



The Gender Pay Gap: The Experiences of Women Faculty Members at Cal Poly Pomona



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INTRODUCTION

- Despite the great progress of women in education, participation in the workplace, and the numerous anti-discrimination laws, women continue to make less than their male counterparts.
- On average, women working full time in the U.S. are paid 83% of what men earn (AAUW, 2022).
- The gender pay gap is a major consequence of occupational sex segregation (Richardson, et la. 2004).

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Why do women get paid less?

Occupational differences: Research suggest that women and men work in different occupations, but the occupations in which men predominate pay higher wages. Even when one compares men and women in the same occupational segregation grouping, one finds that sex segregation in industries, departments, and jobs results in lower wages for women. The separation of men and women into different jobs makes it easier to treat them differently and helps maintain stereotypes about men's and women's work-related characteristics (Richardson, et la. 2004).

Penalty for motherhood/Women's labor unpaid: The phenomenon by which women's pay decreases once they become mothers. Due to the Motherhood penalty, mothers make 58 cents for every dollar paid to fathers (AAUW 2022).

Discrimination in the workplace/ glass ceiling theory: Women face a large number of stereotypes and expectations that can be reflected during the hiring, promotion or development process. Glass ceiling is a theory that describes that men are greatly overrepresented among the elite group of top jobholders in organizations (Richardson, et la.2004).

2. Why do women faculty in higher education get paid less?

Rank and Tenure: Both rank and the number of years a professor possessed his or her PhD are among the most important determinants of the absolute salary structure. In 2015, women held 43% of assistant professors' positions, 40% at the rank of associate professor, and finally only 25 % of women had the rank of full professor in Academia(Calka 2020).

Pay Disparity between disciplines: The highest-paying disciplines for tenure track faculty are largely male-dominated, while the mostly lower paying disciplines have a larger number of female faculty (AAUP 2017).

Labor Market Discrimination: The gender differences in human capital could explain the gender pay gap. But it is necessary to include the labor market discrimination theory which includes a theoretical framework for racial discrimination in which discrimination by employees, coworkers and clients are analyzed(Calka 2020).

Motherhood Wage Penalty: There is a negative relationship between having children and women's wages (Baker 2006).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Structural Theory

-Structural models suggest that gender pay gap exists because men and women are segregated into different types of institutions (Smart, 1991).

-Gendered Organizations employ practices that distribute positions and power associated with rank unevenly between men and women (Acker, 2006).

-Rewards such as tenure, promotion, and higher compensation are primarily granted to male faculty due to their uninterrupted progression in a career and more research productivity (Calka,2020).

2. Feminist Theory especially intersectionality

Intersectionality is the overlapping systems of advantages and disadvantages that affect people differently positioned in society. Overlapping modes of oppression as a kind of matrix domination.

-Society resembles an intricate system of crisscrossing road, each representing a different social identity for example, gender, rank, discipline, hours per week worked, race/ethnicity, family status, age(Desmond and Emirbayer, 2020)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

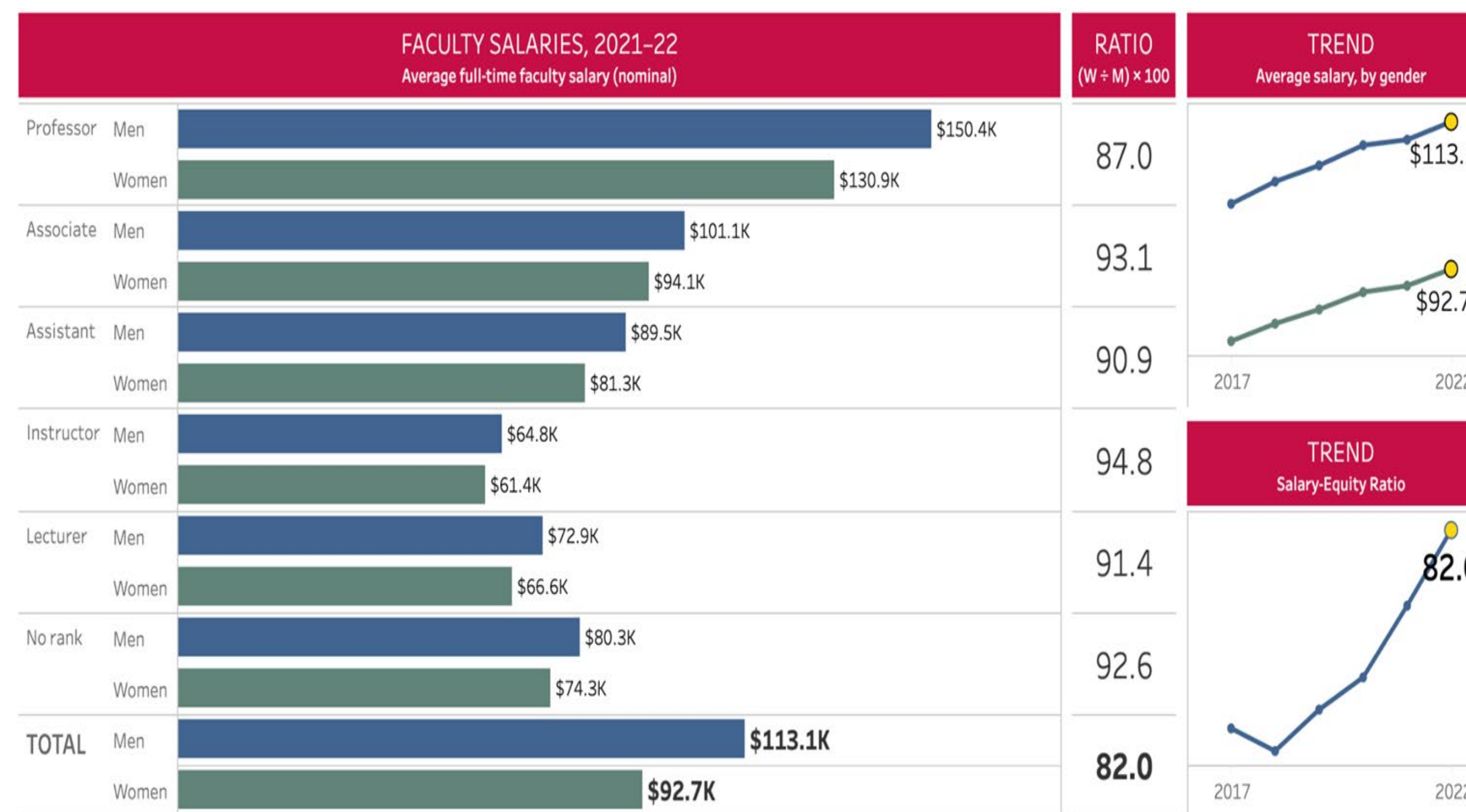
- Are women faculty paid less than their male counterparts in higher educational institutions?
- What are the specific experiences of women faculty at Cal Poly Pomona?

METHODOLOGY

- Descriptive analysis**—To assess if gender affects the earnings of women faculty, and if high-achieving women are devalued in academia, we relied on the 2021-2022 survey data from the American Association of University Professors(AAUP).
- Qualitative in depth interviews**-A qualitative approach was utilized to gather data on 7 women faculty members from the College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences Department at Cal Poly Pomona.

DATA

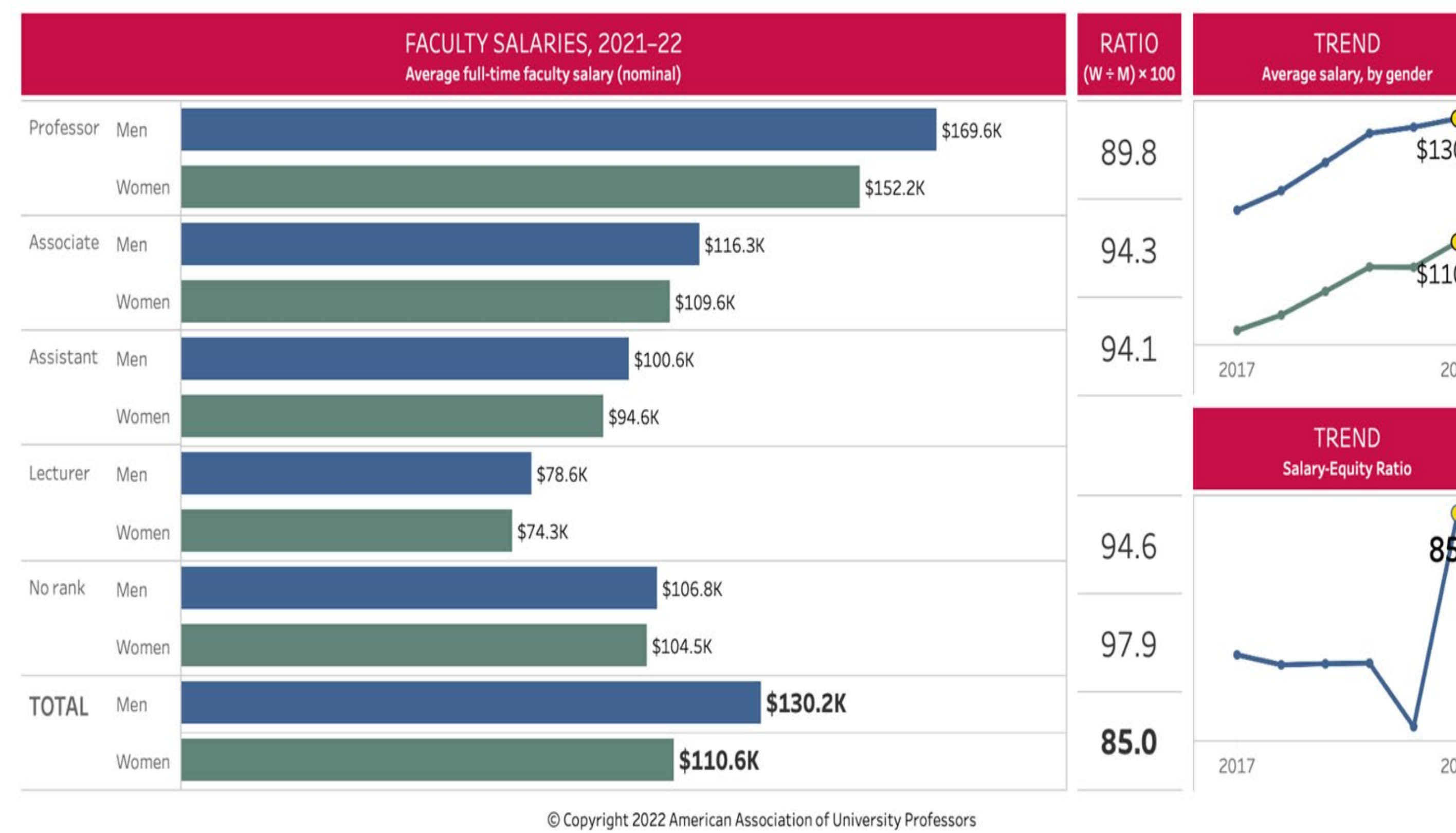
1. Yes, there is a gender pay gap and faculty members are aware of it.



-> This nationwide graph shows the average projected salary expenditures for full-time faculty member, by gender as of each academic year.

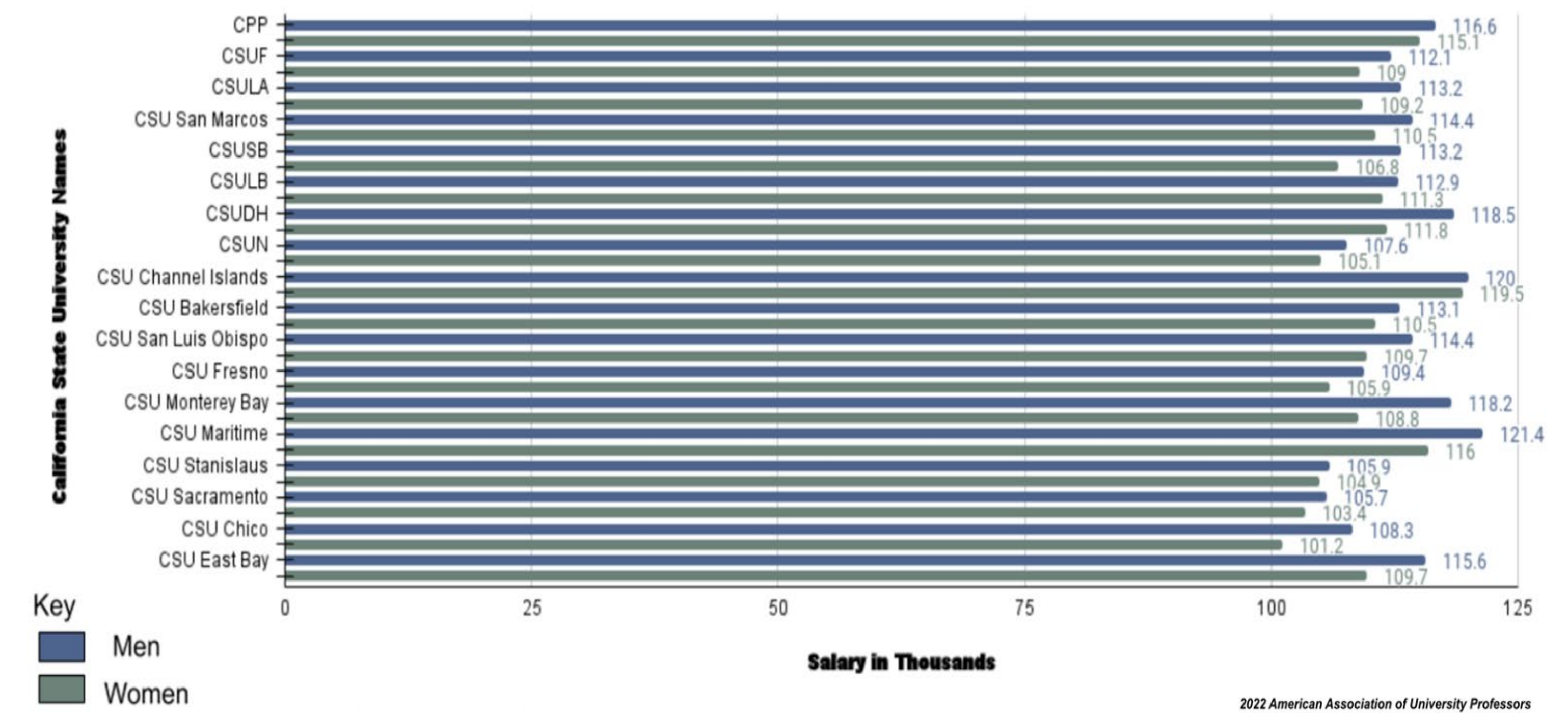
-> These data reveals the differences in salary between men and women.

-> Significant discrepancies can be observed between the different ranks of faculty members.



-> The data from California State University (CSU) campuses graph shows the annual salary of faculty members by rank and gender. As the data demonstrates, women faculty members earn less than men across all ranks.

CSU Full-Time Faculty Salary 2021-22



-> This graph presents AAUP data on CSU Full-Time Faculty 2021-22. The data demonstrates that women faculty members earn less than men at most CSUs including CPP.

2. Women faculty are aware of the issue, yet they feel satisfied with their workplace because of leadership roles, representation, opportunities and unionization.

"I have a PhD now. I am very grateful because I have a job in which I feel satisfied and fulfilled."

"Fortunately, my work has a union that supports and protects me. I feel very privileged with the job I have because I have many opportunities to continue growing professionally."

3. Women faculty feel that they need to do more to continue on the path to achieve more equity.

"An advice that I can give to women is to see the value in yourself and advocate for it. You deserve everything you ask for."

"I know that women have made much more improvements in the workplace but, we should continue to advocate more for better and great opportunities for women in future generations."

DISCUSSION

My study shows that while women faculty at CPP are aware of the gender pay gap, they feel fulfilled by their work and have a strong passion for their field of study. Work-life balance, a strong sense of community within their department, opportunities for professional growth and leadership, and unionization have all contributed to overall job satisfaction and fulfillment. However, they feel it is important to continue to address the gender pay gap and advocate for equal pay for equal work to promote fairness and equity in the workplace.

Thus, though closing the gender pay gap is an important step towards achieving gender equality, it is not enough to fully address the systemic issues that women face in the workforce. As structural theorists have argued, the gender pay gap is just one aspect of a larger problem that includes discrimination, bias, and lack of representation and opportunities for women in leadership roles.

Furthermore, closing the pay gap alone would not address the intersectionality of gender with other factors such as race, sexual orientation, and disability, which also play a role in creating disparities in the workforce. To truly achieve gender equality in the workforce, a comprehensive approach is needed that addresses all of these issues and creates a culture of inclusion and equity.

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