

Bearing the Cost: How Overrepresentation in Undervalued Jobs Disadvantaged Women During the Pandemic

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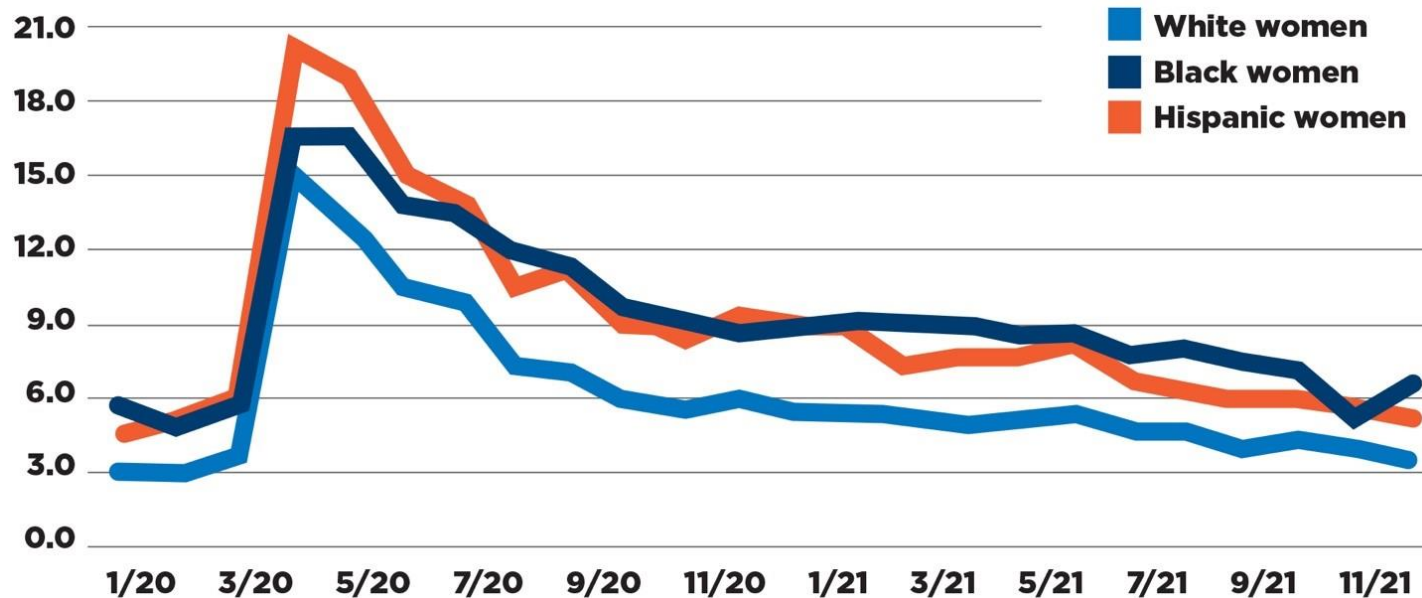
The COVID-19 Pandemic's Disproportionate Impact on Women

First economic recession where women lost more jobs than men

- February to April 2020: Women lost 11.9 million jobs; Men lost 10.1 million
- More women left the labor force (4.4 million) than men (3.9 million)
- Mothers' work hours declined more (3.5 hours per week) than fathers' (2.5 hours)

The COVID-19 Pandemic's Disproportionate Impact on Women, cont.

**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR WHITE, BLACK, AND HISPANIC WOMEN
AGE 20 YEARS AND OLDER, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED**



Notes: Represents the percentage of women in the civilian labor force 20 years of age and older that are unemployed. Data for the individual race groups do not include people of two or more races. Hispanics can be any race.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Series IDs: LNS14000029; LNS14000032; LNS14000035, January 2020-December 2021, Raw Data (Washington DC: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, March 5, 2022).

Why the COVID-19 Pandemic More Severely Impacted Working Women

Unpaid family caregiving falls unevenly on women

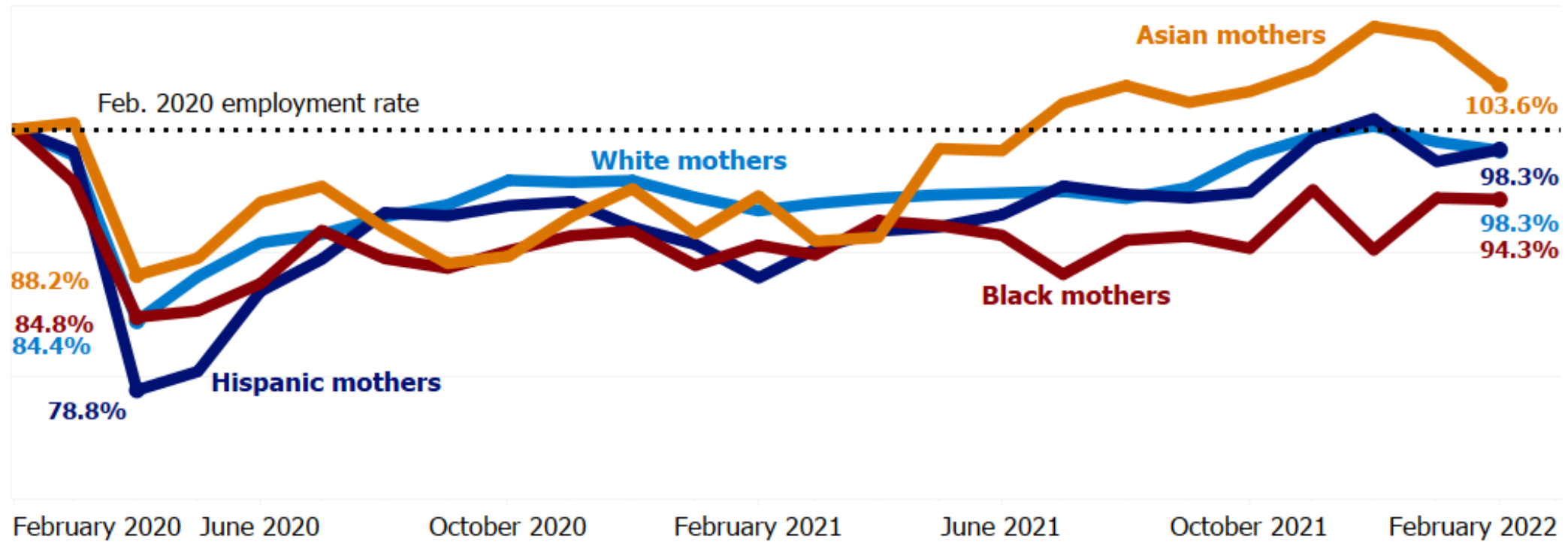
- Remote schooling
- Childcare closures
- Disruptions to home and community-based services
- Employment effects worse for mothers, unpartnered mothers, mothers of

color

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Why the COVID-19 Pandemic More Severely Impacted Working Women, cont.

Change in Mothers' Employment Rates by Race: February 2022 Relative to February 2020, Index (100 = Feb 2020)



Why the COVID-19 Pandemic More Severely Impacted Working Women, cont.

Overrepresented in industries that experienced the worst job losses

- Leisure and hospitality (an industry composed of 53.0% women in February 2020),
- Government (57.8% women), and
- Education and health services (77.2% women)
- These three sectors accounted for 54.6% of total jobs lost and 61.8% of jobs lost by women between February and April 2020.

Occupational Segregation

Occupational Segregation

- Occupational Segregation is unequally distributed across occupations aka “horizontal segregation”
- Vertical segregation: when there are gender or racial and ethnic disparities in representation at different levels within an occupation
- COVID-19 Pandemic proved addressing occupational segregation by both gender and race/ethnicity is critical for equity among women and success of the economy

Causes of Occupational Segregation

Supply-side factors

- Social norms & stereotypes
- Education attainment, sorting, training gaps
- Family caregiving responsibilities
- Networks & mentorship
- Wealth gaps and access to capital

Demand-side factors

- Workplace discrimination
- Workplace culture and harassment

Impact of Occupational Segregation

Occupational segregation leads to devaluation of a job because of who is doing the work

- As more women enter an occupation, the wages drop
- Women-dominated jobs are less likely to provide benefits
- Many women dominated jobs are poor quality jobs:
 - Low pay
 - No paid leave
 - No flexibility in scheduling
 - Unpredictable scheduling

20 OCCUPATIONS WITH HIGHEST MEDIAN WEEKLY EARNINGS, 2021

	Median weekly earnings	Percent women
Architectural and engineering managers	\$2,709	11.4%
Dentists	\$2,492	44.7%
Chief executives	\$2,473	30.2%
Other physicians	\$2,418	42.6%
Lawyers	\$2,252	41.7%
Computer and information systems managers	\$2,085	27.3%
Pharmacists	\$2,019	54.3%
Computer hardware engineers	\$2,006	10.5%
Computer network architects	\$1,990	10.6%
Nurse practitioners	\$1,955	85.1%
Software developers	\$1,922	19.7%
Electrical and electronics engineers	\$1,899	6.6%
Physician assistants	\$1,844	62.7%
Database administrators and architects	\$1,879	34.0%
Chemical engineers	\$1,875	15.8%
Information security analysts	\$1,874	17.9%
Aerospace engineers	\$1,863	17.6%
Veterinarians	\$1,797	71.6%
Personal financial advisors	\$1,773	39.6%
Engineers, all other	\$1,771	16.1%

20 OCCUPATIONS WITH LOWEST MEDIAN WEEKLY EARNINGS, 2021

	Median weekly earnings	Percent women
Hosts and hostesses, restaurant, lounge, and coffee shop	\$498	77.9%
Fast food and counter workers	\$507	64.2%
Dining room and cafeteria attendants and bartender helpers	\$509	49.0%
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	\$511	67.0%
Dishwashers	\$512	28.1%
Cashiers	\$515	71.9%
Food servers, nonrestaurant	\$544	77.5%
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	\$546	85.6%
Food preparation workers	\$547	57.9%
Cooks	\$549	36.7%
Childcare workers	\$569	93.0%
Sewing machine operators	\$572	71.3%
Waiters and waitresses	\$576	61.7%
Home health aides	\$587	84.1%
Cleaners of vehicles and equipment	\$590	19.5%
Animal caretakers	\$595	78.2%
Hairdressers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists	\$604	90.5%
Personal care aides	\$611	77.4%
Baggage porters, bellhops, and concierges	\$612	27.4%
Stockers and order fillers	\$612	34.8%

Notes: Includes detailed occupations where the sample size of the total number of workers allows for a calculation of median weekly earnings. Occupations highlighted in blue indicate non-traditional jobs for women, where women make up less than 25% of workers. Occupations highlighted in pink indicate women-dominated jobs, where women make up more than 75% of workers.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Table 39, Median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by detailed occupation and sex, 2021, Raw Data (Washington DC: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 20, 2022), <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat39.htm>.

Occupational Segregation and the Gender Wage Gap

Of the portion of the wage gap that can be explained using statistical models, by far the largest contributor is the types of jobs that women have.

- Black women lost **\$39.3 billion**, and
- Hispanic women lost **\$46.7 billion**, in wages compared to white men in 2019 due to differences in industry and occupation.

Ways to Address Issues Facing Working Women

- Improve Gender, Racial, and Ethnic Equity
- Increase Access and Equity in Education and Training Programs
- Support Workers with Caregiving Responsibilities Through Work-Family Policies and Workplace Flexibility
- Address Discrimination by Employers
- Address Workplace Harassment
- Improve Job Quality

QUESTIONS?

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