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CRACKING THE WORKPLACE CODE: GENDER WAGE GAPS AND OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION IN CAMEROON

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Abstract

The labor market in Cameroon has faced significant challenges due to economic conditions and demographic factors, resulting in a restructuring of the labor force. This has led to deteriorating employment conditions, increased precarious work, and the growth of the informal sector. Women in Cameroon, in particular, face overrepresentation in low-wage jobs, especially in the informal agricultural sector. While there have been advancements in women's participation in the labor market, gender disparities persist, with women often occupying lower-paying positions. This paper examines the evolving role of women in the Cameroonian labor market, highlighting progress in terms of professional equality in top positions, yet acknowledging ongoing challenges such as the gender pay gap and rural gender inequalities. The study also emphasizes the economic invisibility of women's domestic and reproductive work, which, despite its critical role in maintaining households and communities, remains largely unrecognized. Understanding these dynamics is essential for addressing labor market inequalities and promoting gender equality in Cameroon.

1. Introduction

In Cameroon, the economic situation and the demographic weight have led to a destructuration of the labour market. The employment situation and the availability of social services have considerably deteriorated with the development of precarious employment and an expansion of the informal sector. Labour market indicators in Cameroon show strong disparities (National Institute of Statistics (NIS), 2012; Ekamena, 2014; Baye, Epo & Ndenzako, 2016; *International Labour Organization* (ILO), 2017). The informal sector provides the most opportunities for professional insertion; in fact, it currently occupies about 90% of workers (NIS, 2016). In Cameroon, women tend to be over-represented in low-wage jobs and especially in the informal agricultural sector where productivity and farm incomes are lower (NIS, 2012). The female population is represented in all sectors of activity, particularly in the service sector. However, according to the ILO (2017), informal employments are highly concentrated in the service sector.

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Since the 1990s, the behaviour of women in the labour market in Cameroon has evolved. The progresses in terms of professional equality in the labour market are reflected in the portion of women in the top jobs. Currently, there are eight women ministers and three women secretaries of state in the government, a percentage of 17.18%, compared to 11.7% in 2012 and 6.7% in 2002. Today, women represent 35% of parliament compared to 13.9% in 2012 and 5.9% in 2002. Despite these progresses, the place of women in senior positions of responsibility remains limited and the gender pay gap is still current. In rural zones, gender inequalities are widespread in the labour market, where men and women often work in different combinations of employment, as selves-employed farmers, temporary workers, or unpaid family workers. Rural women continue to be penalised by the invisibility of their work in the home economy. They are strongly engaged in domestic and reproductive functions, which are crucial for the maintenance of home, families, parents and communities, but this is seen as an extension of family duties, which explains that this important part being economically invisible.

Despite these effects on gender equality and economic productivity, employment segregation occurs in both developed and developing countries. It also depends on social norms and beliefs and local constraints on labour supply and demand. This is of particular concern as gender attitudes are persistent and continue to hamper access to better opportunities for women in many countries (Giuliano, 2018). This is a serious preoccupation for equity, gender equality and the implications of low autonomy on the well-being of women and children.

Effective arguments have been made for policies to improve women's position in the labour market. In particular, a growing body of research points to the adverse effect of gender employment gaps on the overall productivity and growth potential of emerging economies (Klasen & Lamanna 2009).

Occupational segregation has significant costs for the economy. Indeed, the limited participation of women in leadership and management positions could be trammed to innovation and economic growth; it limits efforts to encourage women's participation in the labour market (Das & Kotikula, 2019). Some studies have shown that there are benefits to having a more diverse workforce as there are economic costs associated with gender inequalities in the labour market. According to these approaches, the economic benefits of increasing women's labour force participation have beneficial effects on productivity and economic growth (Ngai & Petrongolo, 2017; Ostry, Alvarez, Espinoza & Papageorgiou, 2018).

Progresses are being made in several countries to reduce gender gaps in human capital (education and health), but these progresses are not always associated with improved conditions for women in the labour market. Despite significant improvements in policies related to women's empowerment over the past decades, women's participation in the labour market has remained low, even in developed countries (Lagarde & Ostry, 2018). Patterns of occupational gender segregation vary depending on countries. Globally, women tend to be concentrated in low productivity sectors (Das & Kotikula, 2019). Women are found predominantly among the unemployed and family workers. They continue to occupy the majority of atypical, informal, temporary and parttime jobs (ILO, 2019). Under these conditions, women would not achieve full economic and social autonomy. According to the data in Cameroon, there is a persistence of limited access of women to certain jobs, which would also lead to a persistence of gender wage gaps. The aim of this study is to characterise the evolution of wage differentials between men and women in the labour market, taking into consideration the distribution of men and women according to socio-professional categories in Cameroon since 2001. It is up for us to determine whether women and men work in different jobs because of their different preferences and attitudes or rather because of selection mechanisms in the labour market, thus maintaining wage gaps. The research for explanations, sources and estimates of these gaps is a reason to explain and reduce the persistence of employment inequalities.

This study will have five sections, after the introduction, in the second section we will make a survey of the theoretical contributions, the third section will be devoted to the methodology and in the fourth section we will present the results and then the conclusion.

2. The theoretical literature review

2.1. Theoretical contributions to occupational segregation

One theoretical explanation for occupational segregation is Bergmann's "crowding hypothesis" (Bergmann, 1971, 1974). According to this model, competition is imperfect in the labour market; the dominant group (men) can ration the entrance into certain types of jobs and thus benefit from a higher wage rate in these jobs. In contrast,

the disadvantaged group (women) is excluded from these jobs and accumulates a limited number of jobs. The increase in the participation rate of women in the labour market has not reduced the concentration of female jobs and the occupational segregation of men and women.

2.1.1. Horizontal segregation

The human capital approach is used to explain the phenomenon of occupational segregation. It predicts that women will tend to be specialised in occupations of their preference and where their career discontinuities are not penalised, i.e. in rather low-skilled occupations (Polachek, 1981). However, in reality, members of both sexes are found in jobs requiring a higher investment in specific human capital, which is inconsistent with the theory. Some economists have developed theoretical models that explain occupational segregation in the labour market in terms of employer behaviour. For example, according to Becker (1957), employers have a taste for discrimination. Arrow (1972) and Phelps (1972) argue that employers do not have such preferences, but that women are excluded from certain jobs because of the imperfect information employers have about them. According to Arrow (opcit), if women know that they will be excluded from certain jobs, they will less invest in human capital.

However, institutional economists believe that segregation is not due to discrimination, but to the structure of the labour market. Killingsworth (1987) bases his approach on labour market favouritism towards men.

It assumes that the market is made up of two types of jobs (A and B) and that employers discriminate in favour of male employees in accessing the better-paid B job, even though women are also equally productive. He then shows that this discrimination leads to several results that are consistent with certain stylised facts observed in the labour market. In particular, the job tenure gap will be larger in jobs where women are under-represented (Job B) (Havet & Sofer, 2002).

2.1.2. Vertical segregation

Vertical segregation is a limit to women's access to the hierarchical functions. This access seems to be limited by an invisible and transparent "glass ceiling". To explain the glass ceiling, we use arguments related to the sociology of work and organisations, the sociology of the family, or the sociology of professions.

One argument has to do more with the characteristics of the work organisation in managerial occupations, which are essentially adapted to men's strategies and less often compatible with women's strategies and aspirations. The search of a balance between professional and family investment leads women to give up continuing careers that require time commitment and permanent availability. The norm of permanent availability/mobility is one of the conditions for gaining power (Maruani & Nicole, 1989). Women managers are more likely to live alone, and when they are in a couple, they are more likely to be the partners of managers and therefore have to negotiate their mobility and availability with a spouse who is himself preoccupied with his own promotion (Pochic, 2004).

Another factor is the fundamental role of networks in accessing leadership positions. Women often lack the information, connections, and support needed to reach higher positions because they are cut off from the networks, both formal and informal, whose support is essential for advancement within the company. Because they receive less attention and encouragement from their superiors, they may feel less legitimate. This factor works in a loop, as the higher percentage of men at the decision making level contributes to maintaining the glass ceiling (Maruani & Nicole, op.cit).

Another argument that contributes to the creation of the 'glass ceiling' is related to the stereotypical conception of the skills required and in the conception of responsibility or qualification. The notion of hierarchical responsibility is defined in relation to the number of subordinates under one's instruction, and careers are based more on manly principles such as competition or courage. Furthermore, the implementation of the competence approach in the new classification systems combines over-valuation of the technical dimension and under-valuation of the relational dimension (Sehili, 2000). Relational and behavioural skills are often less recognised on the labour market and are not subject to real formal learning processes because they are assumed to be 'innate', natural because they are acquired within the family socialisation (Daune-Richard, 2001).

2.2. A theory of job market segmentation

According to the employment segmentation theory (Doeringer and Piore, 1971), the distribution of wages and socio-economic status in the labour market less depends on the distribution of education levels than the structure of the labour market. While the proponents of the neoclassical human capital theory assert that there are two types

of jobs, namely skilled and unskilled, employment segmentation theory reprents it differently. The basic assumption of this theory is that the labour market is divided into two sectors: the primary sector and the secondary sector. The difference between the two sectors has more to do with the quality of the jobs themselves than with the qualifications of the employees. Jobs in the primary sector are good jobs, while jobs in the secondary sector are bad jobs.

The secondary sector is characterised by jobs requiring a very low level of qualification, offering only inconstant employment, low pay, poor working conditions and small chance to progress in their career. The staff is not unionised and is predominantly dominated by people from disfavored groups: ethnic minorities, women and older people, immigrants. On the other hand, the primary sector is characterised by jobs that are hierarchical to each other and relatively well paid, on-the-job training, clear differences in wages (wage structure), opportunities for promotion, well-defined work rules and job stability (Doeringer & Piore, op.cit).

The primary sector is divided into two tiers: the lower-jobs tier and the upper-jobs tier. The two tiers are distinguished by the same differences as between the primary and secondary markets. Compared to subordinate jobs, senior jobs are characterised by greater security, higher levels of education, creative freedom and relatively higher incomes (Griffin, Kalleberg & Alexander, 1981).

According to segmentation theory, the valuation of education depends on the type of market in which the individual is hired: differences in human capital are not expressed by differences in wage gains if one is in the primary market (Granahan & Shakow, 1990). According to Doeringer & Piore (op.cit), the labour market is structured according to the level of technological complexity of production. Individuals are recruited for jobs when they have human capital that matches the technical requirements. Wages are not determined by the level of education, but by the characteristics of the jobs. This is why, for jobs that are technically unsophisticated and belong to the lower primary sector, educational attainment does not influence recruitment and pay determination. This approach explains why people are paid according to the functions they perform and not according to their education levels.

3. Methodology

3.1. Specification of the model

The occupied job is an important phenomenon that differentiates populations in the labour market and thus the allocation of wages. A method for decomposition of the wage differential is provided by Brown, Moon & Zoloth (1980). This method is an extension of the Oaxaca-Blinder (1973) decomposition; it introduces job occupation differences into the analysis of wage differentials incorporating distinctions in wage differentials between job categories, i.e. due to different job structures (inter-category gap) and also within the same job categories (intra-category gap). These two types of wage gaps are further decomposed in order to distinguish between the justified portion and the portion attributable to discrimination. The main idea is to measure how the total gender wage gap is explained by gender differences in job allocation (occupational segregation). To determine the Brown & al. (1980) wage decomposition equation, we start from the OLS wage equations for men and women respectively, expressed as follows:

$$\overline{W}_{hj} = \hat{\alpha}_{jh} + \sum_{h} \hat{\beta}_{jh} \overline{X}_{hj} \quad \text{et} \quad \overline{W}_{fj} = \hat{\alpha}_{jf} + \sum_{f} \hat{\beta}_{jf} \overline{X}_{fj} \quad (1)$$

Where j denotes the job category occupied, $\overline{W}_j$ and $\overline{W}_j$ are the logarithm of the wage average of men and women respectively, $\hat{\alpha}_j$ and $\hat{\beta}_j$ are the vectors of the estimated coefficients, $\overline{X}^h_j$ and $\overline{X}^f_j$ are the matrices of the individual average characteristics of the workers. If we take P_j^h and P_j^f, the probabilities of working in category j where j=1,...J. It follows that :

$$\bar{W}^{h} - \bar{W}^{f} = \sum_{j=1}^{J} P_j^{h} W_j^{h} - \sum_{j=1}^{J} P_j^{f} W_j^{f} \quad (2)$$

By adding and subtracting from the right-hand side of equation (2), we get:

$$\bar{W}^{h} - \bar{W}^{f} = \sum_{j=1}^{J} P_j^{h} W_j^{h} - \sum_{j=1}^{J} P_j^{f} W_j^{h} + \sum_{j=1}^{J} P_j^{f} W_j^{h} - \sum_{j=1}^{J} P_j^{f} W_j^{f} \quad (3)$$

The first term represents the within-occupational component, which measures the part of the gap that is due to wage differences within occupations. The second term corresponds to the inter-occupational component: this is the portion of the wage differential is attributable to differences in the distribution of male and female workers across job occupation.

Both terms can be decomposed into explained and unexplained components. The equation of Brown et al (1980) can be written:

$$\bar{W}^{h} - \bar{W}^{f} = \sum_{j=1}^{J} P_j^{h} \left(W_j^{h} - W_j^{f}\right) + \sum_{j=1}^{J} W_j^{f} \left(P_j^{h} - P_j^{f}\right) \quad (4)$$

The first two terms of equation represent the intra-occupational component of the wage gap. The first term is the explained portion which captures the part of the within occupation differential that is due to the different levels of labor market characteristics.

The second term is the unexplained portion, that is, the portion of the within wage differential that arises from gender differences in the rates of return to labor market characteristics and that is interpreted as wage discrimination.

The third and fourth terms on the right hand side correspond, respectively, to the explained and unexplained portions of the inter-occupational component. The parameter P_j^{f} represents the non-discriminatory occupational structure for female. The explained portion of the inter-occupational term measures the part of the across occupation wage differential that results from differences in male and female endowments. The unexplained portion reflects the part of the across occupation wage differential that is not explained by differences in the two groups' characteristics and that is understood as employment discrimination (Meurs & Ponthieux, 1999).

To estimate the wage decomposition using the Brown et al (1980) method, the first step is to predict the probability of men's access to job occupations based on a set of individual characteristics. These are age, age2 , experience, education and place of living. This requires an estimation of the reduced form of the Multinomial Logit model for the sample. The second step is to simulate the distribution of the occupations for women as if they had the same employment access structure as men.

The third step is to estimate the wages of both populations for each occupation category. The six categories include: senior managers, skilled workers, manual workers, patrons, family helpers and apprentices combined into one category and self-employed. The total gender pay gap is then decomposed into different terms.

3. 2. Data and Variables of the Study

In Cameroon, the data sources that gather information to quantify the more recent evolution of wage discrimination are the ECAM II, ECAM III and ECAM IV databases, which are respectively the second, third and fourth Cameroon Household Consumption Surveys conducted in 2001, 2007 and 2014.

The limitation of this work is that the employee population is considered homogeneous according to the criterion of actual working time during the reference week. However, salaried workers in the urban milieu are often subjects to the phenomenon of underemployment because of the importance of seasonal jobs. This is all the more important as certain professions (nursing, textiles, etc.) are predominantly female and others (fishing, crafts, transport, etc.) predominantly male. It is therefore likely that part of the gender wage gap is due to this phenomenon of underemployment, which is not apprehended by the Cameroon Household Surveys.

We restrict our analyses on individuals aged from 15 to 60 who declare themselves to be employed and receive a salary. The wage variable is the logarithm of the declared monthly income, either as an amount or as an interval. It includes wages, salaries and other earnings in cash from the activity. For the self-employed it also corresponds to the net business income, i.e. the profit, or to the mixed income for the Informal Production Units, as the profit is difficult to calculate in their case. The variables selected to explain income are: age, age squared, gender, level of education, experience, socio-professional occupation, place of living.

4. Results

Table 1 presents the total wage gaps in 2001, 2007 and 2014 which are 0.9877, 0.6787 and 0.7899 respectively. We note that the gender wage gap in Cameroon decreased from 2001 to 2007 by 30.89% and increased by 10% between 2007 and 2014. We can explain this decrease with the financial crisis of 2008 which would have had the effect of deteriorating the labour market, women being the first to undergo the consequences; the gender wage gap would have increased. This study shows a persistence of gender wage differentials between 2001 and 2014. Nevertheless, the results show that efforts have been made and continue to be made to reduce gender inequalities in the labour market in Cameroon. These results are in line with the findings of a study by the ILO (2017) on the persistence of monthly gender wage gaps between 2005 and 2010 in Cameroon.

Table 1: Total gender wage differential

Years	2001	2007	2014
Total differential	0,987745	0,678788	0,789945

Source: Author's calculation based on ECAM 2, ECAM 3 and ECAM 4

The results of the decomposition of these differentials are contained in Table 2 and show each portion thereby determined over the years. They show that the intra-category component explains more of the wage gap than the total gap. Indeed, 0.7547 (76.41%) in 2001; 0.5639 (83%) in 2007 and 0.6055 (76.65%) in 2014 represent the intra-category wage gap while 0.2329 (23.59%) in 2001; 0.1148 (17%) in 2007 and 0.1844 (23.35%) correspond to the wage gap that results from gender differences in the distribution of the jobs. Thus, a larger part of the total wage gap is due to differences in the wages of men and women within the same occupations, while a small part of this gap is explained by the different distribution of men and women in the same occupations. The results also show that by combining intra- and inter-category effects, the unexplained total attributed to gender discrimination fully justifies the gap.

Table 2: Decomposition of the wage differential on access to socio-professional groups

	Intra-occupational differential			**Inter-occupational differential**		
Years	2001	2007	2014	2001	2007	2014
Explained portion	-0,0072 (-0,95%)	-0,0229 (-4%)	-0,0807 (-13%)	0,0539 23,16%	0,0429 (37,38%)	0,0681 (37%)
Unexplained portion	0,7620 100,95%	0,5868 (104%)	0,6862 (113%)	0,1790 76,84%	0,0718 (62,62%)	0,1162 (63%)

Total	**0,7547 76,41%**	**0,5639 (83%)**	**0,6055 (76,65 %)**	**0,2329 23,59%**	**0,1148 (17%)**	**0,1844 (23,35 %)**

Source: Author's calculation based on ECAM 2, ECAM 3 and ECAM 4

The analysis of the intra-category component in the explained and unexplained parts shows the significant importance of the unexplained part in explaining the differentials in the same occupations. Indeed, the unexplained portion totally represents and evens more the intra-category component. While 4% in 2007 and 13% in 2014 of this component is explained by differences in labour market characteristics between men and women, 104% in 2007 and 113% in 2014 cannot be explained by these differences. We notice that in 2001, this difference in labour market characteristics between men and women is almost zero (0.95%). Noting that; the explained portion is negative from 2001 to 2014, which means that with regard to the differences in individual gender characteristics in the labour market, men are disadvantaged. This means that the enhancement of individual characteristics decreases intra-category gender wage differentials.

The results therefore show that a large part of the gender wage gap is not explained by individual endowment differences, but is due to wage discrimination. As regards the inter-category component, 23.16% of the gap in 2001, 37.38% of the gap in 2007 while 37% of the gap in 2014 is explained by differences in characteristics between men and women on the labour market. While 76.84% in 2001; 62.62% in 2007 and 63% in 2014 are explained by discrimination against women in access to certain employment. This highlights an aspect of discrimination that stems from the over-representation of women in lower paying firms and men in higher paying firms. This result points to the existence of horizontal occupational segregation as presented by Bergman (1974)

Table 3: Decomposition of the wage differential per socio-professional occupation

Socio-professional occupation	Years	Intra-occupational differential	Inter-occupational differential
Senior manager	**2001**	-0,0047 (-0,62%)	0,2760 (118,48%)
	2007	0,0025 (0,45%)	0,3618 (315%)
	2014	0,0108 (1,79%)	0,3699 (200,59%)
Skilled workers	**2001**	-0,0217 (-2,87%)	0,6482 (278,24%)
	2007	-0,0215 (-3,8%)	1,0814 (942%)
	2014	0,0410 (- 6,78%)	0,8242 (446,91%)
Manual workers	**2001**	0,0362 (4,8%)	0,5752 (246,92%)
	2007	0,0135 (2,4%)	0,3424 (298,27%)
	2014	0,0182 (3,01%)	0,3563 (193,24%)
Patrons	**2001**	0,0155 (2,06%)	0,1343 (57,68%)
	2007	0,0226 (4%)	0,3314 (288%)
	2014	0,0209 (3,45%)	0,1508 (81,76%)
Self-employed	**2001**	0,6668 (88,34%)	-1,3918 (-597,45)
	2007	0,4816 (85,4%)	-2,0013 (-1743%)
	2014	0,5016 (82,84%)	-1,4026 (-760,56%)
and Family helpers apprentices	**2001**	0,0626 (8,29%)	-0,0090 (-3,86%)
	2007	0,0651 (11,55%)	-0,0010 (-0,93%)
	2014	0,0128 (2,11%)	-0,1142 (-61,96%)
Total	**2001**	0,7547	0,2329
	2007	0,5639	0,1148
	2014	0,6055	0,1844

Source: Author's calculation based on ECAM 2, ECAM 3 and ECAM 4

The results in Table 3 give the decomposition of the total wage gap per component and per socioprofessional category. The decomposition of the intra-category component shows that the same-employment wage gap is higher in the own-account workers category with a decrease from 2001 to 2014. Indeed, this category accounts for 88.34% in 2001, 85% in 2007 and 82.84% in 2014 of the total gap within the same employments, this gap is totally and even more justified by the unexplained portion attributed to wage discrimination against women.

The decomposition of the inter-category component also shows that own-account workers have the highest gap, but in the distribution of the occupations, women are the most favoured. The category "selfemployed" has thus contributed over the years in Cameroon to reducing the gap in access to employment due to occupational segregation, which often increases the gender wage gap. For manual workers, the intra-category gap was 4.8% in 2001, 2.4% in 2007 and 3.01% in 2014, while the inter-category gap was 246.92% in 2001, 298% in 2007 and 193.24% in 2014. Both gaps are largely explained by wage discrimination on the one hand and by the limited access of women to this occupation on the other. However, we see a decrease of discrimination and limited access of female manual workers in 2014, perhaps women have decided to go over their nature and face the difficulties associated with this occupation occupation.

The percentage of senior managers in the total gap in the same employment is the lowest (it is negative in 2001, 0.45% in 2007 and 1.79% in 2014), but it remains sufficiently high in the inter-category component. This means that the gender wage differential is more justified by the occupational segregation that women experience in this occupation. Furthermore, the negative sign of the unexplained part of the intra-category difference shows a persistence and increase of gender pay discrimination in the occupation "senior managers" between 2001 and 2014.

As for the occupation "skilled workers", the results show that the wage gap is in favour of women. Its percentage of the total intra-category gap is small and negative (-2.87%, -3.8% in 2007 and -6.78% in 2014). This job category therefore contributes to a decrease in the intra-category wage gap. In addition, the percentage in the inter-category component is the highest (278.24% in 2001, 942% in 2007 and 446.91% in 2014) and it is in favour of men as in the occupation "senior managers" and "patrons". These results show that the gender wage gap observed in the labour market is largely explained by women's limited access to the best high-wage occupations. This corroborates with the results of Baye & al. (2016) who show that women in terms of wages are penalised and that the gender wage gap is explained by individual and labour market characteristics.

These results in theory could be explained by the fact that decision-makers or employers, based on the fact that women are not able to occupying high positions of responsibility due to their nature and the distribution of roles in the household, will consider the nomination or recruitment of men. Offering women positions that allow them time to take care of the home. Moreover, the employer is unable to make difference between women who will remain in the labour market in the long term, regardless of atypical working hours or often difficult and demanding working conditions, and those who will leave quickly. He therefore expects lower productivity on average from women, with a relatively high variance, and he will not be prepared to hire them on the same pay terms as men. Similarly, women anticipating that they will not have the same capacity as men to occupy certain categories of jobs, will make a bad investment in human capital, or will generally choose occupations where working conditions are compatible with their family responsibilities.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to determine the evolution of gender wage differentials in the Cameroonian labour market between 2001 and 2014. The estimated results of the wage decomposition using the Brown et al. method (1980) show that in addition to being discriminated, women are also occupationally segregated, which has persisted since 2001. This is mainly due to the fact that women are majoritary in collective and informal enterprises where salaries are lowest, while men are majoritary in private enterprises and in high-level state positions where salaries are higher. Indeed, the results show a clear persistent contrast from 2001 to 2014 between the occupation of "senior manager", "skilled workers" and "employers" and the occupation of "selfemployed workers", "manual workers" and "apprentices". The first ones are the place of a marked occupational segregation towards women which, added to the discriminations against them, creates a strong wage differential between men

and women in Cameroon. However, the results also show that in some jobs, male "self-employed" workers are occupationally segregated, while male "skilled employees" are discriminated.

This study highlights the persistence of the gender pay gap. Furthermore, it shows that this persistent wage gap is largely a consequence of the structure of the labour market and is linked to the different position of women and men in this market. Despite the government's efforts to reduce inequalities in the labour market through the promotion of gender equality in certain recruitments, gender equality in income is still far from being achieved, and much remains to be done to reduce these gender inequalities. Heavy emphasis must be placed not only on the education of the girl child, but also on the access of women to the highest paid job categories.

Furthermore, in Cameroon, the problem of employment is more in terms of underemployment. This underemployment mostly affects women, because they are highly represented in informal sector activities that are not recognised, registered, protected or regulated by the public authorities. Hence the need to act to improve working conditions in the informal sector, with a view to enhancing the value of their work and reinforcing their professionalism, which would lead to an aspiration to revise their salary conditions. Furthermore, measuring and understanding the phenomenon of occupational segregation in Cameroon is more necessary than ever in order to implement effective public action to promote gender-equitable governance.

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