

Gendered Effects on Productivity Gap Due to Information Asymmetry in India

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Abstract : According to the nationally representative data, about 73% of India's rural workforce is engaged in agriculture. While women make significant contributions to total agriculture production, they contribute to about one-third in India. In terms of gender composition, about 80% of the female and 69% of the male workforce is engaged in agriculture in rural India. Still, it is common to find gender differences in plot management within the household. In the last two and half years, India's agri-food system has undergone several changes due to this pandemic, both the demand and supply side, making agriculture more information and knowledge-intensive. Therefore, this paper investigates, using a nationally representative sample, how information asymmetry affects the net returns per hectare of land between female and male farm managers. Empirical results show that information intensity has a significant positive effect on net farm returns per hectare. Results suggest that if females have the same access to technical information as their male counterparts, their farm income can go up by .96 pp compared to male-headed farms. Results also indicate that literate females have higher farm incomes than non-literate females. The study contributes to the literature by employing gender differentials in farm income due to the information gap.

Keywords : agriculture, gender, information asymmetry, farm income, social bias

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