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Abstract

Estimating the effects of food aid program in influencing food security in Malawi is important for evaluation, redesigning and refocusing effective interventions that will improve food security situation of the country. We identify the impact of food aid program on land and labor productivity in drought affected areas of rural Malawi. Using Integrated Household panel data set of 2010, 2013 and 2016, we exploit the effect of food aid program on land productivity and labor productivity through its impact on labor supply in agriculture. We employ propensity score matching estimator to address selection bias.

The estimated treatment effect on the treated suggest that food aid program significantly increased labor supply by 20.8 percentage points while we observe no evidence to support the positive impacts of food aid on maize production (quantity of maize produced) and land productivity. Labor productivity significantly declined by 21.3 percentage points. Despite an increase in labor supply towards agriculture, maize production remained constant, which affected productivity. This therefore explains the low investment in improving production and productivity as evidenced by insignificant results. As a policy recommendation, government should put in place programs that will motivate households to adopt agriculture technologies to improve maize production and productivity. Furthermore, the government should improve resilience of farmers to enable them to produce beyond rainy season and adapt to effects of climate change thereby achieving food and nutrition security.