Wage Inequality Amongst Artists
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University of Northern Iowa

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Artist Wage Disparities

Fruehling Research Project
by Raegan Christianson
Supervised by Dr. Kysar-Moon
Categories of artists: actors; announcers; architects; fine artists (e.g., painters, sculptures, and illustrators), art directors, and animators; dancers and choreographers; designers; entertainers and performers; musicians and singers; photographers; producers and directors; and writers and authors.

“Artists generally earn less than workers with similar levels of education. Artists earn $6,000 less annually than other 'professional' workers,” (National Endowment for the Arts 2008: 2)
Literature Review

❖ Wage Inequality between Men and Women
  ➢ Autor, Manning, and Smith (2016); Western and Rosenfield (2011); Solly (2019)

❖ Women who have had children and the motherhood penalty
  ➢ Baumle (2009)

❖ Wage Inequality Across Race
  ➢ Solly (2019); Cheeseman Day and Shin (2020)

❖ Wage Inequality Across Race and Gender
  ➢ Jones (2021); Patten (2016)
Hypotheses

1. Female artists will earn less than their male counterparts
2. Women who have had children in the past 12 months will earn less
3. White artists on average will earn higher wages than most other races
4. Women of color will earn the least compared with white women, men of color, and white men
Methods

The sample (with a sample size of n = 129895) collected from The American Community Survey from 2011 to 2015 (U.S. Census 2017)

- Dependent variables
  - Income, self-employed income, wages or salary, and total earnings
- Independent Variables
  - Sex, race, occupation, hours worked per week, weeks worked per year, age, women who have given birth in the past 12 months

Linear regression models for significant associations between 1) race, ethnicity, and income; 2) sex and income; and 3) race, sex, and income
Hypothesis Test 1: Are women paid equal to men?

- total person’s income, total earnings, wages/salary, and self-employment = $p<0.001$
- Women with lower levels of English proficiency had lower total income, self-employment income, total earnings, and wages or salary
Hypothesis Test 2: Women who have had children in the past 12 months will earn less

- approx. 5% had given birth in the last 12 months out of 63,000 women in the sample
- American Indian/Alaskan Native women not included
- women who did not have a baby in the past 12 months had higher total income (p<0.01)
- no difference in self-employment income
- greater total earnings (p<0.05)
- higher wages or salary (p<0.01) compared to women who did have a baby
- lower levels of English proficiency had lower total income, self-employment income, total earnings, and wages or salary (p<0.001)
Figure 1. Predicted Total Income by Race and Had Baby in Past 12 Months (Women Only Model)
Hypothesis Test 3: White artists on average are earning higher wages than most other races

- Black people earn significantly less in total income and earnings ($p<0.01$)
- American Indians/Alaskan Natives also earn significantly less in total income and earnings, as well as wages/salary ($p<0.001$)
- Asians are the opposite, as they outearn white people in total income, earnings, self-employed income, and wages/salaries ($p<0.001$)
- Statistically significant association between age and English speaking ability with income, earnings, wages/salary, and self-employed earnings ($p<0.001$)
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 1 other race, 2 or more
Results of Hypothesis Test 4

Hypothesis Test 4: Intersectionality

- Women who are Black ($p<0.01$), of some other race alone ($p<0.001$) earn significantly less in their wages/salary and yearly income and earnings.

- Women who are of two or more races earn significantly less in their wages/salary ($p<0.05$) and yearly income ($p<0.01$) and earnings ($p<0.01$).
Figure 2. Predicted Total Income by Race and Sex

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Figure 3. Predicted Total Earnings by Race and Sex

Race and Sex

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Figure 4. Predicted Wages & Earnings by Race and Sex