

Comments to the proposal “The Gender Gap in Smallholder Agricultural Productivity: the Case of Cameroon”

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Summary of the Proposal

- Two main research questions are addressed:
 - Does the use of different indicators affect the magnitude of the gender gap in agricultural productivity?
 - Do the gender gap in agricultural productivity differ for farmers living in different agro-ecological areas of Cameroon?
- Data: IRAD survey of smallholder multi-crop farmers, collected in Cameroon in 2009.
- Methodology: Estimation of agricultural yields by OLS (pooled and separately for men and women), estimation of the gender gap in productivity using Oaxaca Blinder decomposition.

Scientific Contribution

- Main contribution is a methodological one. Is interesting to understand if using a different indicator determines a different measure of gender gap in agricultural productivity.
- But, most of the existing literature already uses plot data rather than headship in order to build the gender indicator. And some authors already distinguish between plot owner and plot manager.
- Original contribution needs to be better justified. In particular with respect to La O Campos et al. (2016).
- Authors need to clarify the definition of de jure and de facto household head, and how they aim to use this distinction in the analysis.

Scientific Contribution

- I suggest to clarify work hypotheses: what authors expect to find looking at different indicators? Do they expect ownership or management to measure more on less inequality? Why? What about O+M with respect to O or M alone?
- There is no similar work on Cameroon: I suggest better explain which country specific characteristics (i.e. norms, rights, obligations) make Cameroon an interesting case.
- Same for agro-ecological zones: why should we expect gender gap in agricultural productivity being different for farmers living in different agro-ecological areas?

Data and Empirical Strategy

- Is the sample representative at the national level?
- More descriptive statistics (on plots, on crops, on agro-ecological zones, ...) would be necessary.
- Computation of revenue per hectare as an indicator of agricultural productivity: is a single price by crop for all farmers or the self reported price by each farmer that is used?
- Non random allocation of crops between men and women: how would you handle with that? Separate specification by crops is an option if both men and women cultivate each crops, is it the case?
- Authors should clarify how the different gender indicators will be used. Looking at equation (1) they do not seem mutually exclusive: both IC and G contain gender indicators.
- Is there a self-selection issue into agricultural work? Does self selection differ across gender? This should be considered.

Policy Relevance

- Authors should better explain why policy makers should be interested in a methodological issue as the choice of the gender indicator.
- Policy makers would be possibly more interested in understanding what drives gender inequality in agricultural productivity. Does your approach help understanding what factors drive gender inequality?

Minor points

- Not clear why authors talk about 146 de jure plots and 1,395 de facto plots. Do “de jure” and “de facto” refer to the household head or to the plot? [I am puzzled by this sentence “for the facto headship, the question used is the following: ‘is the farmer a native of the village?’” (page 14)]
- Authors should explain what gender dummies in equations (2) and (3) stand for.
- Beta coefficients should be named differently in equations 1, 2 and 3.



Thanks!

