

Abstract:

This research quantitatively measures a cross-country difference in women's attitude toward labor market participation between Turkey and western countries. The female labor force participation rate in Turkey has fallen from 72% in 1955 to 29% in 2011. This unique trend can be explained by a structural transformation from agriculture to the other sectors and a cultural reluctance of female work in non-family jobs. I construct a simple general equilibrium model of sectoral reallocation with gender, which captures the trends of female labor supply in western countries comparable to Turkey. Then the cultural difference in terms of preference is estimated as a wedge between the model's prediction and Turkish data. An additional cost of Turkish women's one hour market work in a week is quantitatively equivalent to 0.8% reduction in family consumption or 17 minutes less leisure. This factor is also supported by microeconomic evidence by European Social Value Survey.