



Millennial men earn £12,500 less by 30 than Gen X

Annie Makoff 9 Feb 2017  0 comments

More men in low-paid work, while women have moved ‘overwhelmingly’ into higher-skilled jobs

Generation Y men earn £12,500 less than the previous generation by the time they reached the age of 30, new research has revealed.

Between the ages of 22 and 30, men experienced a year-on-year decrease in pay in comparison to Generation X, resulting in a “cumulative pay deficit”, said the Resolution Foundation.

The pay decrease has been exacerbated by a significant rise in part-time work where, since 1993, the numbers of men working part-time in low-paid roles has increased four-fold, the study found.

The proportion of low-paid work carried out by men in their 20s increased by 45 per cent between

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1993 and 2015-16. The numbers of men working in retail doubled from 85,000 to 165,000 and those working in bars and restaurants increased from 45,000 to 130,000.

In contrast, women were found to have moved “overwhelmingly” into higher-skilled jobs, while there was a 66 per cent reduction of young women in mid-skilled positions such as secretarial roles.

Torsten Bell, executive director at the Resolution Foundation, said: “The long-held belief that each generation should do better than the last is under threat. Millennials today are the first to earn less than their predecessors. While that in part reflects their misfortune to come of age in the midst of the huge financial crisis, there are wider economic forces that have seen young men in particular slide back.

“The fact that young women have bucked this trend by moving overwhelmingly into higher-skilled roles is welcome and suggests that the disruptive force of automation has met its match in the forward march of education and feminism.”

Kim Hoque, professor of HRM at Warwick Business School, said the pay disparity between men and women could be attributed to differences in school performance. “Girls have been increasingly outperforming boys for several years at GCSE level,” said Hoque. “It’s inevitable that this will feed through into better labour market outcomes for women entering the labour market, and this is reflected by the fact that for several years now, the full-time gender pay gap for men and women aged 22-39 has all but disappeared.”

But Servane Mouazan, founder of Ogunte, an organisation that supports female entrepreneurs, warned the study reveals that millennials are just seen as “cheap commodities”.

She told *People Management*: “Employers should not see young men and women as such, but rather look at how they can invest in them to gain loyalty and great service, which in turn will be good for business. Women accessing higher-skilled jobs is one thing, but we need to know how long they stay in these positions and if their roles at home have changed. It’s not a clear-cut situation.”

Dr Valerie Stead, an expert on gender and leadership at Lancaster University Management School, said: “One explanation for women under 30 appearing to move into more highly skilled roles may be an increasing number of women graduating from university at undergraduate and postgraduate

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levels, and that this is now having an impact on the workplace. However, this potential pipeline effect needs treating with caution. What may seem like a shift towards gender equality in the workplace is not in evidence as women progress in their careers, with a persistent under-representation of women in leadership roles.”

Meanwhile, Philip Duffy, managing director at financial services company Duff & Phelps, said flexible contracts were partly to blame for low pay among young people, creating a “divided society” with many young people in low-security jobs.

But Adrian Harvey, CEO of training company Elephants don’t forget and ex-MD of British Gas and E.ON, blamed society and the “snowflake generation”. He said: “This is what you get when you let the PC brigade run amok. Millennials were raised by a mollycoddling school system that frowns on competition and sugar coats feedback. Real life, it would appear, is as competitive, cut-throat and merit-based as it ever was. In a nutshell, millennials simply aren’t qualified for real life.”

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