Blurring Perceptions of being men and women in the Mezzogiorno of Italy

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ABSTRACT

Most studies of resource allocation within the household focus on the role of gender norms in influencing male and female access to resources. This article argues that gender norms affect male and female leadership within and outside the household by affecting the way men and women think of resource allocation non-independently from gender norms. Drawing on a household survey conducted in Lecce and Benevento, two cities with traditional gender norms in a region experiencing negative growth rates since 2009, the authors investigate the role of norms in influencing men and women's perception of resource allocation. Data on the cross-perception of resource entitlement by gender within households suggest that both men and women tend to be influenced by the partner in assessing personal entitlements. However, the degree of influence differs by gender. Men tend be highly influenced by norms, which is consistent across both samples, while women tend to be less influenced than men in one sample, while the degree of influence is not significant in the other sample. The authors suggest that entrepreneurship in the region can be supported with social policies rebalancing gender norms within the household in order to support female leadership outside the household.

INTRODUCTION

Several studies of resource allocation at the household level show that the allocation of resources depends on gender norms and the associated relationship of power between male and female household members[1]. In particular, the relative position of power between men and women at the head of the household is an influential factor affecting personal asset-ownership and access to socio-economic opportunities (Deere *et al.* 2012). However, while it has been shown that gender norms affect male and female access to resources within the household, it is less clear the extent to which such norms affect the way men and women "perceive" resource entitlements.

In this article, the results of an original household survey are presented to uncover the cross-perception of resource allocation by gender in a geographical context representative of resource scarcity and pronounced gender imbalances, namely the South of Italy or so-called Mezzogiorno. Symptomatic of the North-South Italian divide (Capello, 2016), two-thirds of the Italian population experiencing relative poverty live in the Mezzogiorno, at a time when the region is experiencing negative GDP growth rates since 2009 (Istat, 2015, 2019). Traditional gender norms at the household level prevail, with female labour force participation being 40 per cent compared with more than 75 per cent for women in Northern Italy, which often results in gender discrimination in the labour market (Del Boca et al., 2005; Saraceno, 2013). As such, the region provides a relevant context to

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assess the role of gender norms on male and female perception of resource allocation.

Focusing on heterosexual couples in traditional nuclear households of the regional cities of Lecce and Benevento, the analysis aims at making the following two contributions. First, the research investigates female and male cross-perception of resource entitlements within the household to show the extent to which men and women influence each other in resource allocation. While most household surveys investigate actual resource allocation from the perspective of the individual, this original survey interrogates the cross-perception of resource entitlements in order to assess the relative position of male and female partners in influencing access to resources. As pointed by Basu (1987, 2006), the opportunity set of an individual is the result of the combination and interaction between the way the individual is perceived and perceives himself or herself within the household, and within the society as a whole. Second, the analysis compares the influence of gender norms between male and female perception of resource allocation. The analysis show that men tend be highly influenced by norms of resource allocation, i.e. resource entitlements, which is consistent across both samples. By contrast, women tend to be less influenced than men in one sample, while this degree of influence is not significant in the other sample.

Next section discusses the role of norms on resource allocation and their influence on how men and women build a personal identity in a specific context. Then, a theoretical framework of perceived entitlements at the household level is presented, accounting for male and female cross-perception of resource allocation. This is followed by the presentation of the original household survey conducted in the Mezzogiorno of Italy, before testing the perceived entitlements framework with the data collected. The results are then presented and critically assessed.

NORMS, IDENTITY AND ENTITLEMENTS WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD

While it is well documented across social sciences that social identities and associated norms of behaviour influence access to resources (Agarwal 1997; Basu 2006; Deer et al. 2012; Folbre 1986; Handa 1994; Iversen 2003; Kennedy and Peters 1992; Lundberg and Pollak 1993), it is less clear how these norms are articulated within the self and perpetuated over time between household members. To understand such phenomenon, this section frames the process of resource allocation in a relational context according to the cross-perception of resource allocation between two individuals, which include socially ascribed rules of allocation according to the social identities of these individuals. The theoretical proposition is as follows. At one end of the spectrum of self-identification, if individuals consider to be entitled to resources according to their social identities, then each individual will sustain the norm that resources should be ascribed to some rather than others. In times of increasing scarcity, resource allocation will follow these rules of allocation. At the household level, this is consistent with the literature cited above whereby gender norms serve as the rule of resource

allocation in patriarchal societies. At the other end of the pluralistic spectrum, if individuals consider that there is no ascribed rule, then no rule will prevail in times of increasing resource scarcity. Rather, the prevailing rule of allocation is that scarce resources should be shared in a sustainable manner in order to maximise everyone's life expectancy in the long-run. This is consistent with the argument advanced by Jay Winter (1986) and Amartya Sen (1998) that the increased life expectancy of people in England and Wales in the two decades between WWI and WWII was the result of resources, such as food and health services, being rationed and shared more equally, which in turn maximised the survival of the entire population in the long-run.

Sen has long worked on the failures of access to resources as a constraint to human development. In particular, his work on "entitlements" shows that the Bengal famine of 1943 was due to entitlement failures to food supply rather than to a shortage of food supply per se (Sen 1981). The concept of "entitlements" is defined as the socio-economic opportunities of access to resources, which are as such dependent upon the entitlements of others (Charles 2012). The entitlement set (Sen 1981) of an individual starts at the household level, since the household represents the starting place of opportunities for human development. From childhood, an individual is entitled to resources according socio-economic and environmental constraints, including social norms that shape his or her personal identity. From this perspective, the opportunities for human development of an individual are the result of the combination of, and interaction between, the ways each individual is perceived and perceives himself or herself within the household and the society as a whole.

Within the household, each individual has to deal with the complex allocation of tangible and intangible resources, while assuring short-run survival and long-run sustainability in the use of resources. As a result, variations along the spectrum of self-identification are likely to blur the boundaries of the self. The questions raised by this research are therefore as follows: to what extent do male and female partners perceive themselves as a decision-maker thinking independently from the gender rules of resource allocation? How does this individual spectrum of self-identification influence the positioning of men and women within and outside the household as independent decision-makers? To answer these questions, the next section describes the way norms shape personal and social identities, before presenting, in the subsequent section, a framework of perceived entitlements to show how norms influence self-identification.

Identity, Social and Gender Norms

Understanding the influence of norms on the self requires first to make the distinction between the personal identity, formed at the psychological level, and the influence that social identities, at the sociological level, have on shaping this personal identity. Social norms influence the sense of self of individuals by creating emotional signals that shape their personal identity (Davis, 2004). For

example, "insider-outsider" models of identity suggest that individuals are more likely to conform to the norms of behaviour of insiders, if they consider themselves as insiders; while outsiders will act differently according to their own sense of identity, outside the group of insiders. In this model, departing from the norms of behaviour of insider or outsider leads to a loss of identity utility, and subsequently levels of anxiety will rise (Akerlof and Kranton, 2010). The subjective sense of self is here influenced by identity-related norms whereby departing from identity-related behaviour lower identity-related utility.

An additional layer of complexity to the self comes in when considering the set of multiple social identities that compose a personal identity. The concept of social identity relates to the fact that individuals have a sense of belonging to various social categories such as ethnicity, gender, or age. Each personal identity is a complex set of social identities with a sense of belonging to diverse social groups. At the psychological level, an individual creates a personal identity based on more or less salient identities according to the context in which social interactions take place and navigates between social signals and personal anxiety to access resources (Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Kahneman and Tversky, 2000; Stryker and Burke 2000). Here, the social context in which access to resources take place is essential in shaping a personal identity. In effect, research has shown that individuals manage their personal identity of what constitutes the ideal of what a man, woman, male or female partner, father, mother, son, or daughter should do or should be at the sociological level (Rao, 2012; Grabska, 2013). Hence, an individual has multiple identities shaped by social interactions, which entitles him or her to a socially acceptable level of resources (Tienda and Lii, 1987; Massey, 2007; Schippers, 2007). As such, there is a deterministic element of social life that shapes the way individuals access resources, and that is whether individuals belong to a group identity at the bottom or the top of social stratification (Akerlof and Kranton, 2010; Davis, 2011; Darity, 2005; Grusky and Weisshaar, 2014). Social stratification then differs by country according to local geographical and historical contexts in which the relationships of power between groups have evolved.

Over time, unequal access to resources reproduces itself through peer-learning within a social group and associated norms, which in turn affects the perception of resource allocation between group members and across groups. In the social setting, groups tend to be more predictable than individuals in the sense that they are more pro-social toward the overall rewards of the group members rather than toward the maximisation of the payoff of an individual within the group (Bornstein et al., 2004; Goette et al. 2006). At the psychological level, social norms tend to bias experienced utility of time t and affect the level of remembered utility at time $t + 1$ according to this social norm (Kahneman and Krueger, 2006; Charles, Wu and Wu, 2019). This means that for individuals, as long as there is a sense of group belonging, they are likely to reproduce the rule of entitlements as long as it maximises the overall rewards for the group. Hence, the perception of resource allocation at the individual level

is likely to be biased by the norms of group behaviour shaped by the geographical and historical context affecting group membership.

The three layers of group membership studied in this research are in terms of a cultural group, assumed fixed by the geographical focus chosen, the household as a social unit, and gender as a social construct within that geographical focus. For the purpose of this intra-household study of resource allocation, the discussion now focuses specifically on gender as a social group in the context of patriarchal gender norms. Gender identity reflects the particular views of gender roles in a given society. As such, gender tend to be considered as a social construct from visual representations and behaviour repeated in a society. These representations are internalized within the self, and then influence the relative balance of power and associated norms of behaviour between men and women (De Lauretis 1996). For example, Bern (1975) defines gender identity as the awareness that individuals have of themselves in terms of identifying as male or female. Gender identity is defined by various personality attributes that are culturally associated with masculinity and femininity. It manifests within society by observable factors such as behaviour and appearances, and vary greatly when gender intersects with other social groups such as culture, ethnicity, or class. Such context-specific gender identity brings with it a set of norms of behaviour at the household level, which then lead to gender discrimination in the labour market, whereby gender roles and earning gap in the household are translated into gender roles and income gap in the labour market (Folbre, 1986; Charles 2011).

Over time, both feminine and masculine stereotypes evolve and they do so mainly in relation to each other (Schippers, 2007). Prügl (2012) for example argues that the perceived attribute of men as risk-takers is a recent phenomenon arising over the past thirty years, and that such attribute only works in relation to the female attribute of the financially prudent woman. With such relational perspective, the masculine myth of bread-winner is dependent on the feminine myth of the bread-maker within the household and *vice-versa*. Hence, gender identity is constructed by the two-way relationship between the behavioural norms of men and women, and reproduced over time by peer-learning. The relative and dynamic aspects of gender norms are intrinsic to the way men and women build a personal identity but also to the way they access resources. This raises the questions of how gender norms influence the perception of resource allocation for men and women, how differently they are influenced, and the extent to which such perception is independent from gender rules of entitlements.

Perceived Entitlements Framework within the Household

Early studies on household behaviour relied essentially on the view that the household has a single objective in resource allocation (Becker 1965), whereas more recent theories stress the

importance of the different objectives each individual brings in a bargaining process to allocate resources.[2] Katz (1997) for example argues that "it is clearly not only one's own sense of the value of one's assets that matters, but also other household members' valuation of one's earnings, property rights, social and political capital, etc., that matters […] in the bargaining process" (Katz, 1997: 33). According to Katz, however, the evaluation by other household members relies on imperfect information, and therefore the use of social norms is often the only way to regulate consciously or unconsciously intra-household behaviour (Katz, 1997: 34). Since resources are scarce and individual preferences are heterogeneous, this can involve some conflict. From this perspective, Sen (1990) argues in favour of a cooperative conflict, a situation in which two decision-makers need to cooperate over the use and allocation of resources among household members. However, the solution of a cooperative conflict is again likely to nest the preferences of the dominant household member and associated norms of the group(s) to which the individual belong. Evidence in effect shows the influence of norms and the perception on relative entitlements, either in terms of intra-household resource allocation (Randa, 2006), household headship (Handa, 1994; Deere et al. 2012), or household food security and child nutrition (Kennedy and Peters, 1992).

Within the household, the interdependence of individual choices is especially relevant since the allocation of both rival and non-rival goods and services questions whether it is possible to choose any set between their opportunity sets. The answer offered by Basu is negative "because what is actually open to one person depends on what the other person actually chooses" (Basu 1987: 74). Accounting for this issue of interdependence, the proposed entitlement framework makes the distinction between "endowments", which are the resources that each individual perceives to make use of, and "entitlements", which are the resources that each individual perceives to be entitled to (Charles 2012). Then, by considering both tangible and intangible resources as part of the endowments of an individual at the household level, the argument put forward in this paper is that the endowments of an individual become part of the entitlements of other household members, thus leading to the interdependence of the opportunity sets. Such argument contributes to the early proposition made by Basu to find a definition of the opportunity set, which accounts for "the interdependence between one person's choice and another's opportunity set and since a person's choice depends on his opportunity set, ultimately we shall have to deal with the interdependence of opportunity sets" (Basu 1987: 75). The interdependence of individual opportunity sets has been identified by several authors as being linked to interdependent preferences between individuals (Rader 1980, Gasper and Van Staveren 2003, Iversen 2003). However, gender norms set the tacit rules for resource entitlements and serve as a basis to reproduce gender inequality (Seguino, 2007).

Norms rule the interdependence of opportunity sets, but it is not clear how men and women articulate these norms between each other and within themselves. Using a perceived entitlement

framework addresses this interdependence by assuming that personal entitlements to resources are dependent upon others' entitlements within the household under the constraint of social norms in general, and gender norms in particular, in the interaction between men and women. The perceived entitlement framework demonstrates the extent to which men and women influence each other in the perception of resource entitlements at the household level. The main hypothesis tested is therefore to evaluate the extent to which individual entitlements are influenced by the perception of others. To estimate whether perceived entitlements between male and female partners affect each other entitlements, data on individual characteristics serve as control or objective variables, while the vectors described below constitute the subjective variables. This does not mean that objective factors are not influenced by norms, but the inclusion of objective factors (namely educational attainment, income, age and employment status) allows to monitor the extent to which such factors (and related group memberships) influence the subjective evaluation of individual entitlements.

Let us assume a society with *m*-individuals, *i=1,..,m*, included in *l*-households *h=1,…,l*, each individual with an endowment set of *n*-items, *x=1,…,n*. Subjective variables are as follows:

x_{ii} Individual *i*'s endowments as perceived by individual *i*

x_{ij} Individual *i*'s endowments as perceived by the partner *j*

e_{ii} Individual *i*'s entitlements as perceived by individual *i*

e_{ij} Individual *i*'s entitlements as perceived by partner *j*

The perceived entitlement model is then as follows:

$$(1)\ e_{ii} = f(x_{ii}, x_{ij}, e_{ij}, Age_i, Edu_i, Inc_i, Job_i)$$

The meaning attached to this equation is that the individual *i*'s perception of personal entitlements (e_{ii}) is a function of individual endowments as perceived by individual *i* (x_{ii}), the entitlements and endowment of the partner as perceived by the partner *j* (e_{ij} and x_{ij} respectively), and objective variables including age (*Age*), education (*Edu*), income (*Inc*), and employment status (*Job*). In other words, perceived individual entitlements depend on the norms regarding what one is socially entitled to, according to the social status specific to personal factors such as age, education, income gender and employment status. The perceived entitlement framework is then applied to the so-called Mezzogiorno of Italy, a macro region with traditional gender norms and underdeveloped economic opportunities.

GENDER NORMS AND RESOURCE SCARCITY IN THE MEZZOGIORNO

Gender inequality in access to socio-economic opportunities in the Mezzogiorno of Italy may be attributed to a set of factors pertaining to cultural factors intrinsic to the Italian welfare model, and to geographical factors linked to the local natural and human capital. The Mezzogiorno is home to

two-thirds of the Italian population experiencing relative poverty (Bank of Italy, 2010, 2019). During the period 2010-2012 under the so-called 'austerity measures', the combination of reductions in public expenditure and labour market deregulations have contributed to the continuous increase in unemployment and the North/South divide. Unemployment rates have worsened dramatically, from 11 to 18.5 percent from 2007 to 2018 in the Mezzogiorno, compared to 3.5 and 6.9 percent in Northern Italy, respectively (IStat 2019, p. 6). With low GDP growth rates since mid-2000s, new job opportunities are scarce, and gender discrimination persists to access these scarce opportunities. Imbalances between male and female participation in the labour force are symptomatic of the imbalances in care responsibilities and resource allocation within the household. This often results in gender discrimination (Del Boca, Locatelli, and Vuri 2005; Saraceno 2013). For instance, Charles (2011) shows that the earning gap between male and female members of the household translates into a gender pay gap in the labour market, which tend to worsen during economic crises.

The Italian welfare model also presents some distinctive features, particularly regarding family and gender policies. These peculiarities are mainly related to the role played by women as main provider of free care services, in contrast with Northern EU countries where these services are covered by a mix of local governments, family care and NGOs. This feature is particularly evident in the Mezzogiorno where, as Bianchi and Provenzo (2012) show, the dominant family model is still the "traditional" one, where the man is the primary income earner, while the woman is the primary care giver. The nuclear household is regarded as a social unit based on "natural" law in agreement with the Catholic vision of family relations and role in society (Marra, 2012). One of the main features of this socioeconomic model – which can be defined as "Southern (European) model of welfare", since it is common to other southern European countries such as Portugal, Greece and Spain - is the fact that social expenditure to GDP ratio is generally lower than the European average (Saraceno, 2013). The model supports benefit in cash to support families, instead of direct provision of services. In that respect, and in line with gender norms, evidence suggests that a female head of household allocates resources more towards children than his male counterpart would (Rangel, 2006). Similarly, a welfare model based on benefit in kind is considered more women-friendly, since it relieves women from care work (Vincenti, 2013), and hence enable them to increase their participation in paid work (Mill et al., 2014). In both cases however, there are long-term implications whereby sustaining gender norms at the policy level may well sustain the gender norm in the long-run (Lundberg and Pollak, 1993). Hence, rebalancing gender norms is largely also about rebalancing gender roles within the household, and allowing men to "return" to the household as carers and bread makers.

Finally, a geographical dimension adds to the specificities of the Italian socio-economic model, and that is the strong internal dualism existing between the North/Centre regions and the Mezzogiorno. Since the Italian unification in 1861, this divide has been growing. Capello (2016)

provides a comprehensive review of all the theoretical and structural frameworks that have attempted to explain this divide. Her conclusion is that all models but one have failed to highlight the specific nature of regional development in the Mezzogiorno. The territorial capital approach in effect relies on an economic, spatial and institutional framework based on the potential and wise exploitation of local assets. Here, human capital is an under-developed local asset despite its potential prospects for development, and female leadership is one of these factors. In the North and Centre regions of Italy, female participation rates in the labour market tend to be in line with the European average, while the picture is different for the South of Italy (Ciavolino et al., 2015). Disparities in income and labour market opportunities also show in the distribution of employment and unemployment rates between the two macro regions. Over the decade from 2004 to 2014, while the rate of female employment registered an increase of 3.1 and 1.8 percentage points in the North and Centre regions, respectively, the Mezzogiorno lost 0.6 percentage points (IStat, 2015) This diverging trend between North and Centre regions and the Mezzogiorno is confirmed with the latest data (IStat, 2019, p. 5). More traditional gender norms in the Mezzogiorno strongly affect the work-life balance between male and female household members. However, the social perception of women in the household is not homogenous across national social strata. In effect, Marra (2012) shows that on one hand the access to paid-employment opportunities by poor women leads to a negative perception of their caring role within the household; on the other hand, middle-class women are socially encouraged to enter the labour market, despite the low provision of private and public childcare. Such norms on income entitlements within the household then also apply to income entitlements of women in the labour market. Looking at the South-North divide in Italy, Furno (2016) shows that Southern women tend to experience both a sticky floor, in struggling to rise above low-pay occupations, and a glass ceiling to access higher-paid occupations compared with Northern women or men. Access to paid work is not a guarantee for equal opportunity between men and women nationally, between poor and middle-class Southern women, or between Southern and Northern men and women. In the Mezzogiorno, gender norms are at a unique intersection of regional, cultural, educational, and occupational identities, which provides a well-suited platform for assessing the extent to which strong gender norms affect the perception of resource entitlements by men and women in the context of resource scarcity.

Testing the Perceived Entitlement framework in the Mezzogiorno of Italy

The cities of Lecce (Puglia region) and Benevento (Campania region) in the Mezzogiorno are both medium-size cities where women are less engaged in paid work, earn less than men when they do, are more likely to be in vulnerable employment, and provide the majority of family care and domestic chores (Bianchi and Provenzano, 2012). Both cities rely on a similar mixed economy based

on the agricultural (5 per cent), industrial (30 per cent) and service (65 per cent) sectors (Istat, 2015) and yet, with their respective historical trajectory and geographical position, offer a unique gender identity[3]. Sampling is done in a way to capture most of the common gender identity between the two cities, and to let their unique features being revealed in the empirical results. The household target is households with a heterosexual couple at its head to keep in line with the family model associated with the strong Catholic background in the two cities. The sampling method is snowball sampling (Goodman, 1961) based on a chain referral process, which allows entering households easily, efficiently, and trustworthily whilst capturing the social networks through which gender norms are reproduced. As such, this method allows collecting a homogenous sample in terms of gender norms.

Questionnaire Survey

The questionnaire investigates the perceived endowments of and entitlements to tangible and intangible resources for individual household members. The originality of the questionnaire is that each partner is asked to answer a series of questions on endowments and entitlements, and then to repeat the exercise for their partner. By doing so, the data collected shows the cross-perception of endowments and entitlements of oneself and the partner.

Two questions are asked for each of the twenty resources investigated. First, perceived endowments are the answers to whether the respondent owns or make use of the resource. Taking the value 1 if yes and 0 if no, the answers for all resources represent the individual endowment vector as perceived by the individual. The respondent is then asked to repeat the exercise for the partner, thus revealing their own perception of the endowments of the partner. These answers for all resources give a set of two vectors: the individual endowment vector as perceived by the individual, and the endowment vector of the same individual as perceived by the partner. Second, perceived entitlements are the answers to whether the respondent is entitled to the item, using the levels "not enough", "enough" and "more than enough" - taking the values 0, 1 and 2, respectively. These levels are consistent with the measurement procedures of qualitative research methods, whose distinguishing features are identity, rank order, equal intervals, and true zero points (Herzog, 1996; Kahneman and Tversky, 2000). The answers for all resources represent the individual entitlement vector as perceived by the individual. The respondent is then asked to repeat the exercise for the partner, thus revealing his or her own perception of the entitlements of the partner. These answers for all resources give a set of two vectors: the entitlement vector of the individual as perceived by the individual, and the entitlement vector of the individual as perceived by the partner.

Twenty resources describe all the major entitlements that can be expected for a good life, on the assumption that this is one definition of a good life. Clark (2003) investigated the perception of well-being among the poor and found that the people surveyed referred to the following domains in relation

to a "good life": jobs, housing, education, income, family and friends, religion, health, food, good clothes, recreations and relaxation, safety and economic security. Additionally, similarly to Djebbari (2005) in her intra-household analysis of power distribution, the following three categories are included in the questionnaire survey to highlight the role of gender norms within the household: sewing and craft-making, cooking and home cleaning, repairs and driving. Hence, the resources considered in this study include tangible resources – food, clothes, income, job benefits, car, bus, bicycle, and intangible resources - job, leisure time (watching TV, leisure, spiritual life), housework (hand-craft, cooking and home cleaning, repairs and driving), education, affectionate and aggressive gestures, and political engagement.

Descriptive statistics

For the Benevento sample, 162 valid questionnaires are collected. The sample is well-spread across age groups with 29 per cent of respondents in the 35-44 age group, 16 per cent in the 45-54 age group, 15 per cent in the 25-34 age group, and 12 per cent in the 55-64 age group. The sample is also well-spread across educational groups with 24 per cent with high school level, 23 per cent with university level, 17 per cent with vocational training, 10 per cent with secondary school level, and 11 per cent with primary school level. The gender disparity shows in the level of income with 0.7 per cent of women in the upper bracket above €2,000 per month, against 6.7 per cent for men, and with the fact that 17.6 per cent of women prefer not to state their income, against 13.5 per cent of men. Finally, 23 per cent of respondents earn less than €500 per month or no income at all.

For the Lecce sample, 144 valid questionnaires are collected. The sample is again well-spread across age groups with 33.3 per cent of respondent in the 45-54 age group, 17.4 per cent of respondent in the 35-44 age group and 13.2 per cent in 25-34 age group. The Lecce sample is also well-spread across educational groups with 52 per cent with the high school level, 27 per cent with the secondary school level, and 13 per cent with the university level. Gender disparity appears at both ends of the income spectrum with 3.7 per cent of women in the bracket above €2000 per month, against 11.4 per cent of men, and 18.3 per cent of women declare to earn less than €500, against 2.9 of men.

Table 1. Sense of ownership by gender as perceived by the gender

Sample	Gender	Mean Endowment	N	Standard Deviation
Benevento	Man	0.63	1218	0.481
	Woman	0.65	1201	0.476
Lecce	Man	0.62	1491	0.485
	Woman	0.64	1533	0.483

Despite the sampling differences, Table 1 above shows a similar sense of ownership on average for

male and female partners (man and woman for short) in both samples. The higher the mean, comprised between 0 and 1, the higher the sense of ownership for all items on average. There is in effect an equal sense of ownership a mean endowment of 0.63 and 0.65 for men and women, respectively, in the Benevento sample, and a mean of 0.62 and 0.64 for men and women, respectively, in the Lecce sample.

Finally, using intra-household panel data, the perceived entitlement model (1) is estimated as follows:

$$(2)\ e_{ii} = \alpha + \beta_1 x_{ii} + \beta_2 x_{ij} + \beta_3 e_{ij} + \beta_4 Age_i + \beta_5 Edu_i + \beta_6 Inc_i + \beta_7 Job_i + \varepsilon$$

where $\varepsilon IID(0, \sigma_\delta^2)$ is the error term and α is the constant term.

The individual i's perception of personal entitlements (e_{ii}) depends on individual endowments as perceived by individual i (x_{ii}), the entitlements and endowment of i as perceived by partner j (e_{ij} and x_{ij} respectively), and objective variables including age (Age), education (Edu), income (Inc), and employment status (Job). The entitlement variables are categorical variables split according to the "not enough", "enough", and "more than enough". Such categorical variables make ordered and multinomial specifications the ideal method to estimate equation (2). The model is in effect estimated on each sample, which allows us to identify regional discrepancies between the cities of Lecce and Benevento.[4] In a first instance, equation (2) is estimated with an ordered logit regression by partner, which allows us to identify regional and gender discrepancies in perceived entitlements. Then, equation (2) is estimated with a multinomial regression by entitlement level and by partner, which allows us to identify, within the gender identity group, the factors affecting the entitlement levels "not enough" and "more than enough" using the level "enough" as a base outcome. Model (2) investigates the factors influencing entitlement levels (not enough, enough, more than enough). These factors include endowments as perceived by the individual, and as perceived by the partner, the perception by the partner of the individual entitlements, age, education, income, and employment status. While the outcome variable is clearly ordered (0, 1, and 2), the difference between "not enough" and "enough" may be greater than the difference between "enough" and "more than enough", which represent a violation of the proportional odds assumption. The models are then tested with a likelihood ratio test against the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the coefficients between models, and the results are non-significant, which means that the proportional odds assumption is not violated.

Empirical Results

Perceived Entitlements by Gender: Ordered Logit Regression

Using an ordered logistic regression, model (1) is estimated by geographical sample (Benevento versus Lecce), and by male and female partners (again man and woman for short). The results are

displayed in Table 2 below. All models are statistically significant as reflected by the WaldChi2 result. Pseudo R-squares have values below 0.5, which is typical of models inspecting psychological factors in human behaviour. In logistic regressions pseudo R-squares are not comparable to traditional R-squares in linear regressions, hence the former should be interpreted with caution (Long and Freese, 2006). Comparing men and women in both samples, the main result to report is that for one marginal increase in the partner perception of individual entitlements, Benevento men display a 2.37 increase in the log odds of having a higher level of entitlement, while the finding is of a 1.89 increase for Benevento women, given all other variables held constant. On the Lecce sample, for a marginal increase in the partner perception of individual entitlements, Lecce men display a 2.57 increase in the log odds of having a higher level of entitlement, while the finding is not significant for Lecce women. In the Lecce sample, both education and income for men and women are also significant to the log odds of having a higher level of entitlement, but the magnitude of the increase is less than unity. In other words, the main factor affecting the perception of entitlements seems to be the perception by the partner of individual entitlements, and this is more striking for men across samples. This would suggest that the interdependence of entitlements within the household is a normative issue for men more than it is for women. One interpretation is that men respond to the local gender norm set by societal expectations to a greater extent than women do.

Table 2. Perceived entitlements for man and woman

Dependent Variable: i's entitlement according to i	Benevento				Lecce			
	Man		Woman		Man		Woman	
Independent Variables: *Subjective variables*								
i's endowment according to i	1.56	(1.08)	1.17	(1.86)	0.62	(0.77)	0.55	(2.07)
i's endowment according to j	0.73	(0.74)	0.66	(1.29)	-0.30	(0.59)	0.32	(1.07)
i's entitlement according to j	2.37	(0.28)*	1.89	(0.24)*	2.57	(0.32)*	0.73	(0.65)
Objective variables								
Age	-0.01	(0.01)	-0.01	(0.01)	-0.01	(0.01)**	-0.02	(0.01)
Education	-0.02	(0.08)	-0.04	(0.09)	0.12	(0.09)*	0.30	(0.12)*
Income	0.01	(0.08)	0.04	(0.09)	0.23	(0.04)*	0.26	(0.08)*
Job	0.10	(0.31)	-0.54	(0.33)	-0.4	(0.03)	-0.01	(0.03)
cut1	2.27	(1.42)	0.92	(1.91)	1.60	(1.60)	-0.60	(1.32)
cut2	6.14	(1.39)	4.44	(1.89)	5.17	(0.88)	6.65	(1.31)
Number of observations	580		565		862		727	
Wald Chi2(8)	120.16*		108.41*		154.33*		58.30*	
Pseudo R-square	0.23		0.16		0.11		0.05	

Note: Robust standard errors in brackets are adjusted for correlation of answers belonging to each individual; *and ** mean that the coefficient is significant at the 5% and 10% level, respectively. Standard errors are adjusted clusters in the household variable. Cut 1 and cut2 represent $Pr(e=0) = Pr(e_{ii} < cut1)$, $Pr(e=1) = Pr(cut1 < e_{ii} < cut2)$, and $Pr(e=2) = Pr(cut2 < e_{ii})$.

Perceived Entitlements by Level: Multinomial Logistic Regression

The second step of analysis is to run model (2) with a multinomial logistic regression, which accounts for the level-specific factors affecting individual entitlements "not enough" and "more than enough", using "enough" as base outcome (Table 3). This technique assumes that there is no order to the three categories of entitlement levels. Losing such valuable information would have been problematic if the model had not been estimated via ordered logit, as shown in Table 2, which showed the significance of the ordered categories in explaining entitlement levels.

Table 3. Perceived levels of entitlements with "enough" as base outcome

Dependent Variable:	*Benevento*				*Lecce*			
i's entitlement according to i	*Man*		*Woman*		*Man*		*Woman*	
Independent Variables:								
Not enough								
constant	18.24	(1.02)*	16.55	(1.20)*	0.18	(1.54)	0.40	(0.15)
i's endowment according to *i*	-15.9	(0.79)*	-15.48	(0.96)*	1.43	(1.45)	-1.18	(2.21)
i's endowment according to *j*	-2.25	(0.34)*	-1.59	(0.84)**	-2.51	(1.56)	-2.62	(2.15)
i's entitlement according to *j*	-1.17	(0.62)**	-1.75	(0.28)*	-1.82	(0.59)*	0.15	(0.94)
Age	0.01	(0.01)	-0.01	(0.01)	0.02	(0.01)*	0.03	(0.15)*
Education	0.08	(0.10)	0.09	(0.13)	0.31	(0.17)	-0.14	(0.13)
Income	-0.13	(0.10)	0.01	(0.07)	-0.26	(0.07)*	-0.37	(0.13)*
Job	-0.57	(0.23)*	0.37	(0.29)	0.03	(1.54)	0.07	(0.04)**
More than enough								
constant	12.95	(1.62)*	13.52	(1.72)*	-6.41	(2.03)*	0.16	(1.36)
i's endowment according to *i*	-15.4	(0.46)*	-14.11	(1.19)*	4.43	(2.03)*	-0.62	(1.38)
i's endowment according to *j*	0.46	(0.78)	-1.03	(1.34)	-3.11	(2.07)	-3.12	(2.24)
i's entitlement according to *j*	1.88	(0.37)*	1.44	(0.32)*	2.54	(0.49)*	1.08	(0.81)
Age	-0.01	(0.02)	-0.04	(0.04)*	0.00	(0.01)	-0.01	(0.10)
Education	0.17	(0.15)	0.12	(0.17)	0.16	(0.20)	0.02	(0.21)
Income	-0.19	(0.11)**	0.09	(0.11)	0.25	(0.12)*	0.14	(0.13)
Job	-0.64	(0.55)	-0.72	(0.42)**	-0.01	(0.05)	-0.01	(0.04)
Number of observations	580		565		862		727	
LRChi2(16) or	2399*		1390*					
WaldChi2(14)					159.64*		75.06*	
Pseudo R-square	0.26		0.18		0.11		0.07	

Note: Robust standard errors in brackets are adjusted for correlation of answers belonging to each individual; *and ** mean that the coefficient is significant at the 5% and 10% level, respectively. Standard errors are adjusted clusters in the household variable

Using a multinomial logistic regression, model (1) is estimated by geographical sample (Benevento versus Lecce), and by male and female partners (i.e. men and women). The results are displayed in Table 3. All models are statistically significant as reflected by the WaldChi2 and LRChi2 results. Comparing men and women in both samples, the perception by the partner of individual entitlements is again a significant factor to explain both "not enough" and "more than enough" levels of entitlements. If the partner perception of individual entitlements was to improve, the multinomial log

odds for "not enough" relative to "enough" entitlements would be expected to decrease by 1.17 for Benevento men, by 1.75 for Benevento women, and by 1.82 for Lecce men, while the finding is not significant for Lecce women, again. On the other hand, if the partner perception of individual entitlements was to improve, the multinomial log odds for "more than enough" relative to "enough" entitlements would be expected to increase by 1.88 for Benevento men, by 1.44 for Benevento women, and by 2.54 for Lecce men, while the finding is not significant for Lecce women. The single most important factor for Lecce women is access to income, whereby if women were to have access to a higher income category, the multinomial log odds for "not enough" relative to "enough" entitlements would be expected to decrease by 0.37. In other words, access to higher income would improve entitlement levels for Lecce women, more than any other factor in the model.

CONCLUSIONS

The perceived entitlement framework presented here in the context of the Mezzogiorno shows that the interdependence of entitlements has a gender and cultural dimension whereby the factors affecting people's perception of access to resources vary across samples and gender. Men tend be highly influenced by norms, which is consistent across both samples, while women tend to be less influenced than men in one sample, while the degree of influence is not significant in the other sample. Entitlements are therefore strongly linked to one another by the way social groups, here being gender groups, are perceived in the society. Whether it is in terms of what culturally constitute masculinity and femininity, fatherhood and motherhood, perceptions of entitlements by group shape actual individual entitlements and the self-awareness of being men and women in a relationship. The perceived entitlements framework also shows the potential that could be unleashed for regional development opportunities as proposed by Capello (2016). Male and female roles within the household could be supported to unlock female leadership and their potential for entrepreneurship outside the household. Social policies consistent with the Scandinavian welfare model of supporting fatherhood roles in the household and the labour market, or childcare services outside the household would help rebalancing gender norms within the household and support female leadership outside the household.

In the Scandinavian system, public policies attempts to shift care work from the unpaid (family work) to paid level (labour market), thereby making it possible for women to maintain a major and continuous occupational commitment. Policy institutions encourage the women's continuous labour force participation, thus enabling both parents (men as well as women) to combine parenthood with paid work in the attempt to redistribute caring work within the family. In Italy, new gender-friendly policies should be drawn to promote a more cooperative sharing of caring responsibilities within the household and higher level of childcare services should be supported in all regions, and

especially in the South. If public policies will succeed in promoting this, the male and female roles within the household could be challenged to unlock female leadership and their potential for entrepreneurship outside the household.

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[1] See, among others, Agarwal 1997; Basu 2006; Deer *et al.* 2012; De Giusti and Kambhampati 2016; Folbre 1986;Handa 1994; Iversen 2003; Katz 1997; Kennedy and Peters 1992; Lundberg and Pollak 1993; Spierings, 2014.

[2] See, among others, Agarwal 1997; Djebbari 2005; Duflo and Udry, 2004; Folbre 1986; Handa 1994; Katz 1997; Rangel 2006.

[3] For example, the myth of the witches in Benevento is unique to the city (Burton, 1972), it is well-anchored in cultural traditions and participate to the imaginary of the Benevento gender identity.

[4] T-tests for the mean of each variable together with F-tests between the means of male and female partners are also performed for statistical significance. Results are available on request to the authors.