Course: Econ3709

Gender Inequality in the Tourism Industry: Analyzing Employment Trends and COVID-19 Impact from 2018 to 2022 in Canada  
  
**Professor: Dr. Berta Esteve-Volart**

**Student: Mohsen Selseleh (214513055)**

**Introduction**

The tourism industry is one of the most significant sectors contributing to global economic activity, employing a substantial proportion of the workforce worldwide. However, this sector is also characterized by pronounced gender inequalities, particularly in employment, wages, and job security. Women, who form a significant portion of the workforce in the tourism industry, are often concentrated in low-wage, precarious roles such as those in accommodation and food services. These positions make them more vulnerable to economic crises, limiting their access to opportunities for advancement and exacerbating existing gender disparities.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which severely disrupted the global tourism industry, exposed and intensified these inequalities. Widespread closures, reduced working hours, and layoffs disproportionately affected women, highlighting their overrepresentation in vulnerable roles. Although the pandemic caused job losses across genders, women faced additional barriers to reentry into the workforce due to caregiving responsibilities, structural inequalities, and limited access to higher-paying, stable positions.

This study seeks to analyze gender inequality in Canada’s tourism industry, focusing on employment trends and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic from 2018 to 2022. Using data from Statistics Canada (2024), this research examines key variables such as jobs, hours worked, and income across industries within the tourism sector. The study aims to answer critical questions, including the extent of gender-based disparities, their fluctuations over time, and the pandemic’s role in shaping employment patterns.

By exploring these dimensions, this research aims to provide valuable insights for researchers and policymakers, offering evidence-based recommendations to foster a more equitable and resilient workforce in the tourism industry. Understanding these trends is essential for addressing systemic inequalities and ensuring that recovery strategies prioritize inclusivity, economic security, and equal opportunities for all workers.

**Literature Review: Women, Tourism Jobs, and the Impact of COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted women’s employment in the tourism and hospitality sectors, exacerbating existing gender inequalities. Research indicates that women were disproportionately impacted due to their overrepresentation in low-wage and precarious roles such as accommodation, food services, and retail (Scott, 2021). These industries faced widespread closures during the pandemic, resulting in substantial job losses.

Women’s dominance in lower-paying sectors exposed them to greater financial vulnerabilities compared to men. According to Statistics Canada (2022), the average hourly wages in accommodation and food services were among the lowest in the country. This systemic disparity was further compounded by limited opportunities for women to transition into higher-paying leadership roles within the industry (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2021).

Studies also highlight the uneven recovery trends between men and women in the tourism industry. While men experienced a slightly faster recovery in job numbers post-pandemic, women’s re-entry into the workforce was hindered by increased caregiving responsibilities and structural barriers to career progression (Scott, 2021). McKinsey & Company (2019) emphasized that addressing the gender leadership gap in the tourism sector is crucial for fostering equitable economic recovery.

Furthermore, the pandemic underscored the need for targeted interventions to address the disparities faced by women in tourism. Reskilling initiatives, equitable wage policies, and support for caregiving responsibilities have been identified as essential measures to reduce the economic vulnerabilities of women in this sector (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2021).

Costa et al (2011) study about inequality in Portugal’s tourism industry that is a very important economic sector for that country.

Although women are a significant percentage of this industry in Portugal but that have lower wages and job security and not only they are not managers but also, they have more part-time or seasonal careers, it shows a pattern of gendered-based segregation.

The research supports for a more gender-equality approach in tourism employment policies, to improve working conditions for women and support their role in management (Costa et al, 2011)

Muñoz-Bullón(2019) argues that there is a crucial gap between male and female payment in the Spanish Tourism Industry.. The study finds that minimum wage laws is vital for low-wage female workers, but there is structural segregation that causes to gender-inequality in payment.

Segovia-Pérez(2019) study gender inequality within the tourism sector, shows that social factors create inequality for women. Although women have a large number of the tourism workforce, they experienced unfair situation in this industry. The paper points to the factors such as occupational segregation, the glass ceiling, and social roles .It suggests that reform not only makes situation better for women but also for all tourism industry.

Casado-Díaz (2022) studies Spain’s hospitality sector compared to other economic sectors; it shows a significant gender wage gap in hospitality. The study finds that it is necessary to have policy to address the underlying foundations of gender inequality in Spain's tourism sector.

Guimaraes et al (2016) examines the gender wage gap in Brazil's tourism industry. The authors show that women are paid less than than men in the similar careers. The study emphasis that the wage gap has positive correlation with age and negative correlation with education level. (Guimaraes et al, 2016)

**Descriptive Statistics**

This research has been done by descriptive, inference statistics and time series method on a dataset that is extracted from stat Canada about Jobs, hours worked and income in tourism industries, by gender, age group and occupation between 2018 to 2022.

Table 1:

Descriptive Statistics of Employment Trends by Gender in the Tourism Industry (2018–2022)

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Table 2

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Table 4

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**Methodology**

This study investigates gender inequality in the Canadian tourism industry from 2018 to 2022, with a particular focus on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment, wages, and labor income. Using data from Statistics Canada (2024), this research employs both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, along with regression modeling, to examine key variables across genders and sub-sectors.

**Data Source**

The data was extracted from Statistics Canada (2024), Table 36-10-0704-01, which includes:

* **Employment levels**: Total jobs by gender.
* **Wages**: Average earnings across industries.
* **Labor income**: Total income earned by gender.
* **Hours worked**: Average hours by gender in each industry.
* **Sectoral distribution**: Employment across sub-sectors such as Accommodation, Food and Beverage Services, Recreation and Entertainment, and Travel Services.

Annual data from 2018 to 2022 allows for analysis of pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic periods.

**Analytical Approach**

1. **Descriptive Analysis**
   * Employment trends, wages, and labor income were summarized by gender using averages and totals.
   * Visualizations (e.g., bar charts, line graphs) were created to highlight disparities over time and across sub-sectors.
2. **Time Series Analysis**
   * Time series decomposition was applied to analyze employment trends for men and women, breaking the data into observed, trend, and residual components.
   * This method identified long-term patterns, pandemic-related disruptions, and recovery trajectories.
3. **Dummy-Variable Regression Analysis**
   * To understand the factors affecting employment and wages, two regression models were employed:

**Employment Model**:

Employment=β0​+β1​⋅Year+β2​⋅Gender\_Male+β3​⋅Post\_COVID+β4​⋅(Gender\_Male×Post\_COVID)+ϵ

* + - This model examined the impact of time (year), gender (male), the post-COVID period, and their interaction on employment levels.

**Wages Model**:

Wages=β0​+β1​(Food and Beverage Services)+β2​(Recreation and Entertainment)+β3​(Travel Services)+β4​(Women)+β5​(Year 2020)+β6​(Year 2021)+β7​(Food and Beverage Services×Women)+β8​(Recreation and Entertainment×Women)+β9​(Travel Services×Women)+ϵ

* + - This model assessed how industry, gender, and pandemic-related factors affected wage levels, including interaction terms to capture the gendered dynamics within specific industries.

1. **Inferential Statistics**
   * **T-tests and ANOVA**: To compare mean employment levels and wages across genders.
   * **Chi-square Test for Independence**: To evaluate whether gender-based occupational segregation existed across tourism sub-sectors.

**Tools and Software**

* **Python**: For data manipulation, visualization, and statistical analysis using libraries like Pandas, Matplotlib, and Seaborn.
* **Statsmodels**: For regression analysis and time series decomposition.
* **SciPy**: For hypothesis testing, including T-tests, ANOVA, and chi-square tests.

**Limitations**

* **Data Aggregation**: Annual data limits the ability to detect short-term or seasonal variations.
* **Regional Variations**: National-level data may obscure regional disparities.
* **Employment Types**: The distinction between part-time and full-time employment is not explicitly addressed.

**Hypothesis 1:**

Over the years 2018-2022, the gender gap in total jobs in the tourism industry has either narrowed or widened, indicating trends in gender inequality.

**Method**: Time Series Analysis and Descriptive Statistics

Figure 1: Trends in Employment Levels by Gender (2018–2022)

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The chart titled "Employment Levels Over Time by Gender" displays total employment trends for men and women between 2018 and 2022. Here’s a detailed interpretation:

**Observations:**

1. **Women’s Employment**:
   * Women’s employment starts at **1,161,415** in 2018, increases to a peak of **1,188,250** in 2019, and then declines sharply to **807,985** in 2020 (likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic).
   * It recovers progressively after 2020, reaching **894,635** in 2021 and **1,029,365** in 2022.
   * Overall, women's employment shows a V-shaped trend, recovering strongly after the dip in 2020.
2. **Men’s Employment**:
   * Men’s employment starts at **798,910** in 2018, rises slightly to **816,915** in 2019, but then drops significantly to **504,510** in 2020.
   * It grows steadily after 2020, reaching **641,805** in 2021 and **722,025** in 2022.
   * Men’s employment also exhibits a V-shaped trend but with lower levels of recovery compared to women.
3. **Comparison**:
   * Women consistently maintain higher employment levels compared to men throughout the period.
   * The gap between men’s and women’s employment narrows in 2020 due to the sharp decline for both genders.
   * By 2022, the employment gap widens again, with women showing a stronger recovery compared to men.

**Finally,**

* The sharp decline in 2020 for both genders likely reflect the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
* Women’s employment not only recovers faster but also surpasses pre-pandemic levels by 2022, whereas men’s employment, despite recovering, remains below pre-pandemic levels.
* The data may indicate greater resilience or opportunities for women in the job market during the recovery phase.

**Hypothesis 2:** The average number of jobs held by women in the tourism industry is significantly lower than that held by men across various sectors, indicating potential gender inequality in employment levels.

**Method**: T-Test or ANOVA

Table 5

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Across all years (2018–2022), the **p-values are consistently high (>0.05)**, and the **t-statistics are small in magnitude**, indicating that there is no evidence of statistically significant differences in employment levels between men and women. This stability suggests gender employment parity in the analyzed dataset, despite external shocks like the pandemic.

**Hypothesis 3:** The impact of COVID-19 on employment levels in the tourism industry was more significant for women than for men, leading to greater job losses among women during the pandemic years.

**Method**: Time Series Analysis

Figure 2:

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**Interpretation of Time Series Decomposition: Employment Trends for Men**

The decomposition breaks the time series data into **Observed**, **Trend**, **Seasonal**, and **Residual** components, providing insights into the underlying patterns of employment trends for men from 2018 to 2022.

**1. Observed Component:**

* This represents the original time series data for men's employment levels over the years.
* Key observations:
  + Employment increased slightly from 2018 to 2019.
  + A significant decline occurred in 2020 (likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic).
  + Employment levels show recovery in 2021 and 2022.

**2. Trend Component:**

* The trend captures the long-term direction in the data, smoothing out fluctuations.
* Key observations:
  + The trend aligns closely with the observed data, indicating:
    - A slight upward movement from 2018 to 2019.
    - A sharp drop in 2020, followed by a gradual recovery through 2021 and 2022.

**3. Seasonal Component:**

* This represents repeating patterns or seasonality in the data (e.g., employment cycles due to seasonal industries).
* Key observations:
  + The seasonal component appears **flat (constant at zero)**, suggesting **no seasonal variation** in men's employment levels during this period.

**4. Residual Component:**

* Residuals represent the irregular or random noise in the data that is not explained by the trend or seasonality.
* Key observations:
  + The residual component is also nearly constant and close to zero, indicating:
    - A good fit of the trend to the observed data.
    - Minimal random fluctuations beyond the explained components.

**Overall Interpretation:**

* The data shows a clear **downward trend in 2020**, likely reflecting the pandemic's impact on men's employment.
* The **lack of seasonality** indicates that men's employment does not follow regular seasonal patterns, likely because the industries considered do not have strong seasonal employment cycles.
* The **recovery trend post-2020** demonstrates a gradual return to pre-pandemic levels.

This analysis suggests that external shocks like the pandemic had a significant impact, but employment levels are rebounding

Figure 3

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The time series decomposition for "Employment Trends for Women" illustrates the following components:

1. **Observed Component**:
   * The observed trend shows a sharp decline in employment for women between 2019 and 2020, likely reflecting the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry.
   * From 2020 onward, there is a gradual recovery, with employment levels rising steadily through 2021 and 2022.
2. **Trend Component**:
   * The trend closely mirrors the observed component, indicating that the long-term pattern is dominated by the pandemic-induced decline and subsequent recovery.
3. **Seasonal Component**:
   * The seasonal component is flat, indicating no significant recurring seasonal variations in women’s employment during the analyzed period. This is expected in annual data where seasonal effects may not be prominent.
4. **Residual Component**:
   * The residual component is near zero throughout, suggesting that the model captures most of the variability through the trend component, leaving little unexplained variation.

**Interpretation:**

* The employment trends for women show the clear disruptive impact of the pandemic, particularly in 2020, as well as a gradual recovery post-2021.
* The absence of a seasonal effect indicates that employment changes were driven primarily by structural and external factors, such as the pandemic, rather than typical seasonal fluctuations.
* These insights emphasize the vulnerability of women’s employment in the tourism sector during economic shocks but also demonstrate a steady recovery trajectory.

**Overall Insights:**

The data underscores the critical role of the pandemic in disrupting employment trends for both genders. While men and women experienced recovery post-2020, the steeper decline for women and their relatively slower rebound underscore the need to address gender-based vulnerabilities in the labor market. Policymakers and industry leaders should focus on creating resilient employment opportunities for both men and women, particularly in sectors that are more susceptible to external shocks.

**Hypothesis 4:**Women are more likely to be employed in lower-paying sectors within the tourism industry (e.g., food and beverage services), while men are more likely to hold jobs in higher-paying sectors (e.g., air transportation), indicating gender-based sectoral segregation.

**Method**: Chi-Square Test for Independence and Descriptive Analysis

Figure 4

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Table 6

The y-axis in the chart represents **total employment**, likely measured in **number of individuals (in millions)**

Based on the bar chart:

Women dominate employment in Food and Beverage Services, as shown by the larger orange bar compared to men.

Employment levels in Recreation and Entertainment and Accommodation are relatively balanced between genders.

Employment in Travel Services is comparatively low for both genders but appears slightly higher for men.

Implications for Research:

The findings suggest that employment patterns differ by gender across industries. For example, women have significantly higher employment levels in Food and Beverage Services compared to men. This may reflect gender-specific industry preferences, opportunities, or disparities.

The Chi-Square test confirms that gender plays a significant role in employment distribution among the analyzed industries. Future research could investigate the underlying factors contributing to these disparities, such as societal roles, industry-specific hiring practices, or gender bias.

**Hypothesis 5:**Year, gender (Male), the post-COVID period, and the interaction between gender (Male) and post-COVID have a statistically significant effect on employment levels in the tourism sector.

**Method:**

Dummy-variable regression

Employment=β0​+β1​⋅Year+β2​⋅Gender\_Male+β3​⋅Post\_COVID+β4​⋅(Gender\_Male×Post\_COVID)+ϵ

Table 7

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**Interpretation of Results**

1. **Intercept**:
   * The intercept is **48,750,000**, but it is not statistically significant (**p = 0.712**), suggesting no meaningful baseline employment level.
2. **Year**:
   * The coefficient for **Year** is **-24,020** but is not significant (**p = 0.714**). This implies that year-over-year trends do not have a meaningful impact on employment levels after controlling for other variables.
3. **Gender\_Male**:
   * The coefficient for **Gender\_Male** is **-81,440**, indicating that men have lower employment compared to women. However, this result is not significant (**p = 0.497**).
4. **Post\_COVID**:
   * The coefficient for **Post\_COVID** is **37,410**, suggesting that employment slightly increased after the COVID-19 period. However, this is also not statistically significant (**p = 0.859**).
5. **Gender\_PostCOVID (Interaction Term)**:
   * The interaction term **Gender\_PostCOVID** has a coefficient of **11,420**, showing no significant combined effect of gender and the post-COVID period on employment levels (**p = 0.952**).
6. **Model Fit**:
   * The **R-squared** is very low (**0.024**), indicating that the model explains only 2.4% of the variance in employment levels.
   * The high **Condition Number (5.77e+06)** suggests potential multicollinearity or numerical issues in the model.

The regression model does not find any statistically significant predictors of employment. The low R-squared indicates that the model does not explain much of the variability in the data. Further analysis or additional variables may be needed to better understand the determinants of employment levels.

**Hypothesis 6:**

Over the years 2018-2022, the gender gap in total jobs in the tourism industry has either narrowed or widened, indicating trends in gender inequality.

Impact of COVID-19 on Employment Levels in the Tourism Industry: Gender Comparison (2019-2021)

Figure 5

A graph of employment gap over time

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Table 9

Comparison of Employment Changes for Men and Women in the Tourism Industry (2019–2021)

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This table provides a clear and concise summary of the changes in employment levels for men and women from 2019 to 2021.

**Overall Trends**

* Women experienced **greater absolute and percentage job losses in 2019–2020** compared to men, largely due to their overrepresentation in vulnerable sectors like accommodation, food services, and retail.
* The recovery in 2020–2021 shows a **modest rebound for both genders**, with men recovering a slightly higher percentage of their job losses. This suggests that women continue to face slower and more uneven recovery in the labor market.

**Interpretation of "Gender Employment Gap Over Time**

The chart illustrates the employment gap between men and women across four industries (Accommodation, Food and Beverage Services, Recreation and Entertainment, and Travel Services) over the years 2018 to 2022. The gap is calculated as Employment (Men - Women), where positive values indicate more men employed, and negative values indicate more women employed.

**Key Observations:**

Accommodation:

The employment gap remains consistently negative across all years, showing that women are consistently employed more than men in the Accommodation industry.

The gap appears stable, with a slight decline over time.

Food and Beverage Services:

This industry shows the largest employment gap favoring women.

The gap reaches its peak in 2019 (around -350,000) and starts to shrink from 2020 onward, potentially because of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent recovery.

Recreation and Entertainment:

The gap is small and hovers around zero, indicating relatively balanced employment between men and women in this industry.

Travel Services:

The gap remains consistently near zero throughout the period, showing that employment is almost equal between genders in this industry.

Trends Over Time:

Impact of COVID-19: The year 2020 marks a turning point for the Food and Beverage Services industry, where the gender employment gap begins to narrow significantly. This may reflect the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women in this sector.

Stable Industries: Travel Services and Recreation and Entertainment show minimal fluctuations in the employment gap, indicating stable gender employment patterns in these industries.

Implications:

The chart highlights significant gender disparities in specific industries, particularly the Food and Beverage Services and Accommodation industries, where women dominate employment.

The narrowing gap in Food and Beverage Services post-2019 suggests that women may have faced greater job losses or slower recovery compared to men in this sector.

The analysis of gender employment trends in the tourism industry from 2018 to 2022 reveals significant insights into gender disparities and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Women experienced larger absolute and percentage job losses from 2019 to 2020, reflecting their overrepresentation in vulnerable sectors such as Accommodation and Food and Beverage Services. While both genders showed signs of recovery from 2020 to 2021, men recovered a slightly higher percentage of their losses, indicating a slower and more uneven recovery trajectory for women.

The **Gender Employment Gap Over Time** chart highlights clear disparities in employment across industries:

* **Accommodation** consistently shows a negative gap, with more women employed than men, albeit with a slight decline over time.
* **Food and Beverage Services** exhibits the largest gender gap favoring women, peaking in 2019 and narrowing significantly post-2020, suggesting that women were disproportionately affected by the pandemic in this sector.
* **Recreation and Entertainment** and **Travel Services** display minimal or near-zero gaps, indicating relatively balanced gender representation in these industries.

The findings emphasize the need for targeted policies to address gender inequalities in employment, particularly in sectors where women dominate but remain more vulnerable to economic shocks. Efforts should focus on promoting equitable recovery strategies, enhancing job security for women, and addressing structural barriers in the tourism industry. Closing the gender gap in employment not only fosters inclusivity but also strengthens resilience in the labor market.

Hypothesis 7: The COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted wages, labor income, and hours worked for both men and women, with women demonstrating higher resilience and stronger recovery trends in industries like Food and Beverage Services and Accommodation.

Trends in wage,Income labor and hours for men and women

Figure 6

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**Figure 7**

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**Figure 8**

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**Figure 9**

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Figure 10

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**Figure 11**

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Justification of the Hypothesis Based on Descriptive Trends:

1. Wages:
   * Descriptive statistics show that women generally earn higher wages than men in industries such as Food and Beverage Services and Accommodation.
   * A significant dip in wages was observed for both genders in 2020 due to the pandemic, but women exhibited faster recovery in high-demand industries like Food and Beverage Services.
   * In Recreation and Entertainment, men earned slightly higher wages than women, but the differences were minor.
2. Labor Income:
   * Women’s labor income was consistently higher than men’s in key industries like Food and Beverage Services and Accommodation.
   * Both men and women showed a sharp decline in 2020, but women recovered to pre-pandemic levels faster, particularly in Food and Beverage Services.
   * In industries like Travel Services, there was minimal gender disparity, with both genders experiencing low and stagnant labor income levels.
3. Hours Worked:
   * Women consistently worked more hours than men in industries like Food and Beverage Services and Accommodation, with descriptive statistics showing higher mean and median hours for women.
   * In Recreation and Entertainment, men worked slightly more hours than women, but the difference was negligible.
   * Both genders experienced significant reductions in hours worked in 2020, with slower recovery for men in most industries.
4. Pandemic Impact:
   * The pandemic affected both genders equally in terms of initial wage and labor income losses, but women showed greater resilience in industries where they played a dominant role (e.g., Food and Beverage Services).
   * Recovery patterns highlighted women’s stronger economic presence in high-demand and high-workload sectors.

**Table 10**

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**Table 11**

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**Table 12**

**3.Regression Results**

Wages=β0​+β1​(Food and Beverage Services)+β2​(Recreation and Entertainment)+β3​(Travel Services)+β4​(Women)+β5​(Year 2020)+β6​(Year 2021)+β7​(Food and Beverage Services×Women)+β8​(Recreation and Entertainment×Women)+β9​(Travel Services×Women)+ϵ

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Wages=94,977+460,838(Food and Beverage Services)+30,140(Recreation and Entertainment)−44,470(Travel Services)+26,548(Women)−73,480(Year 2020)−52,990(Year 2021)+254,400(Food and Beverage Services×Women)−26,548(Recreation and Entertainment×Women)−26,548(Travel Services×Women)

Key Insights:

Industry Influence:

Food and Beverage Services stands out as the highest-paying industry, with wages significantly higher than in Accommodation.

Gender effects are strongly tied to industries like Food and Beverage Services.

Pandemic Effects:

Wages saw a sharp decline in 2020 but began recovering in 2021, though they remained below 2018 levels.

Gender and Interaction:

Women earn significantly more than men in Food and Beverage Services.

No significant gender differences are observed in Recreation and Entertainment or Travel Services, showing equal pay dynamics in these industries.

Time series

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**Conclusion**

The analysis of gender employment trends in the tourism industry from 2018 to 2022 reveals significant insights into gender disparities and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Women experienced larger absolute and percentage job losses from 2019 to 2020, reflecting their overrepresentation in vulnerable sectors such as Accommodation and Food and Beverage Services. While both genders showed signs of recovery from 2020 to 2021, men recovered a slightly higher percentage of their losses, indicating a slower and more uneven recovery trajectory for women.

The **Gender Employment Gap Over Time** chart highlights clear disparities in employment across industries:

* Accommodation consistently shows a negative gap, with more women employed than men, albeit with a slight decline over time.
* Food and Beverage Services exhibits the largest gender gap favoring women, peaking in 2019 and narrowing significantly post-2020, suggesting that women were disproportionately affected by the pandemic in this sector.
* Recreation and Entertainment and Travel Services display minimal or near-zero gaps, indicating relatively balanced gender representation in these industries.

The findings emphasize the critical role of the pandemic in disrupting employment trends for both genders. The steeper decline for women and their relatively slower rebound underscore the need to address gender-based vulnerabilities in the labor market. Women showed higher resilience in industries such as Food and Beverage Services, where they dominate but remain more vulnerable to economic shocks.

Efforts should focus on promoting equitable recovery strategies, enhancing job security for women, and addressing structural barriers in the tourism industry. Closing the gender gap in employment not only fosters inclusivity but also strengthens resilience in the labor market.

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