CHAPTER 15

Gender and Paid Work in Industrial Nations

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1. INTRODUCTION

Gender shapes the work opportunities, experiences, and rewards of women and men in industrial societies. Many sociologists agree that women's and men's participation in paid work, and the nature and social valuation of the work they perform, are key determinants of their overall status in society. In fact, women's labor force participation rates have been used widely in cross-national research as a measure of women's status (Clark, Ramsbey, & Adler, 1991; Ward, 1984; Young, Fort, & Danner, 1996). When women are judged to be performing valued work, especially work for pay outside the home on a comparable basis with men, then gender inequality is minimized (Chafetz, 1984; Nielsen, 1990). Given this, it is not surprising that gender is the most prevalent single subtopic in the recent sociology of work and occupations literature (Abbott, 1993; Hall, 1983). Abbott (1993) finds that about 20% of all work and occupations articles published in 1990 and 1991 focus on gender issues.

The rapid influx of women into the paid labor market during this century is a dramatic social change warranting much attention from sociologists. Women working for pay is no longer the exception to the rule. In most advanced industrial nations today, the average worker is as likely to be female as male (Bakker, 1996). While women have

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always worked, the division of labor in many early industrial societies was such that married women often performed uncompensated work in or around the home to support family members. With industrialization, some groups of women, namely racial/ethnic minority women and working-class women, began to work outside the home for pay in highly gender-segregated occupations. Over the course of the century, other groups of women joined the ranks of paid workers, causing women's labor force participation rates to increase rather steadily in industrial nations. In the United States, for example, women accounted for 46% of the labor force in 1994 (Herz & Wootton, 1996), up from 18% at the turn of the century (Kemp, 1994).

Traditionally, the study of work addressed primarily male workers (Acker, 1989). With women now representing almost one half of the labor force in industrial nations, sociologists have recognized the importance of supplying missing information about employed women. Attention has turned to issues such as: (1) What motivates women to be productive workers (Bielby & Bielby, 1984; Lorence, 1987b; Mannheim, 1983, 1993; Mortimer & Lorence, 1979; Neil & Snizek, 1987; Rowe & Snizek, 1995)? (2) What causes women to be satisfied with their work (Hodson, 1989; Loscocco, 1990; Loscocco & Spitze, 1991; Martin & Shehan, 1989; Neil & Snizek, 1989)? (3) Do women's work and management styles differ from those of men, and if so, how (Colwill, 1993; Johnson, 1976; Maile, 1995)?

Another reason sociologists have begun to focus attention on employed women is related to the increasingly important role they play as economic providers for families/households. Whereas the majority of women who work for pay today do so out of perceived economic need (Baca Zinn & Eitzen, 1993), only a few decades ago discussion of women's labor force participation presented women's employment as secondary and supplemental to men's—an expendable means of improving the family's standard of living (Dubeck & Borman, 1996). As Acker (1992, p. 54) states, "the family wage sufficient for a single worker to support dependents is fast disappearing; women's paid work is becoming necessary for family survival." The high incidence of single adult, mostly female households in modern society also points to the importance of women's paid work. The fact that, on average, women earn less than men for the work they perform contributes to disproportionately high rates of poverty in female-headed households, a serious social problem that has come to be known as the feminization of poverty (Dunn & Waller, 1996).

The emphasis in sociology on women's increased involvement in paid work is also due to the fact that women's employment has broad social consequences that extend well beyond the economy. Families, in particular, are affected by increases in women's labor force participation. Traditionally, women have borne the primary responsibility for domestic work. As they begin to spend significant numbers of hours working outside the home for pay, their ability to perform domestic work, and potentially, the quality of life of their families is affected. Families need to adapt to women's changing work roles by making other provisions for the performance of domestic work (Chafetz, 1997). Research suggests that this adaptation is slow in coming, in that many women today work a "double shift"—they still perform a disproportionate share of domestic tasks in addition to their paid work (Berk, 1985; Ferree, 1991; Hochschild, 1989; Schor, 1991; Steil, 1995). The United Nations (1995b) estimates that two thirds to three quarters of the household work in industrial countries is still performed by women. This inequity has resulted in much sociological attention to what has come to be referred to as work/family conflict (Abbott,

1993). Schools and the nonprofit sector of the economy provide other examples of social institutions/organizations profoundly affected by increases in women's labor force participation in that women today seldom have time to perform volunteer work in these settings. More research is needed to better understand the far-reaching impact of increases in women's employment.

The extensive sociological study of gender and employment results from both the importance of paid work in modern society and the dramatic changes in gendered patterns of work participation. Because women are disproportionately affected by these changes, this chapter will reflect the emphasis on employed women (as opposed to men) found in the sociological literature. The vast literature that has emerged over the last two decades on gender and work makes it impossible to provide an in-depth review of all relevant subtopics. For this reason, we provide an overview of several major topical areas in this literature, highlighting representative research and significant findings in the following areas: patterns and rates of labor force participation, worker inputs, and worker outcomes.

Before turning attention to an examination of gender and participation in the labor force, it is important to distinguish between two distinct approaches to examining issues of gender and employment. An important characteristic that differentiates among sociological theories and the empirical studies they generate is whether women's and men's labor force experiences and opportunities are viewed as affected primarily by characteristics of individual workers or by structural features of society (Coverman, 1988; Kemp, 1994). Functionalism and neoclassical economics are the best examples of the former types of theories; Marxism, Marxist feminism, and other materialist theories provide examples of the latter (Kemp, 1994; Nielsen, 1990). Because much sociological research is devoted to sorting out these two influences on gendered work patterns and experiences, the individualist versus structural theme is a recurring one in this chapter.

2. LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND GENDERED PATTERNS IN THE WORKPLACE

From 1960 to 1990, women's share of the labor force increased significantly in all industrialized nations. Recent estimates show that women now constitute an average of at least 40% of their labor forces (United Nations Development Programme, 1992, 1995; World Bank, 1996). Increases in female labor force participation have been particularly marked in the Netherlands and New Zealand. Steep increases have also occurred in Australia, Canada, Greece, Norway, and the United States. A few countries, for example, France, Ireland, and Portugal, have experienced more moderate increases (OECD, 1994). The rise in women's labor force activity has been accompanied by a decrease in men's rates of labor force participation (OECD; 1985, Kemp, 1994). For this reason, gender differentials in some countries are diminishing while in others they remain pronounced. In 1991, for example, the gap between male and female rates in Sweden had been reduced to 4.2 percentage points, while in Ireland it was still 42 percentage points (OECD, 1994). Table 15-1 provides an overview of changes in women's share of the labor force in 20 industrial nations from 1980 to 1994.

The following sections provide a brief sketch of changes in women's employment over two time periods—the 1960s through the 1970s, and the 1980s to the present.

TABLE 15-1. Women's Share of the Labor force in 20 Advanced Industrial Nations, 1980 and 1994

Country	Women's Share of the Labor Force	
	1980	1994
Australia	36	42
Austria	40	40
Belgium	34	40
Canada	40	44
Denmark	44	46
Finland	46	47
France	40	44
Germany	40	41
Hong Knong	34	36
Ireland	28	33
Israel	34	38
Italy	33	37
Neatherlands	31	39
New Zealand	34	44
Norway	40	45
Japan	38	40
Portugal	39	43
Sweden	44	47
Switzerland	37	40
United Kingdom	39	43
United States	42	45

Source: Adapted from the World Bank. *World Development Report 1996.* New York: Oxford University Press.

2.1. Labor Force Participation Rates and Patterns in the 1960s and 1970s

The influx of women, especially married women, into paid employment in industrial nations accelerated in the 1960s and 1970s. Structural changes in the economy that led to a disproportionate rate of job growth in the service sector and an increased demand for part-time labor had a strong impact on women's rates of employment (Janjic, 1985; OECD, 1993c). In the United States, for example, 79% of the new jobs created between 1973 and 1987 were in the service sector (Acker, 1992). Chaftetz (1990) argues that demand factors resulting from economic expansion are a far more important determinant of women's employment than labor supply factors. This view is supported by comparative research that shows a strong relationship between economic growth and increases in women's labor force participation (Clark et al., 1991; Semyonov, 1980).

While demand factors may be most important in determining women's rates of labor force participation, numerous factors affecting the supply of women workers have also contributed to increases in their share of the labor force. In the United States and some other Western European nations, increasing divorce rates and rising numbers of impoverished displaced homemakers began to cause full-time homemakers to consider the risks of complete economic dependence on a male provider (Amott & Matthaei, 1982; Dunn, 1997). In many countries, the women's movement also played a role in making paid work appear more desirable to married women (Herz & Wootton, 1996). In addition, women's educational attainment was becoming more similar to men's and this opened doors to more interesting and lucrative employment (OECD, 1985; United Nations, 1995a). Increased employment opportunities led to a decline in the birth rate, which meant that

women spent less of their adult years with preschool-aged children, and thus had more years available to spend in paid employment (Herz & Wootton, 1996; Semyonov, 1980).

Changes in occupational opportunity occurring in the 1960s and 1970s had a differential impact across groups of women (Almquist, 1995; Andersen, 1988). Age and race/ethnicity, in particular, patterned the new employment opportunities available to women in industrial nations (OECD, 1985; Ortiz, 1994). Younger women were more likely to remain out of the labor force in order to extend their education and older women were less likely to possess the skills and educational credentials required for emerging employment opportunities (United Nations, 1985). Economic discrimination resulted in limited access to new jobs for minority women in many nations, but economic disadvantage made paid work a necessity. Table 15-2 provides labor force participation rates for women in the United States by race/ethnicity for 1960 and 1970. Among the groups listed, only Mexican, Puerto Rican, and American Indian women had lower rates of labor force participation than white women. African-Americans, Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino women were all employed at higher rates than white women; however, they worked primarily in lower tier, personal service occupations (e.g., domestic, seamstress) and as factory operatives (Ortiz, 1994). More recently, improved educational opportunities for women of color, combined with legal changes, have created new job opportunities for African-American women in the United States, especially in female-dominated, semiprofessional occupations (Higginbotham, 1994; Sokoloff, 1987).

2.2. Labor Force Participation Rates and Patterns in the 1980s and 1990s

Women's labor force participation rates in industrial nations began to level off by the late 1980s and early 1990s. By 1992, female labor force participation rates ranged from a low of 46% in Italy to a high of 79% in Sweden (Baden, 1993). Economic recession in the early 1990s resulted in job loss in heavily male-dominated manufacturing and construction industries, causing men's labor force participation rates to decline. Concentrated in service sector jobs, women remained rather insulated from this recession. In most advanced industrial nations today, at least 70% of all employed women work in the service sector (United Nations Development Programme, 1992).

The high growth phenomenon of part-time employment also fueled demand for women

TABLE 15-2. Labor Force Participation Rates for Women in the United States by Selected Racial/Ethnic Groups, 1960 and 1970

	1960	1970
White	33.6	40.6
African-American	42.2	47.5
Mexican	28.8	36.4
Puerto Rican	36.3	32.3
Chinese	44.2	49.5
Japanese	44.1	49.4
Filipino	36.2	55.2
American Indian	25.5	35.3

Source: Adapted from V. Ortiz (1994), Women of color: A demographic overview. In M. Baca Zinn & B. Thornton Dill (Eds.), *Women of color in U.S. society.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

laborers in industrial nations while men's employment rates were declining (Bakker, 1996). It is important to note, however, that part-time workers in many nations earn lower hourly wages than full-time workers, receive fewer fringe benefits, and have fewer chances for career progression (OECD, 1994). Nordic countries are an exception to this pattern; part-time employment in these nations is fully regulated, resulting in higher compensation and increased access to fringe benefits. Baden (1993) reports that an increasing amount of part-time work is involuntary in that the women who perform it would prefer full-time jobs but are unable to find them. Table 15-3 presents information on the size and gender composition of the part-time labor force for 21 industrial nations. These data show that while women make up the vast majority of part-time workers in all industrial nations, the proportion employed part-time varies considerably from country to country (OECD, 1994).

A sizable share of part-time jobs are temporary. Women's share of temporary employment is greater than men's in all industrial nations except Greece, Spain, Portugal, and Turkey, where higher levels of agricultural activity create many seasonal jobs for men (Baden, 1993). In most industrial nations, the proportion of men in temporary employment has fallen since the early 1980s while that of women has increased in all countries except the Netherlands and Germany (OECD, 1993a, b). Evidence suggests that much temporary employment, like part-time work, is involuntary—the majority of temporary workers indicate they could not find permanent jobs (Baden, 1993). The disadvantages of part-time work appear to extend to temporary workers. Not only do they typically earn less and have fewer benefits, Rogers (1995) finds that temporary workers in the United States have higher levels of workplace alienation than permanent workers.

Women's participation in paid work continues to be affected by variations in age,

TABLE 15-3. Part-time Employment of a Proportion of Employment, 1991

Country	% Men	% Women	Proportion of Total Employment	Women's Share of Part-Time Employment
Australia	9.2	40.9	22.5	76.3
Austria	1.5	20.1	8.9	89.7
Belgium	2.1	27.4	11.8	89.3
Canada	8.8	25.5	16.4	70.5
Denmark	10.5	37.8	23.1	75.5
Finland	5.1	10.2	7.6	65.2
France	3.4	23.5	12.0	84.0
Germany	2.7	34.3	15.5	89.6
Greece	2.2	7.2	3.9	62.9
Ireland	3.6	17.8	8.4	71.6
Italy	2.9	10.4	5.5	65.4
Japan	10.1	34.3	20.0	69.9
Luxemburg	1.9	17.9	7.5	83.3
Netherlands	16.7	62.2	34.3	70.1
New Zealand	9.7	35.7	21.1	74.2
Norway	9.1	47.6	26.7	81.4
Portugal	4.0	10.5	6.8	66.7
Spain	1.5	11.2	4.6	78.0
Sweden	7.6	41.0	23.7	83.4
United Kingdom	5.5	43.7	22.2	86.1
United States	10.5	25.6	17.4	67.2

Source: Adapted from the *OECD Employment Outlook*, July 1993. Paris: OECD.

race/ethnicity, marital status, the presence of children, and educational level (Bakker, 1996; OECD, 1985, 1993b). These characteristics affect women's participation in the labor force for two primary reasons. First, they are related to domestic/family demands on women's time that detract from the opportunity to work (marital status and the presence of children). Second, they are related to employment and earnings opportunity and to the opportunity costs of not working (age, race/ethnicity, and education level). Table 15-4 presents selected population characteristics that illustrate their effects on labor force participation rates among women in the United States in 1994. Today, women in their late 30s and early 40s have the highest participation level, with more than 77% in the labor force (Herz & Wootton, 1996). This represents a change from the earlier part of the century when rates were highest for young, unmarried women (England & Farkas, 1986).

TABLE 15-4. Selected Population and Labor Force Characteristics of Women in the United States, 1994 (numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Percentage of the Population in the Labor Force
Total, females 16 years and over	58.8
Total, males 16 years and over	75.1
Women:	
Age	
16 to 19 years	51.3
20 to 24 years	71.0
25 to 54 years	75.3
25 to 34 years	74.0
35 to 44 years	77.1
45 to 54 years	74.6
55 to 64 years	48.9
65 years and over	9.2
Race and Hispanic origin*	
White	58.9
African-American	58.7
Hispanic origin	52.9
Marital status	
Never married	65.1
Married, spouse present	60.6
Widowed	17.6
Divorced	73.9
Married, spouse absent	62.9
Presence and age of children	
Without children under 18	53.1
With children under 18	68.4
6 to 17 years, none younger	76.0
Under 6 years	60.3
Under 3 years	57.1
Under 1 year	54.6

*Hispanics are included in both the white and black population groups.
Source: Adapted from Table 1.1 (p. 49) in D. E. Herz & B. H. Wootton (1996). Women in the workforce: An Overview. In C. Costello & B. K. Krimgold (Eds.), *The American woman: Where we stand.* New York: Norton.

Through the middle part of the century, women exited the labor force in significant numbers upon marriage and especially upon the birth of children, causing a dip in labor force participation rates for those under the age of 35. As these women reentered the labor force when their children reached school age, rates climbed once again, although not to the level for young unmarried women. Women today are far more likely to work continuously (Rexroat, 1992), causing their labor force participation rates to appear similar to men's; increasing through the middle years, leveling off, and then declining around retirement (Herz & Wootton, 1996). The most dramatic increases in women's labor force participation in the United States in recent decades have occurred for married women with preschool age children.

The general patterns described for the United States and presented in Table 15-4 are also found in most other advanced industrial nations. One key exception is Scandanavian countries, Sweden in particular, whose labor market policies are highly facilitative of women's employment (Rosenfeld & Kalleberg, 1990; Ruggie, 1984). Swedish labor market policies provide daycare and other forms of assistance to the mothers of young children, making it easier for them to be employed continuously. Italy and Belgium also fail to show a downturn in women's employment in the early childbearing years (Baden, 1993). Increases in women's level of education relative to men have also spurred more continuous participation in the paid labor force. Today, in most industrial nations, women receive nearly the same overall level of education as men, and the most educated groups of women are those with the highest labor force participation rates (United Nations, 1995a).

In recent years, variation in women's labor force participation by race/ethnicity has also diminished in some industrial nations. For example, increases in white women's levels of employment in the United States have served to close the gap between white and African-American women (Ortiz, 1994). Rates of participation for Hispanic women in the United States represent marked increases over previous decades, but are still about 6 percentage points lower than those for African-American and white women. The lower labor force participation rates of Hispanic women have often been attributed to cultural patterns that emphasize traditional roles in the family for women. The rapid increases in participation in paid work for women in this group suggest that such traditions are eroding, or perhaps that increased employment opportunities and economic need compel women to deviate from tradition (Ortiz, 1994; Zavella, 1987). It is important to note that while labor force participation rates vary little across racial/ethnic groups, unemployment rates are about two times higher for racial/ethnic minority women compared to white women in the United States (except Asian/Pacific Islanders) (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990).

2.3. Employment Concentration and Segregation by Sex

Despite dramatic increases in women's labor force activity this century, women continue to be employed in a far more narrow range of occupations and industries than their male counterparts (Roos, 1985). For example, in the Netherlands, 66.8% of women are employed in 8 of the 99 professional categories, in contrast to men who are spread across 76 professional employment categories (OECD, 1993c). In G-7 countries, 60% to 75% of all women workers are concentrated in service sector industries (Bakker, 1996). Table 15-5 presents women's share of four broad occupational categories for 13 industrial nations. Variation across nations is marked, but in general women are most likely to be employed as clerical, sales, and service workers. While women's rates of employment in the more

TABLE 15-5. Women's Share of Four Broad Occupational Categories for 13 Industrial Nations, 1990

	Occupation			
Country	Administrative and Managerial Workers (& Women) 1990	Professional, Technical and Related Workers (% Women) 1990	Clerical Sales Workers (% Women) 1990	Service Workers (& Women) 1990
Australia	41.4	23.8	19.3	77.2
Austria	16.4	47.9	64.1	70.8
Canada	40.7	56.0	67.6	57.1
Denmark	14.7	62.9	60.9	72.5
Finland	24.1	61.4	67.4	71.4
Ireland	15.1	46.7	51.6	51.5
Japan	7.9	42.0	50.3	54.2
Netherlands	13.5	42.5	52.2	70.4
New Zealand	32.3	47.8	76.4	67.4
Norway	25.4	56.5	65.9	75.1
Spain	9.5	47.0	47.4	58.6
Seden	38.9	63.3	77.0	76.9
USA	40.1	50.8	66.7	60.1

Source: Adapted from the United Nations Human Development Report 1995. New York: Oxford Unversity Press.

lucrative administrative, managerial and professional, and technical job categories are lower, in most countries there has been an upward trend in the last decade or so in their representation in these job categories (Bakker, 1996).

Women are also heavily concentrated in public sector employment in most industrial nations (OECD, 1994). The public sector has expanded dramatically in many OECD countries during the last few decades, resulting in an increased demand for women workers. Sweden has experienced the greatest increase in public sector employment, with almost one third of all workers now employed in the public sector (Nermo, 1996). In contrast, the government's share of total employment in the United States has held constant in recent decades, suggesting that the bulk of new jobs created for women have been in the private sector. Women in the public sector in Sweden are advantaged relative to those in the private sector in terms of both wages and access to higher tier occupations. The reverse is true in the United States, where many black women are concentrated in lower tier positions in the public sector (Higginbotham, 1994; OECD, 1994).

Most studies of occupational sex segregation, the concentration of workers in predominantly same sex occupations, have been conducted at the national level and limited research exists on patterns of cross-national variation (Charles, 1992; Jacobs & Lim, 1992; Nermo, 1996). Interestingly, levels of segregation are generally lower in some relatively traditional countries, such as Japan and Italy, and higher in the more progressive Scandanavian countries. Charles (1992) argues that this pattern results primarily from the large service sector in modern economies that is associated with higher rates of female labor force participation but greater female concentration in the highly gender segregated clerical, sales, and service occupations. Other studies (Jacobs & Lim, 1992; Lorence, 1992; Nermo, 1996; OECD, 1994) shed doubt on this relationship in recent decades because they show that sex segregation has decreased somewhat in many indus-

trial countries with large service sectors, especially the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Occupational integration occurs for differing reasons across industrial nations. Haavio-Mannila (1989), for example, found that in Eastern Europe occupational integration results primarily from women's work in traditional men's occupations in industry whereas in Southern Europe it results from men's work in traditional women's occupations of sales and private service work. Jacobs and Lim (1992) argue that it is more common for occupational integration to occur by men gaining access to women's occupations than vice versa. They found that during the period 1960–1980, with the exceptions of Austria and Greece, men experienced an increased chance of sharing an occupation with women in industrial countries, while women were more likely to experience a decline in the chances of sharing an occupation with men in all industrial nations but Greece.

In the United States, segregated employment patterns are of interest to sociologists primarily due to their association with the gender gap in wages. Studies examining the segregation–wage gap relationship across countries, however, often fail to provide support for the relationship. Rosenfeld and Kalleberg (1990) find no relationship in their study of four countries and Blau and Ferber (1986) find only a weak negative effect of segregation on the gender gap in wages in their study of 10 countries. Nermo (1992) also finds no straightforward relationship between segregation and the male–female wage gap in a study of Sweden.

2.4. Unemployment

The gap between the unemployment rates of women and men is a commonly used indicator of gender inequality in the labor market (OECD, 1994). It is important to note, however, that variations in unemployment data may in some cases reflect varying national policies that create incentives or disincentives for women to register as unemployed (Evers & Wintersberger, 1990; Grahl & Teague, 1989). Differential rates of long-term unemployment also make the interpretation of unemployment data across nations problematic, in that some nations have larger pools of discouraged workers who no longer seek work and are thus not counted in official unemployment statistics.

While there is considerable variation among countries in both levels of unemployment and relative levels of male and female unemployment (Baden, 1993), most nations experienced increases in unemployment for both sexes over the period 1979 to 1989 (OECD, 1994). Unemployment data from the 1970s and 1980s suggest that female unemployment is less sensitive to economic cycles than male unemployment, particularly in European nations (OECD, 1984). This is due largely to the sectoral distribution of employment by gender, specifically to women's concentration in service sector, public sector, and part-time employment. These forms of employment are less responsive to business fluctuations than other employment categories dominated by men (De Boer & Seeborg, 1989; OECD, 1984).

Women in the following countries had higher rates of unemployment than men in 1990–1991: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, and Spain. The largest unemployment gaps favoring men were in Mediterranean countries—Spain (11.5%), Italy (9.8%), and Greece (7.4%). In all other industrial nations where women have higher rates of unemployment than men, the gap is around five percentage points or smaller (ILO, 1992). A gender difference exists in the distribution of

the unemployed between the categories, "job search after non- participation" and "job search after loss of employment." Women are overrepresented in the first category and underrepresented in the second (OECD, 1994), suggesting that women have difficulty reentering the labor force in many nations after taking time out for family responsibilities.

3. GENDER AND WORK INPUTS

A major theme in the literature on gender and employment involves the comparison of women and men in terms of worker inputs—for example, education, hours worked, absenteeism, work values, and commitment (Abbott, 1993). This focus reflects the influence of the neoclassical economic paradigm and related human capital perspectives, which link work outcomes (e.g., earnings, occupational attainment) to the productivity-related characteristics of individual workers (Acker, 1992). These theories deemphasize the role of structural factors, such as characteristics of firms and markets, in the determination of work outcomes. However, the empirical literature assessing the importance of gender patterning in worker inputs explains a relatively small amount, and never more than 50%, of the variation in earnings and occupational attainment (see, e.g., Corcoran, Duncan, & Ponza, 1984; Polachek, 1981). Finding limited support for the importance of productivity-related differences between the sexes, these studies commonly attribute the unexplained variation to structural variables, including characteristics of firms and markets, and to discriminatory forces (Coverman, 1988).

Because empirical evidence suggests the somewhat limited importance of gender differences in quantifiable worker inputs for determining work outcomes, recent attention has turned to the examination of hypothesized gender differences in worker inputs that are less quantifiable, such as differences in work values and commitment (Agassi, 1982; Elizur, 1993; Lorence, 1987a; Mannheim, 1993; Rowe & Snizek, 1995; Siegfried, MacFarlane, Graham, Moore, & Young, 1981); work styles including communication (Booth, 1991; Fairhurst, 1985; Lakoff, 1975; Noble, 1995; Reardon, 1997; Tannen, 1995); and leadership/management styles (Colwill, 1993; Court, 1997; Dobbins & Platz, 1986; Rosener, 1990). This change in focus is also due to the fact that the sexes have begun to converge with respect to a number of more quanitifiable productivity-related characteristics. Education provides one example in that women's overall educational attainment equals or surpasses men's in many industrial nations today (OECD, 1994). Patterned differences, however, still do exist between men and women workers in terms of type of education, and empirical evidence suggests that these differences impact work outcomes. For example, sex differences in college major have been shown to have a significant impact on earnings and occupational attainment (Eide, 1994; Fuller & Schoenberger, 1991; Gerhart, 1990; Jacobs, 1996). The following sections provide a brief overview of recent literature addressing gender differences in worker inputs in the two areas listed previously.

3.1. Gender, Work Commitment, and Work Values

Two distinct sources of gender differences in both work commitment and work values are posited in the literature. The gender socialization approach suggests that women are less

committed than men to paid work and that they bring different values to the workplace because of their earlier gender training (Giele, 1988). This perspective also often emphasizes women's needs to allocate time and energy to both job and family roles, and the impact of gender roles on such choices (Moen & Smith, 1986). The second perspective views women's and men's differential status in the job market as responsible for commitment and value differences. Sex differences in opportunities for mobility and rewards, in particular, are seen as fostering differing values and levels of commitment for women and men (Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990; Marsden, Kalleberg, & Cook, 1993). Empirical evidence suggests that both gender socialization and job characteristics contribute to gender differences in work values and commitment (Mannheim, 1993), but that characteristics of work may be more important in that women are less likely than men to hold jobs with commitment-enhancing features (e.g., opportunities for advancement and higher levels of other rewards) (Kanter, 1977; Lorence, 1987b; Loscocco, 1990; Marsden et al., 1993).

Research on gender differences in work values typically distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of jobs. This distinction involves valuing work in terms of its interest level and the opportunities it provides for growth and actualization versus valuing it because of material rewards, security, social relationships, or recognition. Studies show that women value the former aspects of work more than men, and that the sexes value different aspects of the latter—men emphasize material rewards and recognition and women emphasize interpersonal factors (Lueptow, 1980; Neil & Snizek, 1987). Recent studies show some convergence between the sexes in work values, but the differences that do emerge are still consistent with this pattern (Betz & O'Connell, 1989; Lueptow, 1996; Neil & Snizek, 1987).

The majority of studies addressing gender differences in work values and commitment are conducted with data from only one nation, the United States. One exception, a study by Elizur (1993), compares gender differences in work values for Hungary, Israel, and the Netherlands. Some values were ranked higher by men in one sample and by women in another. Personal growth, for example was ranked higher by Hungarian men than women, and higher by Dutch and Israeli women than men. Findings also indicated that gender differences in values among workers within a given nation were relatively small compared to differences across nations, suggesting that work values are culturally bound. Gender variation in work values and commitment across nations may be due to either differential gender socialization across nations or to differing work experiences and opportunities for women and men across nations. In a study of workers in Israel, Mannheim (1993) finds support for the socialization model, in that country of origin affected women worker's levels of work commitment.

3.2. Gender Differences in Management and Communication Styles

In the late 1980s and 1990s, sociologists joined in the debate over the existence of gender differences in "styles" of managing and communicating (Noble, 1995). Two popular books, *The Female Advantage* by Helgesen (1990) and *Talking 9 to 5* by Tannen (1995), spurred sociological inquiry into the existence, causes, and consequences of possible gender differences. As is the case with research on gender differences in work commitment and values, both individualistic and structural explanations have been offered for sex-linked differences in workplace communication and leadership. Individualistic explanations fo-

cus on the role of gender socialization in creating differences between women and men (e.g., men are taught to be assertive; women are taught to be conciliatory); structural explanations claim that the structure of work organizations and the location of the sexes within them (e.g., the proportion of women in the work position, hierarchical management structures) result in different work "styles" for women and men (Dunn, 1997).

Structural explanations receive the most attention from sociologists, following the influential work of Kanter (1977), who focused attention on the impact of organizational structure on women's work experiences. According to the structural perspective, the fact that women managers are disproportionately located in lower level positions lacking in authority causes them to rely on more cooperative approaches to leadership. Put simply, women with limited organizational resources to back up their power cannot successfully issue directives and orders (what some call a male-oriented management style); instead, they must enlist the cooperation and support of subordinates in order to gain their compliance (Colwill, 1993).

The primary gender difference in management style posited by those scholars who advocate difference involves women's emphasis on collaboration, teamwork, and participation (Marshall, 1984; Shakeshaft, 1989). Rosenser's (1990) study of 456 women executives, for example, found that women preferred to manage interactively, sharing power and information and empowering subordinates. Some scholars (Epstein, 1991; Powell, 1990; Sonnenfeld, 1991) caution that a range of leadership styles exist for both sexes, and suggest that within-group variation may be as great as between-group variation. These two distinct views are captured in the equity and complementary contribution models of women in management (Adler & Israeli, 1988). The former model, most pervasive in the United States, assumes similarity between the sexes and views difference as problematic; the latter, more visible in Europe and Scandanavia, assumes and values difference. The two models measure women's progress in management in quite different ways. The equity model focuses on quantitative measures of women's movement into management, arguing that as women's numerical representation increases, any structurally induced differences between the sexes in management styles will erode. The complementary contribution model views progress in terms of qualitative assessments of organizations' acceptance of female styles of managing, suggesting a need for changes in organizational culture and values (Adler & Israeli, 1988).

Somewhat less visible than the literature on gender differences in management, the literature on workplace communication differences between the sexes is less divided about the existence of difference. Conversational analyses provide much evidence of gendered patterns, including men interrupting women more often, the greater use by women of tag questions and other linguistic conventions conveying reluctance to make assertions, and more attempts by women to involve the listener (Reardon, 1997; Tannen, 1995). Studies exploring these gendered patterns often acknowledge that male-female interaction in the workplace negatively impacts women by causing them to be ignored, excluded, and/or patronized (Reardon, 1997).

In our opinion, while a range of work styles, including those characterized as both masculine and feminine, have the potential to enrich work organizations, the values that currently infuse the cultures of organizations do not often tolerate, much less value the female styles. Changing those values and the associated structures of opportunity is a difficult task. Similar issues are present in the literature on sex-based earnings differences and the value of jobs disproportionately held by women. These issues are addressed in the discussion of the wage gap and comparable worth.

4. GENDER AND WORK OUTCOMES

Sociological theory and research has addressed the relationship between gender and a number of work outcomes, including earnings (Marini, 1989; Rosenfeld & Kalleberg, 1990; Treiman & Roos, 1983), prestige (Tyree & Hicks, 1988; Xu & Leffler, 1992), authority (Mcguire & Reskin, 1993; Reskin and Ross 1992; Wright, Baxter, and Birkelund 1995), work satisfaction (Martin & Sheehan, 1989; Neil & Snizek, 1988), and mental and physical health (Stellman, 1977; Roxburgh, 1996). Of these workplace correlates of gender, earnings have received the most attention (Abbott, 1993). This emphasis reflects the ideas of early social theorists, such as Karl Marx (1967), who acknowledged the translatability of earnings into other valuable social rewards such as prestige and power. Space limitations prohibit thorough coverage in this chapter of all relevant gender-linked work outcomes. Because earnings differences between the sexes are also addressed in a later chapter, they receive only brief attention here.

4.1. Gender and Earnings

Women's nonagricultural wages in industrialized nations range between 63% and 89& of men's (see Table 15-6). Earnings ratios closer to equality are found in Nordic countries, nations classified by Rosenfeld and Kalleberg (1990) as "corporatist" because they have institutionalized centralized bargaining between the government, employers and labor. The gender gap in wages narrowed somewhat in many nations during the 1960s and 1970s, although rates of change were variable between countries. In the 1980s, progress toward the equalization of earnings slowed in most countries, and actually re-

Table 15-6. Women's Nonagricultural Wage as a Percentage of Men's*

Country	
Austria	78.0
Belgium	74.5
Canada	63.0
Denmark	82.6
Finland	77.0
France	81.0
Germany	75.8
Greece	78.0
Italy 80.0	
Luxemburg	65.2
Neatherlands	76.7
New Zealand	80.6
Japan	86.0
Spain	70.0
Sweden	89.0
Switzerland	67.6
United Kingdom	69.7
United States	75.0

*All data are post 1990 and for the latest available year.
Source: Adapted from the World Bank, *World Development Report 1996*. New York: Oxford University Press.

versed in a few cases. Out of 15 industrial nations, the wage gap narrowed during the 1980s in 5, increased in 9, and remained constant in 1 (ILO, 1994). In some countries the decline in women's earnings relative to men's resulted from changes in governmental wage policies, including wage hike ceilings, the decentralization of wage determination, and the privatization of state-owned companies (Bakker, 1996).

Until recent years, most research on the male–female wage gap was restricted to the United States, making it difficult to assess the impact on the wage gap of culturally distinct means of organizing work, family, and the state, and of coordinating these institutions. Several explanations for the earnings gap have been posited in the sociological literature focused on the United States, including a human capital explanation (women do not compare favorably to men in terms of productivity-related characteristics such as education and experience); an explanation centered on women's coordination of work and family roles which suggests they tailor their work behavior to meet their family obligations; and an explanation focused on occupational segregation and the concentration of women in low-level and/or undervalued occupations (for a thorough review of these explanations and empirical tests of each see Marini, 1989). Each of these explanations receives some support in the empirical literature on gender disparity in wages in the United States. Cross-national studies, however, find only limited support for these explanations (Rosenfeld & Kalleberg, 1990; Treiman & Roos, 1983), pointing to the need for more comparative research.

One subtopic in the literature on gender and wages has received disproportionate attention in the United States: comparable worth (Abbott, 1993). Arguing that wage hierarchies are not objectively determined on the basis of skill level, experience, and other relevant factors, but rather that the gender of the average incumbent of an occupation affects wages, writers on comparable worth both document this phenomenon and prescribe remedies (England & Dunn, 1988). Numerous studies show that a wage penalty exists for workers in female-dominated occupations, even after controlling for human capital and structural variables (Anderson & Thomaskovic-Devey, 1995; England, 1992; Figart & Lapidus, 1996; Reskin, 1993; Sorensen, 1994). Other studies examine systems of job evaluation and assess their effectiveness for eliminating the systematic undervaluing of female-dominated jobs (Steinberg, 1990, 1992; Wajcman, 1991). Several book-length case studies assess the intricacies of implementing pay equity policies designed to remedy gender-biased wage structures, exploring the political dynamics of various groups involved in the process—comparable worth advocates, employers, and unions (Acker, 1989; Blum, 1991, Evans & Nelson, 1989).

4.2. Gender, Occupational Prestige, and Workplace Authority

Occupational prestige and workplace authority are worker outcomes also shown to be related to the gender composition of jobs. Occupational prestige, a subjective assessment of the "status" of an occupation, is rather constant across nations (Treiman, 1977), yet most studies linking prestige to gender are focused on the United States. One exception is the work of Roos (1985), which examines the effects of gender, family background, education, and marital status on occupational mobility in 12 industrial nations, using occupational prestige as one of four measures of occupational attainment. She finds that education is a particularly important determinant of occupational prestige for women; in 7 of 12 countries examined it is the only significant influence for women whereas age, social

origins, and marital status are also important in determining occupational prestige levels for men. Studies focused on the United States typically consider the effects of both gender and race on the prestige of occupations, and find that while female-dominated occupations receive less prestige than male-dominated occupations, race has a more powerful impact than gender on occupational prestige (Bose & Rossi, 1983; Tyree & Hicks, 1988; Xu & Leffler, 1992).

Wright et al. (1995) document considerable variability in the gender gap in authority across seven nations, with English-speaking nations exhibiting a smaller gap, Scandanavian countries a larger one, and Japan the largest. The researchers control for compositional differences among women and men workers, and find that a gender gap in authority still remains in all seven nations; thus, they attribute a significant proportion of the gender differences in authority to direct discrimination. Studies focused on the United (1992), for example, found that net of human capital variables, type of employer, and organizational level, women have less workplace authority than men.

4.3. Gender and Worker Satisfaction

Despite the inferior work conditions women experience (e.g., lower pay, prestige, and authority), they often report greater levels of job satisfaction than men (Hodson, 1989, Murray & Atkinson, 1981). This counterintuitive finding is thought to result primarily from women's lower expectations about work rewards and the reference groups to which they compare themselves (Hodson, 1989). Gender socialization and a lowering of expectations based on knowledge of gender inequity in work rewards may explain why women have lower expectations than men about the rewards they derive from work. Classic theories of job satisfaction suggest that it is the matching of a workers' expectations to what the job offers that determines levels of job satisfaction (Gruneberg, 1979); thus, women's lower expectations make it easier for them to be satisfied with their work.

Expectations are also derived from comparisons with reference groups. To the extent that workers are more likely to conduct same than other-sex comparisons when appraising their jobs, gender inequities that might otherwise compel women to be dissatisfied are obscured. Andrisani (1978) suggests that one result of women's movement activity may be to encourage cross-sex comparisons between workers, which will likely generate lower overall levels of job satisfaction for women. Gender socialization has also been posited as inhibiting women workers' expression of discontent, suggesting that actual levels of dissatisfaction for employed women may be higher than survey findings indicate (Glenn & Feldberg, 1977).

4.4. Gender, Work and Health

The early literature on women, work, and health focused primarily on pregnancy and reproductive hazards for women in the workplace and generally neglected the broader health concerns of women workers (Stellman, 1977). More recent sociological examination of the topic has emphasized gender differences in distress among paid workers, acknowledging the linkage between stress and mental and physical health. A number of studies show higher rates of distress for women workers than men (Menaghan, 1989;

Roxburgh, 1996), despite findings that employed women enjoy better mental health than nonemployed women (Cleary & Mechanic, 1983).

Two competing explanations for gender differences in distress have emerged—the differential vulnerability model and the differential exposure model (Roxburgh, 1996). The former model suggests that gender socialization causes women to experience the same workplace events as more stressful than do men. The latter argues that women are exposed to more stress producing circumstances in the workplace (e.g., a combination of high responsibility and low authority) (Karasek & Theorell, 1990), and that these stressors may be exacerbated by conflicts between work and family roles (Ulbrich, 1989). Empirical research provides mixed support for both models. For example, Turner, Wheaton, and Lloyd (1995) find that while gender differences in exposure to stress account for a considerable proportion of the variance in men's and women's distress levels, vulnerability differences account for more than 50% of the differences. One factor complicating research on gender differences in distress is the fact that women who are vulnerable to job stressors are more likely than men to select themselves out of the labor market or out of full-time employment (Roxburgh, 1996).

5. CONCLUSION

This chapter provides an overview of the major sociological literature on gender and work in industrial nations for three broad topical areas: patterns and rates of labor force participation, worker inputs, and worker outcomes. The recent proliferation of scholarship on these and other topics related to gender and work made it necessary to circumscribe coverage; thus, many relevant topics are not addressed. For example, a sizable literature on gender and particular occupations exists, both comparing women and men in the same occupations and examining differences among women in specific jobs. The range of studies is as broad as the spectrum of occupations, running the gamut from high-status professions such as medicine and law to clerical and lower-tier service sector occupations. Employing a mix of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, these studies both enrich our understanding of particular occupations and provide insight into the variable impact of gender on work experiences. Other topics also not addressed in this chapter include gender and technology in the workplace; gender, unions, and labor relations; and workplace harassment.

Despite the breadth of topics and the extensive scholarship on gender and work, comparative research on many topics is still quite limited. Recent years have seen an increase in cross-national research on gender and work, but more scholarship is needed to reconcile the varied findings of country-specific studies. Many characteristics of nations influence the relationship between gender and work—governmental structures, laws, social policies, cultural belief systems, location in the global economy, and history. Comparative research is required to understand better their role in shaping women's and men's work experiences and opportunities. Data comparability problems have traditionally limited researchers' ability to generate cross-national studies; fortunately, coordinated data collection efforts across nations and improvements in data collection and reporting techniques are occurring. This, combined with increased attention by sociologists to comparative research, bodes well for the future development of this important scholarship.

Ongoing global economic restructuring is affecting women and men workers in in-

dustrial nations, fueling the need for continued research on gender and work (Acker, 1992). As increased international competition slows economic growth, economic reform is undertaken to enhance private sector profitability and competitiveness. These reforms include policies focused on lowering inflation, increasing labor market flexibility, deregulation, and industrial restructuring. These trends need to be assessed and continually monitored to determine whether women and men workers are differentially affected by them. For example, there has been little research examining whether women have been more negatively affected than men by privatization and the contracting out of public sector services in many industrial nations (United Nations, 1995a).

In conclusion, the proliferating scholarship on gender and work is justified for the many reasons described in the beginning of this chapter and should continue into the future. Much has been learned about gender and work over the last several decades; much remains to be learned. Documenting gendered patterns in the workplace and exploring the causes of gender inequities are necessary steps toward providing remedies.

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