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THE US GENDER GAP THROUGH THE GREAT RECESSION USING AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO CYCLICALITY

ABSTRACT

Annual changes in the US gender gap are analysed before, during and after the Great Recession using a quasi-experimental approach, with treatment and comparison groups based on the industry composition within states. During this recession, the hourly wage gap was differentially reduced by seven to ten percentage points in states with a higher concentration of employment in male-dominant and cyclical industries, whereas the employment gap was differentially reduced by five to seven percentage points. Neither outcome was significantly altered in the years immediately before or after the recession. The evidence supports the pro-cyclicality of the gender gap movements.