

Institution: Cardiff University		
Unit of Assessment: Business and Management Studies (17)		
Title of case study: From Evidence to Action: Tackling the sources of the gender pay gap in public service organisations across Wales		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2014 – 2016		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s)	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Alison Parken	Senior Research Fellow	20/08/2012 – 30/09/2016
Rachel Ashworth	Professor	01/10/1995 – present
Teresa Rees	Professor	01/02/2000 – 31/07/2015
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014 – 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Gender pay gaps persist despite laws guaranteeing equal pay for equal work. Cardiff research to understand the drivers of gender pay gaps enabled researchers to assist three large organisations (over 24,000 employees) with employment and pay analysis, embedding organisational change. This led to action on gendered occupational segregation, career progression, and the movement of women from casual to permanent work. The team developed a new Gender Employment and Pay Network for HR professionals involving 22 public, private and third sector employers (with over 100,000 employees). Two of these employers (25,000 employees) were further supported to use the Cardiff analysis tool to identify pay gap drivers and institute action plans to address them. The research also influenced UK and Welsh government policy on gender pay gaps.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Gender segmentation in the labour market (by job, grade, working pattern, and contract type) results in gender pay gaps. Women are over-represented in low-paid, part-time, temporary and casual jobs, which creates barriers to progression. To address these structural inequalities, the Cardiff team undertook a linked series of research projects employing a gender mainstreaming methodology. Gender mainstreaming posits that gender pay gaps arise from a complex intersection of social, cultural and economic assumptions about gender differences and gender roles, and that action-orientated initiatives are needed to address these within the economy and the workplace. Parken's research showed how gender segregation creates and sustains gender pay gaps within the Welsh economy, studies by Rees identified ways to implement gender mainstreaming within EU policymaking, while Ashworth's work focused on equality and diversity in the public sector.</p>		
2.1 Understanding gender pay gaps		
<p>The Cardiff team's complementary expertise was the basis for a substantial body of research which illuminated the drivers behind gender pay gaps. Their findings highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how gendering of working patterns impacts on pay and progression [3.1]; • the extent of the problem in Wales, where just 25% of workers were employed in gender-balanced occupations and women hold 75% of all part-time jobs [3.1]; • the impact of sector-specific organisational characteristics, such as levels of part-time working, on gender pay gaps [3.2]; • potential actions for organisations to remedy gender segregation which include: gender neutral job redesign; secondments; and values-based recruitment [3.3]. 		
2.2. Addressing gender pay gaps		
<p>The Cardiff researchers conducted a three-stage research programme to address gender pay gaps. First, they were commissioned by Welsh Government to recommend the form of a statutory duty to tackle gender pay differences involving an international policy review, extensive discussion with key stakeholders, and a data analysis of women's employment and pay to shape their recommendation [3.4]. The subsequent Duty – the Equality Act 2010</p>		

(Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 – is unique in the UK in requiring organisations to analyse the drivers of pay inequalities and produce an annual action plan.

Secondly, the Cardiff team, with partners (University of South Wales and the Women's Workshop @ BAWSO), were awarded £4.3M **[G3.1]** for *Women Adding Value to the Economy* (WAVE); a project supporting employers to implement this Duty. While the other partners focused on self-employment and training, Cardiff's £1.3M strand i) created an evidence base for employers through the design of a gender employment and pay analysis methodology, and ii) supported change management within organisations **[3.1, 3.5]**.

Thirdly, three employers – a university, an NHS Trust, and a local authority – were recruited as test case studies. Their collaborative research agreement with Cardiff required them to share their workforce data, create an Internal WAVE Management Team of senior leaders (financial, operational, HR), engage their trades unions, and share findings (anonymously) with other organisations through a Gender Employment and Pay Network. The employers benefitted from the research team's data analysis and interpretation of the sources of gendered earnings disparities. The team also used their data analysis from **[3.1]** to create a searchable online Equal Pay Barometer, allowing individuals to check average pay, working hours and gender segregation in over 300 occupations in Wales. The research findings **[3.1]** showed that:

- existing gender pay gaps were mainly due to men and women working in different jobs associated with different grades, contracts and working patterns;
- where men were the minority of employees, they held a disproportionate share of the most senior positions.

Further work to reduce inequalities was embedded in these organisations through a change management programme. Throughout this programme of work, the team also:

- produced a Gender Employment and Pay Analysis tool based on the research findings and, with ESRC funding **[G3.2]**, tested it with a further eight employers;
- demonstrated that contextual factors in organisations (e.g. austerity and changes in leadership) were beginning to have a significant impact on the likelihood of action plans being sustained longer term **[3.4, 3.5]**.

This body of work, specifically Cardiff's gender mainstreaming research and methodology developed through WAVE, combined with the provision of change management support to progress from evidence to organisational change actions, provided practical resources and advice so that employers understood and could act upon gender pay gaps.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

[3.1] Parken, A., Pocher, E., and Davies, R. (2014) *Working patterns in Wales: Gender occupations and pay*, research report for Women Adding Value to the Economy (WAVE), ESF funded through the Welsh Government. Cardiff, UK: Cardiff University. PDF.

[3.2] Andrews, R. and Ashworth, R. (2016) 'Representation and inclusion in public organizations: Evidence from the UK civil service', *Public Administration Review*, 75 (2), 279-290. doi:10.1111/puar.12308.

[3.3] Sarah M. L. Krøtel, S.M.L., Ashworth, R. and Villadsen, A.R. (2018) 'Weakening the glass ceiling: does organizational growth reduce gender segregation in the upper tiers of Danish local government?', *Public Management Review* 21 (8), 1213-1235. doi: 10.1080/14719037.2018.1550107

[3.4] Parken, A., Rees, T. and Baumgardt, A. (2009) *Options for an equal pay duty in Wales*, Cardiff: Welsh Government. PDF.

[3.5] Parken, A. and Ashworth, R. (2018) From evidence to action: Applying gender mainstreaming to gender pay gaps in the Welsh public sector, *Gender, Work and Organization* 26 (5), 599-618. doi: 10.1111/gwao.12239.

Selected grants:

[G3.1] Rees, T. *Women Adding Value to the Economy (WAVE)*, Welsh Government (European Social Fund – 80645) 2012-2015, £1,300,000

[G3.2] Ashworth, R. *Putting research-informed policy into practice*. ESRC Impact Accelerator Award (IAA – 510941), 2016, £22,384

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Cardiff researchers ensured the effective implementation of Wales' Specific Equality Duty on Pay Differences by developing practical tools and techniques to support employers to undertake this new statutory requirement. They: i) worked with three case study organisations (combined total of 24,000 employees) to create an evidence base and implement change management; ii) supported an additional two organisations (25,000 employees) to create and implement gender pay action plans; and iii) influenced UK and Welsh governments to encourage further action to reduce gendered economic inequalities.

4.1 Impact on WAVE case study employers and employees

From 2013-2016, the Cardiff team worked with Swansea University, Cwm Taf University Health Board, and Rhondda Cynon Taf and County Borough Council (total of 24,000 employees, the majority of whom are women). Having identified sources of earnings disparities, organisations were supported to redesign practices and embed change management processes **[5.1]**.

a. Swansea University

The **evidence** from the employment and pay analysis showed that positions such as portering, perceived as 'men's work', tended to be full-time, permanent and reasonably well-paid, but roles within catering and cleaning were more likely to be part-time, temporary and low-paid. As a result, the University took **action** by creating new gender-neutral 'Campus Services' roles from previously gender-segregated jobs. This allowed workers to easily move between typically gendered tasks and all jobs were offered on a flexible working basis, supported by a transformational values-based recruitment initiative. This led to an improved gender balance and increased employment of women, especially in supervisor roles where 65% of new team leaders were female. Bethan Lewis, the University's Head of Equality, confirmed: *"This is a much higher percentage of women in Team Leader roles, and therefore higher grades, than we would have anticipated if we had undertaken a traditional recruitment"* **[5.2]**.

Cardiff research gave the University *"a deep and nuanced understanding of the barriers women academics face in recruitment retention and promotion"* **[5.2]**, resulting in revised academic promotions criteria, significant investment in women's leadership training, and introduction of study leave following maternity leave. This led to an increase in women applying for promotion and a 96% improvement in their success in academic promotions **[5.2]**. Lewis stated: *"The WAVE research acted as a catalyst to implement deep and long-lasting improvements to employment systems, policies and practices at Swansea University. These changes have enabled Swansea to provide an inclusive and supportive environment that enables our staff and students to fulfil their potential"* **[5.2]**.

b. Cwm Taf University Health Board

Cardiff research **evidence** showed limited progression in certain areas of employment at the Health Board (laundry, cleaning, catering). **Actions** implemented based on this included:

- radical overhaul of Performance and Development Review documentation to prioritise progression and development;
- extension of job shadowing and secondment schemes;
- training for line managers on benefits of increasing working hours;
- creation of new recruitment processes, e.g. advance notice of permanent vacancies.

As a result, an additional 81 nurses, previously employed as casual bank staff, were recruited into permanent posts and there was widespread uptake of additional shifts **[5.3a]**. New job shadowing opportunities changed the staffing profile in previously male-dominated domains. For example, three women were appointed into new IT posts, and the Health Board recruited its first female Portering Manager **[5.3a]**. [Text redacted], Workforce and

Organisation Director, confirmed: *"This study took us to a whole new level in terms of detailed analysis of the information and the opportunity to discuss what the data was really telling us"* [5.3b].

c. Rhondda Cynon Taf Council

Evidence showed that one third of the Council's posts were in the lowest three grades and almost all were held by women working on a part-time basis. The **action** was to hold consultations with low graded part-time staff to explore the degree of 'choice' in working patterns, the challenges of working multiple jobs, and aspirations for progression. This resulted in [5.4a]:

- a full review of flexible working;
- redesigned staff Performance and Development Review processes;
- training for 600+ line managers on unconscious bias and job enrichment opportunities;
- simplifying the language in job descriptions.

The organisation's radical improvement of HR policies and practices enabled current and prospective employees at all grades to benefit from improved line management and a more inclusive workplace. HR Adviser [text redacted] stated that WAVE *"made a significant difference to our work to address pay inequalities"* and *"informed senior managers of the systemic issues that need to be addressed to maintain progress"* [5.4a]. The renewed focus on workforce planning *"led to real and tangible changes"* in terms and conditions [5.5, p.7].

4.2 Impact on further public sector organisations in Wales

The Cardiff team achieved wider impact through establishing a Gender Employment and Pay Network for HR professionals. 22 employers joined the network, with an average of 15 employers attending each event (covering over 100,000 employees) from the public, private and third sectors. The network met 10 times over 18 months, with researchers facilitating this on-going community of practice in order to share learning from their research and demonstrate how it was supporting organisational change. This allowed organisations to consider whether and how they could replicate such actions [5.4b, 5.6].

Alongside this, in 2016 the team used ESRC IAA funding to assist a further eight employers (including Airbus, four local authorities, a health board, and Public Health Wales) to use the Gender Employment and Pay Analysis (GEPA) tool the researchers developed in their own organisations. For example, they convened two clinics to help these employers apply the tool to: i) comply with Wales' Equality Duty and ii) understand the impact of gender pay gaps within their own workforces. Following these clinics, the researchers further supported two of these employers (Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Swansea County Council) by providing bespoke assistance to utilise the GEPA tool and prepare recommendations for action. As a result, these organisations, with a combined total of 25,000 employees, implemented gender pay action plans for the first time. [5.4b, 5.6]

Swansea County Council (Adrian Chard, Strategic HR and OD Manager) confirmed that using the analysis tool to calculate implementation of a new pay structure *"reduced our gender pay gap by approximately 2%"* [5.4b]. They estimate the work *"positively impacted approximately 11,000 employees through enabling our understanding of the gender pay gap across functions and grades"* [5.4b]. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (Mike Townsend, Senior Equalities Manager during the period) noted that Cardiff provided *"pivotal knowledge that BCUHB had never had before which could be used to improve organisational strategies and the welfare of our staff"* and that it is *"an absolute certainty that the advancement towards greater gender pay equality would not have been possible without WAVE/GEPA helping to identify that inequality exists and guiding organisations like BCUHB to implement changes to decrease that gap for the benefit of not only the economy but our employees"* [5.6].

Sharon West, Welsh Government's Head of Equality (2013-2016) confirmed the broad benefits of the Gender Employment and Pay Network and the analysis tool, which enabled

members “to begin implementing the changes necessary in their own organisations” and “enabled public sector employers in Wales to populate the tool with their data, helping to produce the data required by the Welsh Specific Equality Duty on Pay Differences” [5.7].

4.3 Impact on policy in Wales and the UK

The research programme made a “significant contribution” to Welsh Government’s objective to tackle gender pay inequalities and has been “instrumental in the effective implementation of the Welsh Specific Equality Duty on Pay Differences” [5.7]. Welsh Government’s endorsement of the research methodology in 2015 saw the responsibility for gender equality in the economy extended to *all* Cabinet portfolios for the first time. The Ministers responsible for employment and equalities wrote to all Cabinet Ministers to request they share the WAVE methodology with their stakeholders to help fulfil their duty requirements [5.7]. In March 2016 the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty wrote to Chief Executives of all local authorities in Wales and encouraged them to use Cardiff’s methodology for reporting against the equal pay duty and addressing gendered patterns of working [5.8].

Cardiff research has also been used by UK and Welsh Governments to encourage further action to reduce gendered economic inequalities. For example, in 2016, the researchers influenced development of the UK Gender Pay Gap Regulations through the Academic Expert Group of the UK Government Equality Office and gave oral evidence to the Women and Equalities Select Committee Inquiry into the Gender Pay Gap [5.9]. Parken also gave expert evidence to an enquiry by the National Assembly for Wales’ Communities, Local Government and Equalities Committee, focusing on the creation of ‘job ladders’ in low-paid work [5.10, p.17]. The Committee’s 2018 report [5.10] emphasised this with a recommendation for the Welsh Government to pilot the creation of job ladders in Wales’ Foundational Economy [5.10, p.47]. The report also highlighted the “positive impact the WAVE programme has had to improve progression and employment opportunities” [5.10, p.43] and stated that: “We believe that the Welsh Government needs to adopt this approach, learning the lessons from WAVE” [5.10, p.47].

In summary, Cardiff research led to workforce changes in organisations with over 49,000 employees, by introducing innovations to tackle gender segregation, promoting women’s progression from both low and high-graded work, and reducing pay gaps. The research also promoted shared learning across organisations covering a further 100,000 employees, and underpinned major revisions to UK and Welsh government policy on gender pay gaps.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- [5.1] ‘The WAVE Employer Case Studies: From Evidence to Action on Gender Pay Gaps’, Dr. Alison Parken, June 2015
- [5.2] Testimonial from Bethan Lewis, Head of Equality, Swansea University
- [5.3] Cwm Taf University Health Board evidence: **a.** Presentation given by the organisation and **b.** Statement from [text redacted], Workforce and Organisation Director
- [5.4] Testimonials from local authority case studies: **a.** [Text redacted] HR Adviser, Rhondda Cynon Taf Council **b.** Adrian Chard, Strategic HR and OD Manager, Swansea Council
- [5.5] External Evaluation of the WAVE Programme for the Wales European Funding Office, West Wales and the Valleys Convergence Operational Programme ESF 2007-2013
- [5.6] Mike Townsend, Senior Equalities Manager (2009-2019), Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- [5.7] Testimonial from Sharon West, Head of Equality (2013-2016), Welsh Government
- [5.8] Annual Report on Equality (2015-2016), Welsh Government
- [5.9] Invitation to Government Equalities Office Academic Expert Group on the UK Gender Pay, Women and Equalities Select Committee, Inquiry into the Gender Pay Gap, 2016
- [5.10] Report of the National Assembly for Wales [now Senedd – Welsh Parliament] Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee ‘Making the Economy Work for People on Low Incomes’ (May 2018)