

EXAMPLE TWO: PARTICIPATION IN THE WORKFORCE

Another example that the affirmative could present would be that of women's participation in the workforce.

DESCRIBING FEATURES OF THE CAUSE

The workforce is part of the public sector while the family unit is in the private. Because men are typically in the workforce and women labor in the family unit, the public and private sectors are separate.

DEMONSTRATING THE EFFECT

This separation makes achievement in the workplace difficult for women. They are expected to perform in the family unit (the private sphere) and so suffer discrimination when they try to enter or achieve in the public sphere. They are not hired nor do they seek employment in certain professions because those professions are considered the preserve of males. For example, worldwide, there are few female police officers or other security personnel because women are perceived to be too delicate for such professions. In many countries, women usually pursue medicine or teaching because they can then treat or teach other women. However, most women are discouraged from working because of the separation between public and private spheres.

DEMONSTRATING A CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP

Again, you can use the method of agreement to demonstrate a causal relationship. You might give various examples where separation exists and where women's abilities to participate in the workforce are diminished. You might point to Cuba, a society with separate public and private spheres, and note that in Cuba women make up about half the workforce and work 10 to 20 hours per week more than men; however, they earn 20 percent less.⁸

Speaking for the affirmative, you could also combine the method of agreement with the method of difference by comparing women in the workforce in two nations, one of which has a strong separation between public and private spheres and another that has more unified sectors. For instance, your debate team might argue that Japan is a nation that maintains a traditional separation between public and private spheres, while China does not. Japan is currently facing a problem of too many young, discouraged women leaving the country to seek work in countries where they perceive discrimination to be less, such as China.⁹ Those women that do find work in Japan are paid significantly less than their male counterparts. Therefore, using a combination of these two methods, we see that the presence of the cause (separation) leads to the presence of the effect (discrimination), while the absence of the cause leads to the absence of the effect.

Furthermore, you could also use correlation by showing that as the extent of separation decreases, women's rights in the workplace increase. In the United States, for example, the belief that women should stay in the private sector is slowly fading as more women enter the workforce. At the same time, the pay disparity is