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Volume 19, Issue 4, 2013



Expenditure Incidence Analysis: A Gender-Responsive Budgeting Tool for Educational Expenditure in Timor-Leste?

Siobhan Austen, Monica Costa, Rhonda Sharp, and Diane Elson



Among feminist economists, government spending is widely seen as a policy tool for promoting gender equality. And, since the 1990s, gender-responsive budgeting has served as a framework for feminist advocates. This study reports on the experience of conducting an expenditure incidence analysis – an analysis of the distribution of government expenditure – for public schools in the new Asia Pacific country of Timor-Leste; the study also discusses how effective this analysis is as an input into the budget decision-making process.

What is EIA? Typically, expenditure incidence analysis (EIA) combines information on the cost of providing public services with evidence on who uses those services. The analysis can take many forms, from a simple comparison of the proportion of users of a funded service for different social groups to complex econometric analysis of demand functions for these services. While this study presents a gender-disaggregated EIA of education budgets in Timor-Leste, it recognizes that a gender analysis cannot stand alone in bringing about change in actual expenditures. Gender-responsive policy and budget changes require a political strategy that links research and policy. Toward this end, the study examines how and under what conditions EIA studies can effectively contribute to a political strategy (for example, advocacy) for budget and policy change in a gender-sensitive way.

Gender inequalities in education spending. The gender-disaggregated EIA of Timor-Leste's educational spending showed inequalities in educational expenditure. We first matched school attendance data of boys and girls with the actual "spending" on education by the government in 2006/7 to show that expenditure shares favored boys compared to girls (52.5 to 47.5 percent). This amounted to a total education expenditure on boys that was about US\$0.8 million higher than that on girls. The gender-disaggregated EIA also found a rural-urban gap: both boys and girls in rural areas receive a relatively small share of total expenditures on secondary schooling.

While the EIA provided evidence of gender gaps in education expenditure, it did not tell us which factors were important contributors to the relatively low share of education expenditure on girls, especially those in rural areas. Policymakers wanted to know what programs they could target to improve gender outcomes. In response, a second stage of analysis was undertaken. This involved applying 2007

national survey data to a regression analysis of the factors affecting the likelihood of a girl's attendance at school. The analysis showed that a girl's chances of attending school in 2007 were linked to household characteristics, such as educational background, the use of the national language (Tetum), urban location, and economic situation. These results suggested increasing the education levels of mothers and their access to and use of the national language, as well as reducing household poverty, would help reduce the relative disadvantage of girls.

Fulfilling the potential of gender-disaggregated EIA. The study concluded that gender-disaggregated EIA of education spending can generate a useful "headline" indicator of gender inequality. It can also contribute to gender-responsive budgeting by contributing to an evidence base for arguments that challenge claims of gender neutrality in education budgets.

Nevertheless, we also found that the potential of gender-disaggregated EIA can only be fulfilled when it is combined with additional gender analysis and a deep understanding of the budget decision-making processes and the actors involved. For example, when policymakers have limited technical knowledge of statistics, it can be difficult to communicate the results of gender-disaggregated EIA in a way that allows them to fully embrace the findings.

A need for interaction. Thus, a sustained interaction between academia and decision makers is critical to bring analysis and a strategy for change closer. We also found that access to information by policymakers, the timing of the budget decision-making processes (such as those associated with the consideration of relevant research on issues associated with spending on education), the gender politics within institutions (such as the politics affecting the power and seniority of gender focal points in ministries), the strength of the political commitment to gender equality, and international influences can also constrain the use of gender-disaggregated EIA as a tool to influence policies and budgets in a gender-sensitive way. These findings need to be brought to the forefront of the debate on evidence-based external assistance, given that organizations, such as the World Bank, have sponsored an expansion of sophisticated statistical techniques and made large investments in data collection.

Read the article in full at

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.830187#.U15uVPldX_M

Cooperative Conflicts and Gender Relations: Experimental Evidence from Southeast Uganda



Cecile Jackson

To understand gender relations and how they affect well-being in developing countries, a strong knowledge of intrahousehold relations – the bargaining between members of a household over decisions that affect them – is crucial. Using interdisciplinary research from Southeast Uganda, Cecile Jackson challenges and extends Amartya Sen's widely accepted model of intrahousehold bargaining. Developed to theorize and understand power differentials between men and women within households, Sen's cooperative conflicts model predicts that, within a given relationship, the person whose bargained outcomes conform more closely to their preferences than those of the other party:

- is more self-interested (in actuality and self-perception)
- makes the greater contribution to household income
- has a more favorable breakdown position (that is, has less to lose in case of defeat)

Questioning expectations. Jackson questions all three expectations in Sen's bargaining framework using economic games played in the predominantly Bagisu area of Uganda in 2005, where 240 participant couples contributed to, and had access to, a conjugal fund. The games were designed – with the expectations of Sen's model in mind – to understand how husbands and wives manage household funds: how much money would they keep for themselves? How much would they add to a joint pool of funds, and how would they share this common pool? The observed behavior was analyzed relative to the gender dynamics and cooperative behaviors predicted by Sen's model. (See Iversen et al. [2011] for the full formal game design with experimental results.)

An uncertain balance of power. Bagisu marriage is formally an authoritarian regime of male control. In actuality, however, the dependence of Bagisu men on their wives, and their wives' readiness to divorce and remarry, influences bargaining outcomes. Men are anxious to sustain marriage, since failure to do so has dramatic consequences and may even be fatal: bachelors and divorced men are socially ridiculed, suspected of sorcery and theft, and in extreme cases may be subject to violence. The complex interdependencies of husbands and wives in diverse ethnographies suggest a more uncertain balance of power within marriage than the cooperative

conflict model implies.

Challenging gender stereotypes of self-perceptions. The study questions Sen's emphasis on lower self-perceptions of personal welfare among women and on the role of cash contributions to the household as the basis of bargaining power, and it argues for a broader characterization of fallback positions. While Sen's model provides a useful way to think about the nature of power within households, it seems to miss some important dimensions. Degrees of self-perception of personal welfare are not neatly divided by gender; although the association of women with altruism and men with self-interest is a pervasive idea – in Western gender stereotypes, in development policy – this is clearly a complex and context-dependent matter. What is more, contributions are seen more broadly than by a money metric, power has cultural dimensions that may be very significant, and marriage is valued beyond its material worth. Divorce and remarriage possibilities affect marital power, and hence change the fallback position of each spouse, a feature that researchers using Sen's approach tend to neglect.

A complex balance of power. The cooperative conflicts model also gives inadequate recognition to male gender identities. Gisu husbands clearly need their wives' farm labor, reproductive capacities, and domestic labor to secure their livelihoods, yet wives also provide social standing: wives maintain men's gender identities, serve as character referees, and establish men's position vis-à-vis other men. Lineage politics in patrilineal and patrilocal societies exclude women from public affairs and full lineage membership. Yet the same politics depend on women to reproduce new lineage members and ensure everyday livelihoods. Thus, the character of dependence and interdependence in households reflects a complex balance of power not easily predictable using Sen's model of cooperative conflicts. As the game behavior of the Gisu couples reveals, marital power is relational and multidimensional.

Reference:

Iversen, Vegard, Cecile Jackson, Bereket Kebede, Alistair Munro, and Arjan Verschoor. 2011. "Do Spouses Realise Cooperative Gains? Experimental Evidence from Rural Uganda." *World Development* 39(4): 569–78.

Read the article in full at

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.827797#.U15v0PldX_M

The Impact of Gender Quotas on Votes for Women Candidates: Evidence from Italy



Genny Bonomi, Giorgio Brosio, and Maria Laura Di Tommaso

Gender quotas to increase women's political representation are now used in more than half the countries in the world. There are three main quota systems: a) the reserved seats system, in which a share of seats is by law reserved for a gender, regardless of voter choices; b) the legal candidate quotas system, in which a share of candidacies is reserved for a gender, but voters can choose among all candidates; and c) the voluntary, political-party quotas system, in which a share of candidacies is reserved for a gender by parties aiming for balanced gender representation. Reserved seats systems, used in India and Rwanda, are quite effective in increasing women's share of political offices. Legal candidate quotas systems, like those used in Italy, are less effective. Although legal quotas increase the votes received by women, they do not automatically ensure a corresponding increase in the number of seats held by women.

More votes for women candidates, inconsistent gains in seats.

Authors Genny Bonomi, Giorgio Brosio, and Maria Laura Di Tommaso show that an example of this outcome may occur in open-list proportional electoral systems such as Italy's, where lists of candidates selected by a party are presented to voters. This is what occurred in Italy: in 1995 and 2000, the introduction of quotas in four regional elections led to an appreciable increase in votes for women candidates, although it was not as large as the increase in women candidates and was unable to ensure a consistent increase in the number of elected women. This paper empirically studies how gender quotas worked in these regional elections and how their effectiveness reflected a demand bias and a supply bias. Demand bias refers to voters' choices: when the opportunity to vote for men exists, voters typically prefer to do so; supply bias refers to a bias that comes from parties preferring to field male candidates.

Methodology. The authors use a conditional multinomial logit model to estimate the probability that a voter will choose a woman candidate and simulate how this probability is influenced by changes in a number of variables, such as the introduction of gender quotas, length of the candidate list, and the position of the party in terms of liberal values. The results show that a greater share of women in party lists leads to an increase in the probability

that voters will choose a woman candidate.

Italian voters and gender bias. The probability of voting for a male candidate is always higher than the probability that a vote will be cast for a female candidate, even with 50 percent quotas. In particular, an increase in the number of women candidates on the list to 50 percent (the equivalent of a 50 percent gender quota) increases the probability that voters will choose a woman from 12 to 36 percent. However, the fact that a 50 percent gender quota leads to only a 36 percent chance of voting for women shows that Italian voters retain some gender bias, at least in the period under consideration. Over time, quotas may affect voters' response that could become less gender biased. The more liberal the party's values regarding these issues, the higher the probability that a woman will receive a vote. Voters' behavior is also influenced by the length of the party list and the position of women and men on it (a very long list appears to discourage voters from selecting any candidate) and the extent to which a party espouses liberal values, defined here in terms of abortion, homosexuality, and euthanasia.

Increasing Italian women's agency. What are the policy implications of these findings? To reach gender equality in representative bodies in Italy, the authors suggest that quotas in an open-list electoral system are a necessary affirmative action, as quotas remove some of the obstacles to women's political participation. In the current Italian electoral system for National Parliament, there are no gender quotas. At the same time, the authors stress the need to address the many different aspects of gender inequality in Italy. Women's traditionally weak bargaining power within the household in Italy likely also weakens their participation in the political arena. Increasing bargaining power through labor force participation and other means, such as stronger measures against domestic violence and violence against women, will enhance women's political prospects as well. Empowerment of Italian women is a difficult path, where each dimension is linked to another. Only by working in parallel, in all dimensions, will Italian women increase their agency in the political arena.

Read the article in full at

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.825375#.U19gd_IdX_M

Labor Market Regimes, Family Policies, and Women's Behavior in the EU



Christine Erhel and Mathilde Guergoat-Larivière

Since 2000, the Lisbon Strategy and the European Employment Strategy (EES) have promoted a gender perspective on European labor markets, with the goal of attaining a 60 percent female employment rate and other indicators of gender equality by 2010. Policies for the promotion of work-life balance and childcare are still mentioned in the new EU 2020 employment guidelines that were approved in 2010, though they are no longer prominent on the agenda. In addition, some EU member states, Germany in particular, have engaged in important reforms to make institutions and policies more favorable to women's employment, although such developments are not equally shared across EU countries.

Limited evidence. Despite these recommendations, policy goals, and indicators, empirical evidence on the impact of these policies or institutions on women's employment remains relatively limited for the twenty-eight member states of the EU. Research by Christine Erhel and Mathilde Guergoat-Larivière seeks to fill this gap, using recent comparative data on childcare and family policies for twenty-four European countries, including states that joined the EU in the past 10 years, commonly referred to as new member states: Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Baltic countries, and Poland. Erhel and Guergoat-Larivière rely on an original methodology (multilevel models) that jointly considers individual factors and countries' institutions to explain women's labor supply decisions and inter-country heterogeneity.

Descriptive analysis confirms the positions of some countries in regard to women's employment: the higher probabilities of working full-time for women from Nordic countries (Denmark, Norway, Iceland, and Sweden) and the predominance of part-time work in the Netherlands, along with the contrasting, very limited share of part-time work in the new member states named above.

Determinants of women's employment status. Using multilevel models, the authors then highlight the determinants of women's employment status at the individual and country levels. Their results show that individual effects such as age, education, citizenship, and parenthood – especially if the child is younger than 3 – are stronger than institutional country effects. In terms of public policies, results suggest that an increase in education levels

is likely to exert a positive influence on women's employment.

Negative effects of parenthood. The authors also focus on the links between employment status and the presence of young children. It appears that having a young child decreases the probability of working part-time and, to a greater degree, the probability of being employed full-time, even if the negative child effect varies a lot across countries. Other individual characteristics being equal, having a young child has a particularly negative effect in the Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Germany, Estonia, and Finland. This negative child effect is the most limited in Italy, Norway, Belgium, as well as Portugal (only for full-time work) and the Netherlands (only for part-time work).

Though individual determinants play a strong role in explaining women's labor market situations, Erhel and Guergoat-Larivière find that institutional settings and policies also matter for women's employment conditions. Indeed, their results confirm the relationships between women's employment and two sets of variables: childcare variables and some characteristics of national labor market regimes (part-time employment rate).

The role of formal childcare. When the authors distinguished between different types of childcare, they observed two statistically significant relationships between institutional settings and the probability of being employed for each woman: 1) a positive relationship between the development of formal childcare (and especially public childcare) and women's employment, and 2) a negative relationship between the development of informal childcare and women's employment, which might be explained by a substitution effect within women's population, given that informal childcare is usually provided by women. For mothers of young children, public childcare is found to have a positive influence on their employment probability and the length of parental leave a negative one. The positive role of formal childcare (and especially public childcare) is therefore clearly highlighted by this empirical study, and in a large geographical context.

Read the article in full at

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.842649#.U19h9PldX_M

Diversity among Norwegian Boards of Directors: Does a Quota for Women Improve Firm Performance?



Harald Dale-Olsen, Pål Schøne and Mette Verner

At the end of 2002 women comprised only 10 percent of the boards of directors of public limited companies (PLCs) in Norway. By April 2008, roughly 40 percent of directors of such firms were women. This leap in representation was the result of Norwegian laws that set a 40 percent quota for women on boards of PLCs. Harald Dale-Olsen, Pål Schøne, and Mette Verner examine this rather controversial reform in order to determine the effect of board structure on company performance in general and evaluate the economic consequences of gender-equalization strategies.

New evidence. Quota reform of this magnitude provides a massive shock to boards' structures, thereby providing new empirical evidence on how board diversity and use of quotas affects firm performance. The Norwegian reform is important as an example of government intervention to improve gender equality in both corporate management and in general. It is also the forerunner of similar reforms in Spain, Iceland, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, and Malaysia. The authors treat the reform as a natural experiment (that is, determined by events or forces beyond the control of researchers – in this case, the Norwegian legislation). For the 2003–07 period they identify changes in returns on assets (ROA) – a measure of how profitable a company is in relation to its total assets – for firms affected by the reform and compare the change in ROA with the change in ROA for Norwegian ordinary limited firms, which were not subject to the quota reform and could therefore serve as a control group. PLCs, a subgroup of limited firms, face stricter rules with regard to capital stock and board composition and size, their board members are not personally liable for debt, and only PLCs can be listed on Oslo Stock Exchange. As a major owner of PLCs, the state could not endorse the gender imbalance on PLC boards, thus legitimizing the quota reform.

Initial impact is small. The main results show that the impact of the reform on firm performance is negligible. Neither ROA nor operating revenues changed, and operating costs can be attributed to the increase in women's representation. These findings imply either that the short-run influence of boards is small, or that the newly recruited women did not contribute

markedly different resources and perspectives than the men they replaced, at least in this initial period.

Other measures of success. However, the authors infer that the reform may be important from a gender-equality perspective. It has increased women's representation on Norwegian boards. This success may have positive long-term effects on women's opportunities and willingness to seek other high-ranked positions in the labor market, which is an important and more wide ranging "second round" effect on gender equality. The reform also appears to have inspired similar reforms in several other countries, improving gender equality in the corporate world. Thus, at this stage, given the negligible economic-performance effects but clearly improved gender equality, the overall impression is that the reform has been a success.

Can Norway's experience be generalized? The authors think the results can be generalized to other countries, but offer the following contextual caveats:

- Norway has a tradition of using quotas in gender-equality policies, which may have helped smooth implementation.
- Norway has a very high labor force participation rate among women, and Norwegian women are on average well educated, factors that help in the recruitment of women into board rooms.
- Norway's political environment, characterized by a relatively friendly atmosphere between politicians and the public, also aids in the development and implementation of such a controversial reform. Even in Norway, major business representatives publicly opposed the reform arguing that it was an infringement of owners' right to determine their board representatives.

Finally, although the Norwegian reform was controversial at the time, as the years have passed and most concerns have not been realized, critics of the board legislation are few and far between. For the foreseeable future, Norwegian PLC boards will comprise 40 percent women.

Read the article in full at

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.830188#.U19jkfldX_M

Gender Inequality in the Spanish Public Pension System

María Jesús Vara



This study explores the extent to which the public pension system in Spain reproduces the existing gender inequalities of the labor market. The gender disparities in the labor market are determined by the roles that men and women play in Spanish society: they reflect that women tend to be allocated subordinate positions in the paid labor market because they spend less time in it over their lives than men do. That is because during their working life, women are still responsible for the work within the household, including unpaid domestic work and care for children, the ill, and the elderly.

Exploring the gender pension gap. Using data for 2010, María Jesús Vara examines the relationship between two labor market variables (employment rate and working conditions of women) and two pension variables (type and amount), incorporating also the age for different cohorts of women pensioners. She also assesses the evolution of the pension gender gap between 2000 and 2010.

Reproducing inequality. Vara shows that employment inequality is transferred to the Spanish pension system through two processes: First, women who did not engage in paid work, or who have not earned sufficient entitlement to an old-age pension, are dependent on other types of benefits (widow's pension or non-contributory assistance), which are considerably lower. Second, women who are entitled to an old-age pension receive, on average, less than men with those same entitlements due to the way in which pensions are calculated, reflecting the volume of employment contributions (proportional to the salary), the number of years during which these contributions were made, and the continuity of such contributions.

Enduring differences. As a result of these two different processes, a Spanish woman's average pension is 40 percent lower than a Spanish man's, and the proportion of women who are entitled to the old-age pension is lower than the proportion of men. These differences persist despite greater numbers of women entering the labor market, finding better-quality jobs, and earning higher salaries. The intensity with

which inequality is transferred from the job market to the pension system remains undiminished over the period of 2000–2010.

Inequality within groups of women. The second main finding is that unequal pension distribution is reproduced among different cohorts of older women. This inequality within groups of the same gender can also be explained by labor market differences. Women who retired or who were widowed two or three decades ago received pensions that were fairly low, in accordance with the weak welfare system of the time. These pensions have gone up only a few times with adjustment for inflation and continue to remain low. Thus, there is a large income gap between this group of women and those who have more recently begun to claim pensions.

Finally, the paper finds there is a narrower range of pension incomes among women pensioners than among men pensioners. This is due to the majority of women's monthly pension payments, whether for widows or old-age pensions, being under 800 euro, whereas the pension range among men is much greater (with 41 percent receiving more than 1,000 euro).

Can the gap be closed? The author suggests these findings could be used to improve gender equity in pensions. Using gender-sensitive calculation methods, or taking legislative measures that recognize years spent undertaking care work within the minimum contribution period required, as is done in Italy, France, Germany, and Sweden, could help close the gap between men and women's pensions. However, it is important to bear in mind that the underlying causes of inequality in the pension system are labor market conditions that favor men's participation and, ultimately, the gender division of labor. Only by changing these employment conditions and by increasing men's involvement in unpaid household work can the unequal distribution of pensions be substantially corrected.

Read the article in full at

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.822525#.U19lt_IdX_M

Women's Economic Participation on the Eve of Industrialization: Bizkaia, Spain, 1825



Pilar Pérez-Fuentes

Women's economic response to industrialization and its evolution over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries remain unexplored within the field of economic history. The Police Census of Bizkaia (Biscay) of 1825 represents a vital source for the study of women's labor force participation (LFP) and its determinants of supply and demand in some Spanish regions in the first half of the nineteenth century. Using data for several towns from the Police Census, Pilar Pérez-Fuentes analyzes the impact of supply factors (marital status, family life cycle, and occupation of household head) and of the opportunities in the local market on women's labor force participation. The results show that supply factors do not explain the variance in women's activity as it has traditionally been emphasized.

A diversified economy. In 1825, Bizkaia was a highly diversified economy in which agriculture had less weight than the iron industry, trade, seafaring, and fishing. Metallurgical production for the international market employed many men in urban centers, who were associated in guilds. The surrounding rural population of small landowners and tenant farmers satisfied the demand for labor generated by the rapid development of proto-industrial iron production (that is, production marked by the involvement of agrarian families in market-oriented crafts). Farming families were mostly woodcutters and charcoal burners who were also engaged in iron extraction and transportation. In coastal areas a greater part of the population undertook fishing, seafaring, and subsidiary activities such as net making, brining, and pickling, and transportation and trade to inland communities. The capital Bilbao was the triangular trade hub between Northern Europe, Spain, and the American market and had a strong artisan sector and services.

Beyond the guilds. The Police Census depicts a society in which women had a high level of LFP. At least 68.6 percent of women ages 15–64 were registered with an occupation. However, there were notable differences between municipalities. In rural localities the labor activity rate among adult women reached 94.3 percent. Proto-industrial environments, where agriculture, unskilled and outsourced labor, and salaried work were beyond the control of the guilds, afforded more opportunities

to women than the urban artisan economy in which LFP was linked to a socially recognized qualification and marked labor identity. These urban artisan economies included Durango, with 17.6 percent women's LFP, and Balmaseda, with 33.9 percent. In the fishing-based economy of Lekeitio, where women carried out subsidiary tasks, their LFP was also high, 78.5 percent. Bilbao was also an area of opportunity for women – servants and services – with a rate of 75.1 percent, much higher than in handicraft urban economies with a strong presence of guilds.

Women's LFP and local opportunities. Variables related to the life cycle, including marital status and the number of dependent children, affected women's LFP, but they were not significant. A probit analysis shows that supply factors do not explain the variances in women's activity. On the other side, women's LFP is highly positively related to their local economic opportunities. Differences in the LFP of single and married women, and widows according to their socioeconomic context – rural, urban, fishing – underline the importance of demand. In Bilbao, where the most marked LFP differences due to marital status are observed, 62 percent of married women were economically active compared to 87 percent of single women and 75.2 percent of widows. However, in rural proto-industrial and fishing areas there were hardly any variations by marital status. The same occurs with the number of children under age 10 in the household, a variable that has only a weak negative relationship with women's LFP.

Motherhood does not always matter. In short, the key variables in the life cycle do not adequately explain women's LFP in Bizkaia, and it is clear that supply factors (children, marital status) do not have the negative impact that has traditionally been emphasized. In other words, motherhood did not act as a determinant of women's paid labor activity in every time and context. On the contrary, in Bizkaia, during the first half of the nineteenth century, household job needs and local economic opportunities for women appear to be strongly related to women's work.

Read the article in full at

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.834068#.U19nJvldX_M

Women's Labor Participation Rates in the Kingdom of Castilla in the Eighteenth Century

Ricardo Hernández



Oral sources, and even some written ones, have always claimed that women and children actively participated in a multitude of work activities on a daily basis in eighteenth-century Western Europe. However, the truth is that the documentation, at least that concerning the late years of the *Antiguo Régimen* (Old Regime) in much of Western Europe, does not reflect that reality. There are various reasons for the considerable gap. Perhaps the main ones are that in the European past, the household was considered a unit headed by the man and the labor guilds and associations were exclusively male.

New documentation sheds light on participation rates. Using detailed records from the mid-eighteenth century Ensenada Cadaster, the most comprehensive census of the Kingdom of Castilla during this period, Ricardo Hernández seeks to answer the following questions: How many women and children actually worked? Can we calculate the activity rates (that is, labor force participation rates) for women and men for mid-eighteenth century Spanish society?

The Ensenada Cadaster. Conducted as part of an ultimately unsuccessful tax reform proposed by Fernando VI (1746–59), the Ensenada Cadaster evaluated the economic, family, and work situation of all the inhabitants of Castilla in 1750. Although the proposed, unified tax was to be based on the incomes of adult men, women and children's labor was also reported in many localities, which helps develop a realistic picture of labor participation rates at the time. The author studied the original documentation used to develop the cadaster, specifically the *Memoriales* (Memoranda), handwritten reports provided by each head of household or neighbor. The analysis of this documentation for a dozen localities in the current province of Palencia, which is situated in the heart of the kingdom of Castilla and may be used as a valid sample for the overall scale, reveals that the great

majority of the population had to work, and actually did so, earning only a meager livelihood.

High rates of women and girls' labor force participation (LFP). The data confirm a labor participation rate of 76.9 percent for the population between 10 and 60 years of age in 1750. When male and female participation rates are differentiated, the participation of men – the breadwinners, in classic analysis – stands at 86 percent; the rate for female participation is 67 percent, a figure much higher than those found for other parts of Western Europe during same period. Another interesting finding is the differentiation between boys and girls (ages 6 through 14). Although it was not very common for children under 10 years to engage in paid work, it was more common for girls than for boys. And, while elementary school attendance was low in general, boys attended school more often and longer than girls (thereby receiving more training). As a probable consequence, boys' labor force participation rate of 62.1 percent is lower than girls' rate of 73.3 percent.

A challenge to traditional studies. Finally, perhaps the least-known fact the study reveals is that women and girls were engaged in all types of work, both in manufacturing (mainly in intensive, small-scale textile production), services (domestic service and as laundresses and seamstresses), and as land laborers at all times of the year and under similar conditions as men. (In the populous town of Astudillo, married women with one child had a labor participation rate of 83 percent – higher than that of married women without children.) This finding suggests that the living standards may in fact have been higher than generally assumed, since traditional studies calculated such standards with only men's earnings in mind.

Read the article in full at

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.837579#.U19n9_IdX_M

Reconsidering Women's Labor Force Participation Rates in Eighteenth-Century Turin



Beatrice Zucca Micheletto

How much did women work in the European past? Conventional thinking holds that until the mid 1970s, women in Western Europe mostly performed unpaid domestic labor, but recent feminist economics scholarship is challenging this long-held assumption. One obstacle to correctly evaluating women's labor force participation rate (LFP) in the past is the complicated relationship between women's work and archival sources, such as population censuses, which date to when formal censuses were introduced in Western Europe in the eighteenth century.

Focus on men's work. Often carried out for military or tax purposes, censuses were always interested in men's work and, more generally, in the principal breadwinner's occupation only. Since women were obliged to reconcile a paid job with childcare and housekeeping, they frequently worked outside or at the margins of the official labor market, invisible to census enumerators – as well as underpaid. Even those women who performed skilled, paid work were often not considered “real” workers and, as a consequence, were scarcely registered by record keepers. To escape this impasse, Beatrice Zucca Micheletto, in research focusing on eighteenth-century Turin, proposes an improvement in the methodological approach to evaluating women's LFP rates using non-conventional archival sources.

Suspiciously low participation rates. According to the population census of Turin carried out in 1802, 33.3 percent of women ages 15 and over stated they had a paid job, while 58 percent declared no job, activity, or status. (Of the remainder, 1.8 percent were identified as housewives and 1.3 percent as residing in a convent; 3.2 percent declared themselves to be poor or beggars, and 2.4 percent said they were living on their incomes.) Marriage was a watershed event: only 21.7 percent of the whole group of married women declared a job against 55.7 percent of unmarried women ages 25 and over and 48.6 percent of widows. Compared with the labor participation rates of unmarried women or widows, the rates of married women seem suspiciously low: Do they illustrate a dramatic reduction in women's activity after marriage? Or, are they the product of the ideology of the time, which considered the contributions of the male breadwinner to

be most important and undervalued the work of other family members?

An undercount is revealed. Zucca Micheletto seeks answers in the registers of the applicants at the Ospedale di Carità, the most popular charitable institution of Turin during the Old Regime. At the Ospedale, all members of a family seeking help were required to declare their occupations and activities in some detail in order to demonstrate their concrete contributions to family survival, and that they were deserving of relief. According to these registers, from 1785 to 1793, 63.2 percent of women ages 15 and over had a paid job (compared to 33.3 percent in the 1802 census). And, 73.3 percent of wives declared they had employment, exactly the opposite of the 21.7 percent figure in the census of 1802. These figures provide convincing evidence that the Napoleonic census seriously undercounted married women's labor force rates. Rather than being absent from the labor market, married women in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries appear to be a hidden labor force.

New archival sources. Zucca's research thus highlights the usefulness of a methodological approach that uses new archival sources – namely non-breadwinner oriented sources – for achieving a more balanced picture of married women's historical LFP rates. These data also confirm the extension of the powerful ideological construction of the breadwinner. In early modern Europe, it was taken for granted that paid work was not central in a woman's life and that it should be limited to specific life-phases, particularly before marriage and during widowhood. Paid work was regarded as less important than unpaid domestic activities and housekeeping. These were considered the “natural” duties of a married woman who, in theory, was placed under the protection and care of her husband, who was assumed to be the main breadwinner. The persistence of this cultural element in conventional sources led researchers to seriously devalue the labor contributions of family members who did not occupy the role of “head of household,” or at least the role of “principal breadwinner,” as was the case with married women workers (and also of children workers of both genders).

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http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.842283#.U19qBvldX_M

Revisiting Women's Labor Force Participation in Catalonia (1920–36)



Cristina Borderías

During the 1960s and 70s, social and women's historians began to use the term "delay" to refer to the late entrance of women into the Spanish labor market – late, that is, compared to when women in other countries entered the industrialized labor force. The supposed delay was blamed on a confluence of factors, including a perceived "failure of the Industrial Revolution," the country's belated economic modernization, and the influence of Catholicism and political conservatism on gender roles. Strengthening the notion of delay or backwardness was the data on women's labor activity published by country's National Census of Population. It was generally understood that the Census under-registered women's labor overall, as well as the differences between localities, but the extent of under-registration was not clear.

Misrepresentation of women's labor. Over the past few decades, studies began to quantify this under-registration. They found that it was much greater than expected – in particular, the labor of married women with children was underreported – and that women in the labor force were more heterogenous. Cristina Borderías aims to reconstruct women's labor force participation rates in the leading textile areas of Catalonia, which represented 20 percent of the whole Catalan textile labor force during the first third of the twentieth century. Within this context of a high demand for female employment, due to the almost complete feminization of the textile sector, the paper also reviews the hypotheses provided by neoclassical economics and labor economics regarding the determinants of women's labor participation. The author assumes that some of these hypotheses – in particular the assumption that the presence of young children discouraged and thus delayed women's labor participation – result from statistical misrepresentation due to the extensive under-registration of female employment, particularly that of married women with children.

Women at work in "the factory of Spain." Catalonia has been called "the factory of Spain" because of its importance in the second half of the nineteenth century in cotton textile production, which led the region's industrialization process. Catalan industrialization generally corresponds to the development model of the principal regions of proto-industrial Europe – the Europe of rural manufacturing and cottage industries that existed prior to more modern, urban factory production. But, driven by the need to cut prices, the Catalan cotton textile industry adopted the intensive use of female labor to an even greater degree than in Great

Britain. Since the 1970s, historiography has recognized the discrepancies between the importance of female labor – documented since the mid-nineteenth century by the statistics and reports of social reformers of the time – and the low women's labor force figures released by the National Population Census. However, the difficulty of finding alternative data left no recourse but to continue using the census account of male labor force activity, producing very significant biases in knowledge of structural change and Catalan economic growth, the productivity of economic sectors, the evolution of living standards during industrialization, the economic contribution of women to their families, and the determinants of their activity.

Toward more accurate participation rates. Yet it is possible to reconstruct more realistic rates of women's labor activity. Catalan municipal archives contain sources that offer more accurate quantification than the National Census of Population. These archives include the municipal censuses (Enumerator Books) undertaken by city councils, and the Labor Censuses carried out by local Social Reform Boards and the Ministry of Labor during the first third of the twentieth century. Using these, Borderías has reconstructed more realistic rates of women's participation and shown that rates of this participation were very high in places where labor market demand offered work opportunities for women. The Catalan case shows how the impact of industrialization on women's work was fundamentally influenced by the characteristics of local labor markets.

A limited role for the traditional breadwinner model. In many areas of Catalonia, the development of the textile industries created a specific, growing demand for women, who in turn responded to these opportunities – even married women with very young children. In fact, the presence of small children incentivized women's market participation instead of discouraging it. One of the most important conclusions of Borderías's research is that demand played a much more important role than classical historiography has maintained. Conversely, supply factors like marriage and the occupation and status of the husband had minor importance. The high participation rates of married women with children (for example, 60 percent in 1920) reveals that during the first third of the century the traditional breadwinner model had little influence among the working classes from the textile areas that played a leading role in Catalan industrialization.

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http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13545701.2013.831181#.U19udPldX_M