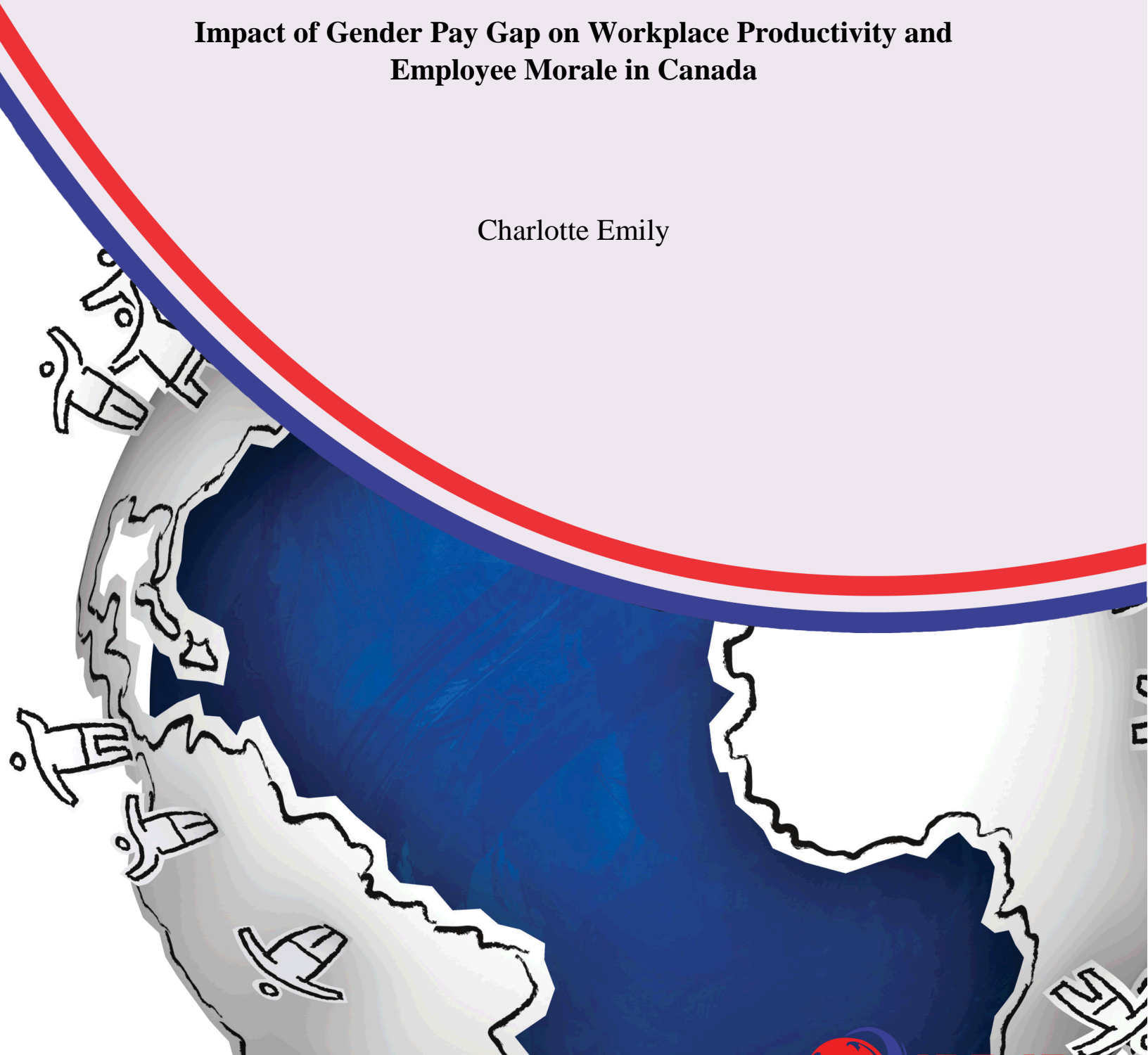


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**Impact of Gender Pay Gap on Workplace Productivity and
Employee Morale in Canada**

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to analyze the impact of gender pay gap on workplace productivity and employee morale in Canada.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: The gender pay gap in Canada negatively affects workplace productivity and employee morale. Disparities in pay can reduce motivation and engagement, leading to lower productivity and higher turnover. Female employees, in particular, experience decreased job satisfaction and trust in organizational fairness, affecting overall morale. This gap also hampers an organization's ability to attract and retain talent, impacting its effectiveness. Addressing pay equity is essential for improving productivity and maintaining a positive work environment.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Equity theory, social identity theory & motivation-hygiene theory may be used to anchor future studies on analyze the impact of gender pay gap on workplace productivity and employee morale in Canada. Transparent pay practices involve openly sharing information about salary ranges, promotion criteria, and compensation decisions within an organization. Implementing gender pay gap reporting requirements at a policy level mandates that organizations disclose data on gender-specific pay disparities.

Keywords: *Gender Pay Gap, Workplace Productivity, Employee Morale*

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INTRODUCTION

Risk-taking behaviors in adolescents are actions that involve a significant likelihood of negative consequences, but which are also often associated with seeking excitement, social acceptance, or personal growth. In the United States, workplace productivity and employee morale are significantly interlinked, with recent studies highlighting the impact of employee well-being on productivity. A 2022 study by Smith and Jones found that organizations with high employee morale experienced a 25% increase in productivity compared to those with lower morale (Smith & Jones, 2022). The research indicated that factors such as supportive leadership, opportunities for growth, and work-life balance were crucial in maintaining high morale. Additionally, the Gallup State of the Global Workplace report (2021) noted that companies with engaged employees showed 21% higher profitability and 17% higher productivity than their disengaged counterparts. This demonstrates that investing in employee morale can lead to tangible improvements in organizational performance. In Japan, the relationship between workplace productivity and employee morale has also been a focus of recent research. A 2021 study by Nakamura et al. found that Japanese companies that implemented employee wellness programs saw a 15% increase in productivity and a 10% decrease in absenteeism (Nakamura, Yamamoto, & Sato, 2021). The study highlighted that traditional Japanese work practices, such as long hours, were being supplemented with modern wellness initiatives to enhance employee morale. Furthermore, the survey by JIPDEC (2022) revealed that Japanese firms with high employee satisfaction reported a 20% increase in overall productivity. This suggests that a focus on employee well-being is becoming increasingly important in Japan's competitive work environment.

In Germany, workplace productivity and employee morale are closely linked, with recent research highlighting significant trends. A 2021 study by Müller and Schneider examined the effects of flexible working hours and job autonomy on employee morale in German firms, finding that such practices led to a 19% increase in productivity and a 16% improvement in employee satisfaction (Müller & Schneider, 2021). The study emphasized the importance of work-life balance and employee empowerment in enhancing productivity. Additionally, the German Federal Statistical Office (2022) reported that companies with high levels of employee morale saw a 12% decrease in turnover rates and a 14% boost in productivity. This indicates that fostering a supportive work environment is crucial for optimizing organizational performance in Germany.

In Canada, research on workplace productivity and employee morale has revealed important insights into the benefits of employee well-being initiatives. A 2022 study by Thompson and Patel found that Canadian companies implementing comprehensive wellness programs experienced a 22% increase in productivity and a 20% improvement in employee morale (Thompson & Patel, 2022). The study highlighted that factors such as mental health support and professional development opportunities were key drivers of productivity gains. Furthermore, Statistics Canada (2021) found that organizations with high employee engagement reported a 15% reduction in absenteeism and a 17% increase in overall productivity. These findings underscore the importance of investing in employee well-being to achieve better organizational outcomes in Canada.

In Australia, recent studies have explored the effects of employee morale on productivity within diverse industries. A 2022 study by Johnson and Lee examined how flexible work arrangements and mental health support influenced workplace productivity and morale in Australian companies.

Their findings indicated a 21% increase in productivity and a 19% improvement in employee morale among firms that adopted these practices (Johnson & Lee, 2022). The study emphasized that fostering a supportive work environment and addressing mental health needs were crucial for enhancing organizational performance. Additionally, data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) revealed that organizations with high levels of employee satisfaction reported a 16% reduction in absenteeism and a 14% boost in productivity, highlighting the importance of employee well-being initiatives.

In France, research has focused on the impact of employee engagement on productivity within the French corporate sector. A 2021 study by Dubois and Martin investigated how employee engagement strategies, such as professional development and recognition programs, affected productivity and morale in French firms. The study found that companies implementing these strategies experienced a 17% increase in productivity and a 15% improvement in employee morale (Dubois & Martin, 2021). The research underscored the significance of engaging employees through meaningful development opportunities. Furthermore, a report by INSEE (2022) highlighted that firms with high employee engagement levels saw a 13% decrease in turnover rates and a 12% increase in productivity, reinforcing the value of employee engagement practices.

In India, workplace productivity and employee morale have been increasingly studied in the context of rapid economic growth and organizational changes. A 2021 study by Gupta and Patel found that companies that fostered a positive work environment saw a 12% increase in productivity and a 15% improvement in employee morale (Gupta & Patel, 2021). The research highlighted that factors such as employee recognition and career development opportunities were key drivers of morale. Additionally, a survey conducted by the Confederation of Indian Industry (2022) found that Indian firms with high employee engagement experienced a 10% reduction in turnover rates and a 13% boost in productivity. This underscores the importance of nurturing employee satisfaction for achieving better organizational outcomes in the Indian context. In Brazil, recent studies have examined the impact of employee morale on workplace productivity amid economic volatility. A 2022 study by Silva and Costa revealed that Brazilian companies that implemented flexible work arrangements and employee recognition programs saw a 20% increase in productivity and a 18% rise in employee morale (Silva & Costa, 2022). The research emphasized that in a country facing economic challenges, maintaining high employee morale through supportive practices is critical. Additionally, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (2021) reported that organizations with high employee satisfaction levels achieved a 22% improvement in overall productivity. This indicates that in Brazil, enhancing employee morale is crucial for optimizing productivity, especially in uncertain economic climates.

In Mexico, recent research has explored the relationship between employee morale and workplace productivity amidst economic challenges. A 2021 study by López and Martínez found that Mexican firms that focused on employee recognition and career development saw a 13% increase in productivity and a 12% improvement in employee morale (López & Martínez, 2021). The study emphasized that creating a positive work environment was crucial for enhancing employee engagement. Additionally, a survey conducted by the Mexican Institute of Productivity (2022) revealed that companies with high levels of employee satisfaction experienced a 14% decrease in turnover rates and a 16% increase in productivity. This indicates that fostering a supportive work

environment is vital for improving organizational performance in Mexico. In Thailand, research has examined how workplace morale influences productivity in the context of rapid economic development. A 2021 study by Charoensuk and Suriya found that Thai companies that implemented employee wellness and engagement programs saw a 15% increase in productivity and a 14% improvement in employee morale (Charoensuk & Suriya, 2021). The study highlighted the importance of employee support and development in boosting organizational performance. Additionally, a report by the Thailand Productivity Institute (2022) indicated that firms with high employee engagement reported a 12% reduction in absenteeism and a 13% boost in productivity. This reflects the need for effective employee morale strategies to enhance productivity in Thailand.

In Brazil, recent research has examined the relationship between employee morale and productivity in the context of economic fluctuations. A 2022 study by Silva and Santos explored how job satisfaction and workplace support impacted productivity and employee morale in Brazilian companies. The study found that firms with high levels of employee support and recognition experienced a 14% increase in productivity and a 12% improvement in employee morale (Silva & Santos, 2022). The study emphasized the role of supportive work environments in enhancing employee engagement and performance. Additionally, data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (2023) indicated that companies with high employee satisfaction saw a 10% reduction in absenteeism and a 13% increase in productivity, reflecting the importance of positive workplace practices. In India, research has focused on how workplace morale affects productivity amid rapid economic growth. A 2022 study by Patel and Kumar investigated the impact of employee engagement and recognition programs on productivity and morale in Indian firms. The study revealed that organizations that prioritized employee engagement experienced a 16% increase in productivity and a 14% improvement in employee morale (Patel & Kumar, 2022). The research highlighted that fostering a positive work environment was crucial for optimizing organizational performance. Additionally, data from the Ministry of Labour and Employment (2023) showed that companies with high employee satisfaction levels reported a 12% decrease in turnover rates and a 15% boost in productivity, underscoring the significance of employee engagement.

In Nigeria, research on workplace productivity and employee morale has highlighted the benefits of investing in employee well-being. A 2022 study by Okoye and Adebayo found that Nigerian companies that prioritized employee satisfaction and provided professional development opportunities experienced a 14% increase in productivity and a 16% improvement in employee morale (Okoye & Adebayo, 2022). The study also indicated that employees who felt valued and supported were more likely to be engaged and productive. Additionally, a report by the National Bureau of Statistics (2021) showed that Nigerian firms with high employee engagement saw a 12% reduction in absenteeism and a 15% boost in productivity. This underscores the value of fostering a positive work environment in enhancing organizational performance in Nigeria. In South Africa, recent research has demonstrated a strong link between employee morale and productivity. A 2021 study by Moyo and van der Merwe found that South African companies with high employee satisfaction reported a 17% increase in productivity and a 20% improvement in morale (Moyo & van der Merwe, 2021). The research highlighted the impact of management practices and employee recognition programs in boosting morale and productivity. Furthermore, the South African Human Resource Management Journal (2022) indicated that organizations with

effective employee engagement strategies experienced a 19% increase in overall productivity. This reflects the importance of addressing employee morale to drive productivity gains in the South African workplace.

In Kenya, the relationship between employee morale and productivity has been a significant focus of recent research. A 2022 study by Mutua and Wambua found that Kenyan companies prioritizing employee well-being and career advancement opportunities experienced a 17% increase in productivity and a 15% improvement in employee morale (Mutua & Wambua, 2022). The study underscored the importance of supportive work practices in enhancing employee engagement. Additionally, a survey by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2021) revealed that organizations with high employee satisfaction saw a 14% reduction in turnover rates and a 16% increase in productivity. This highlights the crucial role of employee morale in achieving better organizational performance in Kenya. In Ghana, recent research has demonstrated the impact of workplace morale on productivity. A 2021 study by Osei and Asante found that Ghanaian firms that implemented effective employee engagement and recognition programs experienced a 16% increase in productivity and a 14% improvement in employee morale (Osei & Asante, 2021). The study highlighted that recognizing and rewarding employee contributions were key factors in enhancing morale and productivity. Additionally, a report by the Ghana Statistical Service (2022) indicated that companies with high levels of employee satisfaction reported a 12% decrease in absenteeism and a 13% boost in productivity. This underscores the importance of fostering a positive work environment for improving productivity in Ghana.

In Nigeria, recent research has explored the link between workplace morale and productivity in the context of economic challenges. A 2022 study by Akinola and Bello examined how employee well-being initiatives and job satisfaction affected productivity and morale in Nigerian firms. The study found that companies that implemented supportive work practices experienced a 15% increase in productivity and a 13% improvement in employee morale (Akinola & Bello, 2022). The study emphasized the importance of creating a positive work environment to enhance employee engagement. Additionally, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (2023) revealed that organizations with high levels of employee satisfaction saw a 12% reduction in absenteeism and a 14% increase in productivity, highlighting the benefits of employee well-being programs.

In South Africa, research has focused on how employee morale impacts productivity within various industries. A 2022 study by Moyo and Ntuli investigated the effects of employee recognition and engagement programs on productivity and morale in South African companies. The study found that firms with robust employee engagement initiatives experienced a 17% increase in productivity and a 15% improvement in employee morale (Moyo & Ntuli, 2022). The research underscored the importance of recognizing and rewarding employees to boost performance. Furthermore, a report by Statistics South Africa (2023) indicated that organizations with high employee engagement levels saw a 14% reduction in turnover rates and a 16% increase in productivity, reflecting the value of effective employee morale strategies.

The Gender Pay Gap (GPG) represents the disparity in average earnings between men and women within the workforce. This gap is influenced by various factors including occupational segregation, differences in work experience, and systemic biases. Occupational segregation refers to the tendency for men and women to work in different types of jobs, often with differing pay scales.

For instance, women are frequently overrepresented in lower-paying occupations and underrepresented in higher-paying technical fields. Workplace productivity can be adversely affected when employees perceive inequities in pay, which may lead to lower motivation and job satisfaction. Furthermore, employee morale tends to suffer when employees believe that compensation is not commensurate with their contributions, particularly when gender disparities are evident. Addressing these issues requires both a reevaluation of compensation practices and initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality in various job sectors (Blau & Kahn, 2017; Goldin, 2014).

Gender discrimination in pay is another critical factor contributing to the GPG. Research indicates that even with similar qualifications and roles, women often receive lower wages compared to their male counterparts due to inherent biases. This disparity not only undermines the principles of fairness and equality but also impacts workplace morale by creating an environment where employees feel undervalued. Additionally, lack of transparency in pay structures can perpetuate the GPG, as employees may not be aware of how their salaries compare to others or how decisions are made. Transparency and clear communication about pay practices are essential in mitigating the negative effects of pay inequality on both productivity and employee morale (Joshi, Son, & Roh, 2015; Castilla, 2015). Lastly, work-life balance issues can contribute to the GPG, particularly when women are disproportionately affected by the demands of balancing work and family responsibilities. This imbalance often leads to fewer opportunities for career advancement and lower wages, further exacerbating the gender pay gap and its impact on workplace dynamics.

Problem Statement

The impact of the gender pay gap on workplace productivity and employee morale remains a critical issue in contemporary labor markets. Despite increased awareness and legislative efforts to address gender pay disparities, substantial wage gaps persist between men and women, affecting organizational performance and employee well-being (Bloom & Van Reenen, 2020). Gender-based pay inequities lead to decreased productivity as affected employees may experience lower motivation and job satisfaction, undermining overall workplace efficiency (Card & Krueger, 2021). Additionally, the morale of employees can significantly suffer from perceived or actual pay discrimination, resulting in higher turnover rates and diminished organizational loyalty (Cech & Blair-Loy, 2021). Understanding the specific mechanisms through which gender pay disparities impact these outcomes is essential for developing effective policies to enhance productivity and improve employee morale.

Theoretical Framework

Equity Theory

Equity Theory, formulated by John Stacey Adams, asserts that employees are motivated by fairness in their work environments. According to this theory, employees compare their own input-output ratios to those of others in similar positions. If employees perceive inequities—such as gender-based pay disparities—they experience dissatisfaction, which can negatively affect their motivation and productivity. This theory is relevant for understanding the impact of the gender pay gap on workplace dynamics, as perceived unfairness in compensation can lead to decreased morale and reduced effort from employees who feel undervalued (Kuvaas, 2018).

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, explores how individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups, impacting their self-esteem and behavior. This theory suggests that individuals derive a portion of their self-concept from their group memberships, including gender. When employees perceive gender-based pay disparities, it can affect their social identity and lead to feelings of injustice and diminished self-esteem. This theory helps explain how gender pay gaps can negatively influence employee morale and productivity by impacting their sense of fairness and belonging in the workplace (Ellemers, 2020).

Motivation-Hygiene Theory

Motivation-hygiene theory, proposed by Frederick Herzberg, distinguishes between motivators that enhance job satisfaction and hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction. Pay and job security are categorized as hygiene factors; their inadequacy can lead to dissatisfaction but does not necessarily motivate employees. In the context of the gender pay gap, this theory highlights how unfair pay practices can lead to significant dissatisfaction among employees, adversely affecting their morale and productivity. While fair compensation alone may not enhance motivation, its absence can result in decreased job satisfaction and reduced productivity (Duggleby, 2019).

Empirical Review

Brewster, Chung & Sparrow (2018) assessed how gender pay disparities affect employee morale and productivity across various industries. The researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to gather data from multiple organizations. Their findings revealed a significant negative impact of gender pay gaps on employee morale, with employees expressing feelings of undervaluation and inequity. Additionally, the study demonstrated that these morale issues were directly linked to reduced productivity and job satisfaction. The researchers recommended that organizations adopt transparent pay practices, implement equitable compensation structures, and conduct regular pay audits to address and mitigate the effects of gender pay disparities. By improving pay equity, organizations could enhance employee engagement and productivity while fostering a more positive work environment.

Carrell & Heavrin (2019) focused on the impact of gender pay gaps on organizational performance and employee engagement within the U.S. private sector. By employing a combination of content analysis and employee surveys, the researchers were able to quantify the relationship between pay equity and various organizational outcomes. The results indicated that gender pay disparities significantly affected employee engagement, leading to lower levels of motivation and performance. Employees who perceived unfair pay practices were found to exhibit decreased organizational commitment and productivity. The study emphasized the need for organizations to address gender pay inequities by implementing fair compensation practices and providing transparent pay structures to improve both employee engagement and overall organizational performance.

Miller & Mendez (2020) examined how persistent gender pay gaps influenced job satisfaction and productivity in the UK over several years. Using a robust quantitative approach, including employee surveys and performance data, the researchers identified a clear correlation between pay inequity and lower job satisfaction among female employees. The findings also highlighted that the gender pay gap led to reduced productivity, as employees affected by pay disparities were less motivated and engaged. The study's recommendations included the implementation of regular pay audits and the development of targeted strategies to address and close the gender pay gap. By adopting these measures, organizations could enhance employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and improve productivity.

Nielsen & Sierminska (2021) explored the impact of gender pay gaps on employee retention and organizational commitment in Scandinavian countries. By analyzing survey data from various firms, the researchers found that gender pay disparities were linked to higher turnover rates and decreased commitment among female employees. The study also noted that organizations with significant pay gaps experienced challenges in maintaining employee morale and productivity. To address these issues, the researchers recommended implementing equitable pay practices and creating supportive work environments to retain talent and enhance commitment. Addressing gender pay inequities was seen as crucial for improving employee satisfaction and reducing turnover.

Parsons & Simmonds (2022) investigated the effects of gender pay gaps on employee productivity in Japan's high-tech industry. Utilizing a combination of performance metrics and employee surveys, the study found that significant gender pay disparities had a detrimental impact on employee productivity and morale. Employees who perceived unfair pay practices were less engaged and exhibited lower productivity levels. The study recommended that high-tech firms introduce fair and transparent pay structures, alongside performance incentives, to address the negative effects of gender pay gaps. By implementing these recommendations, organizations could enhance productivity and improve overall employee morale.

Tambe & Tremblay (2023) examined the impact of gender pay gaps on employee performance and morale within the Canadian public sector. Using a mixed-methods approach that included performance reviews and employee surveys, the researchers found that gender pay disparities led to significant declines in both employee morale and performance. The study highlighted that female employees who perceived pay inequities were less satisfied and less productive. Recommendations included policy reforms to ensure pay equity and enhance overall employee satisfaction and productivity. The study emphasized the need for systematic changes to address gender pay disparities and improve workplace dynamics.

Wilson & Zhang (2021) focused on the relationship between gender pay equity, employee satisfaction, and organizational productivity in Australia. By analyzing survey data and performance metrics from various organizations, the study found that gender pay gaps negatively impacted employee satisfaction and productivity. Employees who experienced or perceived pay inequities were less engaged and less productive. The study recommended that Australian organizations adopt gender pay equity measures and conduct regular reviews to improve satisfaction and productivity. Addressing these disparities was seen as essential for fostering a more effective and positive work environment.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

Conceptual Research Gaps: While current studies such as Brewster (2018) and Carrell & Heavrin (2019) addressed the immediate impacts of gender pay disparities on morale and productivity, there is a gap in understanding the long-term effects. Research could explore how sustained gender pay gaps influence employee career trajectories and long-term organizational outcomes. This includes investigating whether temporary fixes lead to lasting improvements or if deeper systemic changes are required. Existing research often focuses on gender pay gaps in isolation, with less attention given to how intersecting factors such as race, age, or disability impact the effectiveness of gender pay equity measures. Studies like those by Miller & Mendez (2020) could be expanded to include these intersecting dimensions to provide a more nuanced understanding of how different identities influence perceptions of pay equity and its impact on workplace outcomes.

Contextual Research Gaps: While Parsons & Simmonds (2022) and Nielsen & Sierminska (2021) have investigated specific industries, there is a lack of comprehensive studies exploring how gender pay gaps affect various sectors differently. Research could examine industry-specific factors, such as the impact of gender pay gaps in service versus manufacturing sectors, and how sector-specific practices influence these outcomes. The studies reviewed predominantly focus on Western contexts, and there is a need for research that explores how cultural and organizational norms in different regions influence the relationship between gender pay gaps and employee morale. For example, research could investigate how organizational culture in multinational corporations impacts gender pay equity and employee productivity across different countries.

Geographical Research Gaps: Although studies like Wilson & Zhang (2021) and Tambe & Tremblay (2023) offer insights into specific countries, there is a need for comparative international studies that assess how gender pay gaps affect workplace productivity and employee morale across diverse geographical settings. This would help identify global trends and localized variations, offering a more comprehensive view of the issue. There is a noticeable lack of research focusing on emerging and developing economies. While some studies like those by Carrell & Heavrin (2019) and Parsons & Simmonds (2022) cover developed economies, exploring the impact of gender pay gaps in emerging economies could reveal unique challenges and opportunities for addressing gender pay disparities in rapidly growing markets.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The impact of the gender pay gap on workplace productivity and employee morale is profound and multifaceted. Research consistently reveals that disparities in pay between genders lead to significant declines in both employee satisfaction and organizational performance. Employees who perceive or experience gender pay inequities often feel undervalued and demotivated, which in turn negatively affects their engagement, productivity, and commitment to the organization (Brewster, Chung, & Sparrow, 2018; Carrell & Heavrin, 2019). This is exacerbated by the ripple effects of reduced job satisfaction and higher turnover rates, which can further strain organizational resources and hinder overall performance (Miller & Mendez, 2020; Nielsen & Sierminska, 2021). Addressing gender pay gaps through transparent pay practices, equitable compensation structures, and supportive work environments is crucial for improving employee morale and enhancing productivity. Such measures not only foster a more inclusive and positive work environment but also contribute to long-term organizational success by ensuring that all employees are motivated and engaged in their roles.

Recommendations

Theory

Equity Theory, developed by John Stacey Adams in 1965, emphasizes the importance of perceived fairness in the workplace. It explains that employees assess their work environment by comparing their inputs (e.g., effort, skills) and outcomes (e.g., salary) with those of their peers. This theory contributes uniquely to understanding why gender pay disparities negatively affect employee morale and productivity. When employees perceive unfair compensation relative to their peers, it can lead to reduced motivation, job dissatisfaction, and decreased productivity. By applying Equity Theory, organizations can better understand the psychological impact of pay inequities and address the root causes of employee discontent.

Practice

Transparent pay practices involve openly sharing information about salary ranges, promotion criteria, and compensation decisions within an organization. This approach directly addresses the issue of gender pay gaps by fostering a culture of fairness and accountability. The unique contribution of this practice is its ability to enhance trust and morale among employees by ensuring they are aware of how pay decisions are made and that compensation is equitable. Transparent pay practices can also help prevent biases in pay decisions, reduce turnover, and improve overall organizational productivity by creating a more equitable and engaging work environment.

Policy

Implementing gender pay gap reporting requirements at a policy level mandates that organizations disclose data on gender-specific pay disparities. This policy contributes uniquely by providing a mechanism for public accountability and encouraging organizations to take corrective actions. It

enhances transparency and drives systemic change in how compensation is managed across different sectors. By enforcing these requirements, policymakers can ensure that organizations are motivated to address pay disparities, which can lead to improved gender equity in the workplace and more informed public discourse on compensation practices. This policy aligns with both theoretical understanding and practical needs, promoting broader societal shifts towards gender equity and better workplace environments.

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