WOMEN’S LAND RIGHTS, PROCESSES OF EMPOWERMENT, AND DATA NEEDS IN THE COFFEE GLOBAL VALUE CHAIN

A FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF THE AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

PRISCILLA FISHER, FLOOZY COFFEE ROASTERS
FLOOZY COFFEE ROASTERS

Established in 2017, Floozy Coffee Roasters is an all female-owned and led micro-roastery committed to women’s empowerment in the coffee sector. The Floozy gals are passionate about gender equality and empowering women at every level of the coffee supply chain. Floozy's mission is to promote and advance the women in coffee, showcase the talents of the ladies in the coffee industry, and train up future generations of badass coffee chicks.

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ABSTRACT

According to the world’s major coffee organisations, persistent gender inequality exists, most notably in the form of limited land holdings for women coffee producers. Land ownership has been identified as a key determinant of women’s empowerment and is reported to have important development outcomes for women in the broader agricultural sector. This paper employs a systematic review methodology to examine the existing literature base that explores women’s land rights within the coffee sector and the ways in which these might contribute to their empowerment. It finds that women’s land rights in the coffee sector are relatively under-researched and highly under-reported. Recommendations for future research including a range of data needs are presented.

OBJECTIVE

This paper has three major goals: (1) to identify the literature on women’s land rights in the coffee sector; (2) to develop a conceptual framework of empowerment through which the research can be analysed; and (3) to inspire future rigorous data collection and analysis in the hope that all women in coffee might one day have the tools and the capacity to empower themselves.
The motivation for this research stems from my own experience as a coffee professional, in both my capacity as a coffee roaster and a small business owner. Since mid-2017 when I co-founded Floozy Coffee Roasters, an all-female specialty coffee roastery in Newcastle NSW, I have been responsible for making decisions about purchasing and importing coffee beans from all over the world, thus participating directly in the Coffee Global Value Chain. While gender disaggregated data within the coffee sector is lacking, gender inequality at all levels of the supply chain is glaringly obvious – from women producers at origin whose names are rarely included on the bags the coffee arrives in, to the baristas working in local coffee shops whose chances of being promoted are correlated with the lengths of their beards (yet to be tested empirically).

As a participant within the Coffee Global Value Chain as both a roaster and a researcher, I understand my responsibility to use my purchasing power and consumer influence to promote the sustainability of the sector and to ensure more gender equal development outcomes at origin. I also understand that most of us who enjoy a cup of coffee or two a day have absolutely no concept of how that coffee is grown, processed, bought and roasted. Most of us have no idea that some 100 million people in the Global South depend on coffee for their livelihoods.

This paper has provided me with an invaluable opportunity to combine my two great loves in life – economics and coffee. My hope is that this piece of work may contribute to future gender-disaggregated research within the sector and a greater understanding of the role of women at every level of the coffee supply chain.

Priscilla Fisher
CO-FOUNDER FLOOZY COFFEE ROASTERS
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

**BJC**
Bukonzo Joint Cooperative Microfinance Society

**EAFCA**
East African Fine Coffees Association

**FAO**
Food and Agriculture Organization

**ICO**
International Coffee Organization

**ITC**
International Trade Centre

**IWCA**
International Women’s Coffee Alliance

**MOU**
Memorandum of understanding

**SCAA**
Specialty Coffee Association of America

**WEAI**
Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index

Women processing coffee cherries at Santa Isabel, Cobán, Guatemala. Photo courtesy of Melbourne Coffee Merchants.
In 2008, the International Trade Centre highlighted the importance of women to the global coffee chain (Scholer, 2008), and the following year, released a report that found “very little information and next to no hard data” pertaining to women’s roles within coffee production globally (ITC & EAFCA, 2009, p. 1). This was something of a ‘watershed moment’ and sparked a decade of interest in the role of women in coffee production amongst the world’s major coffee organisations (Church, 2018). Since then, a number of reports have been released by the International Coffee Organisation (2018b), the Specialty Coffee Association of America (2015), and a handful of major corporations (Nespresso, 2018; Twin, 2013) investigating the gender division of assets, income and labour in the coffee sector. Each of these reports express a concern that women coffee producers are likely to own less land than their male counterparts, and that this is a likely constraint to their household decision making power, control over income, and ability to join producer organisations and access technical training. Despite this acknowledgement, the glaring lack of data presented in these reports is as relevant today as it was ten years ago.

Given that coffee production generates a significant proportion of export earnings for a number of low to upper-middle income countries (ICO, 2018a), the lack of gender disaggregated research is concerning. With as many as 100 million people dependent on the production of coffee for their livelihoods worldwide (Jha et al., 2011), or some 25 million households (ICO, 2018a), a greater understanding of the role and needs of women and the existing gender disparities within the sector is necessary to inform future development policies. As the peak intergovernmental body for the coffee industry, the International Coffee Organization (ICO) is responsible for technical assistance to the world’s coffee producing nations to ensure the sustainability, stability, and transparency of the sector (ICO, 2018b). In 2018, the ICO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the International Women’s Coffee Alliance (IWCA), a not-for-profit organisation that represents women in coffee producing and consuming countries (ICO, 2018c). The aims of the IWCA are to provide (1) leadership and development; (2) community improvement; (3) coffee training and education; (4) resource procurement and asset development; and (5) advocacy and policy support to the women within its chapter network (IWCA, 2018). The MOU recognises the importance of the IWCA as the main international organisation representing women in the coffee sector, and the critical need for
“inclusion, data-driven decision making, and cooperation” (ICO, 2018c, p. 2).

Like the ICO, the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) identify four key areas where the gender gap in coffee is most pronounced: (1) ownership of assets, including land; (2) the distribution of labour; (3) income distribution; and (4) leadership opportunities and household and production decision making (SCAA, 2015). In the broader women in agriculture literature, land ownership and/or secure access to land is identified as a key determinant of a woman’s productive capacity and of a number of human development outcomes (FAO, 2011; Gumucio, Yore, Mello, & Loucel, 2016; Hill & Vigneri, 2011; Overfield, 1998; Valera et al., 2018). Land ownership is also posited as a determinant of access to credit (FAO, 2006; Gurmesa, & Ndinda, 2017; Meinzen-Dick et al., 2014; Pena, Maiques, & Castillo, 2008), household decision making power (Agarwal, 1994a; Deere, & Leon, 2003; Meinzen-Dick, Quisumbing, Doss, & Theis, 2017) and producer organisation membership (Gumucio et al., 2016; SCAA, 2015). For these reasons, this paper seeks to examine the importance of land ownership for women involved in coffee production and the ways in which this might contribute to their processes of empowerment.

A systematic review methodology has been employed to examine the existing literature base that explores women’s land rights within the coffee sector and the ways in which these might contribute to their empowerment. In Section 2, I provide an overview of the problem and explore the determinants of land ownership for women in the broader agricultural sector. In Section 3, I outline the conceptual framework of empowerment through which the literature pertaining to women’s land rights in the coffee sector will be analysed, applying gender based theories to economic, social and political factors of production. Section 4 details the methodology of the systematic review and Section 5 critically analyses the papers selected for the study. In Section 6, a discussion of future data needs is presented as well as a number of key recommendations in conducting future gender-disaggregated research within the coffee sector. Section 7 concludes.

This paper has three major goals: (1) to identify the literature on women’s land rights in the coffee sector; (2) to develop a conceptual framework of empowerment through which the research can be analysed; and (3) to inspire future rigorous data collection and analysis in the hope that all women in coffee might one day have the tools and the capacity to empower themselves.
2. BACKGROUND

The International Coffee Organization (ICO), the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) represent three of the most prominent organisations involved directly in coffee production standards and the representation of coffee producers worldwide. Each of these organisations have published reports (ICO, 2018b; ITC, 2011; SCAA, 2015) that draw from statistics from a 2008 ITC study in 15 coffee producing countries (Scholer, 2008). In this initial article, Scholer (2008), on behalf of the ITC, presents two tables; one pertaining to women’s participation in the workforce for coffee production, and the other to women’s ownership of assets in the coffee sector. These two tables have been reproduced in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Women’s participation as a percentage of total workforce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNCTION IN THE VALUE CHAIN</th>
<th>VARIATION (LOW - HIGH) %</th>
<th>“TYPICAL” PARTICIPATION %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Work</td>
<td>10 - 90</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvest</td>
<td>20 - 60</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trading in-country</td>
<td>5 - 30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorting</td>
<td>20 - 95</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export</td>
<td>0 - 40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (certification, laboratories, etc.)</td>
<td>5 - 35</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2: Women’s ownership as a percentage of total (including co-ownership)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPERTY</th>
<th>VARIATIONS (LOW - HIGH) %</th>
<th>“TYPICAL” LEVEL OF OWNERSHIP %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land used for coffee production (including user rights)</td>
<td>5 - 70</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee (when harvested)</td>
<td>2 - 70</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee (when traded domestically)</td>
<td>1 - 70</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companies in the coffee sector (e.g. exporters, laboratories, certifiers, transportation)</td>
<td>1 - 30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Scholer (2018) claims that, on average, women are responsible for as much as 70 per cent of labour in coffee fieldwork and harvesting, 75 per cent of coffee sorting, and between ten and 20 per cent of trade related activities. In addition, the author claims that women own 20 per cent of the land used for coffee farming, and ten to 15 per cent of the coffee produced. The ICO report these statistics presented by Scholer (2008), estimating that women make up 70 per cent of the share of the labour force in the coffee sector, and further extrapolating from these statistics that “around 5 million of the estimated 25 million coffee producers are women” (ICO, 2018b, p. 8). The SCAA (2015) similarly highlight the finding that women make up 70 per cent of the
2. BACKGROUND

labour force in coffee fieldwork and harvesting but only ten per cent of trade roles are filled by women. The ITC (2011) claim that these statistics make it “possible to indicate a kind of ‘typical’ role of women in the sector” (p. 61).

Despite being utilised by each of the world’s major coffee organisations, the statistics presented by Scholer (2008) are grossly misleading and statistically invalid, and should in no way be interpreted as a reflection of the reality of women’s labour or asset ownership in the coffee sector. A report published by the ITC and East African Fine Coffees Association (EAFCA) in 2009 provides further details of the study reported on by Scholer (2008). This report states that the sample for the study was made up of “25 persons (mainly women) from 15 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America” (ITC & EAFCA, 2009, p. 1). From this statement we can assume that, at the very most, there were 24 women participants in the study, and that for at least six of the countries there was just one female respondent. One need not be a statistician to understand this sample size is far too small to truly reflect the experiences of women coffee producers in the 15 countries that make up the study. Alarmingly, the sample size was not published in the initial release by Scholer (2008) and the report by ITC and EAFCA (2009) is no longer widely available, thus these low-quality statistics continue to be cited without reference to the sample size by some of the most influential actors in the industry.

Very little is known about the role or the asset holdings of women in coffee worldwide. The fact that our understanding of the role of women and their levels of asset ownership in the coffee sector is still based largely on the ITC and EAFCA (2009) study is extremely problematic. Apart from these findings, the glaring lack of data about the role of women in the coffee sector presented by the ITC (2011), ICO (2018b) and SCAA (2015) is obvious. Aware of this data shortage, the International Women’s Coffee Association’s research arm, known as the IWCA Research Alliance, have attempted to provide an estimate of the number of women working to produce coffee in the 20 producing countries within which the IWCA has a chapter presence (Church, 2018). Thus far, volunteer members within the chapters have been successful in providing an estimate for seven countries, as shown in Table 3 below. They find that the proportion of female coffee producers within the countries for which they have data ranges from 19 per cent in Honduras to 34 per cent in Costa Rica. While this data does not make a distinction between women landholders and non-landholders, and while estimation methods are not made completely clear and a number of the estimates are ageing, it is certainly a positive step towards gaining a clearer picture of the
state of women in the coffee sector, although much work still needs to be done to properly assess the extent of the gender asset gap.

The SCAA (2015) highlight women’s ownership of assets as one of four key areas where the gender gap in coffee is most pronounced. They posit that women are less likely than men to own land, and that when they do their plots tend be smaller and of lower quality. The ICO (2018b) cite land as being “the most important agricultural production factor” (p. 16). Based on their own calculations from World Bank census data for Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania, they find that women own on average 25 per cent less land than men in these countries (ICO 2018b). They also assert that the considerable differences in women’s and men’s access to and ownership of land is likely a product of social-cultural factors, such as male preference in inheritance, and government factors, such as male bias in land titling and other formalisation policies.

The gender asset gap affects women in the broader agricultural sector, and given the little data about women in coffee, many parallels are drawn between the two. From a theoretical perspective, both the ICO (2018b) and the SCAA (2015) suggest that women in coffee who do not own land may face difficulty obtaining credit, joining producer organisations, and accessing

Table 3: Estimates of female coffee producers by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>ESTIMATED NUMBER OF FEMALE PRODUCERS</th>
<th>FEMALE AS % OF TOTAL PRODUCERS</th>
<th>YEAR OF ESTIMATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>15,450</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>6,700</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>4,000 - 7,000</td>
<td>19 - 22</td>
<td>2016/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>17,978</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>117,990</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2006/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>113,846</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>164,000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

technical training. This reflects the broader women in agriculture literature which finds women's land rights to be a key determinant of credit and access to technical training (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2014; Pena et al., 2008) as well as household bargaining power and access to productive resources (Hill & Vigneri, 2011; Meinzen-Dick et al., 2017). In the remainder of this section, I present an overview of this existing literature base for women's land rights in the agricultural sector. In particular I discuss the importance of women's land rights from a development perspective and the social and governmental forces that affect women's land acquisition and the types of land rights held by women in agriculture. This background will form the basis for the conceptual framework presented in Section 3 through which the articles selected in this systematic review will be analysed.

2.1 Women's land rights and development

Women are becoming increasingly involved in cash crop production as a result of male out-migration, or what is more commonly known as the “feminization of agriculture” (Deere, 2005; FAO; 2006). Enhancing women’s access to land and tenure security in the global south has been a priority of the major development institutions for decades and is of even greater importance as female-headed households become increasingly common (FAO, 2011; World Bank, 2012). Tenure insecurity and inequality in land distribution have been identified as causes of poverty for rural households, with smallholders and landless farmers constituting an estimated 90 per cent of the world’s rural poor (Deere, 2005). Despite the persistence of claims that women constitute 70 per cent of the world’s rural poor (UNDP, 1995), relatively little is known about how many women or men are living in poverty, owing to a lack of quality data about income and wealth at the individual level (Doss, 2013; Doss, Meinzen-Dick, Quisumbing, & Theis, 2017; SOFA Team & Doss, 2011).

Female headed households are disadvantaged in their access to land, labour and inputs, typically owning smaller and lower quality plots of land.
headed households while men typically live in male headed households only (Deere et al., 2012). Female headed households are disadvantaged in their access to land, labour and inputs, typically owning smaller and lower quality plots of land (Deere & Doss, 2006; Deere & Leon, 2003; FAO, 2011; Hill & Vigneri, 2011).

The practice of collecting data at the household level, as is most common in agrarian societies, is likely to overstate women’s access to income and resources in a male headed household where intra-household inequality exists (Deere et al., 2012; Doss, 2013; Kelkar, 2011). The assumption that household members will share their income and resources equally among one another is an assumption based on economic rationalism rather than real world experiences (Doss et al., 2017; Razavi, 2007; Verhart & Pyburn, 2010). Given that it is now widely accepted in the literature that women in rural areas are disadvantaged in all modes of land acquisition, understanding women’s access to and ownership of land is critical for addressing their development, although the true extent of this relationship is difficult to quantify as women’s land rights data remain scarce (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2017).

2.2 Defining land rights

Defining ‘land rights’ poses many challenges - particularly for researchers - as land rights can refer to a variety of rights across different contexts. According to the FAO (2006), land rights can refer to: (1) the rights to use and decide how to use land; (2) the right to exclude others from using the land; (3) the right to sell or transfer the land; and (4) the right to use the land as collateral. An individual may have land rights that encompasses one or more or all of these rights above. Even in situations where women are sole or joint owners of land, social norms may prevent them from exercising each of these rights fully, for example they may need permission from their husband or family before being able to sell the land (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2017).

Land rights can also be held solely or jointly. While Agarwal (1994a) argues that sole titling of land to women is necessary for achieving their economic security and empowerment, many other gender and development experts consider joint titling to be equally effective (Deere & Leon, 2001; Deere & Leon, 2003; Pena et al., 2008). Joint land titles have become increasingly common in recent years following major government initiatives to formally and jointly recognise landholdings for small scale farmers. Wiig (2013) found household decision making to be more equitable in a sample of jointly titled households in Peru, while Bayisenge (2018) found that joint titling led to increased tenure security for women in Rwanda. Thus, joint titling may be an effective means of achieving gender equality and increased egalitarian decision making in rural households if supported by social and legal frameworks. For the purposes of this study, I consider women who own their
land both solely and jointly. While the type of land title held may affect women’s empowerment in significant ways, an analysis of the types of land titles held is outside of the scope of this paper and will remain an important consideration for future research.

2.3 Modes of land acquisition

A brief discussion of the modes of land acquisition is relevant to this study in order to gain an understanding of the social and legislative frameworks that both permit and constrain women’s access to land. Women in rural households acquire land through four main avenues: (1) inheritance; (2) marriage; (3) government redistribution and land titling programs; and (4) land markets (Deere & Leon, 2003). While in the past some countries made it illegal for women to inherit or purchase land, the legal frameworks that exist in many countries today are now more gender neutral, recognising dual-headed houses and thus allowing women the same land rights as men (Deere & Leon, 2003; Razavi, 2007). In addition, women are now given more protection through marriage contracts in the case of the death of a spouse or divorce (Deere & Leon, 2001; Deere et al., 2012; FAO, 2006). In practice, however, local customs often supersede national legislation, perpetuating male bias in formal land titles and in participation in land markets (Deere & Leon, 2003). In some cases, government titling programs are reported to have weakened women’s land rights by formally titling the land in the name of the male household head alone (Deere & Leon, 2001; Pena et al., 2008).

Persistent social biases that give preference to men are evident in inheritance patterns in agrarian societies (Deere & Leon, 2001; Deere & Leon, 2003; Fonjong, Fombe, & Sama-Land, 2013). Empirical evidence suggests that inheritance is the most common mode of land acquisition for women in Central America, though in absolute terms, men inherit more land than women (Deere & Leon, 2003). Where the legal framework allows for female inheritance of land, it is argued that the disparity in actual male and female inheritance is a result of social norms and perceived gender roles in society. Unequal access to land in rural communities exacerbates the incidence of poverty and compromises women’s economic security (Glavin, Stokke, & Wiig, 2013; Meinzen-Dick et al., 2017; World Bank, 2012). This in turn affects the extent to which these women can experience empowerment in their own lives.
One of the major objectives of this paper is to develop a deeper understanding of the mechanisms by which women involved in coffee production can empower themselves. As Pena et al. (2008) state, “there is nothing intrinsically important or more empowering about a particular form of resource like land – rather, it is the effect of women controlling economic resources... which is important” (p. 65). Like Pena et al. (2008), I find that land ownership in and of itself is insufficient to achieve empowerment per se, but can instead provide the basis for a shift in intra- and inter-household decision making and a woman’s own sense of self - each of which contribute to processes of empowerment in their own ways. This section explores notions of empowerment as they relate to women in agriculture, and the ways in which they may relate more specifically women in coffee. It also provides the conceptual framework for empowerment that will be used as a lens through which to analyse the papers selected in this systematic review.

### 3.1 Defining empowerment

Women’s empowerment has been a goal of the major international development agencies since the 1990’s (FAO, 2011;
World Bank, 2012). This is consistent with the literature that claims that empowering women leads to the achievement of development outcomes, such as through increased household spending on food, health and education (World Bank, 2012). Additionally, gender-focused development can distribute economic, political and social capital to women which can enable them to empower themselves (Mosedale, 2005; Pena et al., 2008). This relationship between women’s empowerment and economic development is of great importance when considering how the redistribution of land ownership rights to women, either as individual or joint holders, can enable processes of empowerment, and is of critical value to this framework.

Making a distinction between the terms ‘equity’ and ‘empowerment’ is of critical importance, as the latter is by necessity concerned with an actual realisation of power for women as individuals, either redistributed or otherwise (Deere & Leon, 2001). Pursuing gender equity alone without allowing a woman the capacity to exercise power over and within the processes that affect her own life is unlikely to result in lasting development outcomes or social change for that woman, and therefore for society as a whole (Mishra & Sam, 2016; World Bank, 2012). For example, titling a plot of land in the names of a husband and a wife may be a gender equitable solution, however if the wife has no control over how the land is used, it may not contribute to her empowerment (Cuellar-Gomez, 2008). Thus, this study is more concerned with women’s empowerment than with gender equity alone.

While no universal definition of empowerment exists, most definitions center around the ability an individual has to exert power in their own lives through decision making and the control of resources. Kabeer (1999) defines empowerment as “the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such an ability” (p. 435). By definition this implies that for an individual to become empowered they must first have been ‘disempowered’, thus unable to freely make strategic life choices in some or all aspects of their life. Similarly, Carr (2000) finds that empowerment is inherently concerned with an individual’s ability to make choices that contribute to a sustainable living and that empowerment occurs at the “household, community and market levels” (p. 2). Mosedale (2005) adds that empowerment “cannot be bestowed by a third party” (p. 244) but rather must come from within an individual. A role for third parties, such as development agencies, does exist, but in the facilitation of women’s own empowerment rather than in its provision (Oxaal & Baden, 1997).
At the core of these definitions of empowerment is the very notion of power, which can be expressed as:

- **Power over** - the ability to influence or control another;
- **Power to** - the ability and authority to make decisions;
- **Power with** - the ability to collectivise; and/or
- **Power within** - a sense of self (Oxaal & Baden, 1997).

Kabeer (2005) advocates for a framework whereby power is exerted through one’s agency, via access to and control of resources, in order to achieve one’s potential. Empowerment in this sense is thus a process, and one that is inherently internal and deeply personal, based on one’s own lived experience (Alkire et al., 2012; Mosedale, 2005).

### 3.2 Measuring empowerment

Given that the definitions of empowerment are so broad based, effectively measuring and evaluating empowerment poses additional challenges for researchers and policy makers alike. The process of empowerment is highly contextual across time and space and entirely dependent upon the preferences and values of the individual or individuals in question (O’Hara & Clement, 2018). Developing an indicator of empowerment that is both reliable and robust across contexts is thus no easy feat (Alkire et al., 2012), and given that empowerment is relatively new to the development agenda, few such indicators exist (O’Hara & Clement, 2018). The notable lack of a universal tool for the measurement of empowerment makes inter-study comparisons particularly problematic, especially when comparing the experiences of women from different regions or countries.

One such tool that does exist, and possibly the only standardised tool of its kind, is the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI). Initially commissioned by the US government’s Feed the Future Initiative, the WEAI is also useful in broader contexts as a tool for quantifying women’s empowerment and tracking changes over time (Alkire et al., 2012). Within the WEAI exists the Five Domains of Empowerment subindex, which quantitatively measures “(1) decisions about agricultural production, (2) access to and decision-making power about productive resources, (3) control of use of income, (4) leadership in the community, and (5) time allocation” (Alkire et al., 2012, p. 2). While not without its limitations (see Alkire et al., 2012), the WEAI is an important first step towards standardising the measurement of processes of empowerment across contexts so that meaningful comparisons can be made and gender-centric development initiatives can be effectively evaluated. The five domains represented by the WEAI form the basis of the conceptual framework used for this systematic review, as detailed below.
3.3 Conceptual framework

Figure 1 below presents the conceptual framework for this analysis. As discussed in Section 2, increasing women’s land ownership rates are shown to be a product of two major factors:

- **Changing social norms** – whereby patterns of gender equality and social and traditional attitudes towards women are changing globally to allow for increased female land ownership.

- **Government and non-government policy and program interventions** – that directly influence women’s formal ownership of land through land titling programs and other redistributive initiatives or legislative frameworks.

The conceptual framework presented in this paper identifies five areas where women’s land rights are expected to have positive flow on effects contributing to the empowerment of women in coffee. Of these, the first four - Production, Resources, Income and Leadership - are adapted from the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index’s ‘Five Domains of Empowerment’ (Alkire et al., 2012). In this framework, a fifth dimension - Sense of Self - is added to capture relevant power within effects of women’s land ownership, while the original Time component which reflects the division of labour within the household is, for the sake of this analysis, included within the Production domain as discussed below.

Land is a key factor of production in
agricultural households, and a central component of empowerment (Mishra & Sam, 2016; Nagarajan & MacDermott, 2013; Pena et al., 2008). It is regularly cited as a key determinant of access to credit and technical training and as a precondition for producer organisation and cooperative membership (Hill & Vigneri, 2011; SCAA, 2015). Insecure and informal land rights threaten the productivity of the sector and disadvantage the most vulnerable actors in the value chain who are most often women (FAO, 2011; World Bank, 2012). In this conceptual framework, I theorise land rights as the key determinant of the five dimensions that contribute to women’s empowerment. These five dimensions form the basis of the systematic review and are discussed in further detail below.

Production

Under the WEAI framework, the production dimension reflects “decisions about agricultural production and refers to sole or joint decision making” (Alkire et al., 2012, p. 7). For the sake of this analysis, production refers to the decision-making power that a woman has over the productive units of the household, as well as the division of productive and reproductive tasks. Within the women in agriculture literature, land ownership is shown to have a positive effect on women’s participation in household decision making by giving women bargaining power within the household (Pena et al., 2008; Valera, 2018) which can in turn lead to a more equal division of labour. Women coffee growers who own land or have a joint land title with their husbands are likely to have greater household bargaining power than those without a land title, and thus greater involvement in household decision making and a more even distribution of labour which both directly impact their processes of empowerment.

Resources

Alkire et al. (2012) include “(1) ownership of land and assets; (2) decisions regarding the purchase, sale, or transfer of land and assets; and (3) access to and decisions about credit” (p. 9) when they refer to resources in the context of the WEAI. In the context of this study, I have analysed land separately as a determinant of the five dimensions of empowerment that make up the framework for this analysis. In addition, I include access to credit in the income dimension rather than resources, in order to assess control over household financial capital as one, as discussed in the section below. I use the term ‘resources’ therefore to refer to any other physical assets in the household, such as livestock and equipment, as well as intangible assets in the form of human capital, such as access to education.

Within the literature, ownership of and access to resources involved in production are shown to increase women’s efficiency and productivity (FAO, 2011; Jackson, 2003; Valera, 2018). This is particularly important in the case of female-headed households who may be disadvantaged by the absence of an adult male in the household and who therefore have to rely on less labour for production, making them more reliant
3. WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

on livestock and hired labour for production (ICO, 2018b). Within the literature, land rights are demonstrated to be a positive determinant of women’s access to physical resources (Valera, 2018).

Education is also an important aspect of a woman’s empowerment – both in and of itself, and as a means of accessing land, participating in financial and product markets and advocating for and understanding one’s legal rights. Kabeer (2005) underscores the importance of choice as a fundamental component of women’s empowerment, and both physical and intangible resources can facilitate this process as the “medium through which agency is exercised” (p. 15). As such, for the purpose of this analysis, both physical and human capital are considered as resources which may contribute to women’s empowerment.

Income

Alkire et al. (2012) consider income to contribute to a woman’s empowerment if she is able to exercise control over how it is spent, either individually or jointly. In the framework for this study, I also include access to credit in this dimension in order to be able to assess control of financial assets and liabilities as one. Within the literature, land is shown to be determinant of access to credit by acting as collateral (Fletschner, 2008; Fletschner & Kenney, 2011; Hill & Vigneri, 2011; Pena et al., 2008) and is positively related to women’s control of household income (Deere & Twyman, 2012; Kelkar, 2011). Women’s control of household income is also shown to be positively related to household food and education spending, contributing to the wellbeing and development of their households (Gumucio et al., 2016; Johnson, Kovarik, Meinzen-Dick, Njuki, &
Coffee is a seasonal cash crop, with most coffee producing regions experiencing between one to two harvests a year. Access to credit is vital for coffee producing households, who are typically paid a lump sum amount for each harvest (ITC, 2011). Women’s access to credit and control of income in the coffee sector is likely to be dependent on their ownership of land, as in the wider agricultural sector.

**Leadership**

In their interpretation of leadership, Alkire et al. (2012) find that a woman’s ability to become a member of economic and social groups, and to become an active member who is comfortable speaking in front of these groups, contributes to her empowerment. Such groups represent an important form of social capital that are of great importance to a woman’s empowerment (Mosedale, 2005). Within the coffee sector, these groups typically exist as producer organisations and cooperatives. The SCAA (2015) find that land is often a requirement of producer organisation and cooperative membership. Thus, within this dimension, land rights are expected to have a distinct effect on women’s processes of empowerment.

**Sense of self**

The framework for this analysis, while based closely on the WEAI, does depart from it by including a dimension that captures relevant sense of self effects for women’s empowerment. Here I use the term ‘sense of self’ to reiterate that empowerment is an inherently personal process, and one that must come from within (Mosedale, 2005). Stromquist (1995) highlights that empowerment has a psychological dimension incorporating independence, confidence and self-esteem, or what is often referred to as ‘power within’ (Oxaal and Baden, 1997). In the literature, disempowered women are described as being vulnerable and susceptible to domestic violence, with theoretical links between landlessness and partner-violence having been documented (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2017). Landless women are also considered vulnerable in the case where their husbands divorce them and they are forced to leave the family home, with land ownership considered crucial for establishing a threat-point in marriage that provides women with some security (Wiig, 2012). Conversely, the FAO (2006) describe land ownership as being important for a woman’s social status and confidence. Thus land can be a critical factor that ensures women’s economic independence and contributes to their self-esteem and empowerment.
3.4 Limitations

The conceptual framework presented in this section has been developed with the particular purposes of this study in mind, and as such, is contextual to women smallholder farmers who are involved in the production of coffee. I recognise the limitations of this framework, particularly within states where land rights are informal or where land is owned communally by the state. In these situations, it may be more helpful to consider secure access to land in the place of land ownership rights. A discussion of formal versus informal land rights is outside of the scope of this paper, but will be of critical importance in establishing land tenure security for women in coffee production and should be the focus of future research.
This paper uses a systematic literature review approach to investigate the empowerment effects of improvements in the land rights of women in coffee growing communities. This methodology was chosen as an important first step in establishing the strengths and limitations of the existing body of literature prior to conducting further research. It follows the guidelines for the systematic review of effects in international development as set out by Waddington et al. (2012) by using strict eligibility criteria and a pre-defined search strategy. In this section, I outline both the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the review and the search strategy used. The purpose of this systematic review is to present a critical analysis of the existing literature base and to identify gaps for further data collection and empirical research, which will be discussed in greater detail in Sections 5 and 6.

4.1 Eligibility criteria

Table 4 below presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the systematic review in a format consistent with that of Meinzen-Dick et al., (2017). Given the scarcity of gender disaggregated property rights data, this review considers peer reviewed journal articles, published working papers, industry reports and relevant theses. Magazine and newspaper articles are excluded from the study, as well as legislation and reviews. In addition to publication type, articles are included on the basis that they were published in 2008 or later, following the initial release of statistics pertaining to women’s land ownership in the coffee sector as discussed in Sections 1 and 2 (Scholer, 2008). A range of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods studies are included. While Waddington et al (2012) highlight the importance of including studies written in a language other than English, particularly when discussing international development in Latin America, doing so is outside the scope of this paper and thus only studies written in English have been included. Such an omission is likely to have minimal impact on this study given the scarcity of related research in any language, however it will be an important consideration in future reviews.

This review is concerned with women coffee producers who own or have access to land in Central and South America, Africa, and Asia, and excludes studies of households where there is no adult female present. Perceived ownership and access to land are also included in this study. Of particular interest are the determinants or constraints that women’s land rights (and lack thereof) have in the areas of
### Table 4: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDY TYPE</th>
<th>INCLUDE</th>
<th>EXCLUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| PUBLICATION TYPE | - Peer reviewed journal articles  
- Published working papers  
- Industry reports  
- Theses | - Legislation  
- Media articles |
| LANGUAGE | - English | - Language other than English |
| STUDY TYPE | - Quantitative  
- Qualitative  
- Mixed methods  
- Policy analysis | - Meta analyses  
- Literature review  
- Historical analyses |
| PARTICIPANTS | PRODUCER | - Male |
| HOUSEHOLD | - Female  
- Formal landholder  
- Informal landholder  
- Land user | |
| TYPE OF LAND USE | - Coffee production | - Other agricultural production |
| GEOGRAPHY | - Coffee producing countries in Central and South America, Africa, Asia  
- Developing countries  
- Rural plots of land | - Non-coffee producing countries  
- Developed countries  
- Urban plots of land |
| INDICATORS | LAND RIGHTS | - Common property |
| EMPOWERMENT | - WEIA Index  
- Other empirical indicator  
- Data disaggregated for gender | - Not disaggregated for gender |
| OUTCOMES | EFFECTS RELATED TO LAND OWNERSHIP AND EMPOWERMENT INDICATORS | - Outcomes not linked to land ownership  
- Outcomes that do not contribute to empowerment |

Source: Author
productive capacity, access to and control of resources, access to and control of income, leadership opportunities, and sense of self. These areas have been identified to directly impact the empowerment of women in agriculture as identified in the conceptual framework for this analysis in Section 3.

Property rights are not defined universally and therefore extra consideration must be taken to distinguish land ownership and land access when comparing land rights studies from different contexts. As discussed in section 2, using the two interchangeably could overstate land holdings controlled by women and have important implications for policy development.

Given the known data scarcity pertaining to women in agriculture, and particularly in coffee production, studies with small and/or poorly selected samples will not be excluded from the analysis but will be discussed separately. Bias in these samples will highlight the need for further improvements in data collection, particularly in regard to national agricultural censuses, but also for smaller datasets used for qualitative and quantitative analysis. These data needs will be discussed further in Section 6.

4.2 Search strategy

A screening of a number of academic literature databases – ProQuest, JSTOR, EBSCOhost and Scopus – was conducted using the search criteria outlined in Table 5 below. The search terms were kept quite broad so as not to miss any key papers by having a focus that was too narrow. This search yielded a total of 1170 titles. Additional papers were drawn from the websites of leading coffee organisations, such as the International Women’s Coffee Alliance and the Coffee Quality Institute, and through literature snowballing. From these sources, 8 papers were identified for analysis, giving a total number of 1168 studies to be reviewed after removing duplicates.

Figure 2 demonstrates the selection process. 926 records were excluded on the basis of publication type, date, language, and omitted information. Of the remaining 242 records, only three were initially selected for analysis based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, Table 5: Search Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEYWORDS</th>
<th>SU(coffee) AND (“women” OR “gender”) AND (“land rights” OR “land tenure” OR “property rights” OR “land ownership”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DATE RANGE</td>
<td>01/01/2008 - 31/12/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
4. METHODOLOGY

particularly the requirement for gender disaggregated land rights data. Eight additional papers were included for analysis given that they discuss relevant information and implications for this study, despite being initially excluded on the basis of not reporting gender disaggregated land rights data. A clear distinction between these two groups is made in the discussion and in Tables 6 and 7.

Once the papers had been selected, I conducted my analysis based on the conceptual framework presented in Section 3. I identified the key themes and shortcomings from each paper, and gaps where further research is still needed. The results of this analysis are presented in Section 5.

Figure 2: PRISMA flow diagram of search strategy and selection process

Source: Author, Waddington et al., 2012.
5. RESULTS

The purpose of this review is to develop a deeper understanding of the mechanisms by which women involved in coffee production can empower themselves, and to what extent land ownership facilitates this empowerment. The most glaring finding of this review is the overall lack of research that quantifies the land holdings of women coffee producers. Based on the selection criteria outlined in Section 4, only three papers were found to have fully satisfied the criteria for inclusion, most notably the inclusion of land rights data for women (Mayoux, 2012; Meier zu Selhausen, 2016; Nespresso, 2018). What Lyon et al. (2017) describe as a “dearth of gender disaggregated data” (p. 318) may in fact be an understatement in this field. Given this shortage, I chose to include an additional eight papers found using the search strategy outlined in Section 4 that were excluded on the basis of not reporting data on women’s land ownership but that closely examine women in coffee and one or more of the five determinants of empowerment that make up the conceptual framework for this analysis: (1) production; (2) resources; (3) income; (4) leadership; and (5) sense of self. A summary of the three papers that satisfy the initial inclusion criteria is presented in Table 6 below, while a summary of the eight additional papers that have been included for the synthesis can be found in Table 7.

For each of the papers summarised in Table 7, the initial reason for exclusion has been provided. For instance, Austin (2017) was initially excluded based on not reporting women’s land rights data, and otherwise presenting very limited anecdotal evidence about gender inequality in coffee. I chose to include this paper in my synthesis however, as it gives an insight into the distribution of labour within coffee producing communities. Similarly, Bose (2017) provides insight into the experiences of women coffee producers in Colombia, but fails to report any land rights data for the women in her sample. The eight papers presented in Table 7 speak to the importance of land ownership for women, but do not fully satisfy the eligibility criteria set out in this paper. Finding just three studies that did fully satisfy this criteria demonstrates the research potential in this field and the dire need for future gender
disaggregated data driven research in the coffeelands. For the purposes of this paper, the additional studies have been included to provide context to women’s empowerment in the coffee sector, and highlight the areas where much more research is needed.

What follows is a synthesis of the articles selected through the process of this review, however extreme caution should be taken in interpreting these results. For instance, of the 11 articles selected for analysis, only six of these having been published in peer reviewed academic journals (Austin, 2017; Bacon, 2010; Bose, 2017; Lyon et al., 2017; Mayoux, 2012; Meier zu Selhausen, 2016). The remaining articles are either theses or industry reports (Anunu, 2015; Fry, 2010; Nespresso, 2018; Stone, 2017; Twin, 2013). Geographically, only 14 coffee producing countries are represented by these studies, despite the fact that coffee is produced in 44 countries worldwide (ICO, 2018d). Within these 11 studies, four base their analysis on samples of coffee producers from Uganda (Anunu, 2015; Austin, 2017; Mayoux, 2012; Meier zu Selhausen, 2016), a country which produces approximately three per cent of the world’s coffee (ICO, 2018d). These, and other, data concerns are presented and discussed further in Section 6. Readers are urged to interpret the findings of this review as preliminary

Table 6. Summary of included papers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHOR, YEAR, TYPE</th>
<th>COUNTRY/ COUNTRIES</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>TYPE OF STUDY</th>
<th>DATASET &amp; SAMPLE SIZE</th>
<th>KEY FINDINGS</th>
<th>VARIABLES OF INTEREST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayoux, 2012, Journal Article. Enterprise Development and Microfinance.</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Investigate impacts of GALS methodology</td>
<td>Qualitative and Quantitative</td>
<td>NA, n=3500+ but smaller subsets used for different variables, see paper</td>
<td>- “profound” changes in short time period - men have become “enthusiastic promoters of gender equality” (p. 319) - 48% of households in process of joint land title following GALS</td>
<td>- land ownership by woman - joint land ownership - distribution of labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meier zu Selhausen, 2016, Journal Article. Feminist Economics.</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Find determinants of women’s membership in producer cooperatives</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>n=631; 421 women from coop, 210 women non-co-op. Bukonzo Joint Cooperative, June-Aug 2012</td>
<td>- Size of land holding has positive effect on probability of women's coop membership - Found no difference between members' and non-members' agency</td>
<td>- Wife's land - Husband's land - Joint land - Wife's control of coffee income - Key demographic variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nespresso, 2018, Report</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Indonesia, Guatemala</td>
<td>Present results of gender analysis tool</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>n=285; n=86 Indonesia, n=84 Guatemala, n=115 Ethiopia. Nespresso farmers. Approx. 50/50 split men women.</td>
<td>- Disparities in perception of land holding in absence of formal title, women perceive land as jointly owned while men perceive it as their own land. - Differences across the 3 countries re men's willingness to let women participate in coffee production and decision making. - Overwhelmingly women want to be more involved in production in all 3 settings - women were typically more comfortable being interviewed in small groups than individually</td>
<td>- Land title owner and size of land, though not reported - Who owns the land in absence of land title - Decision making in household and production</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

22
### Table 7. Summary of supplementary papers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHOR, YEAR, TYPE</th>
<th>COUNTRY/COUNTRIES</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>TYPE OF STUDY</th>
<th>DATASET &amp; SAMPLE SIZE</th>
<th>KEY FINDINGS</th>
<th>EXCLUSION REASON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anuna, 2015. Thesis</td>
<td>Uganda, Indonesia</td>
<td>Report on workshops conducted by Coffee Quality Institute designed to increase women’s participation in coffee chain</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>n=78; 15 men, 27 women in Uganda, 16 men, 20 women in Indonesia</td>
<td>- Majority of assets owned by men - Unequal distribution of labour - Indic. Sharia law: man is head of household and assets registered in his name</td>
<td>- No land ownership rates reported - Lack of clarity in sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon, 2010. Journal Article. Latin American Perspectives.</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>Analyse empowerment aspects of Fair Trade networks and coffee cooperatives in Nicaragua</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>n=10</td>
<td>- Fair Trade not delivering on gender outcomes - Case study of group of women who started women’s group within cooperative and have a joint piece of land between them - Men in this example 38 responsive to women’s greater agency</td>
<td>- Small sample - Anecdotal evidence - No land ownership rates reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bose, 2017. Journal Article. Women’s Studies International Forum.</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Assess dynamics of rural women’s land rights following land reform in Colombia</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>n=72; 14 case studies, 58 interviews with men and women</td>
<td>- Program encourages joint titles, finds joint titles help women voiced their opinions about matters of land (eg decision to sell) - Title gives single women/widows tenure security</td>
<td>- Few details presented - Bose references a larger study that this case study is based on which could not be located - No land ownership data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fry, 2010. Thesis.</td>
<td>Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica</td>
<td>Analyse policies at international and national levels to determine opportunities for empowerment in coffee</td>
<td>Policy analysis</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>- Policies in Central America “provide more opportunities than constraints” (p. 4) for empowerment. - Implementation of policies has been weak - More research needed to assess needs of women coffee farmers</td>
<td>- No land ownership rates reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyon, Mutersbaugh &amp; Worthen, 2017. Journal Article. Agriculture and Human Values.</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Investigate impact of increased participation/membership of women in coffee producer associations</td>
<td>Qualitative and Quantitative</td>
<td>n=210; men and women from 2 producer orgs. 2014-2016</td>
<td>- Women in producer orgs have high level of household decision making power - Women experience time poverty from participation in producer orgs on top of productive and reproductive responsibilities</td>
<td>- No data on land ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone, 2017. Thesis.</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>Assess whether and how washing station owners can facilitate the empowerment of women coffee producers</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>n=31 interviews, n=15 for 1 x focus group, Coop and non coop participants</td>
<td>- Washing stations not often focus of research but valuable part of chain - Training, assets and access identified as key ways in which washing station owners can facilitate empowerment</td>
<td>- No data on land ownership - Limited external validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twin, 2013. Report.</td>
<td>Peru, Nicaragua, India</td>
<td>Understand barriers facing women coffee, cocoa and nut farmers in division of labour, control and ownership of assets/income</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>n=184 farmers for GALS workshops, n=14 for key informant interviews. Drawn from producer orgs.</td>
<td>- India: 40% of women had land registered in their name, typically smaller plots than men - Ave land holding of woman member of producer org higher than national ave - No land ownership data presented for Peru, Nicaragua - Even distribution of labour in Peru, India. 70/30 split in Nic with men doing more - Men and women from sample make joint income decisions</td>
<td>- Very little land ownership data - Overly generalised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
findings alone, with the key take away from this study being the dire need for gender-disaggregated data-driven research within the coffee sector.

5.1 Women’s land rights

Land is a key factor of production in agricultural households, and a core component of the processes of empowerment. It is regularly cited as a determinant of access to credit, access to technical training and producer organisation and cooperative membership (FAO, 2006; Gurmesa & Ndinda, 2017; SCAA, 2015). Insecure and informal land rights threaten the productivity of the sector and disadvantage the most vulnerable actors in the value chain who are typically women (Deere & Leon, 2001; World Bank, 2012). Of the 11 papers selected for this review, each cite the importance of women’s control of and secure access to land and other resources. Few make an attempt to quantify women’s land ownership in any capacity, with the exception of Meier zu Selhausen (2016) and Mayoux (2012).

Nespresso (2018) highlight the difficulty in establishing land ownership in the absence of a formal land title. In their study of three coffee producing nations – Ethiopia, Guatemala and Indonesia – they found that married men and women expressed different views about who owned the land. In each of the three samples, men were more likely to believe that they owned the land themselves, while women mostly reported that the land was jointly owned with their husbands in the absence of a formal title. The authors, however, do not report the number of married respondents who do not have a formal land title, although this number is likely to be small given that the total number of married couples with or without a land title across all three samples is 93. This small sample size may have compromised the significance of their findings. Nonetheless, differences in the perception of men and women about ownership of the land are likely to affect household bargaining power, particularly in situations where men believe they have complete ownership rights, and thus presents an important consideration for future research.

A number of the articles reviewed suggest joint titling as a means to include women in the formal ownership of household assets (Anunu, 2015; Mayoux,
Mayoux (2012) presents findings from a cooperative in Western Uganda who participated in the Gender Action Learning System (GALS), a “community-led empowerment methodology which works with both women and men to help them gain more control over their lives” (p. 322), and found a significant increase in female joint landholdings as a result of participation in GALS workshops. Similarly, Meier zu Selhausen (2016) cites joint land ownership as a determinant of women’s participation in cooperatives and a positive indicator of their likelihood to sell coffee to the cooperative. Bose (2017) presents joint titling as a means of achieving a more gender equitable distribution of land, although she highlights the difficulty of implementing titling of any kind, particularly in countries where informal land ownership is common, or, as is found to be the case by Lyon et al. (2017), where land is typically communal.

Fry (2010) highlights the importance of government as a means of promoting or discouraging women’s land ownership through the legal frameworks that enforce these rights. She finds that in Central America, where inheritance laws have typically favoured men, the legislative framework in most of these countries is actually gender neutral, but that as a result of social bias women are often overlooked and do not benefit equally to men. Twin (2013) finds that a lack of knowledge about changes to the legislation may affect women’s abilities to advocate for themselves and their rights. Even where the legal frameworks exist to enable women’s empowerment through land ownership, social and cultural practices may supersede these rights.

Land ownership rates for women in the coffee sector are extremely limited and not widely researched.

Land ownership is acknowledged in the literature as a key determinant of many factors affecting women’s empowerment and human development, and yet land ownership rates for women in the coffee sector are extremely limited and not widely researched. As discussed in Section 2, a number of the key international organisations such as the ICO and the SCAA continue to base their estimates of land holdings for women in the coffee sector on a report by the International Trade Centre (ITC) in 2009 that surveys just 25 people across 15 coffee producing countries, a sample size that is far too small to draw any statistically significant conclusions from (ITC, 2009; ICO 2018b; SCAA, 2015). Poor sampling methods such as those of the ITC (2009) emphasise the clear need for data-driven research regarding women’s land ownership in the coffee sector, and this review finds no evidence of any such data beyond the cooperative level.
5. RESULTS

5.2 Women’s land rights and empowerment

I find few studies that explore a direct link between women’s land rights and empowerment for women coffee producers, although, as outlined in the conceptual framework presented in this paper, women’s land rights are likely to facilitate processes of empowerment through decisions about production, access to resources, control over income, leadership opportunities and an individual’s own sense of self. Table 8 shows the thematic concerns presented in each of the papers and the frequency with which each is researched. I find empirical evidence that the size of a woman’s landholding will influence her ability and decision to participate in producer organisations and cooperatives thus contributing to her leadership opportunities (Meier zu Selhausen, 2016). In addition, I find some evidence that women’s land rights may result in greater household decision making power and a more equitable distribution of labour, as well as more control over household income and access to credit and resources, although this evidence is not as strong (Anunu, 2015; Nespresso, 2018; Stone, 2017; Twin, 2013). Finally, I find a tenuous link between women’s land rights and a sense of self through mostly anecdotal evidence, as this aspect of empowerment is not widely explored in the literature (Austin, 2017; Bacon, 2010; Mayoux, 2012). A summary of this evidence, including its strengths and weaknesses, is presented in each of the sub-sections below.

Production

Alkire et al. (2012) identify production within their Five Domains of Empowerment framework as referring to decision making and autonomy in household agricultural production.

Table 8: Systematic review papers by theme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHOR, YEAR</th>
<th>LAND RIGHTS</th>
<th>PRODUCTION</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>LEADERSHIP</th>
<th>SENSE OF SELF</th>
<th>EMPOWERMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anunu, 2015.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin, 2017.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon, 2010.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bose, 2017.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fry, 2010.</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyon, Mutersbaugh &amp; Worthen, 2017.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayoux, 2012.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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Source: Author
Within the framework of this study, I also refer to the division of labour within the household as a dimension of the production domain. As demonstrated in Table 8, eight of the 11 studies selected for review discuss women’s decision making about coffee production and the division of labour within the household (Anunu, 2015; Austin, 2017; Bose, 2017; Lyon et al., 2017; Mayoux, 2012; Nespresso, 2018; Stone, 2017; Twin, 2013), although the link between land ownership and these two variables is less pronounced.

The existing, albeit limited, gender disaggregated research in the coffee sector suggests that women are responsible for a disproportionate share of labour in coffee production (Anunu, 2015; Mayoux, 2012). Through anecdotal evidence gathered from just 21 interviews conducted in the Bududa District of Eastern Uganda, Austin (2017) reports that the men and women participants have vastly different perceptions of how labour is shared in the household. The author notes that half of the men she interviewed felt that they shared the work involved with coffee production equally with their wives, while all of the women interviewed expressed that they did most of the work in growing and harvesting the coffee and that their husbands only claimed responsibility for selling the coffee. Austin (2015) goes on to quote one woman respondent as saying that “the men do nothing” (p. 340). The men in the study also claimed ownership over the coffee, indicating a power imbalance in the household.

Women are cited as being responsible for as much as 70 per cent of the work involved with coffee cultivation within the samples presented by Mayoux (2012) and Bose (2017). Interestingly, Twin (2013) notes that in Peru, where as much as 58 per cent of land is jointly titled, the distribution of labour appears to be much more equal, with the respondents from this study indicating a 45-55 split between men and women respectively. This link between joint land ownership and the division of labour is speculative and yet to be empirically tested, although it may indicate the importance of land ownership for productive decision making and will need to be the basis for future work.

Through gender workshops with 117 smallholder farmers, Anunu (2015) found that both the men and women participants valued joint land ownership over women’s sole ownership of land, and...
the men and women interviewed about who had control of productive decisions differed greatly, with women perceiving men to have complete control over harvesting while the men interviewed most often reported that control over harvesting decisions were shared jointly. This mismatch in perception over household production decisions indicates inequality at the household level.

The ability to contribute to household decision making about production and a more equal division of labour in both productive and reproductive activities is an important dimension of women’s empowerment (Alkire et al., 2012). Overwhelmingly, women are solely responsible for domestic, or reproductive, tasks, which presents an opportunity cost for their involvement in production, or creates what Lyon et al. (2017) refer to as “time poverty” (p. 317). Alkire et al. (2012) include leisure time as an important component of women’s empowerment, although often women coffee farmers report little or no leisure time outside of productive and reproductive responsibilities (Anunu, 2015). Formal land ownership, which improves women’s household bargaining power, may lead to a more equal division of household and agricultural tasks as well as joint decision making about production. Each of these are important contributors to a woman’s processes of empowerment.

Resources

Alkire et al. (2012) include access to land in their resources domain, however in this paper I have analysed land separately as a determinant of the five dimensions of empowerment presented in the conceptual framework in Section 3. Thus, as discussed previously, I use the term ‘resources’ to refer to any other physical assets in the household, such as livestock and equipment, as well as intangible assets in the form of human capital, such as access to education. Education is an important aspect of a woman’s empowerment – both in and of itself, and as a means of participating in financial and product markets and advocating for and understanding one’s legal rights. Kabeer (2005) underscores the importance of choice as a fundamental component of women’s empowerment, and both physical and intangible resources can facilitate this process as the “medium through which agency is exercised” (p. 15). As such, for the purpose of this analysis, both physical and human capital are considered as resources.
Few of the studies considered for this review explore a direct relationship between women’s land rights, access to resources, and empowerment, suggesting that this domain has attracted less research in the coffee sector. The links that are presented are vague and mostly theoretical, and will therefore require future data-driven research in order to determine the importance of these resources to women’s empowerment.

Stone (2017) presents the most convincing evidence that access to resources – in her case, coffee washing stations – can contribute to women’s processes of empowerment by acting as sites of agency. The author does not explore a connection between women’s land rights and access to resources, though she does highlight the fundamental importance of women’s own participation in their empowerment and their ability to make choices about the resources that they own and control - a sentiment that is likely to be shared for all resources a woman has access to, including land.

Nespresso (2018) investigate attitudes towards technical training for women, a resource that has the ability to lead to greater efficiency in coffee production. The authors find significant gender inequality in access to technical training, reporting for their Guatemalan sample that only 36 per cent of women had been invited to participate in training, compared to 74 per cent of men. Within their Guatemalan and Ethiopian samples, the authors also found men to be receptive to women participating in training, however the men interviewed in their Indonesian sample expressed that they did not believe women should be invited to participate, with 71 per cent of men expressing their preference for attending training without their wives. Barriers to technical training based on social norms and male preference will affect women landholders by limiting their ability to produce efficiently and make their own decisions about coffee production, thus constraining their agency. On the contrary, enabling women to participate equally in technical training will improve their control over resources and empower them to make better decisions which can directly influence their incomes and economic wellbeing.

Women tend to be disadvantaged in their ownership of and access to physical resources. Anunu (2015) finds that even in situations where women have some control over household resources, such as livestock, they needed permission from their husbands before selling their by-products thus indicating that they are unable to exercise complete control over these resources. The author finds that men typically have control over tools which may constrain women’s productive
capacity. Certainly for women who own land, the ability to exercise control over physical resources involved in the production of coffee will be essential to ensure women’s empowerment in the coffee sector, as well as further productivity gains. The links between women’s land rights and control over other household resources remains the basis for future research.

**Income**

Alkire et al. (2012) consider income to contribute to a woman’s empowerment if she is able to exercise control over how it is spent, either individually or jointly. In the framework for this study, I also include access to credit in this dimension in order to be able to assess control of financial assets and liabilities as one. Coffee is a somewhat unique crop in that it is harvested only one to two times per year depending on the region, and income from coffee is generally received in the form of one lump sum payment (ITC, 2011). Thus, access to credit can be an important source of financial capital for smallholder farmers, but is often out of reach for landless women who lack the collateral (Twin, 2013). Land ownership has the ability to influence a woman’s financial position through both her income and her access to credit, and both of these dimensions are explored widely in the literature (Anunu, 2015; Austin, 2017; Lyon et al., 2017; Mayoux, 2012; Nespresso, 2018; Twin, 2013).

Mayoux (2012) found that the women in her study were constrained by their landlessness, and unable to access credit or control household income. The author finds that this constrained capital also

Dilma Ponce prepares her coffee cherries at Finca la Giuglia, Nanegal, Ecuador. Photo courtesy of Caravela Coffee.
limited the women’s ability to improve the quality of their coffee or move up the supply chain and become traders. Nespresso (2018) make no connection between landholdings and control of income, but they do highlight the fact that in each of their three samples, there are significant discrepancies between husbands and wives about who controls income in the household. For example, in their Ethiopian sample, the women interviewed most commonly responded that their husbands had sole control over household income, while the men claimed household expenditure decisions were shared jointly. Whatever the case may be, these discrepancies in perceptions about who in the household controls the income indicates that the responsibility is not shared equally.

A common finding in the literature is that men typically receive the payment for the coffee, particularly in situations where households sell their coffee through a producer organisation or cooperative (Nespresso, 2018; Twin, 2013). Men tend to deliver the coffee for sale and therefore collect the payment for two main reasons: (1) women are often less able to leave the household for extended periods of time due to domestic responsibilities (Lyon et al., 2017); and (2) men are more likely to be members of producer organisations and cooperatives as the land is often recognised in their name, either formally or informally (Twin, 2013). As discussed above, land ownership is often a precondition to cooperative membership, and in many cases this directly affects who has control of household income. Little research has been conducted outside of producer organisations and cooperatives, and as a result there is much less evidence of how income is distributed amongst household members when a sale is not made through a cooperative, although it is likely that many parallels will exist as a result of the same social norms that give preference to men as household heads. As discussed in Section 6, future research into households who are not members of producer organisations or cooperatives is necessary to gain a better insight into the position of women in the industry overall.

Women’s control of income is widely cited in the broader development literature as being a key determinant of household welfare (Johnson et al., 2016; World Bank, 2012). Within their study, Twin (2013) found that women were more likely than men to spend income on their children’s educational needs. Anunu (2015), Austin (2017) and Mayoux (2012) each cite that the money earned by many of the men in their studies does not go towards the household, but in some cases may instead go towards alcohol or other women. Thus, allowing women greater control of household expenditure and promoting gender equality in decision making may not only contribute to their processes of empowerment, but also to the overall economic development and well-being of their households.
5. RESULTS

Leadership

In their interpretation of leadership, Alkire et al. (2012) find that a woman’s ability to become a member of economic and social groups, and to become an active member who is comfortable speaking in front of these groups, contributes to her empowerment. Within the coffee sector, these groups mostly exist in the form of producer organisations or cooperatives. Meier zu Selhausen (2016) presents the strongest evidence that women’s land ownership increases their likelihood of joining a cooperative. For his sample from the Bukonzo Joint Cooperative Microfinance Society (BJC) in Western Uganda, he finds that the size of a woman’s landholding is a strong predictor of whether or not she is a member of the cooperative, with the probability of a woman joining increasing by 30 per cent for every additional acre of land held. Twin (2013) finds that land ownership is often a requirement for producer organisation or cooperative membership, although Mayoux (2012) notes that for BJC this requirement is non-existent. Meier zu Selhausen (2016) makes no distinction between the number of women within the cooperative (n=421) who own or who do not own land, nor does he make this distinction for the non-member sample group (n=210). He does, however, report that 29 per cent of the women members of the cooperative sampled have a joint land title with their husbands.

Meier zu Selhausen (2016) includes only married women in his sample. In their investigation of women’s membership and involvement in two producer associations in Oaxaca, Mexico, Lyon et al. (2017) also include single women and widows in their stratified sample, although given that 80 per cent of the land is communal, they do not make a distinction between women landholders and non-landholders. They find a significant number of widows in each of the producer associations - 29 per cent of women in one association and 15 per cent in the other - and consider the death of a spouse to be a motivator for many women’s decision to join a producer association. In addition, the authors found that almost half of the women in one association were single heads of household, and almost a third in the other. The findings presented by Lyon et al. (2017) may reflect a serious omission from Meier zu Selhausen’s (2016) study in the choice to only include married women in his sample and not single women or widows.

Although land ownership is often a requirement for producer organisation and cooperative membership and therefore women may be systematically more disadvantaged than men in their ability to join producer organisations (Mayoux, 2012; Twin, 2013), for those women who are landowners or in situations where land ownership is not a pre-requisite, producer organisation and cooperative membership has been shown to contribute positively to women’s empowerment (Lyon et al., 2017; Meier zu Selhausen, 2016), acting as what Stone (2017) describes as “sites of agency” (p. 23). Lyon et al. (2017) find that women members of two producer organisations in Mexico report high levels of household decision making and more say over household income than the men in the study. The authors do, however, note considerable differences between
women’s membership and their active participation rates, stating that women are less likely than men to actively participate in meetings or within the leadership of the groups. 18 per cent of women in one of the organisations surveyed stated that they felt uncomfortable speaking publicly in meetings, something that Alkire et al. (2012) consider to be an important component of empowerment. Lyon et al. (2017) also note that producer organisation membership can have some negative consequences for women, particularly where a large share of productive and reproductive tasks in the household are their responsibility, creating what the authors describe as “the triple burden” (p. 317). This suggests that producer organisation and cooperative membership can help women empower themselves, but that this effect will be more pronounced where household tasks are more evenly shared so as not to contribute to a woman’s time poverty.

In recent years, a trend towards female-only producer organisations and cooperatives has emerged. Twin (2013) presents an example of the first all-female producer organisations which originated in Nicaragua in 2001 and Peru in 2004, which have since then been replicated in other coffee producing nations around the world. Typically, these organisations market ‘women’s coffee’ to importers and roasters in the Global North who pay a premium for the coffee, and this premium is then reinvested into training and coffee washing and drying facilities for the members. Such groups may give women more opportunities to participate and gain access to training and knowledge than in mixed gender-settings where women may be less welcome to participate or too intimidated to share their ideas (Bacon, 2010; Lyon et al., 2017). Thus, women-only producer organisations may help facilitate women’s empowerment in coffee production even more so than mixed gender groups.

The studies examined in this systematic review show that land ownership can contribute to women’s empowerment by enabling women coffee producers to participate in and have an active leadership role within producer organisations and cooperatives. Of the studies included in the review, six
explore the role of producer organisations and cooperatives in facilitating women’s empowerment (Bacon, 2010; Lyon et al., 2017; Meier zu Selhausen, 2016; Nespresso, 2018; Stone, 2017; Twin, 2013). Importantly, these studies are confined to a small number of countries within Africa and Central America, and their findings may not reflect the experience of women in Asia or South America, or even outside of the particular regions that have been studied. Thus, further qualitative and quantitative research will be necessary to determine the relative importance of producer organisations and cooperatives to the empowerment of women in coffee, and the role that land ownership plays in this facilitation.

**Sense of self**

In the context of this study, sense of self is used to refer to a woman’s independence and self esteem, as well as a measure of her security. Given that a woman’s sense of self is difficult to quantify, I find that few of the papers included in this review explore a connection between women’s land rights and sense of self. While not investigating land rights directly, Austin (2017) finds anecdotal evidence that the women in her study experienced domestic violence when they questioned how their husbands were allocating household income. Mayoux (2012) finds similar evidence of partner violence in her sample, but goes on to demonstrate how gender equitable outcomes such as joint access to land can change household power dynamics and decrease women’s vulnerability in the household. Promoting gender equality within households can give women more confidence to exercise agency in their own lives.

Bacon (2010) demonstrates how land ownership can contribute to a sense of pride for previously landless women. For members of a women’s Fair Trade cooperative in Nicaragua, owning land was posited as the driver for the women’s newfound “capacity to manage [themselves]” (p. 61). The author found that greater economic success on the women’s part also led to changing attitudes for their husbands, positively influencing intra-household relationships, although this evidence is purely anecdotal and would need to be the basis of future empirical research before conclusions about the effect of women’s land rights on their sense of self could be drawn. Ultimately, of each of the dimensions of empowerment outlined in the framework of this study, sense of self is the least investigated in the women’s land rights in the coffee sector literature.

Jenny Mamani, daughter of Juana Mamani, helping on the family farm in Caranavi, Bolivia. Photo courtesy of Melbourne Coffee Merchants.
The key finding from this systematic review is the overwhelming need for extensive research into both the determinants of empowerment and the rates of land ownership for women coffee producers across all coffee producing regions. The existing literature highlights the significant impact that cultural and social norms have had on women’s land ownership and access rights (Anunu, 2015; Nespresso, 2018), and a further understanding of these contexts and the implications for women’s empowerment will be critical. According to Doss (2013), these data needs are broadly in line with the need for gender-disaggregated data across the wider agricultural sector. Thus, the “absence of evidence does not mean that the link does not exist” (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2017, p. 2), but rather that there is much work to be done to empirically address whether and how women’s land rights might contribute to their empowerment in the coffee sector. This section presents a discussion of the key data themes that have emerged from this systematic review along with recommendations for future research.
6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Geographical representation

This systematic review highlights the geographical mismatch between global coffee production and research patterns. Figures 3 and 4 depict this mismatch visually based on the research presented in this study. Of the 11 papers included in this systematic review, more than half concerned coffee producing countries in Africa (Anunu, 2015; Austin, 2017; Mayoux, 2012; Meier zu Selhausen, 2016; Nespresso, 2018; Stone, 2017), despite the fact that Africa accounts for just 11 per cent of global output (ICO, 2018d). Furthermore, of these six papers, four are based on research from Uganda, with two drawing their sample from the same coffee cooperative (Mayoux, 2012; Meier zu Selhausen, 2015). Research is concentrated within Africa and Mexico and Central America, despite the fact that these two regions collectively make up less than a quarter of global production (ICO, 2018d). Additionally, Brazil and Vietnam alone produce almost half of the world’s coffee, and yet neither are represented among these research papers.

Many authors have emphasised the highly contextual nature of their research, and have thus insisted that the findings in one region may not be representative of the rest of that country, let alone a different country altogether (Nespresso, 2018; Stone, 2017). In the absence of quality data for a large proportion of the world’s coffee producing nations, programs targeting women’s land rights and empowerment facilitation may be ineffective, culturally inappropriate, and costly. Future gender-disaggregated research on land rights within the coffee industry should not be confined to a handful of coffee producing countries, but should instead be more reflective of global production patterns. This will ensure adequate representation of women from a variety of contexts and continents to paint a more accurate picture of the land rights and roles of women in coffee globally.
6. DISCUSSION

A holistic understanding of the issues affecting women’s land rights and their empowerment in global value chains requires a multidisciplinary approach. The existing research within the broader women in agriculture literature stems largely from economics, sociology and anthropology, and as such a range of qualitative and quantitative methods have been employed in data collection. Behrman, Meinzen-Dick and Quisumbing (2014) note the importance of both, and advocate for a mixed-methods approach for conducting gender analysis. Rather than being inferior as some economists may be tempted to suggest, qualitative analysis can add breadth and depth to quantitative analysis through targeted questions, thus enriching the value of the quantitative data (Behrman, Meinzen-Dick, & Quisumbing, 2014). Within the field of women’s land rights, this could include questions about perceived ownership of household assets as well as legal ownership. This may provide additional insight into the gender dynamics of a household than a formal ownership title would alone, as demonstrated in the case studies by Nespresso (2018) where married men and women gave different answers when asked how the household land was owned. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods can therefore provide a better understanding of gender roles across contexts.

Within the women in coffee literature, the tendency towards qualitative research methods is evident, as shown in Tables 6 and 7. Of the studies selected for this systematic review, two were based on combined qualitative and quantitative data (Lyon et al., 2017; Mayoux, 2012); seven utilised qualitative data alone (Anunu, 2015; Austin, 2017; Bacon, 2010; Bose, 2017; Nespresso, 2018; Stone, 2017; Twin, 2013); and just one study made use of exclusively quantitative data (Meier zu Selhausen, 2016). Some reasons for this overwhelming trend towards qualitative data are examined further below.

6.2 Qualitative vs quantitative data

The relative lack of high-quality, gender-disaggregated nationally representative asset ownership data is well documented in the literature (Behrman et al., 2014; Doss, Grown, & Deere, 2008). Particularly in the case of agricultural censuses, Doss (2013) and Deere et al. (2012) note that introducing questions about the gendered division of labour and asset ownership within the household would require few trade-offs and almost no
additional cost to researchers. In the meantime, in the absence of such macro-level data, small scale qualitative studies may be more appealing for individual researchers with limited financial resources who are looking to conduct gender analyses, which may explain the overwhelming trend towards qualitative analyses in this review.

Twin (2013) and Doss (2013) also note that women’s work in the coffee sector, and more broadly in the wider agricultural sector, may be understated by the design of household survey questions. The authors find that when asked about their work, women may be inclined to list their household as their primary work, omitting their unpaid work in coffee or agricultural production. Similarly, the seasonal nature of coffee production may not be well captured by household surveys that base their analysis on the previous week’s work, as many household surveys do (Doss, 2013). Simple adjustments to survey questionnaires that allow women to include all aspects of their work, whether paid or unpaid, and that account for the seasonal nature of coffee production will result in higher quality quantitative data that gives a more accurate representation of women’s contribution to the sector.

Where gender is included in largescale household surveys or national agricultural censuses, it is typically only in the form of the gender of the household head (Doss, 2013). The tendency to collect asset ownership data at the level of the household rather than the individual leaves little room for accurate gender analysis. Male-headed households often include adult females, while adult males are less likely to live in female-headed households (Deere et al., 2012). Additionally, reporting asset ownership by the gender of the household head ignores situations where assets, particularly land, are jointly titled, thus potentially understating the landholdings of women. Deere et al. (2012) also note that in many cases, household questionnaires only allow space for a single owner of an asset to be listed, further understating the incidence of joint ownership. Where data is collected at the household level, qualitative research may provide a deeper understanding of the intra-household gender dynamics by asking questions about how assets are owned and controlled within the household.

### Recommendation 2:
- A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods is necessary to provide a greater understanding of gender roles across contexts.
- Asset ownership data should be collected at the individual level, as measures based on the household head do not provide sufficient information about women’s landholdings.
- Asset ownership data should be disaggregated by gender at the national level to allow quantitative analysis on a larger scale than what is currently possible.
6. DISCUSSION

6.3 Bias in data collection and interpretation

In addition to the challenges arising from quantitative research methods in gender analysis, qualitative analysis also presents challenges for the researcher. As Austin (2017) notes, these challenges are even more pronounced when the researcher is directly involved in the fieldwork of the study. Qualitative methods, perhaps more so than quantitative methods, are susceptible to biases from both the side of the respondent and of the researcher. A number of the biases evident from the studies selected for this systematic review are presented below.

Respondent bias

A number of the studies selected for this review are likely to have experienced some respondent bias. This is particularly evident in the study by Stone (2017) where many respondents self-selected into the study, and by definition these women are likely to experience a greater level of freedom and empowerment than those women who feel unable to participate, potentially for fear of repercussion. The author rightly identifies that this respondent bias may have influenced her results and limited the breadth of responses in her study. Similarly, Nespresso (2018) acknowledge the role of respondent bias within their samples, noting that self-selection by relatively more empowered women into the sample may understate the gender gap. Additionally, Nespresso (2018) raise the issue of right response bias, whereby respondents choose to construct their answers in such a way that satisfies the perceived objectives of the researcher rather than providing honest observations. Again, in the case of women’s land rights and empowerment, the gender gap may be understated if respondents give dishonest answers about their landholdings, whether intentionally or otherwise. Thus researchers face a greater responsibility to construct their surveys and sampling methods in such a way as to minimise the effects of self-reported respondent bias, and acknowledge the potential effects of respondent biases in the study as they arise.

Researcher bias

Researcher bias is particularly relevant in qualitative data collection where the researcher is typically directly involved in field work, and can exist in a number of forms. Certainly, it is necessary to acknowledge, as Stone (2017) does, that “though it is not possible to appreciate each and every way that my markers of identity have influenced the study, it is nevertheless vital to appreciate that, in fact, they have” (p. 66). The author identifies that her position as a foreign female coffee professional conducting research in Rwanda may have influenced her relationship with the study’s respondents and shaped their responses and her interpretation of their responses in complicated ways. Similarly, Austin (2017) identifies that as a female researcher, the respondents in her study may have been more willing to share personal information than if she was a male, although she acknowledges that her male translator may have had an effect on the responses shared. Unlike Stone,
Austin had worked in the community where she conducted her research for many years, which will likely have had both positive and negative influences on her frame of reference for the study. It can be argued that qualitative data is more susceptible than quantitative data to the researcher’s interpretation and what information they deem to be meaningful.

Recommendation 3:
- Where possible, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods should be used to allow for the triangulation of findings to minimise the effects of respondent and researcher biases.

6.4 Defining land rights

The way that land ownership is defined within a study has profound effects on its meaning to participants. Given that land rights can refer to a bundle of rights as discussed in Section 2.2, an individual may possess some land rights but not others. Deere et al. (2012) and Doss (2013) note that in many household surveys, what is meant by land ownership is not completely clear, and may overstate those with a land title or understate those without. In addition, Deere et al. (2012) highlight the fact that many household surveys allow space for one land owner’s name to be listed only, thus understating the incidence of joint land ownership.

From this review it is also evident that perceptions of land rights are equally as important as the actual land rights themselves. Nespresso (2018) demonstrate that the married men and women in their samples had different views about how land was owned in the household, with the women most often believing the land to be jointly owned while the men believed they had sole ownership of the land. A mismatch in perceptions of land rights within a household indicates that there is a lack of clarity either in how the land rights are defined in practice, or how the researcher has conceptualised land rights in their study. Each will have important implications for data collection.

Finally, Anunu (2015) notes that gaining an understanding of how land was acquired is important, as different modes of acquisition may imply different land use rights for women. As discussed in Section 2.3, women who purchase land on the market may have more control over its sale than a woman who inherits her land and faces pressure from her husband or family about how the land can be sold and used. Without an understanding of how land is acquired, women’s land ownership rates may overstate the actual control women have over their land.
6. DISCUSSION

A common theme among the selected studies was the tendency to draw samples from the members of producer organisations and cooperatives (Anunu, 2015; Lyon et al., 2017; Mayoux, 2012; Meier zu Selhausen, 2016). It is clear how such a methodology would be desirable for researchers, particularly those with little to no local networks who are tasked with gathering a large group of participants for a study. Having access to a producer organisation and their network may help to mitigate issues associated with locating and making contact with the local farmers, particularly in remote parts of the countryside where travel is difficult. Stone (2017) shares her experience as a foreign researcher in Rwanda where she was able to connect with the participants for her study through her physical presence.

6.5 Over-sampling of producer organisation and cooperative members

Recommendation 4:
- Researchers should be explicit about their definition of land rights, incorporating questions about land use, transfer, exclusion and sale rights, as well as how the land was acquired or whether or not the land is formally titled, to enable data comparison across time and space.

Juana Mamani with her family in Caranavi, Bolivia. Photo courtesy of Melbourne Coffee Merchants.
presence at the central point of contact, in this case being the cooperatively owned washing station. Sampling through a producer organisation may also prove to be more cost and time effective than attempting to connect with non-members in rural areas, particularly for foreign researchers with limited resources.

The practice of sampling producer organisations and cooperatives does, however, present some challenges. Firstly, as discussed in the previous section, women's membership in producer organisations and cooperatives is often conditional upon them having land registered in their name, and their participation in these groups has been linked to greater household decision making power and agency (Meier zu Selhausen, 2016; SCAA, 2015). It is possible that women members and non-members of producer groups have systematically different experiences of the processes of empowerment, and future research ought to examine these experiences in more detail. Secondly, if women non-members do experience lower rates of land ownership, control over resources, and household decision making than their organised counterparts, they may in fact be worse off and in greater need of targeted government assistance. These conclusions can only be drawn from data-driven research that explores both of these groups of women, irrespective of the difficulties that reaching non-members may pose.

**Recommendation 5:**
- Deliberate attempts should be made to ensure that women who are not members of producer organisations and cooperatives are appropriately sampled and represented in research.
Since the International Trade Centre conducted its initial study of women in coffee, gender inequality in the sector has been brought to the fore (ITC, 2009; Scholer, 2008). This is evidenced in recent reports released by a number of the key actors in the industry who have each named gender equality in the Coffee Global Value Chain to be a priority (ICO, 2018b; Nespresso, 2018; SCAA, 2015; Twin, 2013). Despite this, I find few studies that have actively investigated women’s empowerment in the coffee sector in the ten years since the ITC study, and even fewer attempts to quantify women’s access to land and other resources necessary for production. These data gaps represent a huge oversight by the leading organisations in the international coffee community who continue to rely on the poorly constructed and invalid statistics presented by the ITC (2009) in informing their gender policies.

In what can be identified as a step forward, the International Coffee Organisation (ICO), as the world’s peak body for the production and export of coffee, signed an MOU with the International Women’s Coffee Alliance (IWCA) in late 2018 (ICO, 2018c). This MOU acknowledges the need for gender disaggregated data and research within the sector to gain a clearer understanding of the role of women in coffee production. Despite this acknowledgement, neither the ICO nor any of the other major organisations in the global coffee community have provided funding for the IWCA’s research arm, the Research Alliance, who have tasked themselves with rigorous collection and analysis of data of the number of women involved in global coffee production and their roles within it (R. A. Church, personal communication, October 15, 2018). I argue that the lack of financial commitment from the international coffee community to the IWCA Research Alliance and similar groups to enable them to pursue gender based research will invariably place the burden of data-driven development on the most vulnerable actors within the global value chain: the ‘invisible’ women who are themselves responsible for the production of coffee and the economic security of their households.

Within this review, I have explored the role of women’s land rights as a key determinant of empowerment for women involved in coffee production. This is based on a rich literature base in the wider agricultural sector that suggests that land is the most critical factor of production in agrarian households and that land rights are also a determinant of household bargaining power, access to credit and resources, and a marker of status contributing to one’s sense of self (Deere & Leon, 2003; Hill & Vigneri, 2011;
Meinzen-Dick et al., 2017; Pena et al., 2008). I have found only a handful of studies that have investigated the determinants of women’s empowerment in the coffee sector, with even fewer of these attempting to address this topic empirically. Given that coffee producing countries are vastly varied in terms of their cultural and legal contexts, further gender disaggregated data and research is necessary to ensure that women’s voices from all over the world are able to be heard and represented so that they might be able participate in and contribute to their own development. Current estimates of the number of women involved in coffee production worldwide are still largely based on a statistically insignificant ten-year-old sample of 25 people from 15 different countries (see ICO, 2018b). We do not yet have a clear understanding of the sheer number of women involved in coffee production worldwide, let alone their land rights or their role within the value chain. In the previous section, I outlined 5 key recommendations for future research based on the quality of studies selected for this systematic review. Given that women’s empowerment is considered vital for the overall wellbeing of their households (World Bank, 2012), there is now a critical need for gender disaggregated data-driven research in the coffee sector to ensure that future development policies can provide women with the tools and resources they need to empower themselves.

Notes:
1. In 2017, the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) merged with the Specialty Coffee Association of Europe (SCAE) to form what is now known as the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA). In this review I make reference to the SCAA’s publication titled ‘A blueprint for gender equality in the coffeelands’ as it was published in 2015 prior to the merger.
2. The East African Fine Coffees Association changed its name to the African Fine Coffees Association in 2012, and as a result the URL for this report initially cited by Church (2018) is no longer valid. I obtained a copy of the report by contacting Church directly.
3. Nespresso (2018) note that their publication is an extract from a “full report, which is available upon request” however my request to Nespresso for the full report went unanswered. Thus, any reference to a report by Nespresso within this publication refers only to their publicly available summary report.
4. The number of papers presented in this pie chart (n=15) exceeds the number selected for review (n=11) as some of the papers present research on countries from more than one region.

Maria Rosa Oidor, owner of Los Nogales, Inzá, Cauca, Colombia. Photo courtesy of Melbourne Coffee Merchants.
REFERENCES


REFERENCES


