

Review of: "A Review of Informal Employment Research"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

1. Global appreciation

This study presents a valuable synthesis of the existing literature on informal employment, with a particular emphasis on the informal employment of women in rural areas. It comprehensively reviews essential definitions, the role and impact of informal employment, governance aspects, and specific nuances pertaining to rural areas and women. This paper is methodically structured and offers a thorough overview of this research domain.

The strength of this study lies in its extensive literature review, which methodically examines the various facets of informal employment. It covers fundamental definitions, roles, impacts, and governance mechanisms, and delves into rural and gender-specific dimensions. Notably, this study pays special attention to the underexplored areas of informal employment among rural women. Its structure is logical and coherent, effectively transitioning from a theoretical underpinning to a practical example. The integration of theoretical frameworks and real-world instances throughout the manuscript was particularly effective.

1. Areas for improvement:

1. Methodology in the introduction

Lack of Clear Hypotheses or Research Questions: The introduction outlines the scope of the paper and its objectives, but does not clearly state specific hypotheses or research questions. This lack of clarity might have affected the direction and focus of this study.

Broad and General Statements: The introduction makes broad statements about informal employment globally without specific references to back them up. While it cites some statistics, there is a lack of detailed analysis or context for these figures, which could lead to overgeneralization.

Limited Theoretical Framework: The introduction briefly mentions the paper's aim to synthesize the existing literature, but there is no clear indication of a theoretical framework or model guiding this synthesis. A theoretical framework is crucial for contextualizing research within a larger body of knowledge.

Potential Bias in Scope: The introduction focuses on urban workers in informal employment, with less attention given to rural areas and female informal workers. This could introduce bias in the research scope, potentially overlooking the critical aspects of informal employment.

Insufficient Justification for the Study: While the introduction states the importance of informal employment and its role, it does not provide a compelling rationale for why this particular study is necessary or how it fills gaps in the existing research.

Lack of Methodological Overview: The introduction does not provide an overview of the methodologies used in this study. Including a brief methodological overview can help set the stage for research approach and analysis.

Absence of Literature Contextualization: Although this paper aims to synthesize the existing literature, the introduction does not adequately situate its research within the existing body of work on informal employment. This contextualization is crucial for understanding the contribution of the paper to the field.

1. Data sources

Please share details on where the statistics are from and the years they represent whenever possible. Tracking the origins and recency of the data will help me better understand and contextualize trends. “. In Africa, the percentage of employees engaged in informal work is 85.8 percent; in the Asia-Pacific region, it's 68.2 percent; in Arab countries, 68.6 percent; in the Americas, 40.0 percent; and 25.1% in Europe and Central Asia. Ninety-three percent of global informal employment originates from emerging and developing countries. Scholars have also estimated the size of an informal economy.” The lack of citations in the introduction calls into question the academic rigor of the document and can affect the credibility of the entire research.

1. The section "2. Informal Sector, Informal Economy, and Informal Employment" in the paper presents several issues regarding explanation, definition, and currency of information:

Explanation Issues:

Text transitions from historical perspectives to contemporary views without clear differentiation might confuse readers about the evolution of these concepts.

The discussion of the transformation of market economies and its impact on the informal sector is briefly mentioned without a detailed explanation, leaving the reader without a full understanding of this significant shift.

Definition Issues:

The definitions provided for the informal sector and informal employment, though referenced, are brief. More detailed definitions and explanations could help better understand these complex concepts. The paper mentions various theoretical perspectives (such as Lewis's dual economic theory and Todaro's “springboard” effect) but does not provide sufficient explanation or context for these theories, making it difficult for readers unfamiliar with these concepts to understand their relevance.

1. In summary, this is a useful review of the literature highlighting an important topic. By refining some methodological and analytical aspects, this work could provide a solid basis for future research on rural women's informal employment.

