

ESSAYS ON INFORMAL ECONOMY



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Abstract

Developing countries are overwhelmingly heterogeneous. Among many, one distinction that has been getting attention is that between a formal and an informal economy. There are three major forms in which such distinction may show up; in output markets, in labour markets and in financial markets. The Indian economy has high degree of informality: about half of India's GDP is from the informal sector activities (Anand et al., 2016), and a large share of workers work outside of the protected employment relationship. About 84 percent of the Indian labour force is informally employed, which is the largest in the emerging economies (Narayanan, 2015).

A major challenge for the Indian economy is the growing informalisation of jobs in the organised sector, that is, there is an increase in the share of informal employment in the formal sector firms. In India, employment in the formal economy accounts only for 16 percent of the total employment, of which almost half of the workers are recruited informally, where they are not provided with social security or employment benefits. Informal employment in the formal sector was 32 percent in 1999-2000, 54 percent in 2004-05, and increased to 63 percent in 2009-10 and 67 percent in 2011-12. This is mainly due to the increase in contractual jobs in the formal sector (Mehrotra et al., 2013, 2014).

This dissertation is an attempt to understand the formal-informal heterogeneity in a developing economy. We first turn to the factor market – the labour market heterogeneity – by studying the changing structure of formal-informal wage gap in India. By using National Sample Survey (NSSO) Employment-Unemployment Survey (EUS) data for four rounds from 1999-00 to 2011-12, we estimate the pattern of formal-informal and skilled-unskilled wage gaps. Though there seem to be no dearth of such studies, the existing literature has explored the *overall* wage gaps

between the formal and informal workers, and that between the skilled and unskilled workers. That is, they do not control for the skill effects while studying the formal-informal wage gap or the informal employment while studying the skilled-unskilled wage gap. The first essay attempts to uncover the '*true formal-informal wage gap*' by controlling for the skill effect and the '*true skilled-unskilled wage gap*' by controlling for the informal employment. The study finds that there is no discernable change in the true formal-informal wage gap across years, and that the true skilled-unskilled wage gap has narrowed over the years.

The second essay incorporates segmentations in goods market (Williamson, 2008, 2009) and labour market in a general equilibrium model to study the effect of productivity shocks and its transmission. The formal households work in high productive sectors – manufacturing sector, and high-end services sector, and the informal households work in low productive sectors – agriculture sector and low-end services sector. Both formal households and informal households consume formal and informal goods. Such preferences are calibrated based on consumption data from the 2011-2012 Indian National Sample Survey (NSSO) 68th round Employment-Unemployment Survey (EUS) data. The households' savings are modelled in the form of capital, where formal households save in manufacturing capital that is used in the production of consumer durables, and informal households save in consumer durables that is used in the production of low-end services. The linkage between the formal and the informal households is through trade in the goods market and the resultant income flow (Chakrabarti, 2016). This essay proposes to understand how a technological shock propagates from the formal sector to the informal sector and vice versa. The incorporation of the informal services as an input to the production of formal service contributes to the novelty of this work.

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A1. Formal households - First-order conditions:

The first-order conditions(in terms of the shadow price) is given by:

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial C_{F,t}^A} : \frac{U_{C^A,t}^F}{P^A,t} = \lambda_{F,t} \quad (\text{F1})$$

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial C_{F,t}^B} : \frac{U_{C^B,t}^F}{P^B,t} = \lambda_{F,t} \quad (\text{F2})$$

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial C_{F,t}^S} : \frac{U_{C^S,t}^F}{P^S,t} = \lambda_{F,t} \quad (\text{F3})$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial H_t^B} : \frac{\partial U}{\partial L_t^F} \frac{\partial L_t^F}{\partial H_t^B} + \lambda_{F,t} W_t^B &= 0 \\ \implies -U_{L,t}^F + \lambda_{F,t} W_t^B &= 0 \\ \implies \frac{U_{L,t}^F}{W_t^B} &= \lambda_{F,t} \end{aligned} \quad (\text{F4})$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial H_t^S} : \frac{\partial U}{\partial L_t^F} \frac{\partial L_t^F}{\partial H_t^S} + \lambda_{F,t} W_t^S &= 0 \\ \implies -U_{L,t}^F + \lambda_{F,t} W_t^S &= 0 \\ \implies \frac{U_{L,t}^F}{W_t^S} &= \lambda_{F,t} \end{aligned} \quad (\text{F5})$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial K_t^R} : -\lambda_{F,t} P_t^R + \rho E_t \lambda_{F,t+1} [Rn_t^R + (1 - \delta^R) P_{t+1}^R] &= 0 \\ \implies \lambda_{F,t} P_t^R &= \rho E_t \lambda_{F,t+1} [Rn_t^R + (1 - \delta^R) P_{t+1}^R] \end{aligned} \quad (\text{F6})$$

A2. Informal households - First-order conditions:

The first-order conditions(in terms of the shadow price) is given by:

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial C_{I,t}^A} : \frac{U_{C^A,t}^I}{P^A,t} = \lambda_{I,t} \quad (11)$$

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial C_{I,t}^B} : \frac{U_{C^B,t}^I}{P^B,t} = \lambda_{I,t} \quad (12)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial H_t^A} : \frac{\partial U}{\partial L_t^I} \frac{\partial L_t^I}{\partial H_t^A} + \lambda_{I,t} W_t^A &= 0 \\ \implies -U_{L,t}^I + \lambda_{I,t} W_t^A &= 0 \\ \implies \frac{U_{L,t}^I}{W_t^A} &= \lambda_{I,t} \end{aligned} \quad (13)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial H_t^U} : \frac{\partial U}{\partial L_t^I} \frac{\partial L_t^I}{\partial H_t^U} + \lambda_{I,t} W_t^U &= 0 \\ \implies -U_{L,t}^I + \lambda_{I,t} W_t^U &= 0 \\ \implies \frac{U_{L,t}^I}{W_t^U} &= \lambda_{I,t} \end{aligned} \quad (14)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial K_t^B} : -\lambda_{I,t} P_t^B + \rho E_t \lambda_{I,t+1} [Rn_t^B + (1 - \delta^B) P_{t+1}^B] &= 0 \\ \implies \lambda_{I,t} P_t^B &= \rho E_t \lambda_{I,t+1} [Rn_t^B + (1 - \delta^B) P_{t+1}^B] \end{aligned} \quad (15)$$

A3. Manufacturing firms - First-order conditions:

The production function of the manufacturing firm is given by:

$$Y_t^B = A_t^B (H_t^B)^\Gamma (K_{t-1}^R)^{1-\Gamma} \quad (\text{M1})$$

The firm maximizes its profits:

$$\pi_t^B = P_t^B Y_t^B - W_t^B H_t^B - R n_{t-1}^R K_{t-1}^R \quad (\text{M2})$$

The first-order conditions is given by:

From the profit function we have:

$$\frac{\partial \pi_t^B}{\partial H_t^B} : P_t^B f_{H^B}(A_t^B, H_t^B, K_{t-1}^R) - W_t^B = 0$$

$$\implies f_{H^B}(A_t^B, H_t^B, K_{t-1}^R) = \frac{W_t^B}{P_t^B} \quad (\text{M3})$$

$$\frac{\partial \pi_t^B}{\partial K_{t-1}^R} : P_t^B f_{K^R}(A_t^B, H_t^B, K_{t-1}^R) - R n_{t-1}^R = 0$$

$$\implies f_{K^R}(A_t^B, H_t^B, K_{t-1}^R) = \frac{R n_{t-1}^R}{P_t^B} \quad (\text{M4})$$

From the production function we have:

$$f_{H^B}(A_t^B, H_t^B, K_{t-1}^R) = \frac{\partial Y_t^B}{\partial H_t^B} = \Gamma A_t^B (H_t^B)^{\Gamma-1} (K_{t-1}^R)^{1-\Gamma}$$

$$\implies f_{H^B}(A_t^B, H_t^B, K_{t-1}^R) = \frac{\Gamma A_t^B (H_t^B)^{\Gamma-1} (K_{t-1}^R)^{1-\Gamma}}{H_t^B} = \frac{\Gamma Y_t^B}{H_t^B} \quad (\text{M5})$$

$$\begin{aligned}
f_{K^R}(A_t^B, H_t^B, K_{t-1}^R) &= \frac{\partial Y_t^B}{\partial K_{t-1}^R} = (1 - \Gamma)A_t^B(H_t^B)^\Gamma(K_{t-1}^R)^{-\Gamma} \\
\implies f_{K^R}(A_t^B, H_t^B, K_{t-1}^R) &= \frac{(1 - \Gamma)A_t^B(H_t^B)^\Gamma(K_{t-1}^R)^{1-\Gamma}}{K_{t-1}^R} = \frac{(1 - \Gamma)Y_t^B}{K_{t-1}^R}
\end{aligned} \tag{M6}$$

A4. High-end services firms - First-order conditions:

The production function of the high-end services firm is given by:

$$Y_t^S = A_t^S(H_t^S)^\eta(Y_t^U)^{1-\eta} \tag{S1}$$

The firm maximizes its profits:

$$\pi_t^S = P_t^S Y_t^S - W_t^S H_t^S - P_t^U Y_t^U \tag{S2}$$

The first-order conditions is given by:

From the profit function we have:

$$\begin{aligned}
\frac{\partial \pi_t^S}{\partial H_t^S} : P_t^S g_{H^S}(A_t^S, H_t^S, Y_t^U) - W_t^S &= 0 \\
\implies g_{H^S}(A_t^S, H_t^S, Y_t^U) &= \frac{W_t^S}{P_t^S}
\end{aligned} \tag{S3}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\frac{\partial \pi_t^S}{\partial Y_t^U} : P_t^S f_{Y^U}(A_t^S, H_t^S, Y_t^U) - P_t^U &= 0 \\
\implies g_{Y^U}(A_t^S, H_t^S, Y_t^U) &= \frac{P_t^U}{P_t^S}
\end{aligned} \tag{S4}$$

From the production function we have:

$$g_{HS}(A_t^S, H_t^S, Y_t^U) = \frac{\partial Y_t^S}{\partial H_t^S} = \eta A_t^S (H_t^S)^{\eta-1} (Y_t^U)^{1-\eta}$$

$$\implies g_{HS}(A_t^S, H_t^S, Y_t^U) = \frac{\eta A_t^S (H_t^S)^{\eta-1} (Y_t^U)^{1-\eta}}{H_t^S} = \frac{\eta Y_t^S}{H_t^S} \quad (\text{S5})$$

$$g_{Y^U}(A_t^S, H_t^S, Y_t^U) = \frac{\partial Y_t^S}{\partial Y_t^U} = (1-\eta) A_t^S (H_t^S)^\eta (Y_t^U)^{-\eta}$$

$$\implies g_{Y^U}(A_t^S, H_t^S, Y_t^U) = \frac{(1-\eta) A_t^S (H_t^S)^\eta (Y_t^U)^{1-\eta}}{Y_t^U} = \frac{(1-\eta) Y_t^S}{Y_t^U} \quad (\text{S6})$$

A5. Low-end services firms - First-order conditions:

The production function of the low-end services firm is given by:

$$Y_t^U = A_t^U (H_t^U)^\gamma (K_{t-1}^B)^{1-\gamma} \quad (\text{L1})$$

The firm maximizes its profits:

$$\pi_t^U = P_t^U Y_t^U - W_t^U H_t^U - R n_{t-1}^B K_{t-1}^B \quad (\text{L2})$$

The first-order conditions is given by:

From the profit function we have:

$$\frac{\partial \pi_t^U}{\partial H_t^U} : P_t^U j_{H^U}(A_t^U, H_t^U, K_{t-1}^B) - W_t^U = 0$$

$$\implies j_{H^U}(A_t^U, H_t^U, K_{t-1}^B) = \frac{W_t^U}{P_t^U} \quad (\text{L3})$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \pi_t^U}{\partial K_{t-1}^B} : P_t^U f_{K^U}(A_t^U, H_t^U, K_{t-1}^B) - Rn_{t-1}^B &= 0 \\ \implies j_{K^B}(A_t^U, H_t^U, K_{t-1}^B) &= \frac{Rn_{t-1}^B}{P_t^U} \end{aligned} \quad (\text{L4})$$

From the production function we have:

$$\begin{aligned} j_{H^U}(A_t^U, H_t^U, K_{t-1}^B) &= \frac{\partial Y_t^U}{\partial H_t^U} = \gamma A_t^U (H_t^U)^{\gamma-1} (K_{t-1}^B)^{1-\gamma} \\ \implies j_{H^U}(A_t^U, H_t^U, K_{t-1}^B) &= \frac{\gamma A_t^U (H_t^U)^{\gamma-1} (K_{t-1}^B)^{1-\gamma}}{H_t^U} = \frac{\gamma Y_t^U}{H_t^U} \end{aligned} \quad (\text{L5})$$

$$\begin{aligned} j_{K^B}(A_t^U, H_t^U, K_{t-1}^B) &= \frac{\partial Y_t^U}{\partial K_{t-1}^B} = (1-\gamma) A_t^U (H_t^U)^\gamma (K_{t-1}^B)^{-\gamma} \\ \implies j_{K^B}(A_t^U, H_t^U, K_{t-1}^B) &= \frac{(1-\gamma) A_t^U (H_t^U)^\gamma (K_{t-1}^B)^{1-\gamma}}{K_{t-1}^B} = \frac{(1-\gamma) Y_t^U}{K_{t-1}^B} \end{aligned} \quad (\text{L6})$$

$$(\text{L3}) \text{ and } (\text{L5}) \implies \frac{\gamma A_t^U (H_t^U)^{\gamma-1} (K_{t-1}^B)^{1-\gamma}}{H_t^U} = \frac{W_t^U}{P_t^U} \quad (\text{L7})$$

$$(\text{L4}) \text{ and } (\text{L6}) \implies \frac{(1-\gamma) A_t^U (H_t^U)^\gamma (K_{t-1}^B)^{1-\gamma}}{K_{t-1}^B} = \frac{Rn_{t-1}^B}{P_t^U} \quad (\text{L8})$$

A6. Single Period Positive Productivity Shock in the Agriculture Sector

In addition to the impulse response functions in figures 3.6-3.8, the below figures A1-A3 plots the impulse response functions of consumption-output ratios, investment-output ratios and capital output ratios, where C_B^F/Y^B is the ratio of formal households' consumables consumption to manufacturing output, C_B^I/Y^B is the ratio of informal households' consumables consumption to manufacturing output, $(C_B^F + C_B^I)/Y^B$ is the ratio of total consumables consumption to manufacturing output, similarly C_A^F/Y^A and C_A^I/Y^A is the ratio of formal and informal households' agriculture consumption to agriculture output respectively. The capital-output ratio graphs are plotted from period 2. K_1^R is the end of period 1 capital, used in the manufacturing sector in period 2, for producing Y_2^B , correspondingly the graph plots $\frac{P^R K_1^R}{P^B Y_2^B}$ in period 2, $\frac{P^R K_2^R}{P^B Y_3^B}$ in period 3, and so on. Similar logic applies to $\frac{P^B K^R}{P^U Y^U}$ graph.

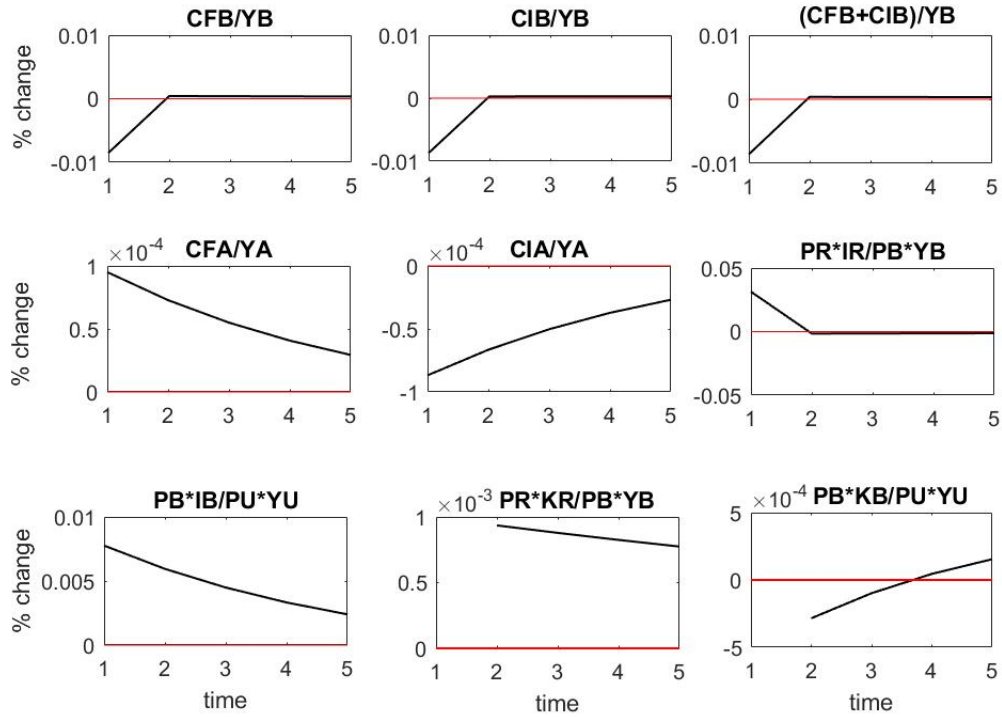


Figure A1. Impact of a single period positive productivity shock in the agriculture sector (A^A)

A7. Single Period Positive Productivity Shock in the Manufacturing Sector

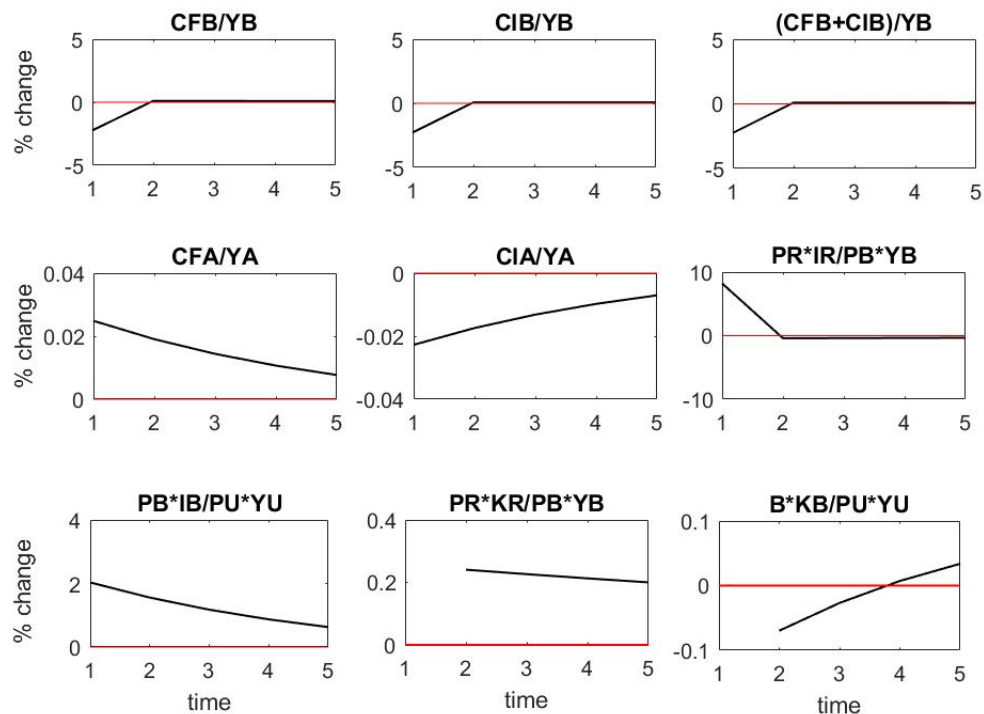


Figure A2. Impact of a single period positive productivity shock in the manufacturing sector (A^B)

A8. Single Period Positive Productivity Shock in the High-end services Sector

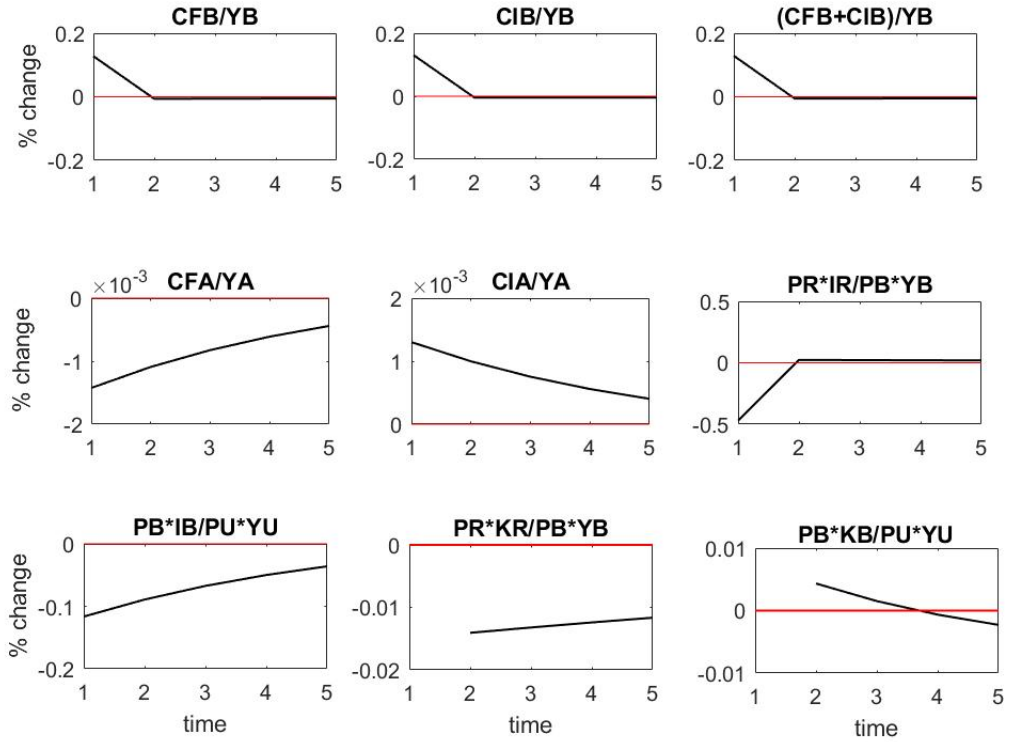


Figure A3. Impact of a single period positive productivity shock in the high-end services sector (A^S)

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