

Do personality traits and social norms impact the gender pay gap?

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Despite increasing female employment and diminishing differences between men and women in career expectations, the gender pay gap is persistent. An analysis in the *Journal of Economic Surveys* that included 39 relevant studies has examined how personality traits and social norms may affect this problem.

The analysis found that [personality traits](#) (such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, or loss of control) and [social norms](#) (such as gender role attitudes, work-family policies, and childcare) are individually and jointly important for analyzing the pay gap. They explain from a few to a considerable amount of percent of the [gender wage gap](#). Different aspects of the studies that were analyzed (such as the use of different definitions and methods) make it difficult to determine their precise contributions, however.

"Gender inequality is a public concern, also reflected in the gender pay gap. Our paper focuses on two determinants of the gap that are less understood but can have important implications," said corresponding author Claudia Röthlisberger, a Ph.D. Fellow at Maastricht University, the Netherlands. "We wanted to shed more light on the extent to which personality and expectations on the roles of women and men in society can explain the gap or are a source of discrimination."

More information: Claudia Roethlisberger et al, The contribution of personality traits and social norms to the gender pay gap: A systematic literature review, *Journal of Economic Surveys* (2022). [DOI: 10.1111/joes.12501](#)

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