

Persistent Economic Disparities

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The persistent economic disparities highlighted in the Global Gender Gap Report 2023 between men and women in economic participation and opportunity are rooted in a complex interplay of societal norms, policies, and economic structures. These multifaceted disparities impact women's labor market participation, wage equality, and representation in leadership and high-skilled jobs. Understanding the root causes and providing an analysis requires a comprehensive look at these elements:

Societal and Cultural Norms

Societal expectations and cultural norms shape the economic opportunities available to women. Traditional gender roles often dictate the division of labor, with women disproportionately bearing the responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work. This limits their availability for paid work and career advancement, contributing to lower participation rates in the labor market and gaps in employment histories that negatively impact their career progression and wage growth.

Structural Inequalities in the Workforce

The labor market is constructed in ways that perpetuate gender disparities. Occupational segregation is a critical factor, with women often concentrated in lower-paying sectors and professions. Even within the same sector, women are

less likely to hold senior or technical roles that command higher salaries. Furthermore, the gender wage gap is intensified by biases in hiring, promotion, and compensation practices, where women are often undervalued compared to their male counterparts.

Barriers to Leadership and High-skilled Jobs

Women face significant barriers to accessing leadership positions and high-skilled jobs, particularly in male-dominated fields, such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and leadership roles in business and politics. These barriers include a lack of mentorship, networking opportunities, and gender biases in recruitment and promotion processes. The underrepresentation of women in these areas not only limits their economic opportunities but also contributes to a cycle of inequality, as the absence of female leaders perpetuates stereotypes and biases.

Policy and Legislative Gaps

Although many countries have made strides in implementing policies to reduce gender disparities, significant gaps remain. For instance, inadequate maternity leave and childcare support policies can hinder women's workforce participation. Similarly, more equal, solid

pay laws and enforcement mechanisms are needed to address wage disparities effectively.

Economic and Geopolitical Crises

Recent economic and geopolitical crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, have disproportionately affected sectors with high female employment, leading to significant job losses among women and setbacks in their economic participation. Recovery efforts have yet to address these gender-specific impacts, further exacerbating economic disparities fully.

Addressing these root causes requires a multifaceted approach that includes policy interventions, cultural shifts, and targeted initiatives. Effective strategies might include:

- Implementing and enforcing policies that ensure equal pay for equal work.
- We are expanding access to affordable childcare and

introducing more flexible work arrangements to support work-life balance.

- We encourage women's participation in STEM through education, scholarships, and mentorship programs.
- It promotes women's leadership through targeted training, networking opportunities, and policies mandating a certain percentage of women in leadership roles.
- It addresses societal norms and stereotypes that limit women's roles and aspirations through awareness campaigns and education.

In conclusion, while the economic disparities between genders are deeply entrenched, they are not insurmountable. Addressing them requires concerted efforts from governments, businesses, and civil society to dismantle the structural barriers and societal norms perpetuating these inequalities.