

Sexism pays: Study finds men who hold traditional views of women earn more than men who don't

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When it comes to sex roles in society, what you think may affect what you earn. A new study has found that men who believe in traditional roles for women earn more money than men who don't, and women with more egalitarian views don't make much more than women with a more traditional outlook.

Timothy Judge, PhD, and Beth Livingston from the University of Florida, analyzed data from a nationally representative study of men and women who were interviewed four times between 1979 and 2005. A total of 12,686 people, ages 14 to 22 at the beginning of the study, participated; there was a 60 percent retention rate over the course of the study. Results were published in the September issue of the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, published by the American Psychological Association.

At each of the four interviews, participants were asked about their views on gender roles in the work force and at home. They answered questions such as whether they believed a woman's place is in the home, whether employing wives leads to more juvenile delinquency, if a man should be the achiever outside the home and if the woman should take care of the home and family. Participants were also asked about their earnings, religious upbringing, education, whether they worked outside the home and their marital status, in addition to other topics. Prior studies have shown that men tend to hold more traditional gender roles than do

women, though this gap has narrowed over time.

The researchers looked specifically at gender role views as a predictor of a person's earnings. They controlled for job complexity, number of hours worked and education. Their analyses showed that men in the study who said they had more traditional gender role attitudes made an average of about \$8,500 more annually than those who had less traditional attitudes.

"More traditional people may be seeking to preserve the historical separation of work and domestic roles. Our results prove that is, in fact, the case," Judge said. "This is happening even in today's work force where men and women are supposedly equal as far as participation."

For women, however, the situation was reversed. Women who held more traditional views about gender roles made an average of \$1,500 less annually than the women with more egalitarian views. Put another way, if a married couple holds traditional gender role attitudes, the husband's earning advantage was predicted to be eight times greater than a married couple where the husband and wife have more egalitarian attitudes.

"These results show that changes in gender role attitudes have substantial effects on pay equity," Judge said. "When workers' attitudes become more traditional, women's earnings relative to men suffer greatly. When attitudes become more egalitarian, the pay gap nearly disappears."

Notably, the results also did not fundamentally change when other factors were controlled, such as industry, occupation, hours worked, and number of children. "These results cannot be explained by the fact that, in traditional couples, women are less likely to work outside the home," Judge said. "Though this plays some role in our findings, our results suggest that even if you control for time worked and labor force participation, traditional women are paid less than traditional men for

comparable work."

The researchers also sought to understand why some people hold more traditional or less traditional perceptions of gender roles. Some associations they found were:

- People living in Northeastern cities had less traditional views regarding gender roles
- People whose parents both worked outside the home had less traditional views regarding gender roles
- Married, religious people tended to have more traditional gender role views
- Younger people had less traditional views but became more traditional over time

The authors offered suggestions for future research, including investigating the relationship between happiness and job attitudes among people with specific gender role views arguing that more money and happiness doesn't necessarily always go together for some people.

The researchers believe their results show that the gender pay gap is not just an economic phenomenon. "Psychology has an important role to play, too," said Judge. "Our country's policies have been leaning toward gender equality for decades now. But, according to our study, traditional gender role views continue to work against this goal."

Source: American Psychological Association

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