**Summary of gender gaps in performance: evidence from young lawyers**

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**Introduction**:

Scholar Ghazala Azmat and Rosa Ferrer aim to reveal the reasons for gender gaps in career outcomes and performance among high-skilled professionals as well as a broader set of professions and skills. To do so, they documented performances and career outcomes of young lawyers in the United States. The generation of young lawyers chosen for this study has experienced virtual gender equality in law school admissions and performance. However, a gender earnings gap persists, where male lawyers earn 18 log points higher weekly earnings than female lawyers on average. The presence of preschool-aged children in the household and aspiration to be law firm partners are correlated with the gender performance gap. For the gender career outcome gap, this study discovered that 50 percent difference can be explained through individual and firm characteristics. The remaining gap can be explained through performance differences, which is measured by annual hours billed and the amount of new client revenue brought to the firm.

**Body: Overview of the theoretical foundation, data, empirical strategy, and the findings**

This paper mainly used OLS linear regression method to examine gender gaps in career outcome and performance. In the regression model for gender performance, this paper used quantified the dependent variable with performance hours billed, the annual working hours that individual lawyers bill their clients for, and new client revenue raised, which is revenue generated from new business, excluding revenue from previously established clients.Both factors are common measures for performance in the legal profession. The regression model for career outcome is measured with lawyer’s annual earnings. All models included gender as the independent variable. By adding different independent variables and control variables, authors observe the change in statistical significance and magnitude of the gender variable’s coefficient. If this coefficient’s magnitude significantly changes or becomes statistically insignificant, then the new factor is correlated with difference in gender performance/earnings.

This paper utilized data from a longitudinal survey of lawyers who first admitted to the bar in 2000 in the U.S. The respondents were interviewed in year 2002 and 2007. Other than measurement for lawyers’ outcome and performance, other variables that can be used either as control or independent variables such as lawyers’ family conditions, employment background, race, educational conditions, and living regions were also included.

The author first proved that gender gaps exist in lawyer’s performance and controlling for certain factors (individual and firms, education) could not eliminate the gender gaps in performance.

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The first regression includes control variables: individuals and firms’ characteristics, and dummy variables such as race, education, and speciality. In the second regression, the author added education level as a control variable Both regression shows that the dummy variable “female” that indicate the lawyer’s gender, is significant.

In the second part, the author tried to explain the causes of gender difference in performance. First, the author tried to find out whether gender gaps come from discrimination. The authors added the dummy variable “assignment” and the intersection variable of “assignment” and gender variable “female”. The result showed that discrimination does not explain the gender gaps. Second, the author tried to find out whether child-rearing could explain the gender difference in performance by adding dummy variables of the number of children raised and the intersection variable. The results turn out that the coefficient of gender variable “female” is significant to “new client revenue” but not significant to “hours billed”. Also, the author found that the career aspirations can explain the “new client revenue” as well.

**Conclusion**:

There is a sizable gender gap among high-skilled individuals in earnings and performances. Significant portion of the gender earnings or career outcome gap that previous studies failed to explain can be justified through a commonly omitted variable: difference in performance. This study explored gender gaps in performance through three hypotheses: factors correlated with workplace discrimination; presence of preschool-aged children; and career concerns factor. The first hypothesis does not yield significant results. The other two factors are correlated with both gender performance and earnings gap, hence proving that difference in performance is correlated with difference in earnings.

Although this study presented ground-breaking findings, there are many limitations to its application. This study utilized self-reported AJD data, which has high response bias despite it being collected anonymously. Only participants with strong opinions on the underlying subject would choose to respond, hence form a more extreme sample than the population that scholars wish to study. Another key limitation roots from the use of hours billed as a performance measurement metric. Working longer hours does not always lead to higher performance. Readers should remain cautious about those limitations when interpreting the study’s findings.