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GENDER WAGE DIFFERENCES IN THE SELECTED CZECH PUBLIC SECTOR COMPANY

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Abstract

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The issue of wage disparity between men and women belongs to the current and widely discussed topics. The attention given to this subject also reflects the fact that the issue of the equality between women and men and non-discrimination by gender is incorporated in the law of the European Union. A number of studies are devoted to the gender wage disparities and the root cause of wage differences in the Czech Republic, however, only few of these deal with the gender wage differentials in the public sector. It is exactly this issue, which is discussed in this article, its aim being to identify the extent of the gender pay gap in the selected Czech public sector company. The article concentrates on finding the main causes for the existence of wage differences between men and women and determining whether the company inclines to wage discrimination against women. The Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition is used to define, which part of the gender pay gap can be attributed to the different characteristics of men and women and which part stays unexplained. It is this unexplained part that can be the result of wage discrimination against women.

gender, wage differences, public sector, gender pay gap, Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition, endowment effect, remuneration effect

The issue of equality between men and women is an area that, besides other disciplines, also deals with the economy. The current and frequently discussed topics include the question of wage differentials and wage discrimination against women on the labour market. The existence of wage differences between men and women is confirmed by empirical data.

According to the Czech Statistical Office data, the gender pay gap reached 24.9 percent in the Czech Republic in 2010. The gender pay gap varied in the different sectors of the national economy. It was 16.3 percent in public administration, 26.2 percent in education and 28.7 percent in the health sector (Czech Statistical Office, 2012). Where do the causes of existing differences stand? Do women face discrimination? And what is the situation in the public sector?

In terms of traditional microeconomic theory, a salary depends on the productivity of the individual. A person with higher productivity, for objective reasons, receives higher wages and vice versa. The resulting pay gap cannot be described as discrimination and is natural and legitimate. Differences between average labour productivity between men and women could be one of the possible causes of a wage gap. These are closely related to the different characteristics of men and women. Traditionally, wage differences are explained by differences in age, education and experience, which directly affect the productivity of individuals (Becker, 1957). Nevertheless, empirical studies show that these factors play only a minor role and that the labour market segregation is a significant factor, which can explain a large part of the existing wage differences. This means that a significant reason why women receive lower wages is the fact that women are concentrated in fewer lucrative sectors or employed in positions with less responsibility and therefore are paid less (Plantenga and Remery, 2006).

There are a number of studies devoted to the gender wage disparities in the Czech Republic (Jurajda (2003), Mysíková (2007), Jurajda and Paligorova (2009), Hedija and Musil (2012) etc. However, only a few of these studies deal with the gender wage differentials in the public sector. Pailhé

(2000) examines the gender wage differences in the V4 countries during the first years of transition. In the Czech Republic, the main factors that set light to wage differences were qualification and the sector in which the employees worked. These two factors explained 26 percent of GPG. The ownership played only a small role, as it explained only 1.8 percent of GPG. Eriksson, Gottwald and Mrázek (2000) analysed the effect of discrimination of the gender pay gap among managerial employees in the public and private sector. The wage gap due to discrimination was 10.8 percent. Jurajda (2003) analysed the wage differences in the public and non-budgetary sector. The gender pay gap was larger in the non-budgetary sector. The estimated gender wage gap in the public sector was 0.24 percent and in the non-budgetary sector 0.30. He concluded that the main causes of gender wage differences in the Czech public sector were segregation and the different level of education. These factors explained two thirds of the existing pay gap. Over a third of the overall gender wage gap stayed unexplained and can be due to discrimination against women. The situation in the private sector is dramatically different. Here, almost two thirds of the gender wage differences stayed unexplained and potentially discrimination against women is larger when compared to the public sector.

The paper investigates wage differences between men and women in a chosen Czech public sector enterprise. The aim of the paper is to determine the size of the gender pay gap (GPG) in this enterprise, to identify factors that can explain this and to determine whether the company leads to wage discrimination against women. The Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition will be used to identify which part of the existing GPG can be explained by different characteristics of men and women, and which part cannot be explained by these. The unexplained part of GPG can be a result of the wage discrimination against women.

The first section of the paper discusses briefly the possible causes of the existence of wage differences between men and women, describes the technique of gender pay gap decomposition and discusses the data upon which the paper is based. The second section reports the results of the applied technique. The causes of the existing gender pay gap and the unexplained part of this gap are identified in the chosen company and discussed.

METHOD

A frequently used method to decompose wage differences is the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition. This method allows us to divide the gender pay gap into the part which can be explained by different characteristics of men and women, and the part that remains unexplained (Oaxaca, 1973; Blinder, 1973). The Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition will be used in this paper.

The extended form of the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition has this form:

$$\ln\left(\bar{W}_m\right)-\ln\left(\bar{W}_f\right)=\left(\bar{X}_m-\bar{X}_f\right)\beta^*+\left(\hat{\beta}_m-\beta^*\right)\bar{X}_m+\left(\beta^*-\hat{\beta}_f\right)\bar{X}_f, \quad (1)$$

where $\bar{W}_m$ is the hourly wage rate of men, $\bar{W}_f$ is the hourly wage rate of women, $\bar{X}_m$ is a vector of average characteristics of men, $\bar{X}_f$ is a vector of average characteristics of women, $\hat{\beta}_m, \hat{\beta}_f$ are the vectors of the wage functions coefficients, β^* is the vector of wage functions coefficients in the absence of discrimination (equilibrium wage).

The term $\ln\left(\bar{W}_m\right)-\ln\left(\bar{W}_f\right)$ expresses the raw gender pay gap, which is defined as the difference in logarithmic mean wages of men and women. The phrase $\left(\bar{X}_m-\bar{X}_f\right)\beta^*$ represents the part of the gender pay gap, which is explained by different characteristics of men and women. This part of pay differences is known as the endowment effect. The phrase $\left(\hat{\beta}_m-\beta^*\right)\bar{X}_m+\left(\beta^*-\hat{\beta}_f\right)\bar{X}_f$ is the unexplained part of the gender pay gap. This is known as the remuneration effect or the effect of discrimination.

The Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition is based on an estimate of the wage functions for men and women. The OLS method is used. The wage equations for men and women are defined as follows:

$$\ln\left(W_i\right)_m=\beta_m\left(X_i'\right)_m+\left(u_i\right)_m, \qquad i=1,\ldots,n, \quad (2)$$

$$\ln\left(W_i\right)_f=\beta_f\left(X_i'\right)_f+\left(u_i\right)_f, \qquad i=1,\ldots,n, \quad (3)$$

where $(W_i)_m$ is the hourly wage rate of the i-th man, $(X'_i)_m$ is a vector of chosen characteristics of the i-th man, $(X_i)_f$ is the hourly wage rate of the *i*-th woman, $(X'_i)_f$ is a vector of chosen characteristics of the *i*-th woman, β_m, β_f are vectors of coefficients of wage functions for men and women and u_i is a disturbance term.

The final step in the application of the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition is the choice of the equilibrium wage (β^*). In professional studies, working with the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition we can find various concepts of the equilibrium wage. Blinder (1973) estimated the extent of discrimination using the wage of men as the equilibrium wage. To decompose the wage gap, Oaxaca (1973) used the wage of both men and women as the equilibrium wage. Reimers (1983) attributed the same weight to the regression coefficients of wage functions for men and women ($\beta^*= (\beta_m + \beta_f)/2$). Cotton (1988) used the weighted average wage of men and women, where, as weights he used the proportion of men and women in the total working population. Neumark (1988) estimated the equilibrium wage as a vector of coefficients of the wage function for both men and women (Hedija, Musil, 2010).

In this paper, the gender pay gap is estimated for the health sector firm, specifically an unnamed hospital in the Czech Republic. Firstly, the wage functions for men and women are estimated for this hospital. The logarithm of the hourly gross wage is a dependent variable. As explanatory variables the following characteristics are used: age, education, job, working time, overtime, sickness, years worked in the company and department. These characteristics include the traditional factors that can justify the existing wage differences between individuals in one company and that are observable and relatively easily quantifiable. A brief overview of the explaining variables, which the authors of selected studies used, can be found for example in the article Hedija, Musil (2012).

The explanatory variables are briefly described. *Age* is the age of the worker in years. *Education* is years of schooling completed. *Job* is a dummy variable. All jobs are divided into 11 groups according to the wage rates in the hospital. *Working time* is a dummy variable. It is 1 in the case of a full-time job and 0 otherwise. *Overtime* reflects the overtime hours per year. *Disease* denotes hours of sick leave per year. *Years in company* is the number of years the employee works in this hospital. *Department* is a dummy variable. It denotes the department, where the employee works. In the hospital, there are 33 departments.

We use only the wage of men as the equilibrium wage. In this case, the decomposition takes this form:

$$\ln\left(\bar{W}_m\right) - \ln\left(\bar{W}_f\right) = \left(\bar{X}_m - \bar{X}_f\right)\hat{\beta}_m + \left(\hat{\beta}_m - \hat{\beta}_f\right)\bar{X}_f . \quad (4)$$

The term $\left(\bar{X}_m - \bar{X}_f\right)\hat{\beta}_m$ represents the endowment effect. This shows the pay gap provided there is no discrimination. The phrase $\left(\hat{\beta}_m - \hat{\beta}_f\right)\bar{X}_f$ is the remuneration effect. This indicates the wage differences in the case that women and men have the same characteristics.

DATA

As we stated above, the wage differences between men and women and the extent of the endowment and remuneration effects are estimated in the chosen public sector company. This is an unnamed hospital in the Czech Republic, which was willing to provide the necessary data. Data was provided

I: *Average characteristics of men and women in the data set*

Characteristic	men	women	Characteristic	men	women
Age (year)	43.066	41.797	Department_9	0.000	0.010
Education (year)	15.812	13.794	Department_10	0.010	0.006
Job_1	0.061	0.031	Department_11	0.083	0.143
Job_2	0.127	0.007	Department_12	0.003	0.017
Job_3	0.008	0.016	Department_13	0.000	0.014
Job_4	0.005	0.039	Department_14	0.008	0.016
Job_5	0.108	0.056	Department_15	0.000	0.001
Job_6	0.008	0.004	Department_16	0.003	0.002
Job_7	0.132	0.111	Department_17	0.015	0.040
Job_8	0.008	0.021	Department_18	0.014	0.033
Job_9	0.080	0.564	Department_19	0.003	0.005
Job_10	0.131	0.069	Department_20	0.049	0.020
Job_11	0.331	0.081	Department_21	0.000	0.008
Working_time_1 (full-time)	0.909	0.812	Department_22	0.019	0.037
Working_time_2 (otherwise)	0.091	0.188	Department_23	0.005	0.019
Overtime (hour per year)	239.63	66.560	Department_24	0.031	0.029
Disease (hour per year)	28.343	68.604	Department_25	0.032	0.049
Years_in_company	8.321	9.314	Department_26	0.015	0.020
Department_1	0.066	0.049	Department_27	0.037	0.042
Department_2	0.003	0.022	Department_28	0.014	0.015
Department_3	0.017	0.033	Department_29	0.025	0.032
Department_4	0.059	0.014	Department_30	0.031	0.014
Department_5	0.280	0.110	Department_31	0.054	0.062
Department_6	0.010	0.002	Department_33	0.017	0.029
Department_7	0.000	0.001	Hourly gross wage (% of men wage)	100	77.130
Department_8	0.092	0.098	N	590	2014

for year 2010. The employees, who were long-term ill, on maternity or parental leave or working in a business agreement were excluded. This left us with a sample of 2604 employees, of which 590 were males and 2014 females.

The data included: gender, age, the highest level of education, job, number of years that employee works in this hospital, working time (full-time means 1), department, where the employee works, hours worked per year, overtime hours, days of sick leave, days of leave and annual gross wage. The hourly gross wage for every employee was calculated as a ration of annual gross wage and the sum of worked hours (including overtime) and hours of annual leave (days of annual leave*8*working time).

Tab. I shows the average characteristics of the male and female employees, which are used in the wage functions.

The average gross hourly wage is expressed as a percentage of the men's wage, because of the sensitivity of the data. In our hospital, women earn 77.1 percent of the men's wage. The gender pay gap, which is calculated as the difference between the average gross hourly earnings of the male employees and of the female employees as a percentage of the average gross hourly earnings of the male employees, is 22.87 percent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Firstly, the coefficients of male and female wage functions are estimated from the collected data. The equations (1) and (2) are used. The results are presented in Tab. II.

Not all the independent variables listed in the section "Method" were statistically significant. Statistically insignificant was the explanatory variable *working time*. The fact that the employees work full-time or part-time was irrelevant in the analysis of the wage differences between men and women. The variable *department* also played only a minor role.

We estimated two wage functions. In the first case, the *department* is not covered in the wage function as an independent variable. In the second case, the full-scale regression has been used. This approach is chosen because the variable department explained only a very small part of the wage differences, especially in the male wage function. In this function only 3 departments proved to be statistically significant from the 33 existing.

The explanatory variables explained 76.5 percent of the variability in logarithm of the male wage and 75.1 percent variability in the logarithm of the female wage in wage function 1 and 78.3 percent and 78.1 percent in the full-scale regression.

Tab. III presents the estimation of the results of the gender pay gap in the company. The row pay gap, calculated as the difference in logarithm of the male and female wage, was 18.81 percent.

The extent of the endowment and remuneration effect differed depending on the wage functions. If we used wage function 1, the endowment effect represented 86.2 percent and the remuneration effect 13.8 percent of the gender pay gap. In the case of wage function 2, the endowment effect was 76.9 percent and the remuneration effect 23.1 percent of the gender pay gap. This means, that the selected characteristics of men and women failed to explain more than 13 percent of the existing gender pay gap in the first case and 23.1 percent in the second case. This part of GPG could be caused by factors that had not been identified or it could be a result of the discrimination against women.

The main causes of wage differences between men and women in the analysed company were the number of overtime hours, the level of education and the job. Other factors played a less significant role.

In wage function 1, more overtime hours of men compared with women explained about 31 percent of the existing GPG; the higher level of education of men explained 29 percent of GPG; the working position about 22.5 percent of GPG. The variance in age explained only 2.4 percent of GPG and absence because of illness or care for a family member 1.6 percent of GPG. Years in the company spoke in favour of women. Women work longer in average in the company. This explained –1.1 percent of GPG.

If we use wage function 2, the conclusions are very similar. The most important factors of wage differences between men and women were overtime hours, education and job. The larger number of overtime hours of men explained 28 percent of GPG, the higher level of education of men 27.1 percent and the work position 17.7 percent of the existing GPG. The higher age of men was able to explain 3.1 percent, the larger number of hours of absence of women 2.1 percent and the number of years in the company –1.1 percent of GPG. Departments where the employees worked explained only a very small part of the wage differences between men and women, specifically 0.04 percent of GPG.

As we concluded above, the main factors explaining the gender wage differences were the higher education level of men and the amount of overtime hours. Each of these factors explained almost 30 percent of the existing gender wage gap. The different jobs played a weaker role and explained about 20 percent of GPG. In the case of the influence of the different job and education, the conclusions are in accordance to the findings of Jurajda (2003). Jurajda (2003) stated that the different levels of education and segregation can explain about two third of the existing gender pay gap in the Czech public sector. He used data from the year 1998. In our case, the segregation and education play a similarly important role. These factors explained about 50 percent of GPG.

On the other hand, the unexplained part of the gender pay gap is smaller compared to Jurajda's (2003) findings. It can be explained by a more detailed dataset and a lot of factors included in the wage function.

II: *Wage functions*

	Wage function 1		Wage function 2	
	β_m	β_f	β_m	β_f
Constant	3.36761*** (0.147065)	3.34412*** (0.0621611)	3.42501*** (0.146303)	3.30433*** (0.0595017)
Age	0.0269311*** (0.00624840)	0.0283353*** (0.00243301)	0.0244917*** (0.00618191)	0.0296749*** (0.00230413)
Age^2	–0.0002192*** (6.71758e-05)	–0.0002591*** (2.80856e-05)	–0.0001859*** (6.68052e-05)	–0.0002664*** (2.65714e-05)
Education	0.0274648*** (0.00583066)	0.0254388*** (0.00229542)	0.0252154*** (0.00580406)	0.0244415*** (0.00222493)
Job_2	0.150358*** (0.0485540)	0.219363*** (0.0442815)	0.147215*** (0.0472673)	0.216896*** (0.0416553)
Job_3	0.527375*** (0.113749)	0.246780*** (0.0337600)	0.546809* (0.110905)	0.181763*** (0.0323176)
Job_4	0.270037* (0.142101)	0.232646*** (0.0270727)	0.267451*** (0.138162)	0.250712*** (0.0255374)
Job_5	0.564167*** (0.0580163)	0.435267*** (0.0260405)	0.542067*** (0.0572551)	0.409799*** (0.0245987)
Job_6	1.16163*** (0.118242)	0.969499*** (0.0571060)	1.06528*** (0.116478)	0.976329*** (0.0538391)
Job_7	0.180118*** (0.0485548)	0.100854*** (0.0222081)	0.191247*** (0.0481451)	0.105166*** (0.0210562)
Job_8	0.377042*** (0.116309)	0.420957*** (0.0318887)	0.388586*** (0.117463)	0.466126*** (0.0311752)
Job_9	0.438640*** (0.0571338)	0.516358*** (0.0221562)	0.481525*** (0.0588328)	0.538191*** (0.0209837)
Job_10	0.534626*** (0.0660364)	0.598659*** (0.0273304)	0.584654*** (0.0654519)	0.631579*** (0.0260852)
Job_11	0.736565*** (0.0646778)	0.691610*** (0.0308801)	0.779363*** (0.0648818)	0.730412*** (0.0294792)
Overtime	0.0003412*** (4.04876e-05)	0.0002983*** (2.82522e-05)	0.0003039*** (4.29593e-05)	0.0002857*** (2.82152e-05)
Disease	–7.54920e-05 (8.41381e-05)	5.8732e-05*** (1.76189e-05)	–9.97200e-05 (8.24193e-05)	5.9534e-05*** (1.65909e-05)
Years_in_company	0.0170939*** (0.00467712)	0.0135019*** (0.00136924)	0.0200967*** (0.00464286)	0.0147884*** (0.00129585)
$Years\_in\_company^2$	–0.0005656*** (0.000197214)	–0.0002241*** (4.93983e-05)	–0.0006810*** (0.000195100)	–0.0002747*** (4.66755e-05)
Department_2	-	-	0.154693 (0.163985)	–0.0746846*** (0.0221945)
Department_3	-	-	–0.000975986 (0.0790242)	0.0960121*** (0.0184361)
Department_10	-	-	0.532282*** (0.100697)	0.514017*** (0.0447169)
Department_14	-	-	–0.0228446 (0.105961)	–0.109386*** (0.0261108)
Department_16	-	-	–0.295560* (0.165142)	–0.227617*** (0.0733347)
Department_17	-	-	–0.0909288 (0.0798116)	–0.0657414*** (0.0179701)
Department_20	-	-	–0.0369049 (0.0494788)	–0.0857306*** (0.0237912)
Department_23	-	-	0.00533016 (0.135403)	–0.0839687*** (0.0238353)
Department_26	-	-	–0.0401052 (0.0784433)	–0.0422495* (0.0232913)
Department_30	-	-	–0.0860204 (0.0565174)	–0.113793*** (0.0277507)
Department_31	-	-	–0.136547*** (0.0461417)	–0.0644062*** (0.0140361)
Department_33	-	-	0.0281058 (0.169588)	–0.135716** (0.0549038)
R^2	0.765404	0.750621	0.783017	0.780831
n	590	2014	590	2014

Standard error in parentheses, ***significant at the 1% level, **significant at the 5% level, *significant at the 10% level.

III: *Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition*

	Wage function 1		Wage function 2	
	Absolute	**Relative (% of GPG)**	**Absolute**	**Relative (% of GPG)**
$\ln W_m - \ln W_f$	0.1881	-	0.1881	-
Endowment effect	0.1621	86.2	0.1447	76.9
● Age	0,0045	0.0237	0,0059	0.0312
● Education	0.0554	0.2946	0.0509	0.2705
● Job	0.0423	0.2247	0.0333	0.1773
● Overtime	0.0590	0.3140	0.0526	0.2796
● Disease	0.0030	0.0162	0.0040	0.0213
● Years in company	–0.0021	–0.011	–0.0021	–0.011
● Department	-	-	0.0001	0.0004
Remuneration effect	0.0260	13.8	0.0434	23.1

But we cannot say that more detailed data and more focus on only one company lead to the explanation of the gender wage differences. Hedija and Musil (2012) examined the existence of wage discrimination against women in a chosen firm of the private sector and concluded that the no part of the gender pay gap in this company could be explained by the different characteristics of men and women. Conversely, women had in average better characteristics than men, as is proven by the negative endowment effect. The extent of the explained part of the gender pay gap in the case of the public sector enterprise can be explained, to some extent, by the wage regulations governing the public sector. This issue requires further research. Extending the sample of studied companies enables to reach objective conclusions.

CONCLUSION

This paper researched the gender pay gap in the chosen public sector company, specifically in the selected Czech hospital. The raw gender pay gap reached 19 percent in this company. The observed pay gap was below the average gender wage difference in the Czech health-care sector. Statistically significant factors that explained wage differences between men and women were age, education, job, overtime hours, illness and years in the company.

Departments, where the employees worked, explained a very small part of the wage differences between men and women. Not all departments were statistically significant for men. This is why we prefer the use of wage function 1.

We can conclude that approximately 86 percent of GPG was possible to explain by different characteristics of men and women. Different overtime hours, education level and job were the most important factors of justified gender wage differences. In our hospital, men in average worked more overtime, had a higher level of education and worked in better paid positions.

About 14 percent of GPG stayed unexplained. It represents only 2.6 percentage points of the gender pay gap. This part of the gender pay gap could be caused by factors that had not been identified, for example the talent of workers or it could be result of discrimination against women. From this point of view, the conclusions are satisfactory. Finally, we can say that the wage discrimination against women does not occur in the chosen company and if so, its rate is negligible.

SUMMARY

The paper investigates the wage differences between men and women in a chosen Czech public sector enterprise. The aim of the paper was to determine the amount of the gender pay gap in this enterprise, to identify factors that can explain this and to determine whether the company leads to wage discrimination against women. The Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition (Oaxaca, 1973; Blinder, 1973) was used to separate the gender pay gap into the part which can be explained by different characteristics of men and women, and the part that cannot be explained and will be marked as the effect of discrimination. Micro-data from the chosen Czech hospital form the year 2010 was used. The estimated gender pay gap was about 19 percent, which was below the average in the Czech health sector. Approximately 86 percent of the gender pay gap could be explained by the different characteristics of men and women. Differences in the number of overtime hours, the education level and the job descriptions were the most important factors of justified gender wage differences. About 14 percent of the gender pay gap stayed unexplained which were only 2.6 percentage points of the total gender pay gap. Authors concluded, that in the examined hospital, there was either no or a negligible wage discrimination against women.

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