UNIVERSITY of GUELPH

COLLEGE of ENGINEERING AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

PhD Qualifying Examination

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Barriers to Employment and Equal Pay for Disadvantaged Groups

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ABSTRACT:
Evidence of barriers to employment and equal pay in Canada for historically disadvantaged groups continues to persist, even with considerable employment equity legislation. Employing the theories and methodologies from two disciplines, Computer Science and Economics, this research increases our understanding of the gender wage gap and barriers to people with disabilities in the Canadian labour market. By showing that the overall gender wage gap is higher, and not a weighted average of the full-time and part-time gender wage gaps, we reveal that selection into work channel contributes to the persisting gender wage gap. Females are highly concentrated in the part-time work channel, a channel with reduced earning hours and lower hourly wages than the full-time workers. In Canada, 75% of all part-time workers are female. Similarly, by analyzing salary data for high earners in Ontario's University Sector, the overall gender wage gap for faculty is greater than the gaps within each academic position. Furthermore, 74% of all full faculty records, generally the highest paid faculty position, are male. Our recommendations to reduce the gender wage gap are therefore linked to policies promoting gender parity in full-time work and promotion. This research also extends its focus to examine the barriers to transitioning from post-secondary education to the labour market for people with disabilities. There is limited knowledge in Canada regarding students with disabilities and the number that enter and persist in the labour market upon graduation. This research will explore students with disabilities' access to activities linked to academic learning that incorporate employment experiences for students to gain career ready skills. The goal of this research is to provide recommendations to increase access and persistence rates for students with disabilities in work structured learning while in post secondary and increase their capacity to enter and persist in the labour market after graduation.