

Female university graduates earn less than men

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It is a well-established notion that female university graduates earn less than men and that this gender wage gap exists mainly because women segregate into fields of study or jobs with a smaller amount of labor market returns. The biggest research through focuses on labor market segregation and its effect on the gender wage gap (e.g. Busch, 2013). Another, smaller part, of research is directed toward educational segregation and its returns within the labor market (e.g. Ochsenfeld, 2014). These examples show that past research investigating segregation and gender wage gap is divided by studies that focus either on educational segregation or on labor market segregation. But there are no studies that bridge segregation of fields of study and industries. We aim to fill this missing link by considering within the gender segregated workplaces the influence of the composition of field of study in addition to the different types of field of study at the first two jobs after graduation. Drawing on socio-cultural theories about devaluation of female work (England et al., 1994) and human capital theory (Becker, 1964) in combination with its specification to field of study by van de Werfhorst (2002), we consider gender disparities at career start under the assumption that fields of study facilitate different types of resources. During studies in higher education individuals acquire cultural, communicational, economic or technical resources. Women more often segregate into fields of study with general (cultural or communicational) resources, but even when fields of study are sex segregated, the structure of the workforce within the first job after graduation and the following jobs as the career advances can have a different composition of gender or field of study. The structure of the workforce should enable us to see if the gender disparities continue due to gender or if they are confounded by the composition of field of study. We use data from the Bavarian Graduate Panel 2005/06 in order to analyze the gender wage gap and run random-effects panel regressions and Oaxaca-Blinder decompositions. First results show that the gender wage gap increases with a rising share of men in the workplace. The large wage disparities in male dominated workplaces arise, because women are more often endowed with general resources whereas men more often have (better paid) technical resources. Moreover, women more often work in minorities concerning the field of study. Within female dominated fields there is no gender wage gap, because women are represented with better utilizable resources. This shows that the human capital endowment specific to its resources explains a major part of gender inequalities. Furthermore, the large gender wage gap in male dominated workplaces compared to the other segregated workforces is among other things explained by the composition of the field of study. Therefore, segregation of workplaces and field of study should be considered simultaneously, when investigating the gender wage gap.