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***Assessing Business Cycles through Female Employment***

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The COVID-19 pandemic caused one of the deepest recessions in American history.  The economy and the labor market experienced wide spread damage, but the effects were uneven. There were distinct differences between how the pandemic affected people of different genders, races, occupations, and education levels. The disproportionate impact on women is particularly prominent. The nature of the pandemic has made it blatantly clear that women’s interaction with the labor market differs greatly from any other group. Women’s experience in and out of the labor market is unique and one that is not entirely understood. The main research question is: “What can female employment (or female focused market indicators) tell us about the economy that cannot be seen when gender neutral market indicators are assessed?” The goal is to see whether regular market indicators and business cycles truly and accurately reflect women’s experiences in the labor market, and if they do not, then how do female focused indicators differ from headline measures?