



Public Policy on Women Wages

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Abstract: The article provides a greater insight into the unknown factors that are prevalent within the diverse organization. It will explore the inequities of minority women within the workforce; we will review examples of race, gender, ethnicity, and pay, both in literature and in a personal account of two minority women. The conjectures will enlighten academics and practitioners and will contribute a deeper understanding of the disturbing findings and revelations of what has or has not transpired since the 1960's.

INTRODUCTION

Congress passed the Equal Pay Act in 1963 to admonish employers from paying female employees' inequitable compensation as their male employees, especially when both were performing comparable jobs. According to McColgan (1997), three decades later, women's wages are still 23 percent less than men's wages. What accounts for this average shortfall for women? Congress passed Title VII of the Civil Right Act in 1964 to protect individuals against employment discrimination based on race and color as well as national origin, sex, or religion. According to an article written by Mincer (1999) and printed in the May 23, 1999 Palm Beach Post, a survey of minority women at Fortune 1,000 companies confirmed what has been suspected for quite some time – that a lot of talented people are leaving corporations because of racism, inequitable wages, a lack of opportunities, and difficulties balancing work and family.

For many women, the path to finding and keeping a job with suitable wages and advancement opportunities is dispersed with obstacles from lack of adequate childcare to juggling work and family responsibilities, to dealing with on-the-job discriminatory practices. These barriers of employment are especially challenging for women living on the economic margins of life; however, these challenges are just as devastating for minority women who do not live on the economic edge.

For some time, it has prohibited the long-established and standard business practice of paying women less than men even when they were doing exactly the same work. The mandate was straightforward equal pay for equal work. One year later, Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which included, a comprehensive fair employment section (Title VII) that banned discrimination against women and minorities in all terms and conditions of employment (hiring, promotions, terminations) including pay. The Equal Pay Act and Title VII established a partial response to employment discrimination in the 1960's; these two acts are the cornerstone of employment discrimination law. The laws were a direct result of employers not paying women and people of color their equitable share for the work they performed because of race, gender or ethnicity.

THE AWARENESS YEARS

At the beginning of the 1980's, according to Bird, Godfrey, and Mandelbaum (1981), forty-three million women were in the job market and their salaries averaged 60 percent of what men were earning. Only 1 percent of people earning over \$30,000 a year were women, 2 percent of the 16,000 directors of top companies were women, and male doctors averaged \$67,450 a year, after taxes compared to \$39,820 for female doctors. During the past two decades, women of color realized that the working world is color biased and male biased. Schwartz (1989) so aptly wrote:

“we have come a tremendous distance since the days when the prevailing male wisdom saw women as lacking the kind of intelligence that would allow them to succeed in business. For decades, even women themselves have harbored an unspoken belief that they couldn't make it because they couldn't be just like men, and nothing else would do. But now that women have shown themselves the equal of men in every area of organizational activity, now that they have demonstrated that they can be stars in every field of endeavor, now we can all venture to examine the fact that women and men are different”.

Yes, women and men are different; however, it is apparent that women must continually prove their intellect in the workplace. In order to fit in a male dominated organization, we must play down our feminism; this too has repercussions -- perceptions of being homosexual. The other side is to maintain ultra-feminism with a reverse backlash from other females. Women's status within the organization, especially women of color, has been subdued by what is dominated by male privilege.

Gatton, DuBois, and Faley (1999) identified four different components of gender stereotypes (traits, role behaviors, occupations, and physical appearance) that influence perceptions within the workplace that greatly influenced job and pay. These perceptions created disparities in wages and salaries, benefits, training opportunities, promotions, prestige, and power within the organization. Jilian Mincer's article (1999) covered the news breaking survey of 1,500 minority women from Fortune 1,000 companies, in which the average reported income was \$51,000 with an average tenure with companies of nine years. The most alarming revelation of the survey was that 42 percent of the women believed that they do not have the same opportunity for promotions as others in the organization with similar qualifications.

In the 35 years since the equal employment laws were enacted, women, and in particular, women of color, have made significant strides into the mainstream of the American workplace. Despite the undeniable gains and the pay bias, discriminatory practices continue to impede progress for minority women. “Nearly half the women poised to crack the glass ceiling said they felt they had to play down their race or ethnicity to succeed, and 37 percent said they believed they had to play down their gender” (Mincer, 1999). All too often, the workplace positions the glass ceiling in the way of female workers moving up and relegating too many other talented females to second-class workplace status on the sticky floor!

According to the 1998 Catalyst Census of Women Corporate Officers and Top Earners, less than 3 percent (or only 63 of 2,320 individuals) of the top earning corporate officers in Fortune 500 companies are women (Pencavel, 1997). Their earnings, which include salaries and bonuses, are only two-thirds those of top-earnings men. Gaps between men and women have declined steadily in recent decades, though progress has slowed in the 1990's, and the gender-base wage differentials in the United States remain large relative to those in many other

industrialized countries (Hartmann, Allen, and Owens, 1999). The narrowing of the gender wage gap since 1979 connotes less progress than data reveals. Over the past two decades, most of the reduction in the gender wage gap was attributed to the fall of men's real wages (Mishel, Bernstein, Schmitt, 1999). An Institute for Women's Policy Research study (Hartmann, and Whittaker, 1998) estimated that the growth in women's wages explained only two-fifths of the decrease in the wage gap between 1979 and 1997; three-fifths of the narrowing of the gap resulted from the decline in men's real wages. The fall in men's wages accounted for roughly half of the decline in the gender wage gap between 1979 and 1989 and for a stunning four-fifth's of the decline between 1989 and 1997.

RECENT YEARS

The AFL-CIO and the Institute for Women's Policy Research (Hartmann, et al.1999) jointly undertook a national study, including state-by-state breakouts, to analyze recent data from the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The study confirms many recent analyses, finding that women who work full-time are paid only 74 cents for every dollar men earn or \$148 less each week than their male counterpart. On the other hand, women of color who work full-time are paid only 64 cents for every dollar men earn, which equals to \$210 less each week. In the past several years, several corporations have had to pay millions of dollars to women who have filed lawsuits against the corporation's discriminatory practices. Per Bond (1999), the dynamics of overt prejudice are shifting to more subtle and indirect expressions. These expressions have as much or more to do with privileging or giving advantage to one group than it is with actively stereotyping or discriminating against another. In other words, they are biases **for** instead of biases against one group of people. At the end of the millennium, the differences in the workplace between men, women, and color are still prevalent, only hidden within the guise of a bias for rather than against the oppressed. Violations and fines are common in organizations. Hartmann, et al. (1999), in their joint research cited that in 1997, two major national chains- Home Depot and Publix Supermarkets- agreed to pay out more than \$80 million due to violations of Title VII and the Equal Pay Act. Specifically, the settlement was due to violations of sex discrimination and discrimination in pay against thousands of female workers. In 1998, several major corporations were cited for discriminatory actions against women and minorities. These corporations included US Airways, Bayer Corp., publishing giant R.R. Donnelly, Pepsi-Cola, desktop computer manufacturer Gateway 2000, insurer Highmark, Inc. (formerly Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Western Pennsylvania), Allison Engine Company of Indianapolis and CoreStates Financial Institution. These corporate giants agreed to payments totaling in excess of \$3.5 million collectively to resolve Labor Department findings of pay bias and other discriminatory practices against women and minorities. More recently, the Department of Labor announced that Texaco had agreed to give 186 women more than \$3 million in back wages and pay adjustments. This settlement was for restitution on findings that Texaco consistently had paid women in professional and executive positions less than their male counterparts. Boeing, Pennzoil Company and United Parcel Service have agreed to employment discrimination settlements totaling more than \$30 million. The settlement was awarded to thousands of African American workers and former employees (Hartmann, et al.1999).

The AFL-CIO and the Institute for Women's Policy Research (Hartmann, et al.1999) jointly undertook a national study, including state-by-state breakouts, to analyze data from the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Despite compositional changes in the workforce, the pay gap not only plagues women, but minorities and families, in addition to men. To tighten the pay gap, the group advocates better laws enforcing equal pay and more unions. The AFL-CIO and the Institute for Women's Policy Research (Hartmann, et al. 1999) study further found astounding wage losses. America's working families lose a staggering \$200 billion

of income annually to the wage gap -- an average loss of more than \$4,000 each for working women's families every year because of unequal pay. The loss takes into account any differences in education, age, location and the number of hours worked.

THE NEW MILLENIUM

Today's 26 percent gender wage gap is 11 percentage points lower than it was in 1979. Several factors contribute to the rise in women's wages today. These factors include an increase in higher education, greater labor force attachment, and work experience. Today, women's college graduation rates are actually higher than men's; although women lagged behind in education for several decades. Women have a greater labor force attachment and work experience, and there is currently a fairer treatment in the labor market and movement for women to transition into traditional men's jobs.

According to Brickson (2000), "observable forms of diversity, particularly race and gender, are especially prone to negative outcomes since they often elicit stereotypes, prejudice, and negative affect." It is apparent that diversity does offer a certain richness of character to an organization; however, the findings indicate that diversity be managed effectively in order to result in a positive organizational impact. Brickson (2000) further states that although there have been many approaches in trying to understand the impact of diversity on organizations, the end is usually associated with a number of negative consequences. Could these negative consequences be due to differentials, such as benefits, opportunities, or pay?

Aileen McColgan notes some essential points in her book *Just Wages for Women* (1997). She not only identified the problem of the inequities, but she also investigates its true source and offers possible solutions. The inequity remains a problem of the persistent gender pay gap in a wider context and must be addressed in a multifaceted and radical fashion. The depressing failure of the congressional measures, which were supposed to reduce inequalities, has enhanced subtle violations. McColgan (1997) further writes that the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 and the Race Relations Act of 1976 were necessary due to the narrowness of the Equal Pay Act, which did not prevent employers from avoiding the act by refusing to employ women. The Sex Discrimination Act and the Race Relations Act were essential to enable a wider challenge to what was termed in the acts as anti-social practices and prejudicial attitudes.

In an April 1999 written news release on *Policy.com*, Herbert Stein of the American Enterprise Institute and Slate wrote that the wage gap between men and women of similar circumstances is small and that there may be an entirely rational explanation for any disparity. If a woman's productivity is lower than a man's, it is not discriminatory, but perfectly reasonable to pay her less for the same job. Schwartz (1989) recant her past appointments with CEO's of many large corporations and how they put women on the back-burner. However, recently there is a shift in enhanced awareness of women. These CEO's and various top management groups now take the initiative to learn how to be responsive to a proactive approach to recruiting, developing, and retaining women. Although this is women in general, we applaud the vast strides of the success women have made. Is there a total rational explanation for the disparity? How do women rate against other countries in this arena? What is the comparison by state? What does the paycheck reveal?

COMPARISON OF WOMEN IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Many other studies, of pay inequality in general, rather than gender differences in particular, confirm that the absence or weakening of collective bargaining promotes inequality. Almond and Rubery (1998) illustrate the point by showing that the proportion of women who are low paid is 8 percent in Sweden, 31 percent in the UK and 33 percent in the US. Edwards and

Gilman (1999) suggest from a comparison of the UK and Australia that although on average women have improved their position relative to men, there are still gaps remaining. They further indicated that there may be a polarization between those in primary and secondary labor markets. Rural Bangladeshi women are paid lower wages than their male counterparts. Although female workers influence wages positively, employers make them victims of exploitation and discrimination. Jahan & Alauddin (1996) revealed that the estimated daily wages for female workers receive approximately Taka 2.60 while those of male laborers are Taka 7.60. Factors that contribute to gender-based wage discrimination include duration of work, social values and experience.

COMPARISON OF WOMEN OF DIFFERING ETHNICITY

According to Hartmann, et al. (1999), women earn \$431 per week compared to men who earn \$579 per week, this constitutes a wage gap of \$148. White women do better than women overall. They earn \$462 per week; however, since white men earn \$631 per week, this is also greater than men overall. The \$169 wage gap between white women and white men is therefore, larger than for all women and all men, minority women have lower earnings-just \$369 a week. Nevertheless, because minority men's \$415 weekly earnings are also lower than men's overall earning, the \$46 distance between minority women and men is the smallest gender gap. The low wages of both minority women and men and their smaller gender gap reflect systematic disadvantages that minority's face in and out of the workplace. When compared with all men rather than only with minority men, the wage gap for minority women-\$210-is almost five times greater (Hartmann, et al.1999).

African American and Hispanic workers are more than twice as likely as white workers to be working poor, in other words, they are employed but live-in poverty. Minority women workers confront the dual problem of gender and race bias. They have especially high poverty rates: one in seven African American and Hispanic women workers lives below the poverty line compared with one in 20 white working women and men (McColgan, 1997).

COMPARISON OF WOMEN IN THE U.S. BY STATE

The ratio of women's wages to men's is lower, and hence the wage gap is greater than corresponding national rates, in half of the states. Overall, gender gaps are worse in Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Wisconsin and Wyoming. In these states, women's median weekly wages are less than 70 percent than those of men. At the other end of the spectrum, women fare best in Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia. In these states, women earn at least 80 percent as much as men (Hartmann, et al, 1999).

The District of Columbia and in six U.S. states there is a gender wage gap that is less than the national rate. These six states are Arizona, California, New York, North Carolina, Texas and Virginia. The primary reason for women's relatively improved status is that the wages of minority men are so much lower. Minority men fare less as well than minority women relative to their white counterparts, though these results, in part, reflect white female's low wages compared with those of white men (Quan, 1996). The Joint Research Project (Hartmann, et al.1999) further suggested there are three clear routes to ensuring that women receive equal pay:

- Vigorous enforcement of current equal pay laws
- Passage of stronger and better equal pay laws
- Greater protections for workers' right to organize together into unions.

The Policy News & Information Service reported that on April 7, 1999, President Clinton and the First Lady Hillary Clinton commented on the gap between men and women's wages.

They equally stated that the 25 percent difference is unconscionable and the reason for this gap is discrimination. Gaps will continue to exist, even with controls of the many different variables. However, the President continued by stating that by eliminating the wage gap is not only a women's issue, but it is a family and a children's issue. He further stated that it calls for an overwhelming passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would remove the limits on punitive civil damages against companies that discriminate against female workers.

THE EQUAL PAY INITIATIVE

The Policy News & Information Service reported on Monday, January 24, 2000 on *Policy.com* that President Clinton announced a \$27 million Equal Pay Initiative to be included in the fiscal 2001 budget request. He urged the prompt passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act to assist in the strengthening the anti-wage discrimination efforts. The Paycheck Fairness Act had three variations of the bill introduced to the House and Senate floor. They are HR 541, S74, and HR 2397; these bills are to provide effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages based on sex, and for other purposes.

Senator Daschle introduced the Senate bill and Representative Rosa Delauro introduced the House bill. All three bills stem from the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. Each bill poses to enhance the enforcement of equal pay requirements, such as:

- 1) Any employer who violates section 6 (d) shall additionally be liable for such compensatory or punitive damage as may be appropriate, except that the United States shall not be liable for punitive damages.
- 2) Enhanced penalties by notwithstanding any other provision of Federal Law, any action brought to enforce section 6 (d) may be maintained as a class action provided by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.
- 3) Training for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, subject to the availability of funds appropriated under section 9 (b), shall provide training to Commission employees and affected individuals and entities on matters involving discrimination in the payment of wages.
- 4) Technical assistance and employer recognition program.

The Secretary of Labor shall develop guidelines to enable employers to evaluate job categories based on objective criteria such as educational requirements, skill requirements, independence, working conditions, and responsibility, including decision making responsibility and de facto supervisory responsibility. To carry out the purpose of this subsection, the Secretary of Labor shall establish a program under which the Secretary shall provide for the recognition of employers who, pursuant to a voluntary job evaluation conducted by the employer, adjust their wage scales (such adjustments shall not include the lowering of wages paid to men) using the guidelines developed under subsection (a) to ensure that women are paid fairly in comparison to men.

5) Establishment of the National Award for Pay Equal in the workplace.

There is established the Robert Reich National Award for Pay Equity in the Workplace, which shall be evidenced by a medal bearing the inscription Robert Reich National Award for Pay Equity in the Workplace. The medal shall be of such design and materials, and bear such additional inscriptions, as the Secretary of Labor may prescribe.

The Paycheck Fairness Act (HR 2397) would complement the Equal Pay Act (EPA) and the Civil Rights Act to provide effective remedies for all women. The Equal Pay Act would entitle

women to equal pay, as well as other contractual terms. Essentially, it is imperative that women, especially women of color, earn comparable wages compared to men 'in the same employment' who engage in 'like' work. In essence, this refers to jobs that are broadly similar or rated as equivalent in value by a job or task evaluation scheme.

EFFECTS OF THE EQUAL PAY INITIATIVE

According to U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), President Clinton's support of the equal pay initiative is the first to support the enforcement efforts of the EEOC since jurisdiction of the Equal Pay Act in 1978. This will also enable women a fair day's pay for equivalent work performed. According to *Policy.com* (1999), President Clinton, in his January announcement, referred to Sharon Long. Sharon is a victim of pay discrimination, who waged a four-year legal battle against her former employer to be paid the same as men at her job who did the same work as she, but were being paid more than twice her salary. The President further stated, "How many countless people like her...didn't stand up and fight like she did?" The Washington Post printed the article "Does Equal Pay mean Equal Work" on April 12, 1999. The article focused on the recent study finding that women earn more associates, bachelors, and masters' degrees than men do. For men and women in equal circumstances (between 27 and 33 with no children), women's earnings are 98 percent of men's earnings. The new regulations will require a company to supply racial, gender, and ethnic heritage of employees so that the federal government can determine if the company is paying its employees within the mean range for a job. The Clinton Administration's initiatives will provide an increase analysis of data on the wage gap. The act will further enable federal agencies to enforce laws regulating wage discrimination and provide technical assistance to both employers and employees. The act will strengthen the federal role in hiring and retaining qualified women.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

According to Bond (1999) the white participants were disbelieving of one personal diversity account; however, they became unsettled after hearing the collection of stories during a diversity training session. We believe that as women of color, we have learned to conform to organizational cultures in order to survive. We discuss our experiences in an emotionless way, for we have learned that it is business as usual. We are what we term, the Adult Children of Discrimination and have learned that if we maintain the ordinariness of these discriminatory practices, it becomes our 12 Step Rehabilitation Program. We have become immune, but not forgetful. The only way to reveal our experiences without embellishing the setting is to list our experiences with questions/responses in parentheses:

- I have overheard coworkers stating that "we" should work with our own kind. (Where is a company that strictly employs ½ African American and ½ mixture of Portuguese, White, and Indian, or a company with ½ Alaska Native and ½ German American. (As an American and U.S. citizen, have you ever been asked to work with your own kind?)
- I am perceived as uneducated by my white coworkers and management because when I speak to people of my race, I talk their talk in order for them to relate. (I see white workers talk to lower ranking subordinates differently than they speak to management, is this any different?)
- I recently was the first only minority female employed by a company with over 50 people; coincidentally, this company bid for a government contract. (As a worker, have you ever felt or been referred to as being there for affirmative action?)
- I have been spoken to by white workers as if I do not understand the English

language. (Have you ever been spoken to, in the United States, as if you were illiterate or non-English speaking?)

- I discovered that I received less salary than the company salary scale for the position I performed. When I questioned the pay, I was told that it did not really matter what the salary was for MY particular position, I earned enough money. (Have you ever been informed that the published pay scale doesn't matter?)
- I was paid less than a white female administrative worker was, while I held a "professional" position. The male coworkers with the same "professional" position were also compensated more than I, although my length of service was longer. When I questioned the manager, he stated that the female worker was compensated based on a lateral move from an area that has higher pay. The manager did not comment on the pay regarding the men. (Do you often feel underappreciated and wonder if it would be different if you were a white male?)
 - I was told that my military experience of 15 years did not have much weight in the business industry as far as experience and pay; therefore, I was considered and paid as an entry-level person. (Why did the male coworkers in the same company receive a higher level of work status with less experience in the same military branch when they started?)
 - I have been referred to in ethnic slurs when addressed by my boss; he stated that they were terms of endearment. (How would you like to be referred to in terms of ethnic slurs?)
 - I usually arrive at work early, work through lunch, and stay late in order to prevent the common stereotype that my race is lazy. (Do you work unreported overtime in order to prevent the labeling of your race?)
 - I once confronted my white male manager about his obvious preference for white male employees when opportunities arose. He laughed and said that he preferred blacks, especially since he is married to a black woman. I said, "Oh, really?" He laughed and said that it was a joke and walked away. I was not laughing, for I am married to a black man. (Have you ever been offended by off color jokes, especially when the essence of the joke is part of your actual life?)
 - When I recently complained about a discriminatory workplace issue, I was told that it is the culture of the group and that the company cannot change the culture. (Isn't diversity about the melding of cultures, not the demanding of individuals to be streamlined into a foreign arena of off color jokes, lack of respect for women, and offensive language?)
 - I experienced a layoff along with another minority woman. (It is our belief that it was because we both complained about a hostile work environment and intentional discrimination. As a non-minority, have you ever been laid off within two weeks of verbally complaining about a sensitive issue?)
 - I have been ostracized by my department, for example, in my immediate work area, the supervisor informs everyone of a group lunch and does not include me. My first week on the job, I overheard about the lunch and thought I was included, so I went to the restaurant only to be told that they were surprised to see me there. (Has your work group and supervisor ever overtly ostracized you?)
 - In meetings, my coworkers do not listen to my ideas and I get the feeling they regard me as "different". (Have you experienced obvious disregard in meetings or have been told, every time you make a suggestion, that your idea will never work?)
 - The company I work for has a Thursday night volley ball game. I have never been asked to participate. I inquired about it and was told that it is a company "family" thing. Workers who are part of the company "family" are the frequent players. (Have you intentionally been left out of company activities because you have been classified as not part of the company family?)

- My coworkers do not willingly share information with me. For instance, the office was given an early release on a Friday before a long holiday weekend. I was not informed about the early release and unknowingly worked an additional three hours. (Has your company withheld information?)
- My co-workers usually talk about me in the third person, when I am within hearing distance. (Do your coworkers speak to you directly or do they speak to you in the third person?)

We used our personal accounts of our work experiences within the past three years. The organizations we worked for over the past three years are a national organization with a diverse culture, a small partnership, and a regional corporation with some diversity within the workplace. These accounts, coupled with research that is currently in the field, have helped us to derive personal implications and managerial implications in race, gender, ethnicity, and pay.

PERSONAL IMPLICATIONS

The pressures within the workplace are far greater than the equal pay. Although I live an extremely disciplined life in order not to draw attention to myself, it never fails that I am a fugitive to the workplace. Numerous issues have not been touched upon regarding people of race. Further research in this area is ripe for the taking for both practitioners and academics. We only touched upon two women of color with advanced education. We both have positive attitudes, and both believe that there is a strong movement within the United States that will one day eliminate the disparity and we will be known as a country with increased proactive diversity dynamics.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this information is to provide management with greater insight into the unknown factors that are prevalent within the diverse organization. Based on the conjectures and the research in the field today, organizations are at a crossroads when it comes to race, gender, ethnicity, and pay. Government mandates require management to function within certain guidelines and procedures; however, it is apparent that individuals, which form the corporate culture remain uneasy and disoriented by the structure of intergroup cohesiveness. Historically, gender, race, diversity, and ethnicity constitute major issues in the workforce since the 1960's. How can management enforce an issue when it may compromise the overall company productivity? This is difficult to answer. It is recommended a form of relational (mentoring) or an alliance orientation. Corporations readily embrace this type of orientation with other corporations and suppliers. Why not take the same approach with gender, race, and ethnicity issues This will instill a value of determined understanding by management and will enable the firm to avoid the possibility of subtle partiality towards any group or individual.

LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Please note that it is not intend for this article to be a complete test; therefore, because of a sample size of two women, there are many opportunities for future research on the level of many disciplines. Significant questions and unknown factors await future researchers to learn of the influence of globalization, the impact of diversity on performance, and numerous other issues regarding the coping skills of each of the issues. There is little research in the field thus far in the area of examining a firm's performance in comparison to minority wages or diversity. There are various opportunities for research. According to Richard (2000) most studies group racial minorities in one group and whites in one group, a division that does not fully capture the

diversity or the overall impact of a firm's performance. It is apparent that larger organizations that are more global will inevitably have a more diverse workforce. Many women face invisible employment barriers that block access to advancement opportunities into higher-paying jobs with increased responsibilities. Some women are merely abandoned to accept low-paying jobs with little or no opportunity for advancement. As we reflected on our careers and had obtained opportunities into managerial positions, what truly was a revelation were the guidelines surrounding our position. We often were confined to a specific department with more responsibility and less authority than our male counterparts or even other women who are not in the minority status. Moreover, the disturbing fact was that we were usually outside the track to upper-level or senior management jobs, although we had more education and experience than our immediate supervisor or those already in upper-level management. These "glass ceiling" barriers prematurely halt the progress of women in the workplace and prevent us from developing our full potential and talents as workers. Affirmative Action programs help shatter the glass ceiling with upper-level women in corporations that are usually global. For instance, Andrea Jung, who is of Asian descent, is currently the CEO of Avon Products, Inc. Is this because Avon is primarily a company of products for women? This is when affirmative action helps to expand opportunities for qualified women and can lead to higher wages, more advancement opportunities, and improved financial security. The Equal Pay Act will provide women with what they were initially entitled to – an honest day's pay for an honest day's work. This should not be based on discriminatory practices based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, or anything else. The terms and conditions of employment are collective agreements with fair wage structures. The legislation will enable women within an organization to be regarded as more than diversity, they will be given the opportunity to become more creative and feel worthy of their diversity. The ultimate goal of any woman with the aid of the legislative process is to come to the aid of organizations. To teach these organizations that people of different groups are their future. Sustainability for any organization of the future will be to practice and promote a fair structure. This includes comparable intellect and work for comparable pay and further recognizing racial diversity as a positive source of information for the organization. With the advent of globalization, the fostering of a culture, even minority females, is to embrace alternative views and to promote relationships within an organization. To prohibit the potential growth of an oppressed culture is the same as stifling the growth of the organization. Differentials are good, for as minority women we are not outliers or those who stand on the outside looking into the organization. We are part of the new millennium organization – the global, all diverse, non-privileged, connected future organization. Finally, our paper and personal accounts reinforce the conclusion that race, gender, national origin, and ethnicity will continue to play a significant role in the management of future organizations. Each specific area within an organization needs to take diversity issues seriously and focus on an approach that will effectively deal with the issue that holds every individual accountable. Positive change within an organization on issues of race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, and pay requires an imperative that will foster an inclusive ambience for all workers. The value of differences is far greater than the devaluing of an individual.

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