

ABSTRACT

Purpose – Land is an emotive issue for women in Kenya, majority of who still suffer the consequences of not having access to land, leading to economic insecurity. This paper aims at examining the effects of women access to land on household nutritional outcomes among smallholder farmers in Kenya.

Design/methodology/approach – The study uses primary data collected from a sample of 384 small-scale women farmers selected using multi-stage sampling technique. For data analysis, household nutritional outcomes were measured using Households Dietary Diversity Scores (HDDS) and Household Hunger Scale Scores (HHS). Stratification multilevel and matching-smoothing approach that controls for pre-treatment heterogeneity bias and treatment effect heterogeneity bias was used in estimating heterogeneous effects of women access to land.

Findings – The analysis reveals that women access to land has a significant positive effect on household nutritional outcomes. All households across all propensity scores strata benefited significantly but differently from women access to land in terms of nutritional outcomes.

Research limitations/implications – Econometrically, propensity matching technique used in computing heterogeneity effects captures selection bias due to observable characteristics but it fails to capture selection bias due to unobservable factors. However, robust strategies were employed to ensure minimal estimation bias.

Originality/value – The paper provides insights on the determinants of women access to land and the influence women access to land has on household nutritional outcomes. In addition, by employing one of the conventional impact evaluation techniques, the paper contributes to knowledge by taking into accounts the heterogeneity in the effects of women access to land on household nutritional outcomes.

Keywords: Women, Access to land, Nutritional outcomes, Heterogeneous treatment effects, Kenya

Paper type Research paper