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Occupational gender segregation in post-apartheid South Africa

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Abstract: In this paper, we show that occupations in South Africa are not only segregated and stratified by race, but also by gender. While some women (mostly black and Coloured) overwhelmingly fill low-paying jobs, others (mostly white and Asian but also Coloured) tend to fill higher-paying professional positions. We find evidence that points at a long-term reduction in gender segregation and stratification with women and men entering occupations previously dominated by the other gender, although this trend is sensitive to several data considerations. Most recent evidence, however, point at stagnation in this process. Distinct worker characteristics by gender, such as education, location, or age, cannot explain existing segregation, or women overrepresentation in low-paying jobs, compared with men, but they do help to better explain their overrepresentation in higher-paying positions.

Keywords: gender, occupational segregation, stratification, low-pay, post-apartheid, South Africa.

JEL Classification: J16, J42, J71, J82, O15, O55.

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