

Are Egyptian Women better off than their Male Counterparts?

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Motivation

Poverty has female face in Egypt

The aim of this paper is to investigate the gender gap between female-headed households and male-headed households using three welfare measures; per capita food expenditure, per capita total expenditure and per capita total wage

Literature Review (1/2)

- The **wage gap** is found to be in favor of men.

Individual and household's characteristics and return to these characteristics explain this gap (Hamidi, 2005; El-Haddad, 2009; Biltagy; 2014).

- For other monetary measures, there is no consensus that women are worse off than their male counterparts as it is the case in the labor market.

Literature Review (2/2)

- Poverty is more prevalent among female headed households when compared to male headed households (Alazzawi, 2015).
- Poverty rate among female-headed households is higher than the rate among male-headed households, but for lower poverty line (El-Laithy, 2016).
- Having a female head is not a determinant of poverty and that “*some de jure male-headed households include a large number of poor females*” (Abdellatif et al, 2017).
- Female headed households are better off than their male counterparts when per capita total expenditure is studied (Ramadan et al, 2018).

Methodology (1/2)

- Unconditional Quantile Regression Technique (UQR) is used to decompose the welfare difference between two groups: female-headed households (FHHs) and male-headed households (MHHs).
- The difference is measured at the different income quintiles.
- The UQR decomposes the inequality into two effects:
 1. *endowment* effect
 2. *return* effect.
- Three welfare measures are studied: *food expenditure per capita*, *total expenditure per capita* and *per capita total wage*.

Methodology (2/2)

- The determinants of the welfare differential include:
 - Individual's characteristics: age, age squared, marital status, education and employment status.
 - Household's characteristics: dependency ratio, presence of more than one earner.
 - Area of living: urban/rural.

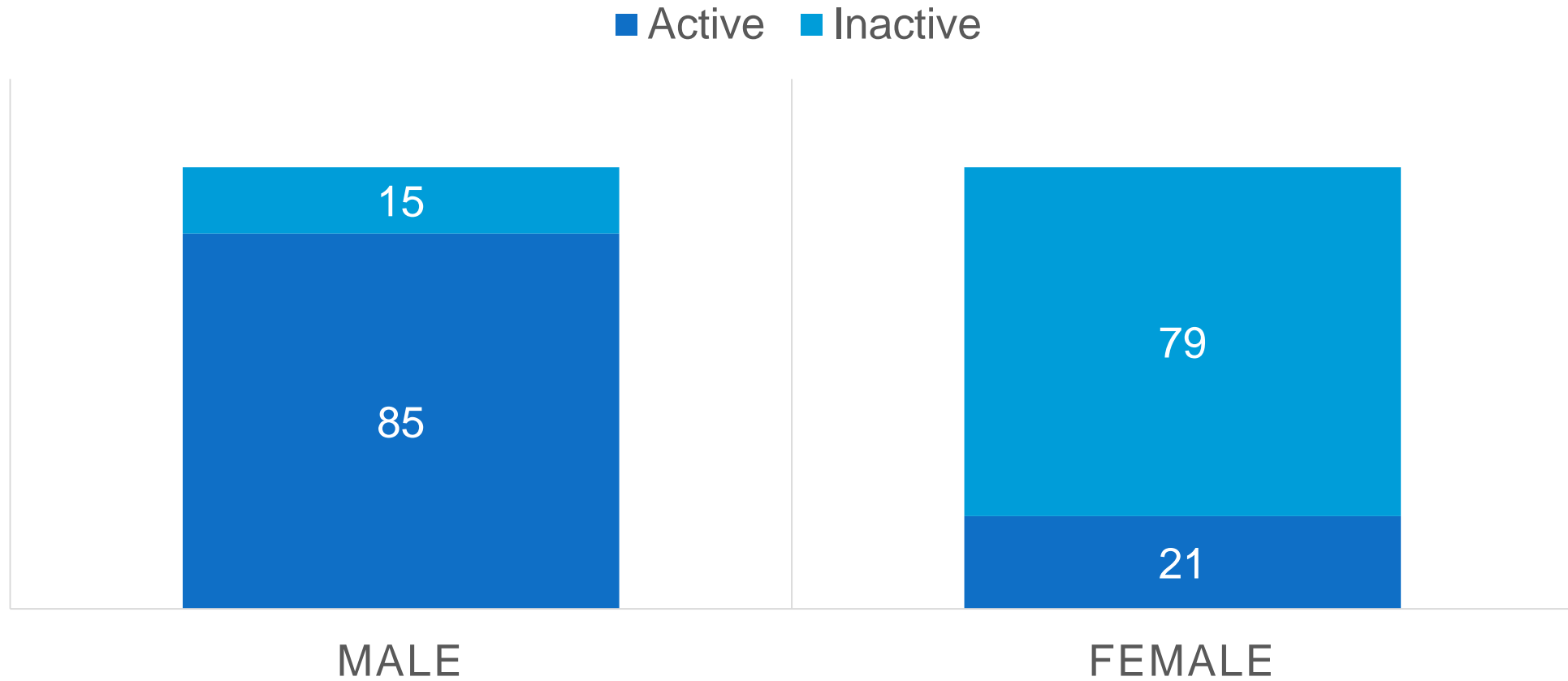
Data

- Data set used: Harmonized Household Expenditure, Income and Consumption Survey of Egypt (HEICS, 2015).
- The harmonized HEICS (2015) covers 11988 households where 18 percent are female headed. Among these 2104 female headed households, 80 percent are separated, widowed or divorced.

Distribution of Male-headed and Female-Headed households by education level(%)

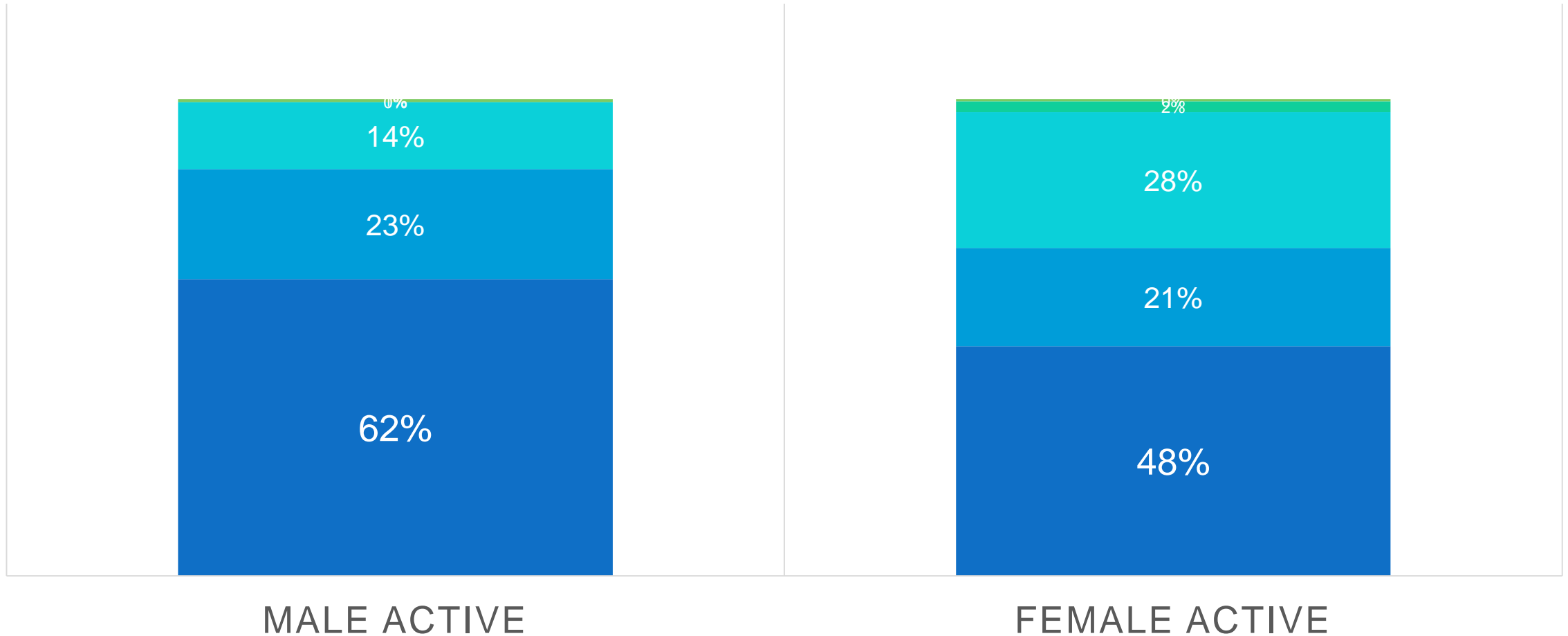
	Male	Female
Illiterate	22	54
Read and Write	15	11
Primary/Lower secondary	15	11
Secondary	30	15
Post-secondary or equivalent	5	3
University and Post University	14	5

Distribution of Male-heads and Female -heads by labor market status (%)



Distribution of Male-heads and Female -heads by employment status (%)

■ Employee ■ Employer ■ Own-account, self-emp ■ Contributing (unpaid) ■ Not stated



Main Findings

- **FHHs are better off than their male counterparts:**
 - The expenditure gap between FHHs and MHHs is in favor of FHHs for all expenditure quintiles of the three welfare measures.
 - Only the wage gap for the three lowest quintiles is in favor of men.
- **Difference in endowment in human capital investment, as education, and household's characteristics significantly increase the three welfare measure differentials.**
- **Not only the characteristics of the head matter, but the return to these characteristics matter as well.**

What's Next?

- Differentiate between different types of FHHs (those who are married but their husbands are not present and those who are single and ever married).
- Active vs inactive heads.
- Include other years.
- Total disposable income.
- Community characteristics.

Thanks for your comments and feedback!

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