobs (Scotti 2). It isn't because there aren't talented women. Women may not be given promotions in some companies. There may be a bias against women in powerful positions. The percentage of women running companies in the Fortune 500 is still solidly in the single digits. Fortune Magazine released its 2017 Fortune 500 list, which ranks major U.S companies by their fiscal 2016 revenues and 32 of the companies or 6.4 percent, were run by female CEOs (McGregor 1).The median female CEO made \$13.1 million in 2016 compared with \$11.4 million for the median male CEO (McGregor 2). These numbers are interesting. In 1972, the first-ever female CEO in a Fortune 500 company was Katharine Graham. Graham frequently found herself to be the only women in a male-dominated room. In 1999, first woman CEO to lead a company in the Dow Jones industrial average was Carly Fiorina. She was a former Republican presidential candidate and Ted Cruz's former running mate (Carpenter 3).In 2009, the first-ever woman to woman CEO succession was Anne Mulcahey. Anne left her position as Xerox CEO and Ursula Burns another woman stepped into the C-suite (Carpenter 4). In 2009, the First-ever African-American CEO was Ursula Burns. She was a one-time Xerox intern who rose to the highest position in the company (Carpenter 5).In 2014, first female CEO at a big automaker was Mary Barra. She became CEO of general motors and became the first-ever women to lead an automaker. This is a huge milestone in the history of the male-dominated industry (Carpenter 6).

It is good to have examples of women CEO's but it is still interesting that there are only a few. The Women who was interviewed by this writer was Sue Bentley. Ms. Bentley is the

Director of Human Resources. Ms. Bentley is coordinating all employment at North Central University. She does the onboarding and offboarding and employee well-being of the employees. Ms. Bentley has been in the business world for 20 years and has two children. Bentley said “I have never taken time off for my children. My parents live at home and they raised my children for me.” Ms. Bentley is a 1 1/2 generation refugee and was born in Cambodia. Bentley said “there are about 70% female and 30% male in my field. I don’t see that there is inequality between men and women in my job” (Sue Bentley 1 November 2017). Ms. Bentley maybe has benefitted because she was seen as committed to her work. Maybe just focusing on work helped her pay. In addition, Asian family system and customs have helped her a lot, in her career.

### **Women and Family**

Many women are raised to think of their family first. Women tend to sacrifice for their family and children. Women may be less inclined to put their jobs ahead of their family. Men are more inclined to make sacrifices in order to assure job security and to earn more money (Finley and Jacobs 2). There are some men who stay at home to take care of children. Majority of women tend to fill the caregiver role. Research has documented that working mothers are nearly twice as likely to take time off to care for children as are working fathers in dual-earner families. Women with college degrees are more likely to give up their job in order to raise a family in the first decade of the 21st century than were women in the 1990s (Finley and Jacobs 2). Many women work part-time and give up promotions. The US Labor Department has collected figures showing that the number of women who stay home with young children has begun rising and that this trend is greatest among educated mothers who might otherwise be expected to be earning the highest salaries. Women elected to work part-time and in many cases, chose to do so because they wanted to spend more time with family (Finley and Jacobs 2). Maybe some of this is because they want to focus on family for a few years and can make that choice.

### **Individual Lifestyle**

The differences between male and female workers comes down to individual lifestyle preferences when women put children before their careers (Lee and Wagner 3). The companies want committed workers and don’t reward women for focusing on families. Companies say it's

the women who decides to take a break and lose money and promotions. America has the highest number of women going to college. Some gender pay gap differences have improved. The gender pay gap is much larger among Africans and Hispanic women (Vasel 1). Statistics showing that women earn less than men in the “same” jobs are commonly used to suggest gender discrimination (Finley and Jacobs 1). Women of color pay for double discrimination, overall, “are stalling because we have age-old stereotypes about women and men” (Scotti 2). Women of color will struggle to go to college and also struggle after college to make enough money. There have been cases where people sued the company because they got promotions without a pay increase. It is hard to get higher up people in companies to tell the truth about pay differences. The recent Supreme Court ruling Ledbetter v. Goodyear makes it virtually impossible for employees who face discrimination based on sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability and age to take action against their employers of the claims are based on decisions made by the employer 180 days ago or more (Lee and Wagner 2). Employers can now discriminate and not be afraid of being sued. This may not be good for women as they work on improving the gender pay gap. Some people may say that 81 cents for one dollar is good enough but women should not be punished for taking time off to raise children. If women are doing good work, they should be paid the same as men.

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