

Women Rights in Architecture

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Abstract—Architecture has long been a male dominated field. There is a big difference between being a student and an being an architect. Nearly half of architecture students are women; but very less numbers of female architects are present in profession. This research paper is about the women who work in the profession are equally important and responsible like men. Both are the pioneers and respectful beings for society of modern era.

Keywords—women, architecture, men, gender.

I.INTRODUCTION

Architecture is a profession where we need to treat, respect women equally when working with their male colleagues from entry post to most senior post of that firm according to their experience, work quality and their knowledge. Traditionally, it has been decided upon what to play, how to deal with it, in dark rooms, by old men, in dark suits. And it needs to change, that definitely needs to change. KjetilTrædal Thorsen, Snøhetta.

Women in architecture are promoted less frequently than men, make less money than men, occupy fewer leadership positions than men, receive fewer awards than men, find their jobs less satisfying than men, and, not surprisingly, abandon the profession in greater numbers than men. Women instead are more adversely affected by cultural issues: a lack of role models, unprofessional behavior, bullying. Addressing sexism and other problems that impede women in the architectural workplace may strike some as a Pandora's box of red tape and feeling statements.

Above all, take this as a given: If a firm can't afford to pay and promote women on the same scale as men, its business model simply isn't viable. That should make the decision a lot easier.

II.REASONS FOR GENDER INEQUALITY IN ARCHITECTURE

Specific to the field of architecture, the majority apply to most professions. And, as with most professions, there are real benefits to remedying the lack of women in architecture.

III.WHY DO WE NEED WOMEN IN ARCHITECTURE?

For those women who persist in the pursuit of a career in architecture, they're often making the choice, like many of their male colleagues, because of their love of the profession. Architecture is a challenging, creative, and fulfilling job that involves taking an idea from paper to reality. Having female team members contribute to this process has distinct advantages, such as:

Creativity and Innovation: Teams with both men and women have more diverse opinions and viewpoints. This breeds greater creativity and more innovative solutions to common design problems.

Community Representation: Architecture exists to reflect and serve the community, and women are a part of our community. Having women involved in design allows their perspectives, views, and needs to be reflected in the final product.

Team Balancing: Having women on the team creates a more balanced group dynamic, leading to greater productivity.

Education is also a crucial part of supporting social change. Educating and raising girls to be confident and powerful is one aspect of this, as is educating boys to see women as equal. Another type of education occurs when younger staff see female architects modelling a balanced life with marriage, kids, and work, showing that work/life balance is achievable in this industry.

However, realizing the advantages that women bring to architecture isn't enough. Getting more women into architecture—particularly leadership positions—

and keeping them there takes support from the industry as a whole. We need both men and women in this industry to help each other be our best selves, and that requires a focused effort from firms along with changes in policy.

IV. IS GENDER PARITY A BIGGER CHALLENGE AMONG ARCHITECTS THAN RACIAL EQUITY IS?

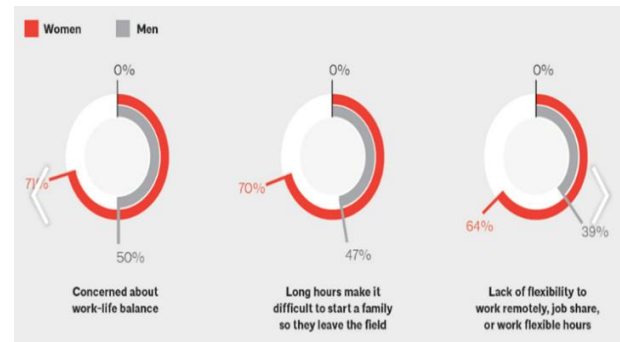
More than 70% of female respondents feel that women are underrepresented in the profession, and half say they are paid less than men and are less likely to be promoted to senior positions. Not surprisingly, overall job satisfaction is 6-12% higher for men than it is for women. What this doesn't reveal is that, even for men, only about half (52-54%) are satisfied. While the gap between men and women is troubling, what's possibly more troubling is that architects in general don't seem very happy in their jobs. Fewer than half of all respondents, male and female, report doing meaningful work (39-45%) or being recognized for doing their jobs well (42-48%), and about a third (29-38%) are happy with their salaries.

Women are especially important to diversity in any type of company, since studies show they improve the entire triple bottom line of social, economic, and environmental value:

- **Economic impact:** According to research, companies with more women in senior management enjoy higher sales, return on investment, profit, and productivity—by wide margins. A 2014 study found that organizations with more women on their boards are more financially stable and less prone to excessive risk-taking. Since women are better for the bottom line, would architects enjoy better salaries if more women held leadership positions in their firms?
- **Social impact:** More women in management leads to higher employee engagement and a more widespread sense that the organization cares about the staff. Research shows that having more women in an organization also creates more team self-confidence, higher psychological safety, lower turnover rates, and better recruitment—for the whole staff. Architects' low job satisfaction

might improve with more women leading the profession.

- **Environmental impact:** women are much more likely than men to support environmental causes—through their work, consumer choices, voting, and activism. The average carbon footprint of women is considerably lower than that of the men, who are more skeptical about climate change, although they understand the science less. More women in leadership could very well improve architects' slow rate of progress on sustainability.



Despite the efforts of some practices, the big picture for women in the profession remains discouraging, says Laura Mark.

V. OTHER MAJOR ISSUES

On 21 January 2017, more than 100,000 marched in London to protest against American president Donald Trump. Dubbed the Women's March it was just one of 576 demonstrations that took part across the globe. Although spurred on by Trump, these marches were about equality and women's rights. It is a stark reminder that, almost 100 years since the suffragette movement, women still need to fight for recognition, equal pay and equal rights.

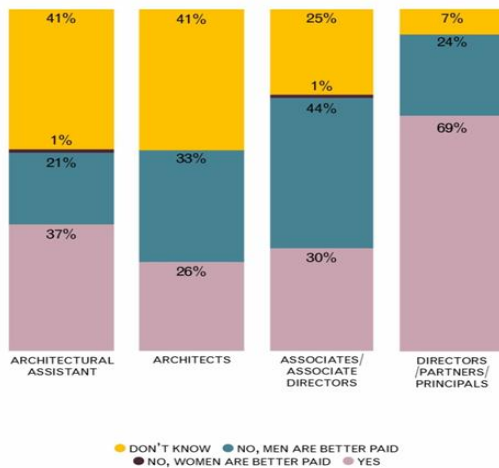
The results of the AJ's annual Women in Architecture survey – undertaken again alongside sister-title The Architectural Review – are a stark reminder that the architectural industry is far from equal. The poll of 1,277 women and 340 men paints a picture of a profession where a glass ceiling is firmly in place; women are penalized for wanting a family, and take the lion's share of responsibility for the care of dependents; and sexual discrimination and bullying are rife.

- Pay

Women are consistently earning less for doing the same job as their male counterparts and, instead of improving, the gaps are widening. ‘The salaries are as far apart as chalk and cheese,’ says Woman Architect of the Year 2015 Teresa Borsuk.

The RIBA has said it will do more to tackle firms that are not paying staff equally, but this may still fail to alter the results. According to Bruce Tether, who analyzed the data from this year’s survey, ‘women are more likely to work for smaller, generally lower-paying practices’, so unless a pay scale is introduced across the board inequality is likely to continue.

Do you think men and women doing the same work are paid the same by your employer?
UK women respond



‘It is up to individuals to negotiate a pay rise based on their work and productivity,’ says past RIBA president Angela Brady, ‘and this is often where women lack confidence to ask for a pay rise, particularly in large practices and when women are in a minority.’

The RIBA report highlights two primary reasons for Gender Pay Gaps in architecture:

“It is worth noting that there are two primary reasons for the median Gender Pay Gaps reported by architecture practices, and professional practices more generally:

1. Men dominate the senior roles, and therefore the better paid roles, in these practices (and the upper two quartiles of the pay distribution)
2. Women in the organizations are more likely to be in the bottom half of the pay distribution as: (a)

women dominate the relatively lower paid administrative and support roles; and (b) the distribution of female professionals tends to be more junior than the distribution of male professionals.”

However, the AIA report again makes a clearer case than the RIBA for outright sexism. It states: “Average salaries for men are higher than women at every year of experience, with average starting pay difference within a few thousand dollars, then increasingly diverging to approximately a 15-percent pay gap in late career. For both men and women, earnings are most commonly cited as integral to career success, and lack of compensation (in the form of pay, promotions, opportunities, professional development, and meaningful work) is the predominant reason why both men and women leave jobs in architecture or leave architecture altogether.”

- **Childcare**

The average age of a female architect when they have their first child is 32 – four years older than the UK average. Among associates, associate directors, directors, partners and principals, the median age at the birth of their first child is two years higher: 34. This suggests those who delay starting a family climb higher (along with those who choose not to) – 38 per cent of women directors and partners/principals do not have children). Among women who do have children, most consider that starting a family has had a detrimental effect on their career progression. Architecture still remains a profession where female architects feel they have to sacrifice their career in order to raise a family. The statistics corroborate that the combination of work and domestic responsibility continues to weigh heavily with women,’ says Borsuk.

- **Career Progression**

With a median age at qualification of 27, architects are relatively old when they achieve full professional status in comparison to other careers. For those not yet qualified, two-thirds of women who filled out the survey intend to qualify at some point in the future.

‘Architectural education is a long series of milestones’, says Duggan Morris co-founder Mary. She adds: ‘It’s a very complex and strategic process and hardly surprising that female architects plan having children around these milestones. The mindset imposed by this structure is to continue on the journey with as few interruptions as possible; to get it

over and done with. 'More than a third of women architects thought their employers provided better opportunities for career advancement to men within their companies. This reduced to 20 per cent at managerial level, but across all levels no one thought women had better opportunities.

Borsuk, adds: 'The profession is still geared towards linear, rising career paths. Men are more likely to follow this traditional path whilst women, are more likely to have atypical or flexible career paths, with multiple breaks, different levels of intensity and changing roles over the course of a career.

This has a detrimental effect on many women, regardless of their talent, commitment, expertise and experience. It also means that women are less likely to be in positions to change these structures. The architecture industry really needs to review its structure and work practices.

- Work/Life Balance

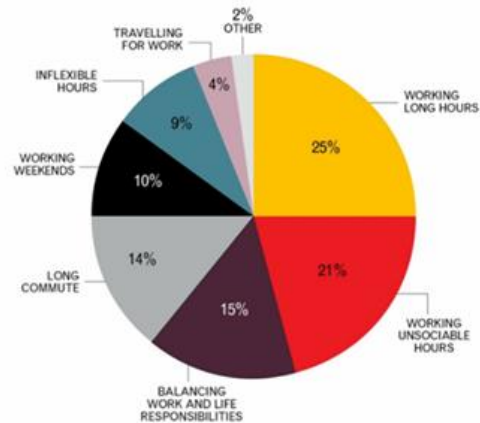
'Long hours have been a problem in architecture since college, and continue to be demanding at all levels,' says Tracy Mellor, partner at Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners. More than a quarter blamed working long hours for their poor work/life balance while 20 per cent of UK-based women put it down to working unsociable hours, including early mornings and evenings.

Women often set up on their own after having children, in order to be more flexible with their time. Borsuk comments: 'The long-hours culture, which starts at architecture school, continues to be widespread in business; equating commitment with unfailing availability.' The practice of architecture is demanding and requires inordinate amounts of time and commitment. But it's also a business, and as a business it has a responsibility to manage, sustain and maintain its workforce.

Surely, we must know that excessive working hours are not sustainable and that a balanced work lifestyle benefit everyone.'

- Sexual Discrimination

Women reporting sexual discrimination say it is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men. Experiences include being excluded, being ignored, having meetings set up at times they cannot make, being shouted at, and being given impossible tasks.



'I am particularly concerned that instances of sexual discrimination are happening in practices,' comments RIBA president Jane Duncan. 'In a world of increased insecurity, misogyny and xenophobia, architecture must stand as a beacon of equality. These results show there is clearly much more to do. I call on every single member of our profession to play their part in stamping out inequality and blowing the whistle if they see it happening.

VI. WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE WORKPLACE

Women's rights in the workplace include many facets, such as the right to work if pregnant. An employer cannot exclude a woman from a position due to pregnancy as long as she can perform satisfactorily. Employers cannot refuse to hire any person due to marital status, gender or age.

In addition, an employee of any company where a woman works may not sexually harass the woman in any way. This includes a hostile work environment where the woman must endure sexual comments, touching or materials, as well as unwanted sexual advances that put her in fear of losing her job if she does not comply. Women should report all advances of this sort to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or a supervisor.

- Benefits

Because of workplace rights, women enjoy freedom to work in almost any position they choose. They join the armed forces, work as cab drivers, own businesses and become executives in large corporations. As the financial status of women increases, so does the welfare of their families, children and the nation.

- Issues Concerning Equal Pay

Another type of discriminatory treatment to which women have been subjected is unequal pay. An article on Workplace Fairness states, "More progress has been made for women, but most women continue to work in jobs stereotyped as female jobs, and women in nearly all job categories receive less pay than males in those job categories." Reasons employers traditionally justified unequal pay for women was purely and simply based on gender, and societal perception of women being the "weaker sex," incapable of functioning well in a business or corporate work environment.

Typically rewarded for exhibiting traits traditionally considered masculine, but when women exhibit these same traits, they are not rewarded but are often penalized for them."

1. Pregnancy discrimination

Many working women are faced with a major dilemma when it comes to starting a family. Pregnancy discrimination occurs when a woman is treated unfairly due to pregnancy, childbirth or a medical condition related to their pregnancy. It also involves bias towards an expectant woman, and behaviors such as social isolation, stereotyping, intrusive comments, change of duties, lack of development opportunities and pay reduction.

2. Sexual harassment

Workplace sexism and harassment have become even more evident in recent years, with women plucking up the courage to share their horrific experiences. With the #MeToo movement exposing just how widespread sexual violence, abuse and harassment are in professional environments, and beyond. Sexual harassment can manifest in multiple forms, from sexual remarks about a person's body, appearance or clothing, to unwelcome physical advancements and any other nonverbal actions that can create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment.

3. Gender pays gap

The gender pay gap is something that's widely discussed in today's working world. While some may try to dismiss this issue as a myth, the numbers and figures prove this claim to be false.

4. Racial discrimination

5. Breaking the glass ceiling

Career advancement is much trickier for young female professionals who need to work harder than their male peers in order to earn recognition or praise.

5. Biased Office Temperatures

in order to address this gender-discriminating bias in thermal comfort, companies need to implement a new formula that is calibrated towards both female and male metabolic rates.

6. The Grooming Gap

Also known as the beauty expectation gap, this phenomenon encapsulates the social norms that are imposed on women regarding their grooming and appearance, and the financial and time constrictions it imposes.

7. Work-Life Imbalance

Another noticeable challenge that the working women face is the lack of work-life balance. Of course, everyone struggles with balancing their work and personal life. This was made especially obvious during the COVID-19 pandemic, with workers working from home reporting they were unable to switch off and maintain boundaries with their work. That said, women are still facing societal expectations regarding family roles, especially in heterosexual relationships.

8. Lack of Childcare Support

Following up from the previous point, it's important to address the detrimental effects that lack of childcare support can have on working moms and their careers.

9. Ego Clashes

This phenomenon is not talked about as much as it should. Women who find themselves progressing in their careers and achieving their professional objectives may face backlash from male partners. This behavior often manifests as sarcasm, passive-aggression, discouragement and guilt-tripping.

10. Being Talked Over

This is a scenario that women are all too familiar with: You start making a point during a meeting only to be interrupted halfway through, talked over and have your idea handed back to you and presented as the culprit's suggestion.

11. Exclusion in Male-Dominated Fields

Unfortunately, women who do choose to pursue a career within these fields are often faced with considerable challenges. These include pervasive stereotypes about their abilities and skills, higher stress and anxiety compared to women working in

different fields, and lack of career advancement opportunities.

12. Favoritism

Favoritism is quite a common occurrence in any work environment and can take many different forms: extra privileges, additional opportunities, undeserved promotions and general sense of entitlement. In male-dominated fields, favoritism is often the result of gender-discrimination. This behavior can be even more detrimental for female workers who may miss out on promotions, career opportunities and equal pay with their male counterparts doing the same job. Favoritism can also create a more hostile and unwelcoming environment that can stunt an individual's growth and advancement in their career.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to create awareness about empowering women in the architecture profession through different issues from personal to workplace issues which gives us an idea of how far this problem has gone and needs a strong solution on that at entry level from top most post of this profession with more numbers of leading women.

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