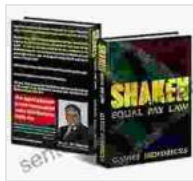


Shaken: Equal Pay Law in South Africa

The fight for equal pay has been a long and arduous one, but it is one that is far from over. In South Africa, the gender pay gap remains stubbornly high, with women earning on average 28% less than men for the same work.



SHAKEN: Equal Pay Law South Africa

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 164934 KB

Screen Reader : Supported

Print length : 786 pages



This gap is not only unjust, but it also has a significant impact on women's lives. Women who earn less than men are more likely to live in poverty, to be food insecure, and to have difficulty accessing healthcare and education.

The good news is that there is a growing movement in South Africa to close the gender pay gap. In 2019, the government passed the Employment Equity Amendment Act, which made it illegal for employers to pay women less than men for the same work.

This law is a significant step forward, but it is only one part of the solution. To truly close the gender pay gap, we need to change the way we think about work and value the contributions of women.

The Gender Pay Gap in South Africa

The gender pay gap in South Africa is one of the highest in the world. According to the World Economic Forum, South Africa ranks 117th out of 149 countries in terms of gender pay equality.

The gap is particularly large in the private sector, where women earn on average 35% less than men. In the public sector, the gap is smaller, but still significant, with women earning on average 20% less than men.

The gender pay gap is not simply a matter of women being paid less for the same work. It is also due to the fact that women are more likely to work in low-paying jobs and to have their work undervalued.

For example, women are more likely to work in part-time and temporary jobs, which typically pay less than full-time and permanent jobs. Women are also more likely to work in jobs that are considered to be "feminine," such as teaching and nursing, which are typically paid less than jobs that are considered to be "masculine," such as engineering and law.

The Causes of the Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap is caused by a number of factors, including:

- **Discrimination:** Women are often paid less than men for the same work simply because they are women. This discrimination can be overt, such as when an employer explicitly states that they will not pay women as much as men, or it can be more subtle, such as when women are given less desirable assignments or are passed over for promotions.

- **Occupational segregation:** Women are more likely to work in low-paying jobs and to have their work undervalued. This is due to a number of factors, including gender stereotypes, which lead to women being channeled into certain jobs, and the fact that women are often responsible for unpaid care work, which can limit their ability to work outside the home.
- **Lack of transparency:** Many employers do not disclose salary information to their employees. This lack of transparency makes it difficult for women to know if they are being paid fairly and can lead to women being paid less than men for the same work.

The Impact of the Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap has a significant impact on women's lives. Women who earn less than men are more likely to:

- Live in poverty
- Be food insecure
- Have difficulty accessing healthcare and education
- Experience violence and abuse

The gender pay gap also has a negative impact on the economy as a whole. When women are paid less than men, it reduces their spending power and can lead to a decrease in economic growth.

What Can Be Done to Close the Gender Pay Gap?

There are a number of things that can be done to close the gender pay gap, including:

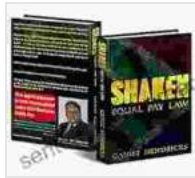
- **Enforce equal pay laws:** The government needs to do more to enforce equal pay laws and to hold employers accountable for paying women less than men for the same work.
- **Promote occupational desegregation:** We need to encourage women to enter into non-traditional jobs and to challenge gender stereotypes that limit women's career choices.
- **Increase transparency:** Employers need to be more transparent about salary information and to disclose salary ranges for all jobs.
- **Provide paid parental leave:** Paid parental leave can help to reduce the gender pay gap by making it easier for women to return to work after having children.
- **Change the way we think about work:** We need to change the way we think about work and to value the contributions of women. This means challenging gender stereotypes and recognizing the value of unpaid care work.

The gender pay gap is a serious problem that has a significant impact on women's lives and on the economy as a whole. We need to do more to close the gap and to create a more just and equitable society.

This article has provided an overview of the gender pay gap in South Africa, the causes of the gap, and the impact of the gap. It has also discussed some of the things that can be done to close the gap.

We hope that this article has been helpful and informative. If you would like to learn more about the gender pay gap, please visit the following resources:

- Equal Pay International
- UN Women: Facts and Figures on the Gender Pay Gap
- ILO: Gender Equality



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