

Conference on Diversity and Inclusion in Economics,
Finance, and Central Banking

November 9, 2021

Comments on:
**INNOVATIVE IDEAS
AND GENDER INEQUALITY**
by Marlène Koffi

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SUMMARY



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What this paper does:

The paper investigates whether there are **gender biases in citation patterns**, i. e. whether articles by equally relevant and innovative male and female authors are similarly credited.

Using machine learning techniques and bibliometric data on articles published in major economic journals, the author:

- establishes the similarities between papers,
- builds links between articles, identifying:
 - the papers citing a given paper,
 - those cited by it, and
 - those that should be cited (omission index)



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What this paper finds:

Omitted papers are 15 to 30 % more likely to be female-authored than male-authored.

The papers most likely omitted are those of women working at mid-tier institutions and publishing in non-top journals.

This gender omission bias is higher:

- in theoretical fields than in applied fields,
- the more the article is perceived to be female,
- when there are only males in the citing paper.

Finally, being omitted with respect to past publications reduces the probability of getting published in a top-five journal in the future by up to 5%.



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COMMENTS



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Comments #1:

- This is high quality work using a fascinating range of data.
- It also brings a methodological contribution by constructing an **omission index** that identifies papers that should be cited in the references and are not.
- It uncovers many interesting results that call for further examination.



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Comments #2:

1. How to break the vicious circle:

- Prior literature documenting lower levels of visibility and amplification for women in academia relative to men (e. g. Hospido and Sanz (2020) on the likelihood of getting accepted to conferences)
- Women have smaller professional networks, smaller audiences, and narrower reach on virtual platforms (Paula Chatterjee and Rachel M. Werner (2021): Gender Disparity in Citations in High-Impact Journal Articles, JAMA Netw Open. 4(7):e2114509. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.14509)

2. Attrition when looking at future productivity:

- Also consider the women who have left, not only those who remain (survivorship bias)



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Thank you!
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