



Women's Inheritance Rights and Intergenerational Transmission of Resources in India

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Country	India
Organizing Theme	Economic Opportunities and Access to Assets
Status	Completed
Intervention Category	Legal Reform
Sector	Agriculture and Rural Development
Abstract	We use inheritance patterns over three generations of individuals to assess the impact of changes in the Hindu Succession Act that grant daughters equal coparcenary birth rights in joint family property that were denied to daughters in the past. We show that the amendment significantly increased daughters' likelihood to inherit land, but that even after the amendment, substantial bias persists. Our results also indicate a robust increase in educational attainment of daughters, suggesting an alternative channel of wealth transfer.
Gender Connection	Gender Focused Intervention
Gender Outcomes	Women's owned property, gender disaggregated school attainment
IE Design	Difference in Difference
Intervention	The traditional Hindu Succession law distinguishes individual property from joint ancestral rights. The former can be bequeathed at will, while the latter are limited to a group that is male-only. The act was amended by the states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Karanataka in 1986, 1989, 1994 and 1994 respectively. The change in the law makes daughters status equal to sons and also implies that girls share in joint family property cannot be willed away by her father.
Intervention Period	1986-1994
Sample population	The study uses the 2006 Rural Economic and Demographic Survey which collected information on 8190 rural households and 72655 individuals in 16 major states of India.
Comparison conditions	The study compares inheritance of land to males and females by fathers who died before and after the legal reform.
Unit of analysis	Difference in Difference
Evaluation Period	2006
Results	There is a clear discontinuity in the likelihood of females inheriting land at the time of the reform and a significant increasing trend in this variable after the reform. The reforms had a positive impact on the total value of asset transfers women received, the share of household land they received, and their level of land ownership. Women's likelihood of inheriting land increases by 15 p.p. Girls, but not boys, had significantly higher levels of primary education (by .37 years) compared to the old regime.
Primary study	The paper does not discuss limitations



limitations	
Funding Source	Gender Action Plan, Global Land Tools Network
Reference(s)	Deininger, K., Aparajita, G., & Nagarajan, H. (2013) "Women's Inheritance Rights and Intergenerational Transmission of Resources in India," Journal Of Human Resources, 48(1), 114-141
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