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hamstrung the progress toward gender wage parity since the 1990s, according to an economic paper.

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By Catarina Saraiva, Bloomberg News (via TNS).

Family leave policies, though limited in scope and typically unpaid in the U.S., have hamstrung the progress toward gender wage parity since the 1990s, according to an economic paper.

The policies, led by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act enacted in 1993 and

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of its previous value.”

The economists cite other research showing that parental leave, disproportionately taken by women, and other forms of flexible work arrangements, tend to have a negative impact on women's career trajectories and pay. Their analysis accounts for changes in the composition of the U.S. labor market, including an expansion of the low-wage service sector, where female workers are overrepresented.

Women made about 70 cents for every dollar earned by male workers in the 1990s — much more than in the 1960s, when they made just over half of what men did. Progress since then has been slower, with women today earning, on average, 83 cents for every dollar a man makes, according to Labor Department and Census Bureau data.

Blair and Posmanick estimate that without family leave policies, the gender wage gap in the U.S. between White women and White men could have been eliminated in 2017.

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