## **ECONOMIC STUDIES**

### DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND LAW UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG 204

Essays on Development: Household Income, Education, and Female Political Participation and Representation

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ISBN 978-91-85169-66-5 ISSN 1651-4289 print ISSN 1651-4297 online

Printed in Sweden, Kompendiet 2012

# Contents

A	Acknowledgements	i
S	ummary of the thesis	ii
P	<b>Paper 1:</b> The Push Towards UPE and the Determinants of the Demand Tanzania	for Education in
1	Introduction	
2	Background – conceptual framework 2.1 Setting 2.2 Conceptual Framework	
3	Empirical Strategy and Data 3.1 Data 3.2 Estimation Strategy	7
4	Results	
5	Conclusions	
	References	
	Figures and Tables	
	Appendix	
	<b>Paper 2:</b> Households' income-generating activities and marginal return Tanzania	
	Introduction	
2	Background 2.1 Income diversification in Tanzania 2.2 The role of shadow wages	
3	Data and empirical strategy 3.1 Data 3.2 Empirical strategy	7
4	Results 4.1 Patterns of income diversification 4.2 Marginal returns 4.3 Marginal returns as an indicator of constraints	
5	Conclusions	
	References	
	Tables and figures	
	Appendix	

Pa	ber 3: The Effects of Gender Quotas in Latin American National Elections	
1	Introduction	2
2	Theory and Expectations	4
	<ul><li>2.1 Theory on Quota Effects</li><li>2.2 Quotas in Latin America and Expected Effects</li></ul>	
3	Data and Empirical Strategy	10
5	3.1 Data	10
	3.2 Empirical Strategy	
4	Results	16
	<ul><li>4.1 Quota Effects on the Share of Women in Parliament</li><li>4.2 Quota Effects on Policy, Participation and Corruption</li></ul>	
5	Discussion of Potential Mechanisms	20
6	Conclusions	
	References	
	Figures and Tables	
	<b>ber 4:</b> The gender gap in African political participation: Individual and contextual determinants	2
1	Introduction	2
2	Understanding the gender gap in political participation	3
	<ul><li>2.1 Individual determinants</li><li>2.2 Contextual determinants</li></ul>	
2		0
3	Data and empirical setup 3.1 Dependent variables	0
	3.2 Explanatory variables	
	3.3 Estimation strategy	
4	Results	11
	<ul><li>4.1 Pooled regressions</li><li>4.2 Gender specific regressions</li></ul>	
5	Conclusions	18
	References	
	Tables and figures	
	Appendix	34

# Acknowledgements

This theses has come about through blood, sweat and tears (well, maybe not so much blood), but it would not have seen the light of day if it were not for the help I have received from so many kind and brilliant people.

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisors Arne Bigsten and Måns Söderbom for pushing and pulling me through this process. All the encouragement, suggestions and discussions have truly been invaluable!

I would also like to thank my co-authors Ann-Sofie Isaksson, Andreas Kotsadam and Trudy Owens. Working with you all has been both stimulating and fun! Andreas deserves extra thanks for being such a good office mate and friend, and not complaining about my constant drumming, humming and general nuisance. While not a co-author of a thesis chapter, a sincere thanks also to Justin Sandefur for the times we spent in Tanzania and the related work. I have learnt a lot from you all!

Thanks to Pelle Ahlerup, Heather Congdon Fors, Annika Lindskog, Sven Tengstam and all other people at the Development Economics unit for valuable and appreciated discussions, both on and off the topics in this thesis. Thank you also to my classmates Yonas Alem, Haoran He, Pham Khanh Nam, Fabian Nilsson, Eyerusalem Siba, Michele Valsecchi, Clara Villegas, Kofi Vondolia and Conny Wollbrant – I'm sure none of us will forget the times and experiences we shared when we started.

I also wish to thank Eva-Lena Neth-Johansson for being so helpful and on top of everything, and Debbie Axlid for excellent editorial assistance.

Financial assistance from Sida/Sarec is gratefully acknowledged.

To the family and friends who still remember me: sorry for being such a bore and out of touch lately. I hope to do better in the future.

Finally, I am forever grateful for having my love Ia. Thank you for pushing and pulling me, for encouragement, suggestions, discussions, for being so helpful and on top of everything, and even for editorial assistance. I could not have done any of this without you. Words are not enough.

Måns Nerman Göteborg, March 2012

### Summary of the thesis

The thesis consists of four self-contained papers.

# **Paper 1:** The Push Towards UPE and the Determinants of the Demand for Education in Tanzania

Achieving universal primary education is explicitly stated as one of the Millennium Development Goals and has been the focus of many policy makers in developing countries during the last decade. In the early 2000s, the government of Tanzania introduced the Primary Education Development Programme in order to make sure all children get an education. The aim of this paper is to investigate if and how the determinants of demand for education have changed in this period.

Using data from two nationally representative panel surveys, we find that the abolition of school fees was followed by an overall increase in enrolment, yet both direct and opportunity costs of schooling remain important determinants of educational demand, as do the household's level of consumption, its choice of livelihood, the education of parents and the child's relationship to the head of household. We also find that the average level of education within the local community is a significant predictor of children's education, which indicates that educational choices are affected by the views on education held by others within the community.

The evidence suggests that the socio-economic background of a child is just as important in predicting his or her level of schooling in 2007 as it was in 2001. Taken together, we conclude that while there have been significant gains in the level of education among children across the board, important structural inequalities in education remain.

#### Paper 2: Households' income generating activities and marginal returns to labor in rural Tanzania

Poverty is widespread in rural Tanzania. For households in these areas, it is thus of great importance to be able to live up to their full income earning potentials. The vast majority of rural households are to some degree engaged in farming, yet show different strategies when it comes to diversifying their incomes. In order to better understand the opportunities and constraints these households face, the present study aims to investigate to what extent households in Tanzania are able to diversify into income-generating activities so as to maximize income, and what factors seem to determine if they do so.

To this end, detailed household-level data is used to investigate income and activity diversification among rural Tanzanian households. Unlike previous research on

diversification, I explicitly evaluate marginal returns – or shadow wages – within own farming; an empirical strategy related to the literature on farm household labor supply (e.g. Jacoby 1993).

The findings indicate that specialization in agriculture does not seem to be correlated with household welfare, which is somewhat contradictory to the typical finding in the literature. I also find strong support for agricultural wage work being a last resort, rather than a lucrative outside option for rural households, as those engaged in agricultural wage work also allocate more labor to their own farms than do others, despite lower returns. This is somewhat surprising, as both agricultural and non-agricultural wage rates are much higher than shadow wages in own farming, implying that there are potentially large gains to be made from expanding the non-farm side of the rural economy. However, I find no evidence that access to the existing labor markets is an important determinant of how much labor households allocate to own farming, nor do I find evidence that a taste for homegrown crops is important, yet preferences for working on the own farm seem to play a role. Some support for the importance of access to credit and social networks for not being stuck in low-return agriculture is also presented.

#### Paper 3: The Effects of Gender Quotas in Latin American National Elections

Over the past twenty years, affirmative actions have been introduced in more than 100 countries around the world in order to increase the number of women in politics, either by governments or by political parties of own accord. In terms of legal electoral quotas, Latin America has been at the forefront; eleven of eighteen countries in the region have legal gender quotas in national elections today, with Argentina being the first democratic country to introduce such a law in 1991.

The arguments usually put forward for quotas are based on justice, women's experiences, women's interests, and the importance of female politicians as role models (Dahlerup 2003). These have found some support in empirical research, where associations have been found between more women in politics and spending priorities (e.g., Clots-Figueras 2011, Chattopadhay and Duflo 2004), changing gender norms (Beaman et al. 2009), and having less corruption (e.g., Dollar et al. 2001). However, this evidence is either at a local level of government, or merely establishes correlations. As there is a lack of research on the causal effects of legal quotas in national elections on outcomes other than the share of women in parliaments, this article aims to identify the impacts of the increased number of female

politicians in national parliaments in Latin America due to the quota introductions on policy, women's political participation, and corruption.

Our results show that while the quotas substantially increased the number of women in parliament, they had no measurable effects on policy, political participation, or corruption. However, we find that estimations not utilizing the quota introduction, instead looking at variation in the share of women in parliament not caused by quota measures, often show correlations between female representation in parliament and the mentioned outcomes. This seems to imply either that women elected through quotas differ from other elected women, or that the correlations between women in parliament and our outcomes are spurious. In either case, it suggests that quotas have been ineffective with respect to these issues in Latin America. Further analysis also shows that the quotas did increase the share of women in ministerial positions, suggesting that quota parliamentarians do not seem completely marginalized.

# **Paper 4:** *The gender gap in African political participation: Individual and contextual determinants*

As citizens' political participation may influence what policy issues are brought to the agenda, an unequal distribution of participation could potentially reinforce existing economic and social inequalities. Traditionally, men have participated more than women, and this remains so in many African societies. However, we have little empirical knowledge of what underlies this gender gap. Leading explanations of the gender gap, based on studies from other parts of the world, focus on structural differences in individual resource endowments, often viewing female employment as the crucial factor, and on cultural differences, often with religion as main focus (e.g., Ross 2008 and the response by Norris 2009).

The aim of this paper is to examine what factors can explain the gender gap in African electoral and inter-electoral political participation, evaluating the relative explanatory power of commonly suggested individual and contextual determinants of participation, and of gender variation in their effects.

Our estimations on data covering more than 27,000 respondents from 246 regions in 20 African countries indicate that differing observable characteristics between men and women explain only a very small share of the gender gap in African political participation. Hence, the gender inequality observed in African political participation, which for inter-electoral participation is quite substantial, can seemingly not be explained simply by differing characteristics such as women being less educated or participating less in the labor market. The fact that the lion's share of the observed gender gaps remains unexplained in spite of controlling for a wide range of commonly suggested individual and contextual determinants of political participation suggests that some other factor is at play. Interestingly, the often suggested role of religion as reinforcing traditional gender roles does not seem to help explain the gender gap in participation. Rather, the strong positive associations observed between individual religiosity and political participation seem to indicate that religious affiliations provide access to political networks stimulating participation, among women as well as among men.

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