

Gender Discrimination

Response to DACOWITS RFI 19



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Introduction

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) requested a literature review on gender discrimination. The Committee was particularly interested in (1) an overview of gender discrimination in the civilian workplace, including its prevalence and career impacts; (2) successful strategies businesses employ to combat gender discrimination; and (3) initiatives, resources, and other support programs that have shown promise in mitigating the impact of discrimination and enhancing retention of women in the workforce. The Committee also requested the inclusion of relevant findings and strategies from male-dominated civilian industries and occupations and foreign militaries. The official request for information from DACOWITS appears in Appendix A.

Chapter 1 provides background information on gender discrimination. This includes a review of definitions of gender identity, gender stereotypes, gender bias, and gender discrimination. This chapter also outlines legal protections for gender discrimination in the workplace and reviews research on the prevalence of gender discrimination in the U.S. civilian labor force and U.S. military.

Chapter 2 reviews the impact of gender discrimination in the workplace from entry into the labor force and career fields to wages and promotions or leadership roles.

Chapter 3 outlines strategies, initiatives, resources, and support programs used to reduce and prevent gender discrimination in civilian workplaces.

Chapter 4 focuses on gender discrimination in foreign militaries, including laws, policies, directives, and current approaches to reducing and eradicating gender discrimination.

Chapter 5 concludes with a synthesis of the research and information on gender discrimination presented in this literature review and outlines implications for the U.S. military.

The research and information in this literature review are current as of September 8, 2022.

Chapter 1. Background on Gender Discrimination

Bottom Line Up Front

- Sex, gender, and gender identity are distinct, yet interrelated concepts connected to physical and social aspects of gender. Gender stereotypes and gender bias contribute to and inform gender discrimination.
- Gender discrimination is acting on bias toward a particular gender identity. Discrimination can be exercised in overt and covert ways and can involve formal and interpersonal forms of discrimination.
- The Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibit gender discrimination in pay and employment.
- For U.S. Service members, Department of Defense Directive 1020.02E establishes unlawful discrimination and promotes equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion across the Department through the Military Equal Opportunity program.
- Many women in the U.S. labor force report experiencing some form of gender discrimination. Prevalence rates of gender discrimination are higher for women in male-dominated fields, racial and ethnic minorities, sexual orientation minorities, and individuals who are transgender or nonbinary.
- Active duty servicewomen are more likely to experience gender discrimination than their male counterparts. Women in the Air Force reported the lowest rates of gender discrimination, and women in the Marine Corps reported the highest levels of gender discrimination. Gender minorities in the Army reported the highest rates of gender discrimination out of the Military Services.

Gender discrimination is defined as the unequal treatment of an individual based on their gender identity.¹ Harassment, particularly sexual harassment,ⁱ is a form of gender discrimination with its own large body of research. This literature review focuses on gender discrimination experienced by women in the workplace and does not discuss sexual harassment in a substantive manner. This chapter begins with a review of concepts that relate and contribute to gender discrimination: sex, gender, gender identity, stereotyping, and bias. The latter half of chapter 1 defines gender discrimination, outlines legal protections in place to guard civilian workers and U.S. Service members from gender discrimination, and presents research on the prevalence of gender discrimination in the workplace.

A. Definitions of Sex, Gender, and Gender Identity

Sex and gender are two distinct, but related categories that contribute to an individual's gender identity. Sex is based on biological markers, whereas gender is a socially constructed concept.²

- ▶ **Sex** is assigned at birth and based on anatomic and genetic features, such as genitalia and sex chromosomes; sexes assigned at birth are male, female, and intersex.ⁱⁱ
- ▶ **Gender** is defined as the “social and cultural differences a society assigns to people based on their sex.”³
- ▶ **Gender identity** refers to how an individual chooses to express the perceived social expectations of their gender.^{4,5}

ⁱ Sexual harassment is defined by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.” Harassment may not always be of a sexual nature. It can also include offensive remarks about a person's sex. Harassment becomes illegal when the frequency or severity of incidents creates a hostile or offensive work environment or results in an adverse employment decision.

ⁱⁱ interACT is an organization dedicated to the advocacy and awareness of intersex people; interACT has created a [resource](#) to explain intersex status and suggest guidelines for supporting intersex employees.

Gender has historically been perceived as binary, like sex. However, an individual may choose to identify in multiple ways, including male, female, transgender, and nonbinary.⁶ Gender identities are categorized relative to a person’s assigned sex. A person who identifies as a man or woman and was assigned male or female, respectively, at birth is considered a cisgender person. A cisgender person identifies with the gender socially expected of their sex. A person who identifies as a gender different from the sex they were assigned at birth is considered a transgender person. A transgender person does not identify with the gender socially expected of their sex. A nonbinary person does not identify as male or female, and therefore the sex of a nonbinary person is unrelated to their gender.⁷

B. Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are widely held assumptions about a group based on their gender identity.⁸ Gender stereotypes, for example, characterize women as communal (e.g., kind, sensitive, relationship-oriented) (see Table 1) and men as agentic (e.g., dominant, ambitious, and achievement-oriented) (see Table 2).^{9, 10, 11}

Table 1. Dimensions of Communal Attributes for Women

Dimensions of Communal Attributes		
Concern for Others	Sociability	Emotional Sensitivity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding ▪ Kind ▪ Compassionate ▪ Sympathetic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicative ▪ Collaborative ▪ Relationship-oriented ▪ Likeable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emotional ▪ Intuitive ▪ Sentimental

Source: Hentschel, T., Heilman, M. E., Peus C. V. (2019). The multiple dimensions of gender stereotypes: A current look at men’s and women’s characterizations of others and themselves. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*, Article 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00011>

Table 2. Dimensions of Agentic Attributes for Men

Dimensions of Agentic Attributes			
Instrumental Competence	Leadership Competence	Assertiveness	Independence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Competent ▪ Effective ▪ Productive ▪ Task-oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership ability ▪ Achievement-oriented ▪ Skilled in business matters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dominant ▪ Bold ▪ Assertive ▪ Competitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independent ▪ Desires responsibility ▪ Emotionally stable ▪ Self-reliant

Source: Hentschel, T., Heilman, M. E., Peus C. V. (2019). The multiple dimensions of gender stereotypes: A current look at men’s and women’s characterizations of others and themselves. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*, Article 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00011>

Gendered expectations of men and women can lead to role segregation in the labor force, meaning women are overrepresented in positions that favor communal attributes (e.g., teacher, nurse, secretary) and underrepresented in positions that favor agentic attributes (e.g., construction, military, engineering).¹² Communal and agentic stereotyping are inherently oppositional and create conditions for gender discrimination in the workforce, particularly for women who intend to work in male-gender typed positions. Stereotyping can lead to the perception that women do not have the skills necessary to fulfill male gender-typed positions, resulting in the increased likelihood of gender discrimination against women in male-dominated positions.¹³

Descriptive gender stereotypes are beliefs about how men and women *typically* act, such as the belief that women are normally communal and men are normally agentic.^{14, 15} Prescriptive gender stereotypes are beliefs about how men and women *should* act.^{16, 17} Prescriptive stereotypes about women can damage likability, which impacts work outcomes, such as wages or promotion, especially among women who disrupt traditionally held beliefs about how they should act.^{18, 19, 20} Several male gender-typed behaviors can have a negative impact when enacted by women in the workplace, such as—

- ▶ Direct and assertive communication styles
- ▶ Autocratic or directive leadership styles
- ▶ Display of anger or pride
- ▶ Self-promotion
- ▶ Salary negotiation
- ▶ Workplace misconduct

These behaviors are not unique to men or women; however, women who display characteristics like anger or pride might be labeled “emotional” about their work, whereas men who portray these characteristics may be labeled as “passionate.”²¹ Women are negatively impacted in the workplace when they do not perform female gender-typed behaviors such as willingness to help, respectful and kind treatment of subordinates, and openness to collaboration. These gendered expectations stem from the stereotype that women should be communal or relationship oriented.^{22, 23} Such attitudes reinforce the belief that certain behaviors are permissible for one gender, while not for the other, even if that behavior is widely considered negative or inappropriate, such as being visibly angry in the workplace.²⁴

C. Gender Bias

Biases can manifest as prejudiced perceptions of, attitudes toward, or beliefs about an individual or group, and these biases have the power to affect behavior.^{25, 26} Gender bias, or sexism, involves any prejudice or stereotyping based on gender or sex.²⁷ Although all genders—including women, men, nonbinary individuals, and transgender people—can be targets of gender bias,^{28, 29, 30} research on the history of gender-based discriminatory policies often highlight prejudice against women.³¹

Conscious, or explicit, biases exist within a person’s full awareness, thus knowingly affecting their behavior.^{32, 33} Conscious biases are acted upon intentionally toward a particular identity that is designed to be harmful.^{34, 35} For example, a person could consciously believe women are less qualified to be a leader than men and therefore promote less qualified men over more qualified women.

Unconscious, or implicit, biases are not knowingly believed, accepted, or acted upon.^{36, 37} Unlike conscious bias, unconscious bias unknowingly informs a person’s perceptions and behaviors. A person can express one belief while internalizing a contradictory belief unknowingly.^{38, 39} For example, one could consciously believe women and men are equally effective leaders but unconsciously believe men are better leaders and unconsciously weigh that factor when making promotion or salary decisions.

Unconscious bias is an outcome of subtle cognitive processes that are automatic and assess “people and situations that are influenced by personal background, experiences, memories, and cultural environment.”⁴⁰ Social judgments inform unconscious biases, which dictate behavior. Characteristics, such as race, gender, or disability, for example, serve as context for developing preconceived expectations of a person or group. Stereotypes broadcast through mediums such as social media, news, or television are one way to inform social judgments that contribute to unconscious bias. The values bestowed during upbringing are another source for unconscious biases. See the **Testing Your Implicit Bias** callout below to test your own implicit bias.

Testing Your Implicit Bias

Project Implicit, a nonprofit organization developed by scientists and researchers, features several implicit association tests (IAT) to help people acknowledge their unconscious biases and unlearn the social judgements associated with marginalized identities. Several IATs are related to gender, such as—

- Gender-Science
- Gender-Career
- Transgender

These IATs are designed to identify people’s attitudes toward gender as they relate to the field of sciences, career expectations, and trans identities. You can access the IATs here:

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

D. Gender Discrimination

Gender bias refers to preconceived beliefs one has toward a particular gender, while discrimination involves acting on that belief about a particular gender.⁴¹ In the workplace, gender discrimination occurs when applicants or employees are treated differently because of their gender.⁴² Gender discrimination can be delivered in an overt (i.e., direct) or covert (i.e., discrete) manner and occurs on either a formal (e.g., promotion, performance) or interpersonal (e.g., social isolation) scale.⁴³

Gender discrimination refers to acting on bias toward a particular gender identity.



1. Overt and Covert Discrimination

Overt discrimination is a “clearly exercised form of unfair treatment with visible structural outcomes.” It is an unabated expression of prejudice toward a particular group.⁴⁴ An example of overt gender discrimination in the workplace would be using demeaning or inflammatory language related to someone’s gender.

Covert discrimination is exercised more subtly and can be difficult to identify.^{45, 46} It is enacted with the intention of appearing inconspicuous or neutral, so one cannot conclusively associate prejudicial intent with the prejudicial action that took place.⁴⁷ Covert discrimination is typically “entrenched in common, everyday interactions, taking the shape of harassment, jokes, incivility, avoidance, and other types of disrespectful treatment.”⁴⁸ An example of covert gender discrimination in the workplace would be hiring a less qualified man over a more qualified woman for a position just because of their gender.

2. Formal and Interpersonal Discrimination

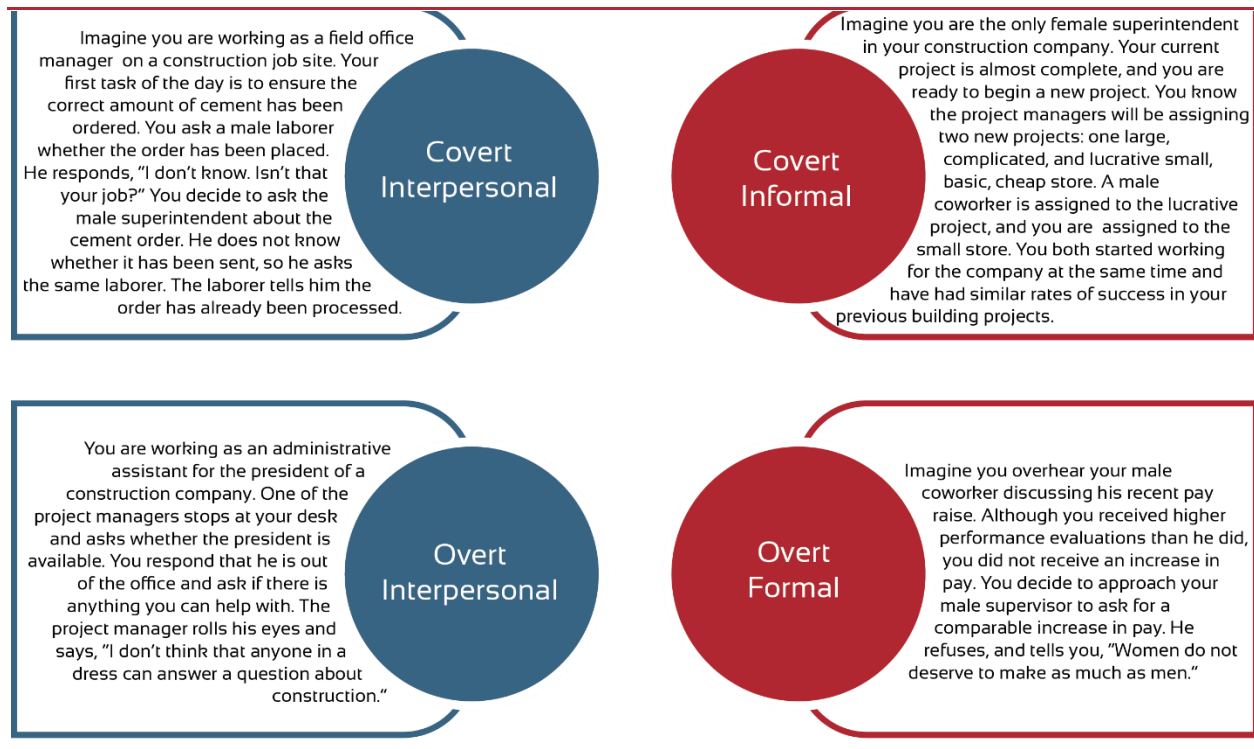
Formal discrimination in the workplace refers to “the decision not to hire or promote an employee due to an unjust cause, such as the individual’s gender.”⁴⁹ Legal protections are in place to safeguard against formal workplace discrimination in hiring and employment (detailed below in Section E).

Interpersonal discrimination is a “form of disrespect, formal and nonverbal harassment, general ill-behavior, and hostility in the workplace” and is “likely to occur within social situations.”^{50, 51} An example of interpersonal discrimination would be asking a coworker for help with an assignment, and then making an offcolor remark related to their gender because they cannot assist immediately upon request.

The distinction between overt and covert, and formal and interpersonal discrimination, is that overt and covert discrimination are related to delivery, whereas formal and interpersonal discrimination are

related to the scale of the discrimination.⁵² See Figure 1 for example scenarios of overt, covert, formal, and interpersonal discrimination.

Figure 1. Example Scenarios of Overt, Covert, Formal, and Interpersonal Discrimination



Source: Lindsey, A., King, E., Cheung, H., Hebl, M., Lynch, S., & Mancini, V. (2015). When do women respond against discrimination? Exploring factors of subtlety, form, and focus. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 45*(12), 649–661. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12326>

E. Legal Protections for Gender Discrimination in the Workplace

In the United States, legal protections are in place to combat workplace discrimination, including gender discrimination.

1. Federal Policies

The U.S. Department of Labor first established the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA) as an amendment of the Fair Labor Standards Act, which requires “substantially equal” wages among both men and women for all forms of compensation. Key components of the EPA follow:

- ▶ **Ensuring equal pay for equal work:** “The Equal Pay Act requires that men and women in the same workplace be given equal pay for equal work. The jobs need not be identical, but they must be substantially equal. Job content (not job titles) determines whether jobs are substantially equal.”^{53, 54}
- ▶ **Applicable forms of compensation:** “All forms of compensation are covered, including salary, overtime pay, bonuses, stock options, profit sharing and bonus plans, life insurance, vacation and holiday pay, cleaning or gasoline allowances, hotel accommodations, reimbursement for travel expenses, and benefits.”^{55, 56}

Shortly thereafter, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) established Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII) to provide a legal framework for addressing discriminatory practices for a variety of work situations and aspects of employment, including pay and benefits. Key components of Title VII follow:

- ▶ **Definition of prohibited forms of discrimination:** “Employers are prohibited from discriminating against individuals based on their race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, transgender status, and sexual orientation),^{iii, 57} national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information.”^{58, 59}
- ▶ **Applicable work situations:** “Under Title VII, it is unlawful to discriminate in any aspect of employment, including hiring and firing; compensation, assignment, or classification of employees; transfer, promotion, layoff, or recall; job advertisements and recruitment; testing; use of company facilities; training and apprenticeship programs; retirement plans, leave, and benefits; or other terms and conditions of employment.”^{60, 61}

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is overseen by DOJ and is the Federal agency responsible for enforcing unlawful employment discrimination.⁶² Any complaints of violations of Title VII or the EPA are submitted to the EEOC for review.

2. U.S. Department of Defense

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 1020.02E, “Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in the DoD,” provides a policy and programmatic framework for addressing unlawful discrimination and promoting equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion across the Department. This includes the DoD Diversity and Inclusion Management Program, DoD Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) program, DoD Civilian Equal Employment Opportunity Program, and the DoD Civil Rights Program.⁶³

The DoD MEO program defines prohibited discrimination and outlines legal protections for Service members.⁶⁴ The MEO is charged with ensuring that “Service members are treated with dignity and respect and are afforded equal opportunity in an environment free from prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender identity, or sexual orientation.”⁶⁵ DoD Instruction 1350.02 defines equal opportunity and prohibited discrimination in the following ways:

- ▶ **Equal opportunity:** “The right of all Service members to serve, advance, and be evaluated based on only individual merit, fitness, capability, and performance in an environment free of prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.”⁶⁶
- ▶ **Prohibited discrimination:** “Discrimination, including disparate treatment, of an individual or group on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender identity, or sexual orientation that is not otherwise authorized by law or regulation and detracts from military readiness.”⁶⁷

ⁱⁱⁱ *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia* in 2020 amended Title VII to protect LGBTQ+ employees. The Supreme Court decided the “firing [of] individuals because of their sexual orientation or transgender status violates Title VII’s prohibition of [discrimination on the basis of] sex.”

F. Prevalence of Gender Discrimination in the Workplace

Research on the prevalence of gender discrimination in U.S. workplaces varies by how gender discrimination is defined and measured, along with study context, such as the population and setting. For instance, a 2022 systematic review of gender discrimination measurement found prevalence rates vary from 3.4 to 67.0 percent of women who have experienced gender discrimination.⁶⁸ Gender discrimination can occur in different aspects of work and employment, including hiring, promotions, pay, job assignments, leadership roles, and more. Gender discrimination at work can originate from coworkers, superiors, or clients/patients/customers.

Many women in the U.S. labor force report experiencing some form of gender discrimination. A recent PEW student found 42 percent of working women in the United States reported discrimination because of their gender compared with 22 percent of working men.⁶⁹ Women with higher education levels reported experiencing more gender discrimination: 57 percent of women with a postgraduate degree compared with around 40 percent of women with a bachelor's degree and 39 percent of women who did not complete college. Compared with men, women are three to four times more likely to experience small slights at work because of their gender or experience being treated as though they are not competent at their jobs because of their gender.⁷⁰ Forty-one percent of women reported experiencing discrimination related to equal pay and promotions, and one-quarter of women say they have earned less than a man doing the same job.^{71, 72}

In fiscal year (FY) 2020, 31.7 percent of all employment discrimination charges filed with the EEOC were sex-based discrimination claims.^{iv} This percentage has remained relatively stable over time—since FY 2016 around 30 percent of all employment discrimination charges have been sex-based. However, the percentage of monetary benefits awarded for sex-based discrimination out of the total monetary benefits has increased in recent years. In FY 2020, 46.0 percent of the total monetary benefits were awarded for sex-based charges.⁷³

The prevalence of gender discrimination can vary based on many factors, including industry or occupation and the gender composition within an industry, occupation, or workplace. Around half of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields report experiencing gender discrimination. For STEM women working in a majority-male workplace, 78 percent say they have experienced some form of gender discrimination.⁷⁴ Similarly, nearly 80 percent of female residents in general surgery programs say they have experienced gender discrimination; in comparison, only 17 percent of their male peers report gender-based discrimination.⁷⁵ The PEW research center also finds that women working in male-majority workplaces report higher levels of gender discrimination than those in balanced or female-majority workplaces.⁷⁶

Gender discrimination rates also differ by the intersection of other identities, such as race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Individuals who are minorities in other aspects of their lives tend to experience higher rates of gender discrimination.⁷⁷ Over half of Black women (53 percent)

PEW Research Center's Survey Items of Gender Discrimination at Work

- Earned less than a woman/man doing the same job
- Were treated as if they were not competent
- Experienced repeated, small slights at work
- Received less support from senior leaders than a woman/man doing the same job
- Been passed over for the most important assignments
- Felt isolated in the workplace
- Been denied a promotion
- Been turned down for a job

^{iv} Charge data reflect private sector and State or local government employees; Federal sector data are not included.

reported experiencing some form of gender discrimination at work compared with 40 percent of White and Hispanic women (respectively).⁷⁸ Forty percent of sexual orientation and gender identity EEOC charges from 2012 through 2016 were filed by people who identify as Black, greatly disproportionate from their representation as 12 percent of the U.S. population at that time.⁷⁹ LGBTQ+ individuals report experiencing workplace discrimination, including during the process of applying for jobs, promotions, and equal pay. Women who identify as LGBTQ (including transgender women) showed lower odds for reporting work-based gender discrimination than LGBTQ men. LGBTQ individuals who were also racial or ethnic minorities were twice as likely than their White peers to say they had experienced discrimination when applying for jobs.⁸⁰ Research on gender discrimination prevalence for transgender and nonbinary individuals is limited; however, current research shows between 15 and 57 percent of trans people experience gender discrimination.⁸¹

G. Prevalence of Gender Discrimination Among U.S. Service Members

DoD's Workplace and Gender Relations survey estimates prevalence rates of sexual assault and sex-based military equal opportunity violations experienced by active duty, Reserve, and Guard populations.^v Prevalence estimates of gender discrimination are measured by Service members' responses that they have experienced a combination of the following two criteria within the past 12 months: (1) comments or behaviors directed at them because of their gender from someone at work,^{vi} and (2) those experiences harmed or limited their career. Sexual harassment is measured by a series of separate survey items.⁸² Research from the previous section on the prevalence of gender discrimination in the civilian labor market is not directly comparable to prevalence rates in the military because of differences in measurement, survey items, and sampling approaches.

In 2021, active duty servicewomen were more likely to experience gender discrimination (16.1 percent) than their male counterparts (1.4 percent). Comparatively, the estimated gender discrimination rate for Reserve and Guard servicewomen was 9.9 percent and 0.8 percent for servicemen in 2021. Prevalence rates of gender discrimination varied by Service branch (see Table 3), with active duty Air Force women reporting the lowest rate of gender discrimination (11.8 percent) and Marine Corps women the highest (21.9 percent). Among servicemen, Active duty Navy men reported the highest prevalence rates of gender discrimination (2.1 percent), and Marine Corps men the lowest (0.8 percent). When examining rates by gender identity, active duty Army personnel who identify as a gender minority reported the highest

DoD's 2021 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Military Members Gender Discrimination Questions

- Did you hear someone from work say that your gender is NOT as good at your particular job, or that your gender should be prevented from having your job?
 - If YES: Do you think their beliefs about your gender ever harmed or limited your career? *For example, did they hurt your evaluation/fitness report, affect your chances of promotion or your next assignment?*
- Do you think someone from work mistreated, ignored, excluded, or insulted you because of your gender?
 - If YES: Do you think this treatment ever harmed or limited your career? *For example, did they hurt your evaluation/fitness report, affect your chances of promotion or your next assignment?*

^v The Workplace and Gender Relations survey is conducted biennially. The survey is fielded for the active duty population in even-numbered years and the Reserve and Guard population in odd-numbered years. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, DoD did not conduct the planned survey of active duty personnel in 2020, and the 2021 survey was administered to both active duty and reserve component populations simultaneously.

^{vi} "Someone from work" is defined as any person the respondent has contact with as part of their military duties. This includes a supervisor, someone above or below the respondent's rank, or a civilian employee/contractor.

rates of gender discrimination out of all the Services (12.6 percent). Navy active duty personnel had the lowest reported gender discrimination among gender minorities (7.6 percent) but the highest for cisgender personnel (4.9 percent).⁸³

Table 3. Estimated Past Year Gender Discrimination by Service Branch, Gender, and Gender Identity for Active Duty Personnel

Service Branch	Gender		Gender Identity	
	Women	Men	Gender Minority ^a	Cisgender ^b
Army	18.2%	1.4%	12.6%	3.7%
Air Force	11.8%	1.1%	9.2%	3.2%
Navy	16.9%	2.1%	7.6%	4.9%
Marine Corps	21.9%	0.8%	8.1%	2.7%

Notes:

^aService members are considered a gender minority when they selected “transgender” as their current gender identity or when their sex at birth and current gender identity reported on the survey did not match. In 2021, 1.7 percent of active duty Service members identified as a gender minority, including 0.4 percent who identified as transgender and 1.7 percent whose sex at birth did not match their selected gender identity.

^bA cisgender person identifies with the gender socially expected of their sex.

Source: U.S. Department of Defense. (2022). *Annex 1: 2021 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Military Members: Overview report (No. 2022-182)*. Office of People Analytics.

https://www.sapr.mil/sites/default/files/public/docs/reports/AR/Annex_1_2021_WGRS_Overview_Report_FY2021.pdf

Rates of gender discrimination by race for servicewomen showed statistically significant differences. Active duty servicewomen who are a racial or ethnic minority reported lower overall prevalence rates of gender discrimination than White women (14.3 percent compared with 18.4 percent). Comparatively, active duty men showed no significant differences by race or ethnicity.

Service members who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual were more likely than those who are heterosexual to report experiencing gender discrimination. In 2021, 11.7 percent of lesbian, gay, or bisexual active duty personnel experienced gender discrimination compared with 3.0 percent of heterosexual personnel. Similarly, Service members who identify as a gender minority reported higher rates of gender discrimination (9.9 percent) compared with cisgender Service members (3.7 percent).⁸⁴

Respondents who indicated they have experienced gender discrimination were asked to provide more detailed information about the situation that was the worst or most serious to them. The majority of active duty women (89 percent) and men (87 percent) in 2021 reported their gender discrimination experience involved being mistreated, ignored, or insulted because of their gender. Most alleged offenders were other military members and someone in their chain of command.⁸⁵ While the gender discrimination prevalence rate for junior enlisted women has increased, senior enlisted women were significantly more likely to experience gender discrimination. Among Service members who reported experiencing gender discrimination in the past year, their odds of also experiencing sexual assault increased: double for women and tenfold for men.⁸⁶

Of those who reported experiencing gender discrimination in the 2021 survey, 54 percent of active duty women and 47 percent of active duty men made a report or filed a complaint; of those, close to half reported the issue to someone in their chain of command. The majority of those who reported gender discrimination shared that they were encouraged to drop the issue, many stated that they were treated worse or blamed for the issue, and around 40 percent said the person they reported to took no action. In 2018, active duty men were more likely than their female counterparts (41 percent compared with 33 percent, respectively) to say the gender discrimination they experienced led them to take steps to leave the military.⁸⁷

Chapter 2. Gender Discrimination and Its Impact on Careers

Bottom Line Up Front

- Career and educational aspirations are influenced by societal gender norms in children as young as 4, and women may be less likely to pursue male-dominated career and educational fields because of anticipated gender discrimination.
- Although the gender wage gap has closed significantly since 1970, the rate of convergence has slowed considerably since 1990.
- An estimated 62 percent of the gender wage gap is attributable to quantifiable supply-side factors, including education, race, and choice of occupation, while 38 percent is attributable to demand-side factors, such as societal norms and gender discrimination.
- Women often experience a “motherhood penalty” in the workforce based on their parenting status, including reduced likelihood of being hired and receiving promotions and salary increases. Conversely, parenting men often receive a “fatherhood premium” with increased rates of hire, promotions, and salary increases.
- Women’s wages in the United States were found to be 5 percent lower for each child. However, delaying motherhood is associated with an average increase in earnings of 9 percent per year of delay.

This chapter outlines the impact of gender discrimination on various aspects of women’s careers, including career selection and hiring, salaries, promotability into leadership positions, and working in male-dominated career fields. This chapter also discusses the specific impact of gender discrimination on pregnant and parenting women.

A. Career Selection and Entry Into the Workforce

Career selection is influenced by factors such as gender stereotypes and preconceived notions from youth about which careers boys and girls are supposed to pursue when they grow up.⁸⁸ Research shows children as young as 4 are influenced by gender stereotyping when discussing their future careers,⁸⁹ and these gendered perceptions continue to shape children’s career aspirations beyond young adulthood.⁹⁰ Similar perceptions are exhibited in educational pursuits, which also play a significant role in shaping career selection. Studies have found that women may decide not to pursue certain career interests or feel less motivated to pursue a diverse range of careers because of expectations for gender discrimination.

For example, a 2017 survey of female high school and undergraduate students found women were more likely to anticipate discrimination in male-dominated occupational fields, including expectations of being viewed as less competent than their male colleagues.⁹² Women may be less likely to pursue careers in male-dominated occupational fields, such as STEM, if they anticipate experiencing gender discrimination, or if they experience discrimination while pursuing an educational field closely associated with a male-dominated career path. For example, women who hold STEM degrees are more likely to choose careers fields outside of STEM fields than men with the same degrees, and nearly twice as many women leave STEM fields once hired compared with men.^{93, 94}

Gender discrimination can infiltrate the applicant selection and hiring process. For example, a woman may experience gender discrimination during the hiring process if a male applicant is selected for a position over her, even though her qualifications, skills, and experience far exceed those of the male applicant. A recent PEW research center survey indicated 7 percent of women and 4 percent of men say

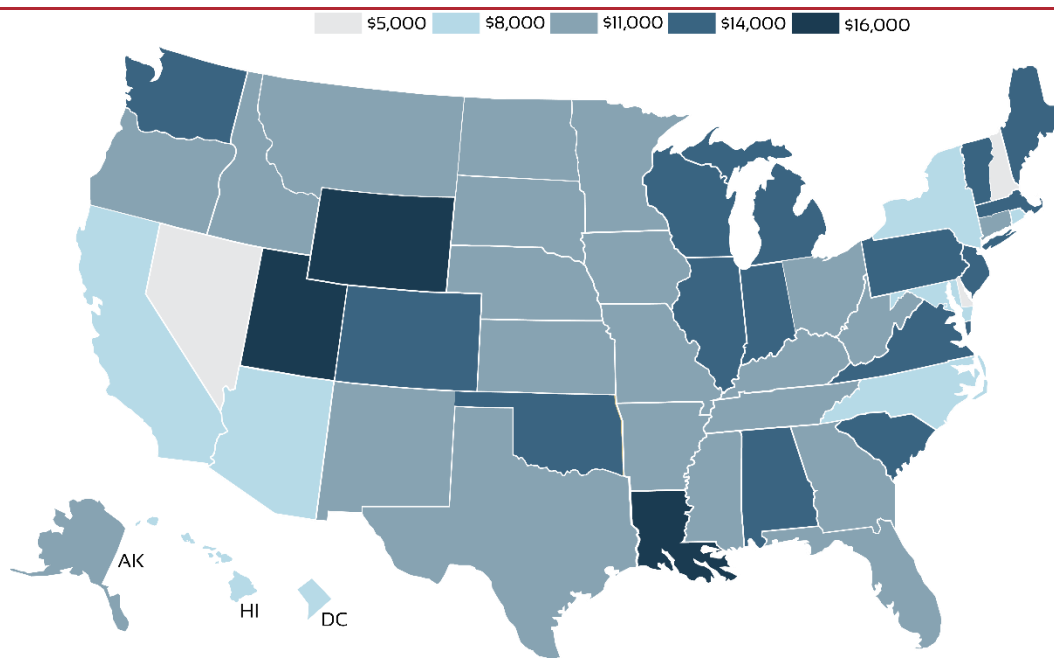
they have been turned down for a job because of their gender.⁹⁵ Conscious or unconscious gender biases have been shown to affect those who evaluate applications and make hiring decisions, particularly if those evaluators hold traditional views about gender roles, or they are assessing positions that are stereotypically seen as masculine or feminine.^{96, 97} Studies also show that men receive a higher rate of callbacks for an interview when applying for traditionally masculine jobs than women, but these rates were similar for women and men when applying for jobs associated with traditional femininity.^{98, 99}

The rate at which women experience discrimination during the hiring process can vary by other characteristics. For example, Rivera and Tilcsik (2016) found male applicants benefit heavily from evidence of high social status on resumes, such as participation in elite sports like sailing, while female applicants appear to be penalized for such activities, potentially because of concerns about their commitment to intensive career fields, such as law. The study found 16.3 percent of fictitious male applicants with evidence of elite social status received callbacks from law firms, while only 3.8 percent of women received callbacks, even though the fake resumes were the same except for the applicant’s name.¹⁰⁰

B. Gender Wage Gap

The wage disparity between men and women is one of the most easily recognizable effects of workplace gender discrimination, and while the gender wage gap has decreased over time, the rate of convergence has significantly slowed since 1990.¹⁰¹ Between 1970 and 1990, the median hourly pay among female full-time employees compared with men rose by 13 percentage points from 61 to 74 percent of male wages, but the gap closed by only 9 percentage points between 1990 and 2018 as women’s median hourly salaries increased to 83 percent of men’s.¹⁰² The gender wage gap also varies by State (see Figure 2).¹⁰³

Figure 2. Difference in Median Annual Earnings between Women and Men by State



Note: The saturation of States indicates the difference in median annual earnings between male and female full-time and part-time workers.

Source: National Partnership for Women & Families. (2022). *What’s the Wage Gap in the States*. <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/economic-justice/wage-gap/>

Even when accounting for education and experience levels, men earn more per hour than women in the United States in nearly every occupation and industry, including those in which women are the majority.^{104, 105, 106} The distribution of women across occupations accounts for about half of the wage gap, as female-dominated fields occupations such as teaching and administration roles tend to pay less than male-dominated occupations.^{107, 108} As of 2016, of the 30 highest paying jobs, 26 are predominantly male, and of the 30 lowest paying jobs, 23 are predominantly female.¹⁰⁹

The information above clearly highlights the significant wage gap between male and female employees in the United States; however, the factors that cause the wage gap are less clear. Glynn (2018) suggests supply-side factors, such as those related to education, race, and choice of occupation, and demand-side factors, such as those related to societal and systemic forces such as gender norms, discrimination, and stereotypes, contribute to the gender wage gap. Supply-side factors are observable and can be studied using representative U.S. Census Bureau to determine how influential each factor is on wage inequality, while demand-side factors are more difficult to quantify as they relate to how the value of women’s work is perceived. Glynn (2018) found that only 62 percent of the gender wage gap was attributable to quantifiable supply-side factors, indicating 38 percent of the wage gap may be the result of societal or systemic factors that are difficult to quantify. Glynn (2018) also suggests demand-side factors, such as societal norms and gender discrimination, influence supply-side factors, and therefore may account for more than 38 percent of the wage gap. For example, as discussed earlier, women may decide to pursue certain educational or occupational fields to meet societal expectations of their role in the workforce.¹¹⁰ See Table 4 for a description of how much each supply-side factor contributes to the gender wage gap and notes on each factor.

Table 4. Estimated Supply-Side Percentage Contributions to the Gender Wage Gap and Associated Explanations

	Percentage Contributed to Gender Wage Gap	Explanation
Work experience	Increased by 14 percent	Women continue to have less work experience compared with males because they are being relied on to provide unpaid care for children and family members.
Industry	Increased by 17.6 percent	Women are overrepresented in low-wage service industries, and female-dominated occupations tend to feature lower wages. Women also tend to be overrepresented in lower end occupations within industry. For example, women hold 52.8 percent of legal occupations, but only 37.4 percent of those women are lawyers.
Occupation	Increased by 32.9 percent	
Education	Reduced by 5.9 percent	Women earn more postsecondary degrees than men leading to increased wages. However, women tend to pursue fields of study that lead to lower wage jobs than men.
Unionization	Reduced by 1.3 percent	The reduction in wage gap is associated with women’s overrepresentation in public-sector jobs where unionization is more common.

	Percentage Contributed to Gender Wage Gap	Explanation
Race	Increased 4.3 percent	Black women still earn 34.2 percent less than White men and 11.7 percent less than White women, offsetting recent increases in educational attainment among Black women.
Regions	Increase 0.3 percent	States with smaller gender wage gap differences were twice as likely to have a minimum wage higher than the Federal minimum wage.

Source: Washington Center for Equitable Growth. (2019). *Gender wage inequality in the United States: Causes and solutions to improve family well-being and economic growth*. <https://equitablegrowth.org/gender-wage-inequality-in-the-united-states-causes-and-solutions-to-improve-family-well-being-and-economic-growth/>

C. Barriers to Leadership Positions

Gender discrimination can contribute to lost opportunities for promotions, leadership experience, and advancements in responsibility. Gendered biases, when held by supervisors or hiring managers, can prevent qualified women from moving up the ladder in their careers. This is often referred to as a metaphorical “glass ceiling,” characterizing invisible barriers women face in the workplace.¹¹¹ The gender composition of the workplace impacts the representation of women in leadership positions; larger percentages of female nonmanagement employees are associated with greater shares of women in management positions.¹¹²

Ambition and resilience are necessary to excel in the workplace, and because these traits are typically considered masculine behaviors, women who exhibit them are often judged negatively.^{113, 114} If a woman is viewed as too feminine, others may perceive her as incompetent and incapable of being a leader, but if a woman is too masculine in her approach to work interactions and leadership style, others may perceive her as unlikeable.^{115, 116} Pressures to conform to gendered expectations while maintaining exceptional work performance can be a barrier toward progression in the workplace for many women.^{117, 118} Studies have found perceptions of women as caretakers and nurturing can result in some women taking on additional work-related, but not career-enhancing “soft” responsibilities. For example, women in academic fields also tend to be assigned heavier course, service, and advising loads than their male counterparts, particularly while working in male-dominated subject areas, thereby reducing their availability and energy for work on other more career-enhancing goals.^{119, 120}

D. Motherhood and Caregiving

Women with children face additional layers of bias and discrimination in the workplace compared with nonparenting women. Motherhood is associated with the belief that a woman will be less reliant, competent, and committed to her work.¹²¹ These gendered assumptions and bias contribute to a phenomenon known as the “motherhood penalty,” where women’s status as a parent puts them at a disadvantage in the hiring process and in the workplace through wages and earnings, promotions and responsibilities, and treatment by coworkers and supervisors. Conversely, men generally experience a premium for being a father reflected in their career opportunities, wages, promotions, and the perception that fatherhood makes them more committed to their career.^{122, 123}

Even the perceived threat of motherhood can affect the careers of women who do not have children. For instance, coworkers being skeptical toward high-achieving women’s work ethic than their male peers, viewing women as more likely to leave their position to pursue family responsibilities.¹²⁴ However, while women are more likely to quit their jobs and opt for unemployment for family and

caregiving-related reasons, the average probability of women their leaving job was not found to be significantly different from men.¹²⁵

Mothers, on average, also receive lower wages than childless women. In 2017, women’s wages were found to be 5 percent lower with the presence of each child in the United States.¹²⁶ Conversely, the act of delaying motherhood is associated with an average increase in earnings of 9 percent per year of delay.¹²⁷ Another study concluded that the pay gap between mothers and nonmothers is even larger than the pay gap between men and women under age 35.¹²⁸ As a result, it has become more common for women to delay motherhood in recent years because of the financial and social impacts of career interruption.¹²⁹

E. Discrimination in Male-Dominated Fields

As of 2020, 6.5 percent of women worked in male-dominated occupations, and 5.4 percent of men worked in female-dominated occupations. An occupation is defined as male- or female-dominated when one gender makes up 75 percent of the workforce in that occupation.¹³⁰

Women who work in male-dominated fields often face unique challenges in the workplace, including “workplace backlash” and other forms of discrimination. Workplace backlash refers to intentional or unintentional efforts to reduce diversity by both dominant and subordinate employees to uphold social hierarchy in the workplace.¹³¹ Some researchers believe workplace backlash may explain why women often face repercussions for being a minority in their field¹³² and have found that efforts and initiatives to promote diversity can be ineffective or create even more backlash toward minority groups.¹³³

Women with higher levels of education are more likely to work in male-dominated fields and are therefore more susceptible to workplace-based gender discrimination.¹³⁴ However, skilled trades that do not require a college degree, such as construction and carpentry, are also heavily dominated by male employees despite initiatives to increase the number of women in these industries.¹³⁵ These occupations are often stereotyped as masculine because of the typically more physically demanding nature of the work.¹³⁶ A 2021 study found that while women who break into physically demanding male-dominated industries are represented as successful and hardworking, they are expected to work harder than men to prove themselves and adjust their behaviors to fit in. These women are typically viewed as role models and therefore also have the responsibilities of changing industry culture and advocating for other women.¹³⁷ For example, women working in the construction field reported feeling they must work harder to prove to their superiors and coworkers that they belong in the industry and are frequently excluded from workplace interactions.¹³⁸ De la Torre (2017) reports that women are more likely to leave these types of male-dominated positions because of negative experiences than positions that are considered to be “high level” or more prestigious.¹³⁹

As can be expected, the stressors of discrimination in the workplace can cause negative mental health outcomes and elevated risk of burnout. Andersson and Harnois (2020) found that “in general, women who spend more time working in male-dominated occupations perceive higher levels of unpleasantness and lower levels of meaningfulness at work than those who spend less time in such work contexts.”¹⁴⁰ Being a numerical minority in a work or educational environment was also found to have a more severe negative impact on women’s well-being than men, and women working in a male-dominated field were

twice as likely to report suicidal ideation.^{141, 142} Studies show that having adequate support from loved ones and mentors and efforts of workplaces to support work-life balance are associated with higher levels of satisfaction.^{143, 144} However, women in male-dominated fields often experience a lack of support from their male colleagues and may feel the need to adopt male behaviors to establish interpersonal relationships with them to address mistreatment or gender discrimination. This increased focus on interpersonal relationships may take away from female employees' focus on their job and reduce their workplace performance.¹⁴⁵

Chapter 3. Strategies, Initiatives, Resources, and Support Programs to Combat Gender Discrimination in the Workplace

Bottom Line Up Front

Employers use various strategies to guard against gender discrimination and promote gender equity, including the following:

- **Education and training:** Education and training are used to ensure company leaders and staff are aware of and comply with laws prohibiting gender discrimination in the workplace. Although employees have been shown to retain knowledge from these trainings, associated behavioral changes tend to diminish over time.
- **Questioning individual biases:** These training activities focus on teaching employees about an individual to avoid stereotyping and substituting themselves or other employees into a situation to consider whether they would treat someone of another gender similarly.
- **Female representation in leadership roles:** Research shows the perception of female leaders can help to reduce gender discrimination in the workplace.
- **Provide equitable parental leave and work-life balance:** Employers should avoid assuming females will automatically embrace the role of primary caregiver after giving birth.
- **Senior leaders shape workplace culture.** Senior leaders and other influential figures in the workplace set the tone for workplace culture and demonstrate acceptable values and behaviors.

A variety of approaches and strategies are available for preventing and reducing gender discrimination at institutions, organizations, and workplaces. Outlined below are practices commonly used or found to be effective in minimizing discriminatory behavior and promoting gender equity.

- ▶ **Education and training have value but show mixed results.** Education and training are commonly used strategies to ensure company leaders and employees understand how to comply with laws and policies prohibiting gender discrimination. Some materials are also designed to identify bias and provide trainees with tools to better counter and avoid gender discrimination at work. Research on the effectiveness of these trainings, particularly for diversity issues, has demonstrate mixed results. For example, although Heilman and Caleo (2018) report attendees retain knowledge from trainings, resulting attitudinal changes have been shown to diminish over time. In recent years, unconscious bias training has become more popular, and although some evidence suggests positive results, it remains unclear how effective these trainings are at mitigating stereotypes and bias in the workplace.¹⁴⁶
- ▶ **Strategies to call into question biases at the individual level:** Training and education exercises can be designed to work on dismantling biases and negative attitudes for individuals. Examples of these techniques follow:
 - **Individuating:** The more we know about an individual, the less likely we are to label them or rely on stereotypes to complete our understanding.¹⁴⁷

- **Substituting:** This is a mental exercise designed to help a person consider if stereotypes shape their decisions and question if the same evaluation would be made regardless of gender. For example, would Sally (a woman) receive the same evaluation or perception if she were Robert (a man)? Experimental studies have shown that when provided the same description about a fictitious entrepreneur, participants evaluated women more harshly because they expected them to conform to traditional aspects of femininity.¹⁴⁸
- ▶ **Countering stereotypes through representation.** Women’s representation in leadership roles, particularly those traditionally occupied by men, can work to counter common stereotypes about women in the workplace. While merely increasing the presence and prominence of women in an organization is not enough to wholly combat gender discrimination, everyday examples of women’s success in the workplace can prompt a reassessment of previously held attitudes and beliefs.¹⁴⁹
- ▶ **Gender-neutral language in job titles, position descriptions, and promotion criteria.** Gendered language or language evoking gendered stereotypes can send unintentional signals about gendered expectations and contribute to a working environment that enables discriminatory behaviors in hiring and promotion. Stripping documents and materials of gendered language or gender biases (e.g., only highlighting qualities of a masculine nature) can demonstrate expectations of equity based on merit and qualifications.¹⁵⁰
- ▶ **Providing employees equitable parental leave and work-life flexibility.** Benefits such as parental leave, flexible schedules, and family-friendly work options should be provided equally to male and female employees. Policies or company practices that assume women will bear more caregiving responsibilities at home perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes and encourage gender discrimination.¹⁵¹
- ▶ **Senior leaders are powerful figures shaping workplace culture.** Senior leaders and other influential figures in the workplace set the tone for workplace culture. Through their words and actions, leaders at all levels demonstrate values and the type of behavior that is accepted or condoned. Leaders can establish and articulate new social norms on matters of gender equity in the workplace to prevent and mitigate gender discrimination.¹⁵²

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a United Nations agency working to advance social and economic justice through international labor standards. In 2017, ILO conducted a comprehensive review of unconscious gender bias in the workplace and its relationship with unintentional discriminatory practices that impact women’s career advancement.¹⁵³ As a result, ILO outlined guidelines for how to assess the prevalence of unconscious gender bias in work organizations and its impact on employees. Proposed assessments include perception surveys, language analysis, analysis of gender gaps (e.g., career advancement, wages, hiring), and experiments.¹⁵⁴ ILO also provided promising practices for prevention of unconscious bias including blind evaluations for hiring, developing a standardized process for recruitment and performance evaluations, and creating an ethos of transparency and accountability.¹⁵⁵ Data analysis and training were offered as other possible options for preventing bias.¹⁵⁶

Chapter 4. Gender Discrimination and Foreign Militaries

Bottom Line Up Front

- Since 2015, NATO and partner nations have made strides in increasing women’s involvement in all aspects of their respective armed forces following the United National Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. These efforts have included ways to reduce gender discrimination for women in military service.
- In 2017, Montenegro promoted the military profession to high school, teenage, and student populations to recruit candidates into military academies. Young female and male officers were present during these activities to provide perspectives from both genders, resulting in nearly half of the applicants being women.
- Some foreign militaries employ dedicated staff or personnel to monitor and respond to gender and equality issues.

Women have played a critical role serving in foreign militaries across the globe. Formal recognition of women’s role, in the form of compensation and membership, began developing in the late 1940s.¹⁵⁷ Since then, women’s integration in foreign armed forces, including in combat roles, has continued at varying rates. Broad efforts by the United Nations to advance a global Women, Peace, and Security agenda have underscored the critical importance of women’s role in the armed forces. Sustained attention to gender integration has also led to the development of measures to reduce and eliminate gender discrimination, which are detailed below.

A. Efforts Under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

In October 2000, the UN Security Council passed UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. This resolution reaffirms the important role women play in all UN efforts to maintain and promote international peace and security and urged UN members to increase women’s involvement in all aspects of the armed forces.¹⁵⁸ All North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members and partner nations submitted an inaugural report to the Office of Gender Advisor in the International Military Staff (IMS) in 2014 on their efforts implementing UNSCR 1325. These reports focused on the recruitment and retention of women the armed forces and policy, education, and training related to gender issues. Since 2015, IMS submits a summary of the national reports annually to encourage sharing of information, data, and best practices in advancement of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.^{159,160} Table 4 highlights selected actions from NATO members and partner nations implementing UNSCR 1325 aimed at reducing gender discrimination.

Table 4. Actions Taken by NATO Members and Partner Members Integrating UNSCR 1325, 2016–2018

Country	Actions Taken
Australia	In 2015, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) created the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office to provide policy, training, data collection and reporting, advice, and a channel for victims to report sexual harassment and sexual and gender-based violence. ADF also created a Gender Advisor Network as part of the implementation of Australia’s National Action Plan, which works to build capacity on gender perspective.

Country	Actions Taken
Moldova	In 2018, Moldova carried out a gender analysis of the Code of Professional Conduct of the National Army of 2016. This analysis led to the elaboration of recommendations for the Code's improvement.
Montenegro	In 2017, Montenegro conducted the promotion of the military profession among high school, teenage, and student populations to recruit candidates to military academies. Young female and male officers were present during these activities to provide perspectives from both genders. As a result, almost half of the applicants were women.
Spain	In 2016, gender mainstreaming became part of the military education at all levels (academies and high level courses on human resources management), including gender and international humanitarian law. Spain develops a report every month to assess gender integration in all branches.

Sources:

NATO. (2016). *Summary of the national reports of NATO member and partner nations to the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives: Full report.*

https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_11/20171122_2016_Summary_of_NRs_to_NCGP.pdf

NATO. (2017). *Summary of the national reports of NATO member and partner nations to the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives: Full report.* https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_09/20190909_190909-2017-Summary-NR-to-NCGP.pdf

NATO. (2018). *Summary of the national reports of NATO member and partner nations to the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives: Full report.* https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/7/pdf/200713-2018-Summary-NR-to-NCGP.pdf

Canada stood at the forefront of global efforts to adopt UNSCR 1325 after the Security Council passed UNSCR 1325.¹⁶¹ To address and prevent gender discrimination, defined as one form of sexual misconduct, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) launched Operation HONOUR in 2015, which aimed to understand issues related to sexual misconduct at large, respond more directly to incidents, provide more effective supports, and prevent incidents from occurring.¹⁶² Operation HONOUR recently evolved after CAF conducted sexual misconduct research, gathered feedback, and reflected on the initiative's effectiveness. The initiative shifted to combat sexual misconduct, including gender discrimination, by changing CAF's culture. CAF launched this new culture change strategy, referred to as "The Path to Dignity and Respect," in 2020. Based on an analysis of CAF's culture, this initiative identifies what cultural aspects CAF ought to change, strengthen, or eliminate to address sexual misconduct.¹⁶³

UNSCR 1325's influence spread beyond NATO nations and contributed to the development of gender-related policies in Latin American countries, particularly Argentina. Several laws state that the Argentine State is responsible for "the elimination of specific forms of violence and discrimination based on gender."¹⁶⁴ For example, Law 26.845 directs the State to "take positive actions by all appropriate means to prevent, punish and eradicate all forms of violence against women. Article 11 of this law explicitly calls on the Defense Ministry to adopt regulations and positive measures to eradicate all patterns of discrimination in the recruitment, retention, and promotion of women in the armed forces." The article also requires that the Defense Ministry raise staff awareness of the problem of violence against women and include courses on the human rights of women in their training programs.¹⁶⁵

B. Gender and Equality Advisors Used by Foreign Militaries

Foreign militaries have implemented supplemental accountability measures by dedicating staff and personnel to monitor gender issues and support gender equality. For example, since 2005, the German armed forces appointed gender equality officers throughout each force to ensure their respective force implements equal opportunities for service women and men. These officers oversee personnel, social, and organizational measures related to family and service; the mitigation of gender-related discrimination; protection against workplace sexual harassment; and equal opportunities for women

and men.¹⁶⁶ Bulgaria also utilizes staff to support similar efforts. Bulgaria stood up an Armed Forces' Women's Association that responds to the needs of armed forces' personnel who experience sexual discrimination, harassment or abuse, or domestic violence; monitors official complaints; and provides additional support services for both women and men.¹⁶⁷

Chapter 5. Conclusions and Implications

This literature review provided an overview of gender discrimination and discussed foundational concepts of sex, gender, gender identity, stereotyping, and bias which inform a full understanding of gender discrimination. It also outlined legal protections and prevalence rates of gender discrimination in the civilian workplace and U.S. military; reviewed the impact of gender discrimination on women in the workplace; described strategies, initiatives, resources, and support programs used to reduce gender discrimination; and provided information on how foreign militaries work to combat gender discrimination. Critical findings on this topic related to DACOWITS' study of women in the military are synthesized below:

- ▶ **Gender stereotypes and gender bias fuel gender discrimination.** Gender discrimination is defined as acting on bias toward a particular gender identity. Stereotypes, bias, and prejudice create an environment for individuals to act on their biases and beliefs, leading to discrimination. The interconnected nature of these concepts demonstrates the importance of dismantling sexism and negative stereotypes to eradicate the roots of discrimination. Leaders at all levels of an organization can actively work to prevent gender discrimination by fostering an environment intolerant of bias, prejudice, and differential treatment.
- ▶ **Women at the intersection of other minority identities (race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity) and women in male-dominated fields experience higher rates of gender discrimination.** Many women in the U.S. labor force report experiencing some form of gender discrimination; however, certain subpopulations of women are more at risk. A greater proportion of women of color, especially Black women, report experiencing gender discrimination than White and Hispanic women. People who identify as LGBTQ+ and those who are nonbinary also experience more gender discrimination than cisgender women. Compared with women in gender agnostic or female-dominated industries, a majority of women who work in male-dominated fields say they have experienced some form of gender discrimination. Although reported prevalence rates of gender discrimination for U.S. servicewomen are lower than studies on civilian women, differences in survey measurement items make it difficult to compare. Based on women's experiences in civilian workplaces, all servicewomen and most women of color or LGBTQ+ servicewomen are at greater risk for experiencing gender discrimination.
- ▶ **Gender discrimination infiltrates all aspects of women's careers, including career selection, hiring, wages, promotions, and leadership opportunities.** Decades of research indicates no portion of women's careers remains untouched by gender discrimination. Gender stereotypes influence young children, which begin to shape their ideas about future careers and educational pursuits. The gender wage gap persists, and women continue to experience invisible barriers in reaching leadership positions at work. Women with children face additional layers of bias and discrimination and experience a motherhood wage penalty while fathers see their wages increase after becoming a parent. These dimensions of gender discrimination occurring across the career life cycle are exacerbated for women in male-dominated workplaces and industries.

- ▶ **Successful strategies to combat gender discrimination range from oversight and accountability mechanisms to interpersonal support designed for breaking down biases and stereotypes.** The persistence of gender discrimination is supported by internal, interpersonal biases held by individuals *and* structural aspects of workplaces that directly or indirectly foster inequality. Strategic approaches to dismantle and prevent discrimination should consider addressing multiple dimensions. Equity advisors, used by some foreign militaries, provide directed oversight to the implementation of equal opportunity programs and consistent monitoring of these issues. Another structural strategy organizations can employ is use of gender-neutral language in job descriptions and position titles and encouraging family-friendly work accommodations for all employees. Individual-based exercises, such as individuating and substituting, can provide workers a way to illuminate and recalibrate harmful biases, attitudes, and stereotypes. Senior and influential leaders are also crucial for mitigating gender discrimination in a workplace. Leaders set the tone for workplace culture and should demonstrate swift, responsive accountability for those who engage in harmful behaviors that detract from a healthy working environment.

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Appendix A

Gender Discrimination: Request for Information 19

September 2022

The Committee requests a **literature review** from the **DACOWITS Research Contractor** on the following:

1. Provide an overview of gender discrimination in the civilian workplace, including its prevalence and career impact, and identify successful strategies businesses employ to combat the problem – with a focus on studies and data which identify career impact and attrition trends. Although this issue is not restricted to any career area, more relevant findings may come from more male-dominated career fields, such as firefighters, police, construction, etc. in which women had not historically been employed.
2. Identify successful strategies businesses employ to combat gender discrimination, as well as initiatives, resources and other support programs which have shown promise in mitigating its impact and enhancing retention.

Of note, the goal of this review is to gather objective data and research which speaks to impact and which identify measures of potential value to the Services in developing and implementing strategies/programs to minimize adverse impact on servicewomen and to enhance retention. If available, it would be helpful to have information about foreign military practices.