

# Gender-based pay gaps among US faculty

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Before the Equal Pay Act of 1963 was signed into law by President Kennedy, women earned about fifty percent less than men. Nationally, women still earn an average of thirty percent less than men regardless of education, choice of industry, or professional standing. Even some of the most highly educated and qualified women are subject to salary discrimination.

A new study published in *Psychology of [Women Quarterly](#)* analyzes the salaries of faculty members at a large, American University and shows a significant gender-based pay gap. The researchers took into account the challenges that are introduced by market-based pay structure and individual human capital factors (education level, experience, rank).

Although these factors influence salary directly, it was the gender-based disparity that posed a significant issue to equal pay practice, and clearly favored men. Salary patterns were evaluated separately using two statistical approaches that produced very similar results in regard to the size and direction of a gender pay gap.

"Our findings show that women who wish to challenge pay gaps at their own institution need to systematically and quantitatively approach the situation, especially during a time of [economic downturn](#)," said Cheryl B. Travis, lead author and Professor of Psychology at the University of Tennessee.

Despite the fact that gender-based pay equality has not improved much over the past decade, recent equal pay legislation such as the Lilly

Ledbetter Fair [Pay](#) Act (passed by Obama in 2009) could alleviate this imbalance.

More information: This study is published in the November 2009 issue of the *Psychology of Women Quarterly*. To view the abstract for this article, please visit [www3.interscience.wiley.com/jo ...  
ct?CRETRY=1&SRETRY=0](http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/jo...ct?CRETRY=1&SRETRY=0)

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