

Gender Inequality:
Bridging the Gap Between Men and Women
in the Music Industry

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Introduction

While music itself is seen as neither masculine nor feminine, those who create music are generally of one sex. Historically, men are more likely to become musicians, producers, composers, or record label owners than women. In today's world, this is apparent even in terminology that is used colloquially. Sound engineers at concerts are strictly "sound guys," talent scouts are "A&R men," and male guitarists are "guitar gods." While women are present, their experiences within the industry are much different than those of men, lacking equality from all angles; underrepresentation in numbers to being underrated by critics, audiences, and fellow musicians. Often shadowed by an industry that rewards and promotes male egotism, women are here to say time's up.

My primary aim in this exploratory study is to find a solution to the discrimination females within the music industry face on both a personal and an institutional level. Why is there equal representation across gender in entry-level positions, but the proportion of women in executive ranks decrease significantly? I seek to answer these questions by discovering the experiences from women who have made, or are attempting to make a career within the music industry. For that reason, I approach all females within the music business as women industry professionals and use research on sexism in the workplace that strengthen the results from this study. "The use of the term women is intended to refer to any persons identifying as women and can include non-binary and trans women, female-identified folk as well as cis-gendered women" (Pacelli). As I analyze how society constrains female's choices and success rate within a male-dominated workplace, I then reveal how sexism plays a significant role in the lives of females within the music business.

Historical Context

Equality

Gender inequality within all workplaces, not exclusively the music industry, exists worldwide. In the United States alone, the concern in regard to inequality is understandable in a nation founded on the self-evident truth of equality. The Declaration of Independence claims that “all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights,” but to women, what does this mean? (The Declaration of Independence). At this time, women, among other human rights, were denied property rights, the right to vote and were also under control of their husbands. It was not until 1848, when the first women's rights convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York. Only “68 women and 32 men were present and a set of twelve resolutions were signed calling for equal treatment of women and men under the law and voting rights for women” (Imbornoni). Two years later, the first National Women’s Right Convention took place in Worcester, Massachusetts with over 1,000 women in attendance. It was another seventy years before women were granted the right to vote in 1920, but the movement had already begun.

Three years later in 1923, the first version of an Equal Rights Amendment was introduced. It states that “men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction” (Milligan). To this day, it has not been approved by Congress. Throughout the next forty years, workplaces would be unwilling to pay women the same amount as their male counterparts. By 1963, The Equal Pay Act was established, which “promises equitable wages for the same work, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin or sex of a worker” (EPA). This was a major success at the time, but as of now, within the past

few decades, women receive only seventy-eight cents to a man's dollar. Years to follow included Congress banning sex discrimination with the workplace and housing to banning employment discrimination to pregnant women. Now in recent years, as generations age, women are speaking up more for themselves.

Women's Rights Activists

Over the past few decades, there have been women of all races across the United States who have been activists to defend and protect groups of people in through moments of time. While this exploratory study focuses on women in the music industry, it is important to know about the women who have paved the way thus far.

As early as the 1820s, women started to speak up for themselves. One woman who dedicated her life to woman suffrage was Sojourner Truth. Truth was an African American abolitionist and women's rights activist best known for her speech on racial inequalities. Sojourner Truth took part in the Women's Rights Convention in May of 1851, reciting her speech 'Ain't I a Woman?' in which she "challenged prevailing notions of racial and gender inferiority and inequality by reminding listeners of her combined strength and female status" (Michals). A year after Sojourner Truth began voicing her thoughts on women's rights, social reformer and women's rights activist, Susan B. Anthony, joined the women's rights movement in 1852. Anthony campaigned for the "abolition of slavery, the right for women to own their own property, retain their earning, and she advocated for women's labors organizations" (Susan B. Anthony House). In 1863, she organized the Women's National Loyal League which "campaigned for full citizenship for women and people of any race, including the right to vote" (Susan B. Anthony House). Another woman who was both an activist and writer was Ida B.

Wells who became prominent in the 1890s because she brought attention to the lynching of African Americans in the South. She was a victim of racial discrimination and not only raised awareness to all African Americans, but she later helped launch the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc., also known as NACWC. This organization adopted the motto, "Lifting as We Climb," which promoted self-help among women" (*National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc.*). NACWC to this day "actively raises awareness and in addition to their social services, actively promote cultural events such as music concerts and literature groups" (*National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc.*). These two women were led the way for women in the 20th century to continue the fight towards equality.

In 1913, suffragist and public speaker, Inez Milholland, not only was an active member in the National Woman's Party, but also a key participant in the 1913 Woman Suffrage Procession. Milholland led the women's suffrage demonstration in Washington on a white horse, wearing white robes. This photograph became "one of the most memorable images of the struggle for women's rights in America" (Simkin). During this same time period, Doris Stevens, an American suffragist and woman's legal rights advocate, was a participant in the mission for women to gain their right to vote. Years later, once the right to vote was secured, Stevens supported the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment on comparing the impact on law for women and men. While Stevens was unsure in wanting to take part in the women's suffrage movement, once she became involved, she did not stop raising awareness.

As years past, many more women stepped up because the fight never ended. In the late 1960s, Gloria Steinem, feminist, journalist and social political activist, became a leader and a spokeswoman for the American feminist movement. Almost forty years later, she co-founded the Women's Media Center, which is a "nonprofit organization working to raise the visibility,

viability and decision-making power of women and girls in media and, thereby, ensuring that their stories get told and their voices are heard” (Womens Media Center). Within the past ten years, many female women have become more involved than ever in making their voices be heard; some who are women in the music industry. The names of these individuals include Beyoncé, Alicia Keys and Ariana Grande. All three women, have used their platforms to speak up and speak out on behalf of inequality in general between men and women, but also in the industry. Within the past two years, singer-songwriter and feminist, Alicia Keys, has spoken out about what it means to be a woman and how powerful being a woman means. She has vowed not to back down to any of the issues within today’s government in regard to women’s rights and stated at the Women’s March in 2017, that as women, “we will not allow our bodies to be owned and controlled by men in government - or men anywhere, for that matter” (Levy). Every woman previously mentioned, and many more powerful women who were not, have stood up and continue to stand up for women in today’s world. Women have fought for their rights and while they continue to do so to this day, the battle isn’t over, it has just begun.

Marches

The first-time women marched on Washington was on March 3, 1913 at the Women’s Suffrage Parade. More than 5,000 women — “young and old, rich and poor, educated and non-educated,” marched to “demand the right to vote” (Hamlin). These women hoped to attain the right to vote and they did. While there were many more small marches in between, the next biggest march was the Women’s Strike for Equality, which took place on August 26th, 1970. Women marched on Washington and were demanding equal pay and political power. “The

Women's Strike for Equality was organized by the National Organization for Women, then under the leadership of Aileen Hernandez, a longtime civil rights activist and the first woman to serve on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission" (Werner Winslow). This march drew more than 20,000, which at the time, was one of the largest gathering of women ever, but twenty-seven years later, the number only grew. On October 25, 1997, the Million Woman March took place in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This march, whose mission was "to call attention to the marginalization of African-American women," drew at least 500,000 women. This number was increasingly bigger than previous women marches and was only advertised from word of mouth and flyers; no national organizations wanted to be an ally. These were just the beginnings of movements to come.

In recent years, the most known movement that is now a recurring event every year, is the Women's March. Their mission is "to harness the political power of diverse women and their communities to create a transformative change" (*Women's March*). In 2017, the first year for the march, five million people around the United States came together in hope to shape the country's future. It is now a yearly march and the number of participants grow each year, bringing more awareness to topics such as reproductive rights, LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual) rights, workers' rights, civil rights and disability rights.

Sexism

When googling "sexism in the music industry," it yielded 533,000 results in less than half a second. Almost all of the stories pertain to female artists and from the start, when research began for this study, there were an overwhelming number of stories strictly from and about female performing artists. Something that became difficult to find were stories from women

industry professionals: label heads, directors, managers, producers, etc. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, sexism is defined as “the behavior, conditions, or attitudes that foster stereotypes of social roles based on sex.” Both female performing artists and women industry professionals have been a victim of sexism within their workplaces.

Women Industry Professionals

While conducting interviews, many of the interviewees revealed that within the workplace, women are seen as emotional and that it becomes difficult to share their thought process without this stigma hanging over their heads. One interviewee, who would like to remain anonymous, shared that honesty is the policy and transparency is key and those two things go hand and hand. She shared:

“Honesty is so critical especially as a woman in a predominantly male industry because it’s really easy for people to write females off for any number of reasons so, anything you can do to put people on your side and build extra strength and have assets that you can say, ‘hey all of the people trust me, or all of these people think this positive thing about me or positive way about me’” (Anonymous 3).

It is important for young women to build a foundation behind them, especially in the beginning as they start from the bottom. This interviewee went on to explain transparency as being just as important because this is an opportunity for a female to share their progress so that nobody in the workplace feels as they are going in a different direction. Sharing your insight in a constructive way and why one thinks the way they do in a non-emotional way is important because a lot of the time, transparency transcends from the idea female equals emotion, and when a woman gets past the idea that there is always an emotional reason for something, giving a straightforward

answer is much more powerful. “Instead of saying that your decision really moves you and is beautiful, which is something anyone can come up with, you need to share that this is why you are choosing this and here are the facts behind it” (Anonymous 1). It has nothing to do with being a female or anything that could possibly connect to that; women in upper positions, whether a director, executive or label head, have to deal with giving the facts and explaining to their male counterparts that it is not about crushing their creativity or bashing their dreams, it ends up being a legal thing, an ethical thing, or the moral thing.

Female Performing Artists

While conducting interviews for this study, two questions that were asked included: what is it like being a female musician? Why do you think there are fewer women in music? One interviewee, a jazz musician from the tristate area, responded by using ‘sexism’ to describe both of her responses. On being a female musician, this artist offered insight on how, from her own career, how much pressure there is being a girl. She went on to say that when she is seen with her bass, the response is generally, “Oh a girl bassist,” as if she cannot even be a musician. She is automatically seen as strictly a ‘girl’ musician. In response to her thoughts on the lack of females in the industry, her response was:

“I think it’s been historically more difficult because of all these things it’s so easy to get discouraged and people take you less serious sometimes and the sexism, just the objectification and the pressure to not only be a fantastic musician, but also everything that is expected of a woman. That combined is so taxing, that I think people just give up” (Anonymous 2).

This artist is just at the beginning of her career, but already feels the pressure from males within the industry. Another female, who is a blues-rock jazz artist, mentioned that men often overlook her due to her personal morals. This artist, who is based out of New York, is trying to combat sexism by breaking the societal norms of women having to look ‘picture perfect’ both onstage and off. She does not want to have to show any bare skin to be a successful artist in the music industry. She wants to be remembered for her talent and not her body. Unfortunately, sexism only increases and both women industry professionals and female performing artists lack recognition in regard to equal opportunities.

Equal Opportunity

When seeking a position within music, most job applications or contracts state that the company, where you are applying, ensures equal opportunities for women, yet a lot of the time they break that promise and these companies slip through the cracks. The Equal Employment Opportunity Act “gives the Equal Opportunity Commission, or EEOC, authority to sue in federal courts when it finds reasonable cause to believe that there has been employment discrimination” (USLegal). Being a woman in the industry is known to be very difficult and women have to put in double the hours, double the amount of work and double the dedication. One woman industry professional, who is the President of a label based in New York City, said “I think a woman who is successful has to yell out, scream more, work harder, be heard. It takes much more” (Sullivan 28). Over the course of years, women have been unequal in various career industries and this statement provides evidence in regard to the music industry. Women have to constantly make it known that they are capable of bypassing men on the corporate ladder; the executive ladder refers to entry-level positions on the bottom rungs, while executive level positions are at the top.

There has always been a negative stigma that coincides with business women who strive for higher positions within their workplace. Women are told that they may have to sacrifice some of their family life, when in actuality, it will be difficult to handle one's personal life and work life all at the same time. Based on cultural ideas, women are seen as primary caretakers and in this industry, they are held back for wanting a family. Some believe that they should not be given a promotion and because of this idea, males are rarely held back, while there is a lack of opportunity for women from advancing professionally. When asked about equality in the workplace, a female attorney who works in the music industry, stated:

“I still come across horror stories though of women being undermined just because they are women, usually around the time they have children.

It's sad and frustrating that with so many good things going on in this industry, there are still dark hidden corners where women are still treated like this. Women need to know their worth and to be firm about this, tad for the industry to be open and innovative in the way it approaches women in music” (Sullivan).

One's personal life should not dictate their capabilities in the workplace and promotions should be given to those women who deserve it best. One article, written by *Variety* magazine, explains why the music business needs to wake up and embrace gender diversity, showed that a case study was performed by researching different record labels and gender disparity within the industry. This study revealed that “companies that employ women at all levels of their organization, from entry to boardroom, demonstrate tangible business benefits. A gender-rich organization consistently outperforms peers that are predominately run by men” (Singers). The work of the women who dedicate their lives to this industry becomes overshadowed by the accomplishments of those of males and this aids in young women shying away from fulfilling

their dreams of a career within the industry. A survey conducted by a music task force found that women “account for more than 50% of entry level roles, but only 30% reach to executive positions” (The Lack of Women in the Music Industry). While a task force is a group used to better organization information in articles related to a specific topic, a music task force “includes music creators, executives, academic scholars and thought leaders in gender and equality” (Grammys). Professional roles within this study included Chief Executive Officers (CEO), Chief Operating Officers (COO), Vice Presidents and Directors. “Women make up more than half of the US population but less than seven percent of Fortune 500 CEOs (and that’s the highest number since *Fortune* started keeping a list in 1955)” (Carvello 120). From an interview with another woman professional, she shared that male counterparts will shy away from working with women because they find it to be easier to work with another male to omit the feelings of a woman. Her words include that “it’s an everyday battle and it’s not going to end until all of the departments within a label are led by women and until all of the generations of men that grew up in the [sexist] industry environment are no longer working” (Anonymous 2). This is one of the many examples showcasing that having males exclude women from decisions within the workplace only hinders females from jumping to the ‘male side’ of the industry.

Roles Within the Industry

What classifies as the ‘male side’ of the music industry? The ‘male side’ of the music business is seen more as masculine, while the performance side is more feminine. Men are often the ones in higher up positions, meanwhile women rarely see promotions. The performance side is seen as feminine because of the term, “sex sells.” Sex, in this scenario, refers to beautiful women, which in turn is what is used to lure in a viewer or listener despite talent capabilities;

this also plays into why there are so many generic artists nowadays who write songs that will become hits on the radio rather than creating a song that means something to them for who they are or what they have been through.

Not only does the term “sex sells” play a significant role, so do the social roles distributed within the popular music world, based on one’s gender. Some of the expectations for women in music include being a “singer, back vocalist, fan, groupie, girlfriend, wife, mother and dancer” (Bayton). Meanwhile, the expectations of males are “instrumentalist, manager of a band, live sound engineer, technician (guitar tech, drum tech, etc.), roadie, lighting engineer, road manager, music press photographer, promoter or music press journalist” (Bayton). These social roles can prevent young females from fulfilling their dreams. Often times toxic masculinity shadows women industry professionals from sharing their stories. What does toxic masculinity within the industry really mean? Well, many male individuals in the music industry will use the power their title gives them to try or to force women to refrain from sharing their stories of their careers. This, then, makes it difficult for young females to find women who can offer advice and guidance who are not the women who perform on a stage every night or a male in the industry. One woman executive who was in the industry for more than twenty years said, “My influences were only men, with male perspectives, I had always known that men and women lived in different world. By now I re-learned that lesson in a much more painful and personal way, through repeated devastation and humiliation” (Carvello 166). This can be seen as true for a lot of women who have made a career in the industry because there was such a scarcity of women and although the gap still remains, women wanting to start a career in the industry have women mentors to offer advice and guide them with the experiences they have faced. An industry professional who is a Senior Vice President of Promotion of a top record label, shared a

piece of advice she would give to any young woman who is in hopes of a career within the music industry. Her advice is: “Stop thinking you’ll get the same breaks as your male peers. You won’t” (Women in Music 2). Even though female performing artists use their voice to start a revolution, oftentimes women industry professionals stray away from taking initiative in fear that once their personal stories of harassment arise, that it will give their male peers the satisfaction of trying to prove that women are just ‘too emotional’ for a predominantly male-saturated workplace. Women are then ostracized and “if you spoke up, you were out. They can replace you in three seconds” (Carvello 26).

Pay Gap

Throughout the series of interviews conducted, many women were either all for sharing their experience dealing with the pay gap between men and women, while others felt strongly about not sharing that information. One woman stated that the “raises and promotions went to the harassers, the abusers, and the criminals” (Carvello 134). From this, she means that once a male was accused and found guilty of sexual assault, the higher ups in the record label would promote them to a different division within the same location to these men being transferred to a different location of the record label. An example of this is Lukasz “Dr. Luke” Gottwald who, after allegations of sexual, physical, verbal and emotional abuse from numerous female performing artists, was demoted as CEO from Kemosabe Records, but remained as a part of the SONY family. A female director from a record label based out of New York that I interviewed said:

“I know that there is a difference in what women get paid in the industry versus what men get paid, but to be honest, I do not pay attention. I am aware of the gap, but although I have a job that I only get paid 40 hours

a week to work, most weeks I work 80+ hours and from there do not have time to talk to colleagues about the difference” (Anonymous 1).

Meanwhile, another women industry professional mentioned, “one time a male colleague with the same title as I received a \$20,000 bonus and I only received \$1,500” (Carvello 96). This same professional then went on to say how after she brought in money for the record label she was working at the time, her supervisor “gave her a raise to \$50,000” from her initial salary of “\$23,500 a year” (Carvello 51 - 96).

Harassment

In an industry, where harassment happens more often than not, this proves that there are still things that need to be taught and things that need to be learned. Topics that need to be brought to the attention of others is that rape culture is still a problem and men need to become allies, not enemies. It has been so difficult for women to speak out in fear that revealing their experiences will turn into more bullying and backlash than being able to be freed from their trauma. Rape culture, as a whole, is one of the most common themes that affects women’s careers in music. “From sexualization of female-identified bodies to sexual violence and abuse that forces women to change scenes or career paths or otherwise sacrifice their careers to isolate themselves from their abusers, it is obvious that the music industry has a problem with sexual assault and rape culture” (Pacelli). For example, singer Kesha, was shunned when sharing her story and was forced to work with her abuser until her contract ended months later. Men not only have a responsibility, but need to take responsibility because the backlash women receive derives from men not wanting to step up either and taking advantage. They watch women suffer, but yet

don't step up to help address these major issues like sexual assault or make the music industry a safer space for women.

A former A&R female executive and survivor of sexual assault recently shared her story years later because for so long felt powerless, taken for granted and denied. A&R, or artist and repertoire, is the "division of a record label that is responsible for talent scouting and overseeing the artistic development of recording artists and songwriters" (Music Careers). In her memoir, she describes her assault as sexual battery. Sexual battery is defined as "a person who is guilty of forcible touching when such a person intentionally, and for no legitimate purpose, forcibly touches the sexual or intimate parts of another person for the purpose of degrading or abusing such person" includes squeezing, grabbing, or pinching" (Carvello 69). Her abuse that reoccurred multiple times throughout the years started to diminish her own self-worth and self-love that she has previously to starting her career within the industry. In her words, she said:

"These men were killings my spirit. Everything they did seemed designed to make me lose my self-esteem. For the first time, I started questioning my talent, I felt like I was going deaf - not literally, but as an A&R executive, I had a hard time hearing. I found it harder and harder to trust my own intuition, my own taste, and my own ears" (Carvello 159).

It has taken her years to share with the world the hard truths of the industry and this is one of the many stories of why women have stopped depending on men to help make a change and have taken it into their own hands to start a revolution.

One revolution that has taken place at the beginning of 2018 was #TimesUp which is in response to the #MeToo campaign that came from the Harvey Weinstein sexual harassment epidemic. A well-known female performing artist spoke on behalf of the campaign: "To those

who would dare try and silence us, we offer you two words: time's up. We say time's up for pay inequality, discrimination or harassment of any kind, and the abuse of power" (Staff 1). This campaign took over all media outlets and gave women industry professionals the confidence to speak out without fear of being criticized. The following days, as women started to feel empowered, a statement by Neil Portnow, the president of the Recording Academy, was released and women quickly came out to share their thoughts on his statement. His statement read:

"It has to begin with...women who have the creativity in their hearts and souls, who want to be musicians, who want to be engineers, producers, and want to be part of the industry on the executive level... [They need] to *step up* because I think they would be welcome. I do not have personal experience of those kinds of brick walls that you face but I think it's upon us - us as an industry - to make the welcome mat very obvious, breeding opportunities for all people who want to be creative and paying it forward and creating that next generation of artists" (Angermiller).

Being a male, who is in charge of such a powerful organization, quickly tried to retract his words, but it was too late. It was a moment in time where a male finally received backlash and needed to take full responsibility of his doing. This moment was of such high importance because men who hold powerful titles rarely are held accountable for their actions. One female performing artist took to Twitter, a social networking website, to say: "Women in music don't need to 'step up' - women have been stepping since the beginning of time. Stepping up, and also stepping aside. Women owned this year. They've been killing it" (Staff 2). This was no surprise, since this performing artist is one of many who is a supporter of the campaigns #MeToo and

#TimesUp. While it was primarily female artists who took to social media to share their thoughts on the matter, women industry professionals did just the same. Six female music executives released a letter to the Recording Academy's board of trustees in response to Portnow's statement by calling them "woefully out of touch with today's music, the music business, and even more significantly, society" (Reiss). One of these female executives, who happens to be one of the only women who is the Chief Operating Officer of a top record label, is very well-known within the industry, especially since she can proudly say that her label has a 50/50 ratio of males to females employed. As she would like to remain anonymous for this study, she happens to be a mentor to young females and reveals the harsh realities of working in music when interviewed about the industry. In an interview, after being asked to share advice to young executives who may have been inspired by her rise, her response was:

"You're going to have to work very hard. We live in a day and age of instant gratifications; everything is so available. I devoted my twenties to working 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. I didn't get here by chance. You're going to have to make serious choices if you want a career path like mine. It's not about just being smart and resourceful. You have to be smart, resourceful and out-hustle everyone" (Ingham).

This executive is sure to be truthful with the realities, whether good or bad, of the industry. She is also a feminist and stands by the importance of empowering women and always giving females credit where it fits best. In 2016, artist MILCK released 'Quiet,' a women's empowerment anthem, and this female took time to send an email to her colleagues. She wrote:

"When artists use their gifts to speak out against oppression and stand up for social change, dignity and respect, the effect can be extraordinary. So

I'm grateful and extremely proud to be able to share this powerful song in this all-important moment...I am also proud to be running a music company full of strong women. But I know it's not easy being a woman in the entertainment business. It never has been, and we have to have each other's backs as we gain strength through our collective voice. *This is not a time for quiet...it is a time to speak out*" (Hu).

It is crucial that women speak out and that their voices that have been silenced for so long are finally heard. A female producer, mentioned that within the thirty years of being in the business, she has been manhandled, grabbed, groped and violated in many ways, but has not shared her story till now. The media is quick to write articles talking about female performing artists and their harassment cases, but women industry professionals are left in the dark. She said:

"To tell you the truth, as bad as it is, it is when my abilities come to question that I get pissed off. Defending my body can happen when I go to Walgreens, but when you dismiss my intellect or capacity to perform as a professional simply because I have boobs, that's weird and you and I now have a situation" (Huckeba).

Women industry professionals are the ones, until now, haven't had the opportunity to speak up without being spoken down too. One woman, who is an Executive Vice President of a top record label who has offices worldwide, mentioned one of her favorite quotes by Audre Lorde. The quote goes: "I write for those women who do not speak. For those who do not have a voice because they were so terrified, because we are taught to respect fear more than ourselves. We've been taught that silence would save us, but it won't" (Toledano). This same woman, when asked one of the most frustrating aspects of being a woman in the industry, said was "being 'hepeated,'

a term used in the industry to describe when a woman suggests an idea and it is ignored. A male can then say the same thing and is praised and everyone loves it” (Women in Music 2). Many women industry professionals find that hearing stories of other women in the same positions as them, makes them feel as that they are not alone and that their experiences aren’t ones that are made up in their minds. A woman COO shared “It’s not easy being a woman in the music business. It has never has been, and we have to have each other’s backs as we gain strength through our collective voice. (Women in Music 1). Empowering women is essential in such a predominantly male industry and is essential to many women, because there is this discrepancy and this gender continuum and misunderstanding that women are not capable of competing in the workplace to the same capacity.

Female Empowerment

When interviewing a young female who wants to not just have a job in the business, but a career, hopes to work for a company that is ran by a woman. She has done internships at record labels who empower women and has done some that do not give women the opportunities to speak up. While asking about her experience at the record label who has empowered her as a young female, she stated:

“There’s definitely a lot to be said about working for other women and having other women there and knowing that even though issues within the industry exists. There’s also a bright light at the end of the tunnel and knowing what being able to identify what value I can bring as a woman in the industry and that it’s possible that I can be a leader or that I can be that kind of helpful person to somebody” (Anonymous 4).

Hearing from both women industry amateurs to women industry professionals, has definitely paved the way to bridging the gap between men and women in the music business. At the end of the day, every woman industry professional brings an asset to the table that is irreplaceable and that's what really counts. Men who say or think of women in a negative way simply because they are a woman, need to start realizing that women are a force to be reckoned with. Women try to overlook negativity and turn it into something bright and that's what makes them the most powerful.

Personal Recommendations

As a young woman wanting to start a career in this industry, this research has not only been eye opening, but has shown the side of the music business that is overshadowed by the constant album releases and live tours. The continuous journey trying to create equality between men and women in the music industry has been making progress in the right direction. The year of 2018, has been a big stepping stone in mending the gap, but there is so much more than can be done. With movements such as #MeToo, which brought awareness to sexual harassment that has taken place in the music business, I believe the realization of these actions to others who have been blinded by the industry in itself, is showcasing the lack of opportunities for different individuals in the music industry. I think that there should be more task forces developed, such as the Recording Academy's newly formed task force on diversity and inclusion. This task force is so important because it "examines barriers and biases affecting women and other underrepresented voices in the music industry, and specifically, the Recording Academy" (Grammys). There has to be more opportunities for women with opportunities such as being a part of a task force where these individuals can finally have a voice in an industry where they

once did not. It is important for women industry professionals to be included in groups and organizations where they will have the opportunity to start even more movements to use their voice like many female performing artists do so when they perform on a stage.

Women in the music industry need and should be welcoming to all because although a very competitive industry, making more connections and closer relationships will be the stepping stones to hopefully closing in the gap within the industry. Although I do not have first hands with working in the industry, from an outside perspective, I believe in the woman who have been stepping up, will continue to step up and hopefully I will one day be able to call myself a woman industry professional who made a difference within the industry.

Conclusion

This study provides contextual evidence on how sex discrimination within the music industry is exhibited on different levels of success. A woman, a professional or not, deserves to be seen and no longer be hidden behind a curtain. The research conducted thus far on women industry professionals is important for musicians, the music industry and any workplace where women are a minority. When the day approaches that women feel unrepressed by age, beauty, sexuality, identity, or image, then we will know that sexism is no longer an issue. The road is long and difficult, but I have hopes that changes, no matter how big or how small, will come in the future. I end this study on a final note about the importance of women from words once said by American rapper Logic: women are stronger than any man will ever be. They will continue to stand tall and will no longer be scared to use their voices, especially in instances like these when they have the opportunity too.

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