

The Gender Pay Gap

Sociology

What the headline gap measures, and the mechanisms proposed for it.

The difference between men's and women's earnings across a workforce, reported either raw or adjusted for measured characteristics such as job, hours and experience.

TWO VERSIONS

raw, adjusted

WIDENS AT

first child

- Raw gaps compare all workers, not like with like.
- Adjusted gaps control for job, hours, experience.
- Controlling for occupation can hide segregation.
- The gap widens sharply after a first child.
- Part-time and care interruptions carry a penalty.
- Direct discrimination is one mechanism among several.

LOOK FOR IT

Kleven and colleagues: earnings paths of women and men diverge at childbirth and do not reconverge.

Educational reference. How much of the gap is discrimination is contested and depends heavily on which controls are used.