Introduction

- Migration is a widely prevalent global phenomenon and has important implications for agriculture, by leading to changes in labor, farm inputs, crop mix, yield, profits, as well as farm decision-making.
- Labor migration is heavily male dominant in rural India. Women are left behind to tend to agriculture, resulting in feminization of agriculture.
- Women farmers have lower access to resources and limited managerial exposure; therefore, feminization of agriculture has important implications for agricultural productivity & profitability.

Results

- The results indicate a modest increase in women’s share in family labor (4%). On the other hand, male migration leads to a significant and robust increase in the likelihood of having a female farm manager or decision-maker (13%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Female Labor</th>
<th>Female Farm Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migration</td>
<td>0.038*** (0.011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>9,880</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Exploring the linkage between migration induced female farm management and farm profits, I find that female farm management mediates 28% of total effects of migration.
- However, mediation results are highly sensitive to the model assumptions.

Research Questions

- How does male migration change women’s work and decision-making in agriculture?
- Does female farm management play a mediating role in influencing migration’s overall effects on farm profits?

Data

- The data comes from the two rounds (panel) of Indian Human Development Survey IHDS (2004-05 & 2011-12).
- The analysis focuses on the balanced sample of rural households that are engaged in cultivation.

Conclusion

- The results suggest changing roles for women – increase in female farm decision-making.
- Increase in female farm management is concentrated in households: with inter-state migrants, in North India, belonging to SC-ST castes, with a joint family set-up.
- Female farm management mediates 28% of total negative effects of migration on farm profits.

Empirical Methods

- To examine changes in farm labor & decision-making, the analysis employs a Difference-in-Differences (DID) strategy in combination with Propensity Score Matching (PSM) methods.
- DID – compare change in outcomes over time between two sets of households – non-migrant (no migration in both time periods) & migrant households (migrant in end-line only).
- PSM methods to account for self-selection.
- To examine the mediating role of female farm management, the analysis adopts Imai et al.’s causal mediation framework (2010).

References


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