

Who is responsible for the gender pay gap in TV?

Christopher Young

CHRISTOPHER YOUNG 2019

## SCENE 1 OPENING

A 100 years ago it was acceptable for women to stay at home; clean the house and look after their children. It's because of this that in the 21st century there is still a big gap in the way men and women are paid, with men generally in higher positions in organisations. Especially broadcasters such as the BBC and ITV. So, are women just bad at their jobs, or do we live in a society of sexism?

## SCENE 2 THE LAW

The government said by April, 2018 each organisation with over 250 employees must post the difference between the average earnings of men and women, expressed relative to men's earnings. The results would then be displayed like this (insert pic here), they would show the difference of by saying "the difference between the average earnings of men and women, expressed relative to men's earnings"

This has really exposed some companies, and by far the worst would be THE BODY SHOP INTERNATIONAL LIMITED where women earn 49p for every pound a man earns. Nearly 51% percent lower, how is this possible? In what I'm calling their excuse document they say "Our level of gender pay gap is not where we want it to be. We know we have a number of issues to address and we will do all we can to reduce it." What does this actually mean?, it doesn't actually talk about what they are physically doing to solve this problem.

## SCENE 3 BBC

In July 2017 the BBC posted the salaries of its biggest stars. From my research I asked people if they thought the BBC had the right to post it's stars salaries and everyone said

yes on the basis that its publicly funded.

As you can see from this graphic the top 8 stars paid by the BBC are all male. When you compare the highest paid male to the highest paid female there is a difference of just under 2 million. You could say Chris Evans fronts a lot more than Claudia Winkleman, he has been doing breakfast shows for years whereas Claudia Winkleman just does Strictly Come Dancing.

Interestingly the day I'm writing this, the BBC hit headlines again. "The BBC has been criticised by a group of MPs who say the corporation is refusing to admit it has a problem when it comes to equal pay." The BBC fights back with terms such as 'Much has changed'

When the BBC were under criticism before they admitted that there was work that needed to be done.

#### SCENE 4 THE OTHER BROADCASTERS

The difference with other broadcasters is that some don't admit they need to make improvements.

Let's take ITV for example they said "We're committed to supporting flexibility and helping all of our employees balance their career with life outside of work. At ITV, many more women than men choose to work less than full-time hours, and take extended family leave, which also has an impact on our numbers, particularly our mean bonus gap." In a survey which I conducted the majority of people said this statement was completely untrue, some people did think if they could prove it is true then that would be fair enough. My question here is why haven't they provided any evidence to confirm this information?

Channel 5 is the only broadcaster who's pay is in favour of women. With women averagely getting 2.85% more pay than men. On their press release they don't mention anything about how women are paid more just that there is a 2% difference. This shows that they aren't saying women earn more, they are trying for completely equal pay. Yet what if women work more than men and have higher positions at channel 5? There would be no right to make the pay equal, because women are working more.

#### SCENE 5 SURVEY COMMENTS

From the survey I conducted interestingly when asked "do you think the government are doing enough for the gender pay gap?" all the men said yes and all the women said no.

In another question I asked who is responsible for the gender pay gap? and the majority of people said society, this suggests that people aren't blaming big organisations, they are blaming the rise in social media and how it's created such a negative outlook on the society we live in.

When I asked "what can be done to remove the gender pay gap?" the majority answered that it should be 'absolute transparency within organisations'. What is meant by this is that, all organisations with show in depth how much they pay both men and women. Full honesty. This would include them showing pay brackets for similar job roles.

#### SCENE 6 CONCLUSION

Finally, it doesn't look like the gender pay gap will be disappearing anytime soon. At the current rate of progress it would take around 10 years for the gap to be completely removed. An idea could be the government saying

by a certain year each company must have a gender pay gap of less than 5%. Yet this would be very difficult to enforce. Regarding TV, it is very difficult to say whether the BBC are in the wrong; they have said they need to improve, so maybe they know they are doing something wrong. But you could also say some broadcasters are being very ignorant which suggests that they are ultimately the ones responsible for the gender pay gap.