

The Value of Work: The Gendered Outcomes of Organizational Wage Reforms

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Background

- Wage inequality is a core element of the financial inequality between men and women.
- Contemporary wage inequality is largely affected by occupation segregation, and the devaluation of feminine occupation
- The 'value of work' is an undefined concept, therefore devaluation is hard to measure and prove
- Kibbutz societies only recently began paying members 'differential wages'. Their evaluation process could shed light on gender inequalities

Contents

- Introducing the Israeli Kibbutz
- Kibbutz reform and wage-evaluation techniques
- Gendered outcomes of Kibbutz reform
- Discussion

Our case study: Israeli Kibbutz

- Socialist collective-democratic communities, based on shared ownership.
- The first kibbutz was formed in 1910, and at their height they reached 5% of the population in Israel
- Kibbutz labour is un-waged, resources are shared: “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs”
- Occupational hierarchy: higher status in the very beginnings to manual labour, especially agriculture, and education work
- **Since mid 1980s – Economic & Demographic crisis leading to reforms in the communal way of living**

Gender in the kibbutz

- Socialist ideology: no private household, care work is shared, consumption is communal
 - therefore, the main site for women's subjugation is removed
- However, gender roles remain: women in the (communal) kitchen, men in the fields/factories
- Management/Leadership positions are also gendered, that is – mainly performed by men
- These trends persist and even strengthen in the post-transition kibbutz communities

The reform process

- Since 1990's, kibbutz communities began reforming their financial structure:
 - Shared resources become commodities (and purchased from the kibbutz)
 - **Wages per labor**
 - (Partial) Private ownership of housing
 - Kibbutz members are share-holders in the communal enterprises
 - Introduction of these reforms requires strong support among members

Method

- Qualitative interviews with kibbutz officials, consultants and members
- Focus group with Kibbutz management, after gathering the wage data
- Quantitative data from two kibbutz communities
 - **K1**: pre-renewal data (2005), renewal wage data (2010), current wage data (2017)
 - **K2** renewal wage data (2017)

Phase 1: Preparing to reform

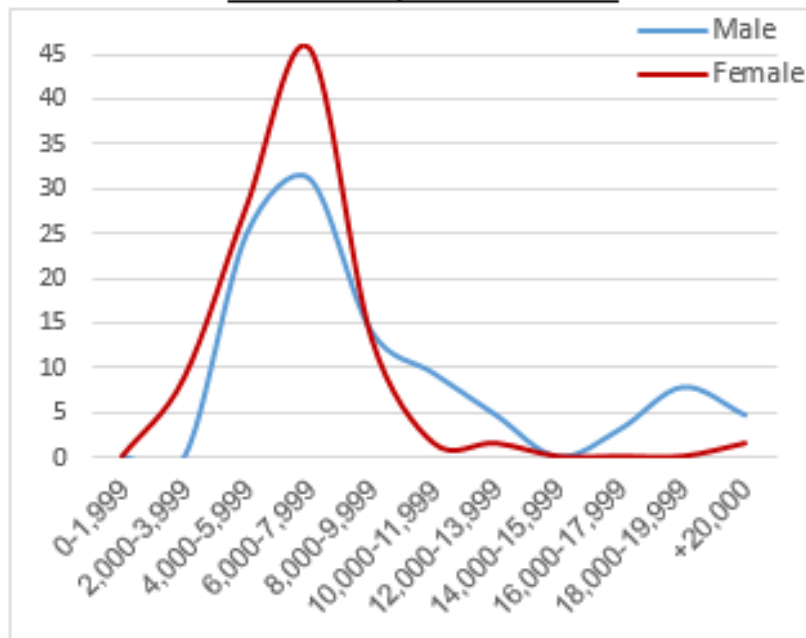
- 2005 – Job Evaluation Process
- The evaluation is performed by external evaluator, alongside kibbutz officials
- “Complexity score” produced for each job, and wage evolutions are presented to members

Phase 1: evaluation outcomes

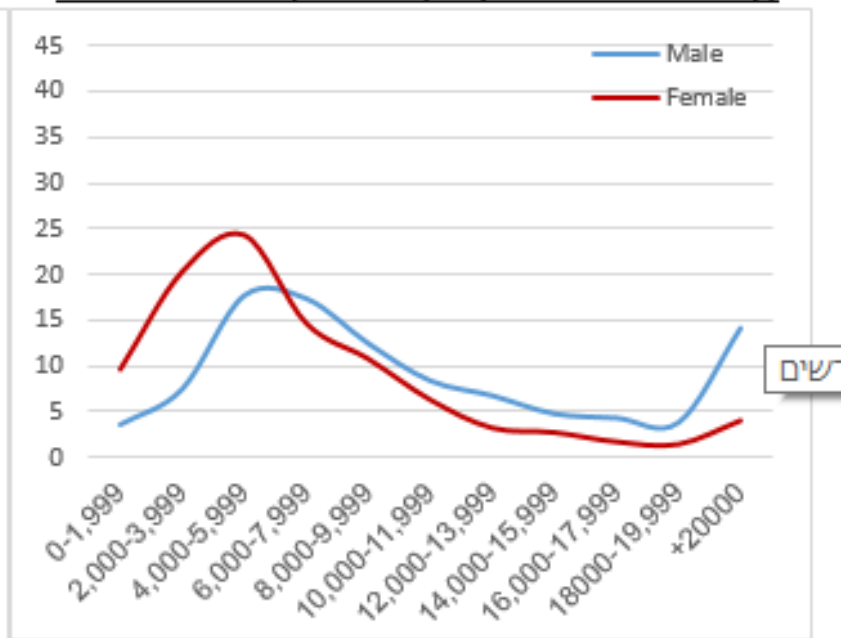
	Our case study Kibbutz			Center Israel ^a			Ratios: Kibbutz/Central Israel	
	Median	Mean	N	Median	Mean	N	Median	Mean
Women	6757	6694	68	5624	7159	1852	1.20	0.94
Men	7165	9362	64	8596	11685	1757	0.83	0.80
Ratio	0.94	0.72		0.65	0.61			

Phase 1: Wage distribution

Case Study Distribution



Central Israel (Income/expenditure Survey)



Phase 2: From evaluation to actual wage (2010)

- Wages are introduced gradually (initially through mechanisms of overtime, and percentage of wage)
- Annual wage re-evaluation upon demand
- Change in evaluation method: from job evaluation to market evaluation

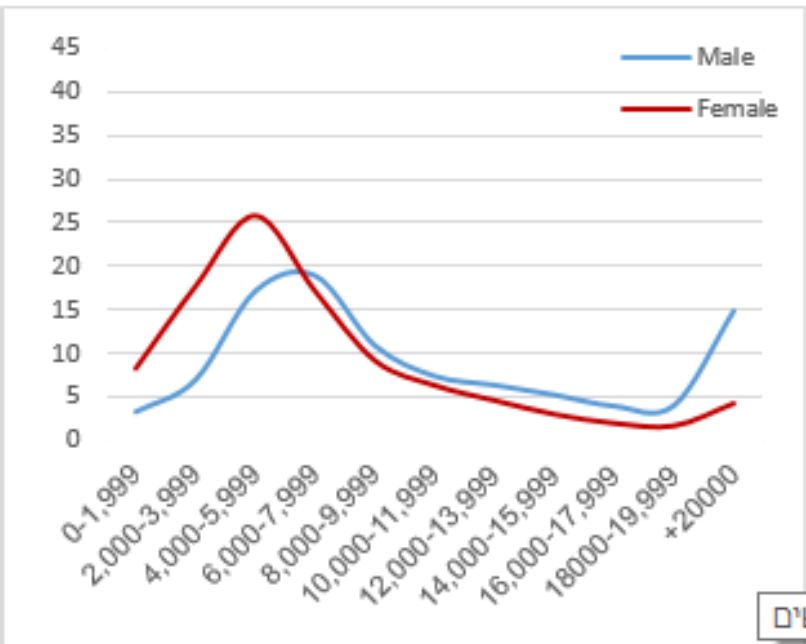
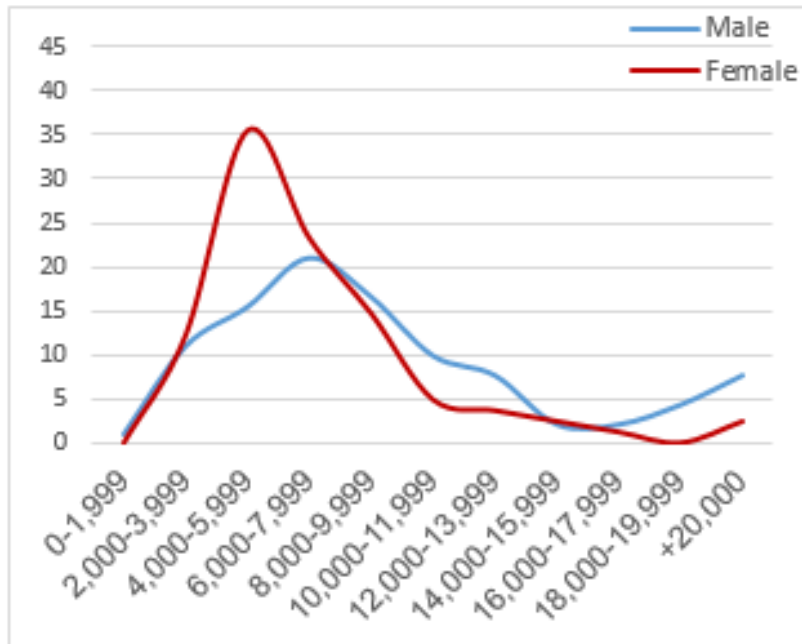
Introduction of wages

- *“We started with remuneration for weekends and for overtime. All sorts of ploys. That wasn’t so bad, and people accepted it as it is. And slowly, slowly, we moved to the market [wages].” (Aharon)*
- *“Each change that connected the job value to an extra pay of a member, was another ‘push’ towards the market, so to speak” (Shlomo)*

Phase 2 (2010) wages

	Our case study Kibbutz			Center Israel ^a			Ratios: Kibbutz/Central Israel	
	Median	Mean	N	Median	Mean	N	Median	Mean
Women	6150	7183	82	5875	7555	2014	1.05	0.95
Men	8336	9821	90	8587	11867	1886	0.97	0.83
Ratio	0.74	0.73		0.68	0.64			

Wage Distribution 2010



Wage hierarchy maintenance

- Kibbutz members can opt out/in the internal kibbutz labor
- Annual evaluation of wages per worker/role
- Convergence with external labor market

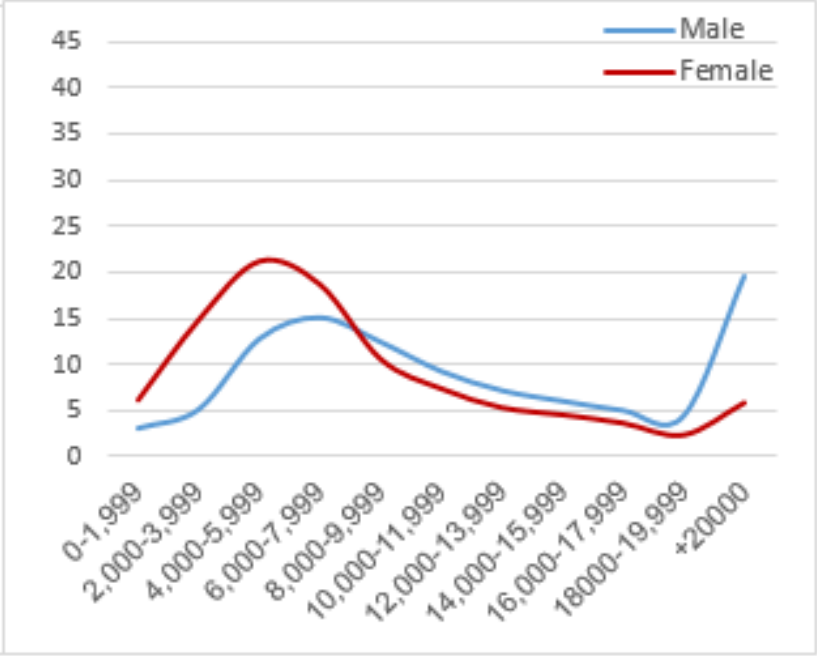
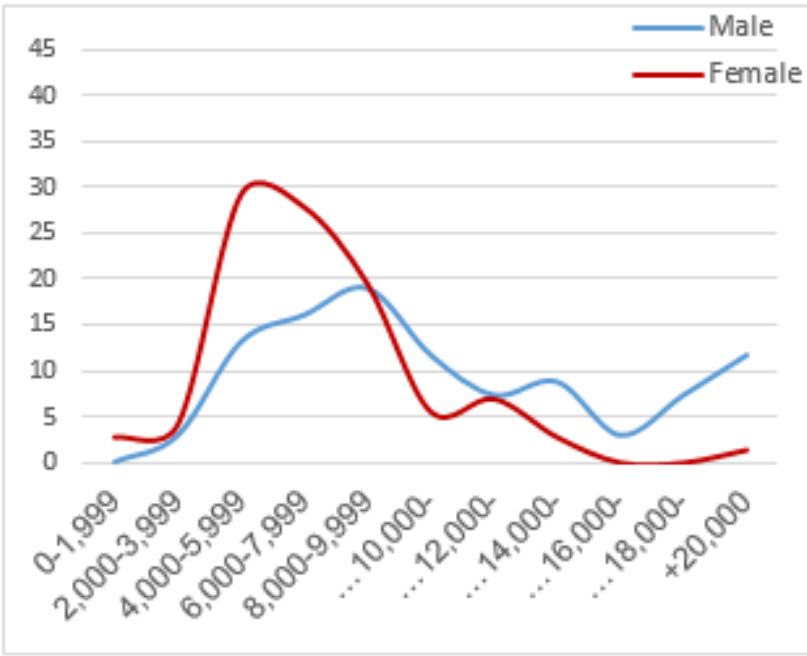
Maintaining wage hierarchy

- Life here is life without equality. I personally don't believe in equality at all. That's that. But my life physically improved. It improved because, at the end of the day, I earned more money. Fact. I earned more money, I had more options. And slowly, slowly, one progresses. (Male member, high earner)
- I don't judge those who earn more. I think those jobs demand a lot of responsibility, and [attract] a lot of ungratefulness. A lot of criticism, and the price one must pay in order to earn that money is not enough. If I had the opportunity to be in this position, if I had to weigh the personal cost against the money (he is earning), I would not want that. (Female member, low earner)

Wages 2017

	Our case study Kibbutz			Center Israel ^a			Ratios: Kibbutz/Central Israel	
	Median	Mean	N	Median	Mean	N	Median	Mean
Women	6617	7423	73	6719	8568	2844	0.98	0.87
Men	9794	12166	69	10314	13764	2613	0.95	0.88
Ratio	0.68	0.61		0.65	0.62			

Wage Distribution 2017



Summary and conclusions

- Organizations' practices have gendered outcomes (Acker)
- The reformed Kibbutz is a unique site for examining the link between evaluation methods and systemic gender inequality
- Evaluation systems matter, however, organizations operate in accordance with the market surrounding them
- Over time, market-based evaluation methods take over, and bring the kibbutz to cohere with structural inequality
- The 'market authority' as justifying any form of inequality

Participant: I don't get it. You said that there is no different between the wages of individual men and women in the same job.

Researcher: Right. The gap is at the level of the profession.

Participant: what you are researching is like, sort of, jobs of 'comparable worth'. So the question is really about the value we give. That is, **for what and not for whom.**

Researcher: Right.

Participant: and what we see here is, allegedly, more and more entry of the market internally. That in the market, we reward masculine jobs more than feminine jobs.

Researcher: Right

Participant: **Cool. So the question here is not gendered at all, it is a question of values. What we value and not whom we value.**

Thank You

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