

## **Gender Inequality in the Workplace (300 words)**

**Theory:** Conflict Theory (Karl Marx)

Despite decades of progress, gender inequality remains a persistent issue in the workplace. Conflict theory provides a useful framework for analyzing this phenomenon by examining power dynamics and structural inequalities. In organizations, men often hold more authority and access to higher-paying positions, while women are concentrated in lower-status roles, reflecting systemic patriarchal structures.

Conflict theory emphasizes that these disparities are not random but are maintained to preserve dominance by certain groups. Workplace policies, social expectations, and cultural norms all contribute to sustaining inequality. For instance, women are more likely to face challenges balancing career and family responsibilities, while men are less likely to take parental leave, reinforcing the unequal division of labor.

Empirical studies support this structural perspective. Wage gaps persist across industries, and women frequently encounter glass ceilings that limit upward mobility. By framing these outcomes as products of broader social structures rather than individual shortcomings, conflict theory highlights the need for systemic change.

In conclusion, applying conflict theory to gender inequality in the workplace reveals that disparities are deeply rooted in power imbalances and structural constraints. Addressing these inequities requires both policy reform and cultural shifts to redistribute opportunities and challenge entrenched norms.

