

DOES MANAGEMENT MATTER? EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

Nicholas Bloom^a, Benn Eifert^b, Aprajit Mahajan^c,

David McKenzie^d and John Roberts^e

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Abstract:

A long standing question in social science is whether management matters. To investigate this we run a field experiment on 28 plants in large Indian textile firms to evaluate the causal impact of modernizing management practices. We do this by providing free management consulting to a set of randomly chosen treatment plants, and compare their performance to a set of control plants. We find that improving management practices had three main effects. First, it led to significantly higher efficiency and quality, and lower inventory levels. These changes increased productivity by 10.5% and profitability by 16.8% on average. Second, it increased the decentralization of decision making, as better production monitoring enabled the owners to delegate more decisions to their plant managers. Third, it increased the use of computers, necessitated by the extensive data collection, analysis and dissemination involved in modern management. Since these management practices were profitable, and firms were able to transfer them from their treatment plants to their other plants, this raises the question of why they had not adopted these practices before? Our results suggest that informational barriers were initially a primary factor in explaining this lack of adoption. Modern management practices are a type of technology that diffuse slowly between firms, with many Indian firms simply unaware of their impact or existence. A secondary factor constraining management appears to be the ability and behavior of the family firm CEOs.

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^a Stanford, SCID, CEP and NBER; ^b Berkeley; ^c Stanford and SCID;

^d The World Bank, IZA and BREAD; ^e Stanford

I. INTRODUCTION

Economists have long puzzled over why there are such astounding differences in productivity between firms and across countries. For example, US plants in very homogeneous industries like cement, block-ice, white-pan bread and oak flooring display 100% productivity spreads between the 10th and 90th percentile (Syversson 2004, Foster, Haltiwanger and Syverson, 2008). At the country level, Hall and Jones (1999) and Jones and Romer (2009) show how the stark differences in productivity across countries account for a substantial fraction of the differences in per capita income. Understanding the source of these differences is clearly a central issue for economics, as well as many other disciplines in social science.

A natural explanation for these productivity differences lies in variations in management practices. Indeed, the idea that “managerial technology” determines the productivity of inputs goes back at least to Walker (1887), and is central to the Lucas (1978) model of firm size.¹ Yet while management has long been emphasized by the media, business schools and policymakers, models of growth and productivity by economists have typically ignored management, reflecting skepticism in the economics profession about its importance.

One reason for this skepticism is the inherent fuzziness of the concept, making it hard to measure and quantify management.² Yet recent work has moved beyond the emphasis on the “soft skill” attributes of good managers or leaders such as charisma, ingenuity and the ability to inspire – which can be difficult to measure, let alone change – towards a focus on specific management practices which can be measured, taught in business schools or by consultants, adopted by firms and transferred to other managers. Examples of such practices include key principles of Toyota’s “lean manufacturing,” the implementation of systems for regular maintenance and repair of machines, continual analysis and refinement of quality control procedures, inventory management and planning, and human resource practices such as performance-based incentives. Ichniowski, Prennushi and Shaw (1998), and Bloom and Van Reenen (2007) measure many of these management practices and find large variations across establishments, and a strong association between better management practices and higher productivity.³

But another reason for economists’ skepticism is the possibility that the differences in practices and productivity are not causally linked but are both simply a reflection of different market conditions. For example, firms in developing countries may not be adopting quality

¹ Francis Walker’s 1887 paper entitled “*On the sources of business profits*” discussed the extent to which variations in management across firms were responsible for their differences in profitability. Walker was an important character in the early years of the economics discipline as the founding president of the American Economics Association, the second president of MIT, and the Director of the 1870 Economic Census.

² Lucas (1978, p. 511) notes that in his model “it does not say anything about the tasks performed by managers, other than whatever managers do, some do it better than others”.

³ In related work, Bertrand and Schoar (2003) use a manager-firm matched panel and find that manager fixed effects matter for a range of corporate decisions. They do not explicitly measure the management practices carried out by these managers, but do identify differences in the patterns of managerial decision-making which they call “styles” of management. Lazear and Oyer (2009) provide an extensive survey of the literature.

control systems because wages are so low that repairing defects is cheap. Without evidence on the causal impact of management practices on performance it is impossible to quantify the impact of management practices on performance, or even say if “bad management” exists at all.

This paper seeks to provide the first experimental estimates of the importance of management practices in large firms. We use a randomized consulting design and collect unique time-series data on management practices and plant performance. The field experiment takes a group of large multi-plant Indian textile firms and randomly allocates their plants to management treatment and control groups. Treatment plants received five months of extensive management consulting from a large international consulting firm, which diagnosed areas for improvement in core management practices in the first month, followed by four months of intensive support in implementation of these recommendations. The control plants received only the one month of diagnostic consulting, provided only in order to collect performance data from them.

The treatment intervention introduced modern management practices for factory operations, inventory control, quality control, human resources, planning and sales and order management. We found this management intervention led to significant improvements in quality, lower inventory levels and higher production efficiency. We estimate the interventions to have increased productivity by about 10.5% and profitability by \$320,000 per year (about 16.8%). Longer run impacts of good management on productivity and profitability could be much larger, because our numbers focus only on short-run changes in a very narrow set of management practices. For example, plants do not change their production manning levels, investment schedules or product mix within the experimental time frame. Firms also spread these management improvements from their treatment plants to other plants within the same company, providing additional revealed preference evidence on their beneficial impact.

The improvements were substantial because, like the majority of firms in developing countries, our sample of plants had very poor management practices prior to the consulting intervention. Most of them had not adopted basic procedures for efficiency, inventory or quality control that have been commonly used for several decades in comparable European, US and Japanese firms. Since these practices do not typically require any capital expenditure, and they were successfully introduced and institutionalized during the intervention period (albeit with the help of the consulting firm), this raises the question of why these profitable management practices had not been previously adopted.

Our evidence suggests that one important factor is informational constraints – our Indian firms were simply not aware of many modern management practices that are common in Western and Japanese firms. Management practices evolve over time, with innovations like the American System of Manufacturing, Taylor's Scientific Management, Ford's mass production, Sloan's M-form corporation, Demming's quality movement, and Toyota's “lean production”. These management technologies spread slowly across firms and countries – for example, the US automotive industry took two decades to adopt Japanese lean manufacturing. We find our Indian firms are far from the management technological frontier and have little

exposure to the modern management practices that are now standard in the US, Japan and Europe.

Another important factor was the family firm directors' prior beliefs, procrastination and time constraints that impeded the adoption of better management practices. All our firms were family owned and managed, so that there was a wide distribution of managerial talent across the firms. In many cases, directors were aware of various of the practices that were recommended but had incorrectly believed they would not be profitable. In several cases during the intervention, directors repeatedly claimed they intended to introduce profitable management practices but they had not managed to make the changes. One possible explanation is that directors were too busy to make these changes. But in several cases these changes simply needed a quick decision, like whether to buy blackboards to display performance metrics on the factory floor. This inability to decide on this was suggestive that procrastination also played some role. In other cases, different directors from the same family disagreed whether improving management practices would pay off, with domestic squabbles occasionally leading to paralysis in decision making.

A related question is why product market competition did not drive these badly managed firms out of business. One reason is the reallocation of market share to well managed firms is restricted by span of control constraints on firm growth. In every firm in our sample only members of the owning family are in senior managerial positions. Non-family members are given junior managerial positions whose power is limited to making relatively minor decisions with minimal financial impact. The reason is that family members are worried about non-family members stealing from the firm. For example, they worry if they let their plant managers run yarn procurement they might buy yarn at inflated rates from friends and receive kick-backs. And since the rule of law is weak in India legal sanctions are not as much of a deterrent against theft as they are in developed countries.

As a result of this inability to decentralize, every factory requires a trusted family member to manage it. This means firms can only expand if male family members are available to take up plant manager positions. Thus, by far the best predictor of the size of the firms in our sample was the number of male family members. All the biggest multi-plant firms had multiple brothers, while the best managed firm had only one plant because the founder had no brothers or sons. Hence, well managed firms do not generally grow large and drive unproductive firms out from the market. This helps to explain the lack of reallocation in China and India (Hsieh and Klenow, 2009a) and the centralization of control in firms in developing countries (Bloom, Sadun and Van Reenen, 2009). Furthermore, entry is also limited by the significant financing costs for starting a textile firm (our firms have an average of \$13m of assets). So badly run firms are not rapidly driven out of the market.⁴

⁴ Another related question is given the large profits from improving management practices why don't consulting firms generate more business? One obvious constraint is firms are approached all the time by companies offering cost saving products – from cheap telephone lines to better weaving machines – so simply contacting firms to tell them about the huge profits from consulting will not be effective. Of course the consultants could offer their services in return for profit sharing with the firms. But profit sharing is hard to enforce ex post as the firms can hide their profit numbers from the consultants, as they do frequently from the tax authorities. As a result in India – as in the rest of the world – consulting is almost never offered on a profit-sharing basis.

We also find two other results of the impact of better management practices in leading to greater decentralization and computerization of production management. First, turning to decentralization, the adoption of the improved management practices led the firms' owners to allow plant managers greater autonomy over hiring, investment and pay decisions. It appears that this happened partly because the improved collection and dissemination of information enabled owners to monitor their plant managers better, reducing the risk of managerial theft, and partly because the modern management practices improve the ability of plant managers to run their factories, allowing the owners to relax their direct control.

Second, turning to computerization, the extensive data collection, processing and display requirements of modern management practices led to a rapid increase in computer use. For example, installing production quality control systems requires firms to record each individual quality defect, and then to analyze these by shift, loom, weaver and design. This suggests that modern management practices is a type of skill-biased technical change (SBTC) since increased computerization places a greater premium on employees' numeracy and computer literacy. A large literature has highlighted SBTC as a key factor increasing income inequality since the 1970s, with this providing experimental evidence on modern management practices as one possible mechanism.⁵

This paper relates to several strands of literature. First, there is the extensive productivity literature which reports large spreads in total-factor productivity (TFP) across plants and firms in dozens of developed countries. From the outset this literature has attributed much of this spread to differences to management practices (Mundlak, 1961), but problems in measurement and identification has made this hard to confirm (Syverson, 2010). This dispersion in productivity appears even larger in developing countries (Banerjee and Duflo, 2005, and Hsieh and Klenow, 2009a). Despite this, there are still very few experiments on productivity in firms (McKenzie, 2009), and none involving the sort of large multi-plant firms studied here.

Second, our paper builds on the literature on the management practices of firms. This has a long debate between the "best-practice" view that some management practices are universally good and all firms would benefit from adopting these (Taylor, 1911) and the "contingency view" that every firm is already adopting optimal practices but these are different from firm to firm (Woodward, 1958). The empirical literature trying to distinguish between these views has traditionally been case-study based, making it hard to distinguish between the different explanations and resulting in little consensus in the empirical management literature.⁶

Third, it links to the large theoretical literature on the organization of firms. Papers generally emphasize optimal decentralization either as a way to minimize information processing costs or as a way to trade off incentives and information within a principal-agent model.⁷ But the empirical evidence on this is limited, focusing on natural experiments like the adoption of on-

⁵ See, for example, the surveys in Acemoglu 2002 and Autor, Katz and Kearney 2007.

⁶ See Gibbons and Roberts (2009) and Bloom, Sadun and Van Reenen (2010) for surveys of this literature.

⁷ See, for example, Bolton and Dewatripont (1994) and Garicano (2000) for examples of information processing models and Aghion and Tirole (1997), Baker, Gibbons and Murphy (1999), Rajan and Zingales (2001), Hart and Moore (2005), Acemoglu et al. (2007) and Alonso et al. (2008) for examples of principal-agent models. Recent reviews of this literature are contained in Mookherjee (2006) and Gibbons and Roberts (2010).

board computers in trucking (Baker and Hubbard, 2003 and 2004) or de-layering in large Compustat firms (Rajan and Wulf, 2006, Guadalupe and Wulf, 2010). In this paper we have the first experimental evidence on decentralization in large multi-plant firms.

Fourth, it links the rapidly growing literature on Information Technology (IT) and productivity. A growing body of work has emphasized the relationship between technology and productivity, emphasizing both the direct productivity impact of IT and also its complementarity with modern management and organizational practices (i.e. Bresnahan et al. 2002, Brynjolfsson and Hitt, 2003, and Bartel, Ichniowski and Shaw, 2007). But again the evidence on has focused on panel IT and organizational survey data, with no prior experimental data. Our experimental evidence suggests one route for the impact of computers on productivity is via facilitating better management practices, and this occurs simultaneously with the decentralization of production decisions.

Finally, recently a number of other field experiments in developing countries (for example Karlan and Valdivia, 2010, Bruhn et al. 2010 and Drexler et al. 2010) have begun to estimate the impact of business training in microenterprises. This work focuses on training the owners in tasks such as separating business and personal finances, basic accounting, marketing and pricing. It generally finds significant effects of these business skills on performance, supporting our results on management practices in larger firms with evidence on managerial training in smaller firms.

II. MANAGEMENT IN THE INDIAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

II.A. Why work with firms in the Indian textile industry?

Despite rapid growth over the past decade, India's one billion people still have a per-capita GDP (in PPP terms) of only one-seventeenth of the United States. Labor productivity is only 15 percent of that in the U.S. (McKinsey Global Institute, 2001). While average levels of productivity are low, most notable is the large variation in productivity, with a few highly productive firms and a lot of low-productivity firms (Hsieh and Klenow, 2009a).

Like those in other developing countries for which data is available, Indian firms are typically poorly managed. Evidence from this is seen in Figure 1, which plots results from the Bloom and Van Reenen (2007, 2010a) double-blind telephone surveys of manufacturing firms in the US and India. The Bloom and Van Reenen (BVR) methodology scores establishments from 1 (worst practices) to 5 (best practices) on specific management practices related to monitoring, targets and incentives. This yields a basic measure of the use of modern management practices that is strongly correlated with a wide range of firm performance measures like productivity, profitability and growth. The top panel of Figure 1 plots the histogram of these BVR management practice scores for a sample of 751 randomly chosen medium-sized (100 to 5000 employee) US manufacturing firms and the second panel for Indian ones. The results reveal a thick tail of badly run Indian firms, leading to a much lower average management score (2.69 for India versus 3.33 for US firms). Indian firms tend to not collect and analyze data systematically in their factories, they tend to use less effective target-setting and

monitoring and to employ ineffective promotion and reward systems. Bloom and Van Reenen (2010a) show that scores for other developing countries are very similar to those for India, with Brazil and China shown as examples in the third panel with a score of 2.67. In the fourth panel we show the management scores for the Indian textile industry, which looks similar to the whole manufacturing sector. Finally, in the bottom panel we show the management scores for our experimental firms, which have similar management scores to the whole population of firms in developing countries.

India thus appears broadly representative of large developing countries in terms of the prevalence of poor management practices and low levels of productivity. If we are interested in conducting an experiment to improve management, it makes sense to work in a country that is important in of its own right, as well as one which contains firms that are broadly representative of firms globally with low initial levels of management quality. India fits the bill.

In order to implement a common set of management practices across firms and measure a common set of outcomes, it is necessary to focus on a specific industry. We chose textile production, since it is the largest manufacturing industry in India, accounting for 22% of manufacturing employment (around 30 million jobs). The bottom panel of Figure 1 shows the BVR management practice scores for textile firms in India, which are similar to those for all Indian manufacturing, with an average score of 2.60.

Within textiles, our experiment was carried out on 28 plants operated by 17 firms in the woven cotton fabric industry. These plants weave cotton yarn into cotton fabric for suits, shirting and home furnishing. They are vertically disintegrated, which means they purchase yarn from upstream spinning firms and send their fabric to downstream dyeing and processing firms. As shown in Figure 1 these 17 textile firms involved in the field experiment had an average BVR management score of 2.60, very similar to the rest of Indian manufacturing. Hence, our sample of 17 Indian firms appear broadly similar in terms of management practices to other manufacturing firms in developing countries.⁸

II.B. The selection of firms for the field experiment

The firms we selected operate around Mumbai, which we targeted as a centre of the Indian textile industry (US SIC code 22). The firms were chosen from the population of all public and privately owned textile firms around Mumbai, kindly provided to us by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), supplemented with member lists from the Confederation of Indian Industry and the Federation of All India Textile Manufacturers Association. We kept firms with between 100 to 1000 employees, to yield a sample of 529 firms.⁹ We chose 100 employees as the lower threshold because by this size firms require systematic management practices to operate efficiently. We chose 1000 employees as the upper bound to avoid

⁸ Interestingly, prior work on the Indian textile industry suggested its management practices were also inferior to those in Europe in the early 1900s (Clark, 1987).

⁹ The MCA list comes from the Registrar of Business, with whom all public and private firms are required to register on an annual basis. Of course many firms do not register in India, but this is generally a problem with smaller firms, not with 100+ employee manufacturing firms which are too large and permanent to avoid Government detection. The MCA list also provided some basic employment and balance sheet data.

working with conglomerates and multinationals, which would be too large and complex for our intervention to have much impact in the field experiment time-period. Within this group we further focused on firms in the cotton weaving industry (US SIC code 2211) because it was the largest single 4-digit SIC group within textiles. Geographically we focused on firms in the towns of Tarapur and Umbergaon because these provide the largest concentrations of textile firms in the area, and concentrating on two nearby towns substantially reduced travel time for the consultants we employed to help the firms. This yielded a sample of 66 potential subject firms with the appropriate size, industry and location for the field experiment.

All of these 66 firms were then contacted by telephone by Accenture, our partnering international consulting firm. Accenture offered free consulting, funded by Stanford University and the World Bank as part of a management research project. We paid for the consulting to be provided at no charge to the subject firms to ensure we controlled the intervention. We felt if firms co-paid for the consulting they might have tried to direct the consulting (for example asking for help on marketing or finance), generating a heterogeneous intervention. Moreover, if lack of information about the potential benefits of better management were a factor in inhibiting firms adopting better management practices, we might expect that poorly managed firms might not see *ex ante* the benefit of such services and so would not be as likely to participate if asked to pay.¹⁰ However, the trade-off may be that firms who had little to benefit from such an intervention or did not really intend to pursue it seriously might have chosen to take it up when offered for free. We balanced this risk by requiring firms to commit one day per week of senior management time to working with the consultants. This time was required from the top level of the firm in order for changes to be implemented at the operational level. It also was intended to ensure buy-in for the project.

Of this group of firms, 34 expressed an interest in the project, and were given a follow-up visit and sent a personally signed letter from the US. Of the 34 firms, 17 agreed to commit to senior management time for the free consulting program.¹¹ We compared these program firms with the 49 non-program firms and found no significant differences in observables.¹²

The study firms have typically been in operation for 20 years and are family-owned, with some into their second or third generation of family management. They all produce fabric for the domestic market, with many firms also exporting, primarily to the Middle East. Although the intervention took place against the backdrop of the recent global financial crisis, the participating firms do not appear to have been much affected by the crisis. If anything, demand for low grade fabric of the type produced by these plants may have increased somewhat as customers in urban markets traded down, while the textile market in rural India, to which this product was usually directed, was largely untouched.

¹⁰ This may be analogous to Karlan and Valdivia (2009)'s finding that micro-entrepreneurs who expressed less interest in the beginning in business training were the ones who benefited most from it.

¹¹ The two main reasons for refusing free consulting given on the telephone and during the visits was that the firms did not believe they needed management assistance or that it required too much time from their senior management (1 day a week). But it is also possible the real reason is these firms were suspicious of this offer, given many firms in India have tax and regulatory irregularities.

¹² For example, the program firms had slightly less assets (\$12.8m) compared to the non-program firms (\$13.9m), but this difference was not statistically significant (p-value 0.841). We also compared the two groups of firms on management practices, measured using the BVR scores, and found they were almost identical (difference of 0.031, with a p-value of 0.859).

Table 1 reports some summary statistics for the textile manufacturing parts of these firms (many of the firms have other parts of the business in textile processing, retail and real estate). On average these firms had about 270 employees, current assets of \$13 million and sales of \$7.5m a year. Compared to US manufacturing firms these firms would be in the top 2% by employment and the top 5% by sales¹³, and compared to India manufacturing in the top 1% by both employment and sales (Hsieh and Klenow, 2009b). Hence, by this criterion, as well as by most formal definitions¹⁴, these are large manufacturing firms.

These firms are also complex organizations, with a median of 2 textile plants per firm and 4 hierarchical levels from the shop-floor to the managing director. These levels typically comprise the worker, foreman, plant manager and managing director. In all the firms, the managing director is the single-largest shareholder, reflecting the lack of separation of ownership and control in Indian firms. All other directors are family members, with no firm having any non-family senior management. One of the firms is publicly quoted on the Mumbai Stock Exchange, although more than 50% of the equity is still held by the managing director and his father.

In exhibits (1) to (7) we include a set of photographs of the plants. These are included to provide some background information to readers on their size, production process and initial state of management. As is clear these are large establishments (Exhibit 1), with multiple several story buildings per site, and typically several production sites per firm, plus a head office in Mumbai. They operate a continuous production process that runs constantly (Exhibit 2). Their factories' floors were (initially) often rather disorganized (Exhibits 3 and 4), and their yarn and spare-parts inventory stores lacking any formalized storage systems (Exhibits 5 and 6). Instances of clearly inefficient operational practices were easy to come across, such as using manual labor to transport heavy warp-beams because relatively cheap machinery had broken down and not been repaired (Exhibit 7).

III. THE MANAGEMENT INTERVENTION

III.A. Why use management consulting as an intervention

The field experiment aimed to improve the management practices of a set of randomly selected treatment plants and compare the performance of these to a set of control plants whose management has not changed (or changed by less). To do this we needed an intervention that improved management practices on a plant-by-plant basis. To achieve this

¹³ Dunn & Bradstreet (August 2009) lists 778,000 manufacturing firms in the US with only 17,300 of these (2.2%) with 270 or more employees and only 28,900 (3.7%) with \$7.5m or more sales.

¹⁴ Most European countries and international agencies define large firms as those with more than 250+ employees, the US as having 500+ employees, and India as having Rs 5 crore (\$1.25 USD+) of revenue.

we hired a management consultancy firm to work with our treatment plants to improve their management practices.

We selected the consulting firm using an open tender. The winner was Accenture consulting, a large international management consulting and outsourcing firm. It is headquartered in the U.S. with about 180,000 employees globally, including 40,000 in India. The senior partners of the firm who were engaged in the project were based in the US, but the full-time consulting team of up to 6 consultants (including the managing consultant) all came from the Mumbai office. These consultants were all educated at top Indian business and engineering schools, and most of them had prior experience working with US and European multinationals. Selecting a high profile international consulting firm substantially increased the cost of the project. But it meant that our experimental firms were more prepared to trust the consultants and accept their advice, which was important for getting a representative sample group. It also offered the largest potential to improve the management practices of the firms in our study, which was needed to understand whether management matters. The project ran from August 2008 until August 2010, and the total cost of this was \$US1.3 million, or approximately \$75k per treatment plant and \$20k per control plant.¹⁵ Note this is very different from what the firms themselves would pay for this themselves, which would be probably at least \$500k. The reason for our much cheaper costs per plant is: (i) Accenture charged us pro-bono rates (50% of commercial rates) due to our research status, (ii) our partners' time (who were US based) and some of the initial Indian consulting time was provided for free, and (iii) there are large economics of scale in working across multiple plants.

While the intervention offered was high-quality management consulting services, the purpose of our study was to use the improvements in management generated by this intervention to understand how much management matters. It was not to evaluate the effectiveness of the international consulting firm. Our treatment effect is the impact on the average firm that would take-up consulting services when offered for free, which is unlikely to be the same as the effect for the average or even the marginal client for the consulting firm. The firms receiving the consulting services might change behavior more if they were voluntarily paying for these services, and the consulting company might have different incentives to exert effort when undertaking work for a research project like this compared to when working directly for paying clients. Based on our intensive interaction with the consulting company, including bi-weekly meetings throughout the project, and discussions with the clients, we do not believe the latter to be an important concern, but nevertheless acknowledge that any attempt to extrapolate the findings of this study to discuss the effectiveness of international management consultants faces these issues. In contrast, neither of these issues is an important concern for the central purpose of this experiment: to determine whether and how much management practices matter for firm performance.

¹⁵ These rates may seem high for India, but Accenture's India rates are about one third of their US rates. At the bottom of the consulting quality distribution in India consultants are extremely cheap, but of course their quality is extremely poor, with these consultants typically having no better knowledge of management practices than our textile firms. At the top end, rates are much more comparable to those in the US and Europe. This is because the consultants these firms employ are often US or European educated and have access to international labor markets. In fact 2 of our team of 6 Indian consultants had previously worked in the US for large multinationals, and had chosen to return to India for family reasons.

III.B. The management consulting intervention

Textile weaving is a four stage process (see Exhibit 2). In the first stage individual threads of yarn are aligned in a pattern corresponding to the fabric design and wound repeatedly around a “warp beam”. The warp beam fits across the bottom of a weaving machine and carries the threads that will run vertically. In the second and third stages the warp beam is attached to a drawing stand and then a weaving loom, and the horizontal cross threads woven in. This cross thread is called the weft weave (as opposed to the vertical warp weave). Finally, the fabric is checked for quality defects, and defects repaired wherever possible.

A typical factory comprises several buildings in one gated compound (see Exhibit 1), operating 24 hours a day in two 12 hours shifts, working 365 days a year. One building houses the production facilities, typically comprising 2 warping looms occupying one floor and about 5% of the manpower, about 60 weaving looms occupying another floor and 60% of the manpower, and a large checking and repair section occupying about 20% of the manpower and a third floor. The remaining 15% of the manpower works in the raw materials and finished goods stores, which occupy an adjacent building, and in back-office processing, which is typically located in a third building. The combined size of these buildings and staffs (typically about 50,000 square feet and 130 employees) is similar to that of a U.S. Wal-Mart or Home Depot retail store. The average firm in our experiment has two plants like this, plus an office in downtown Mumbai (which is about 4 hours drive away) which deals with finance, administration, sales and marketing. Thus, these organizations are so large that no one person can physically observe the entire production process, so that formal management systems to collect, aggregate and process information are essential.

The intervention aimed to improve the management practices of these plants. Based on their prior experience in the textile industry and in manufacturing more generally, the consultants identified a set of 38 key management practices on which to focus. These 38 practices encompass a range of basic manufacturing principles that are standard in almost all US, European and Japanese firms and that the consulting firm believed would be of benefit to the textile firms and would be feasible to introduce during the intervention period. These 38 practices are listed individually in Table 2, alongside their frequency of adoption prior to the management intervention in the 28 plants owned by the firms and the frequency of adoption before and after the intervention in the treatment and control plants. The baseline adoption rates show a wide dispersion of practices – from 96% of plants who recorded quality defects to 0% of plants initially using scientific methods to define inventory norms¹⁶ – with an overall adoption rate of 26.9%. These practices are categorized into 6 broad areas:

- Factory Operations (to increase output): Plants were encouraged to undertake regular maintenance of machines, rather than repairing machines only when they broke. When machine downtime did occur, plants were encouraged to record and evaluate this, so they could learn from past failures to reduce future downtime. They were also encouraged to keep the factory floor tidy and organized, both to reduce accidents and

¹⁶ This involves calculating the cost of carrying inventory (interest payments and storage costs) and the benefits of carrying inventory (larger order sizes and lower probability of stock-outs) and using this to define an optimal inventory level. The use of inventory norms is almost universal in US, European and Japanese firms of this size.

to facilitate the movement of materials and goods. Daily posting of performance of individual machines and weavers was suggested to allow management to assess individual and machine performance. Finally, plants were encouraged to organize the machine spare parts, so these could be located in the event of a machine breakdown, and develop scientific methods to define inventory norms for spare parts.

- Quality control (to increase quality and reduce rework hours): Plants were encouraged to record quality defects by major types at every stage of the production process on a daily basis. They were encouraged to analyze these records daily to address quality problems rapidly, so that the same defect would not repeatedly occur. Standard operating procedures were established to ensure consistency of operations.
- Inventory (to reduce inventory levels): Plants were encouraged to record yarn stocks, ideally on a daily basis, with optimal inventory levels defined and stock monitored against this. Yarn should be sorted, labeled and stored in the warehouse by type and color, and this information logged onto a computer, so yarn can be located when required for production. Yarn that has not been used for 6+ months should be utilized in new designs or sold before it deteriorates.
- Planning (to increase output and to improve due-date performance): Plants were encourage to plan loom usage two weeks in advance to ensure prepared warp beams are available for looms as needed. This helps to prevent weaving machines lying idle. The sales teams (based in Mumbai) should meet twice a month with the production teams to ensure delivery schedules are matched against the factory's production capacity.
- Human-resource management (to increase output): Plants were encouraged to introduce a performance-based incentive system for workers and managers. The recommended system comprised both monetary and non-monetary incentives (e.g. a radio for the most productive weaver each month). Incentives were also linked to attendance to reduce absenteeism. Job descriptions were defined for all workers and managers to improve clarity on roles and responsibilities.
- Sales and order management (to increase output and to improve due-date performance): Plants were encouraged to track production on an order-wise basis to prioritize customer orders with the closest delivery deadline. Design-wise and margin-wise efficiency analysis was suggested so that design-wise pricing could be based on production costs (rather than flat-rate pricing so that some designs sold below cost).

These 38 management practices in Table 2 form a set of precisely defined binary indicators that we can use to measure improvements in management practices as a result of the consulting intervention.¹⁷ We recorded these indicators on an on-going basis throughout the

¹⁷ We prefer these indicators to the BVR management practice score for our work here, since they are all objective binary indicators of specific practices, which are directly linked to the intervention. In contrast, the BVR indicator measures practices at a more general level, with each measured on a 5-point ordinal scale.

study. The indicators allow for differences in the extent to which a particular system is put in place. For example, in factory operations, a basic practice is to record machine downtime. A second practice is actually to monitor these records of downtime daily, while a third practice is to analyze this downtime and create and implement action plans on a regular (fortnightly) basis in order to act on this information. A general pattern at baseline was that in many cases plants recorded information (often in paper sheets), but had no systems in place to monitor these records or use them to make decisions. Thus, while 93 percent of the treatment plants recorded quality defects before the intervention, only 29 percent monitored them on a daily basis or by the particular sort of defect, and none of them had an analysis and action plan based on this defect data – that is, a system to address repeated quality failures.

Indeed we found that while plants usually had historic data of some form on production and quality, it was typically not in a form that was convenient for either them or us to access. The majority of plants had electronic resource planning (ERP) computer systems which they used to record basic factory operation metrics (such as machine efficiency, defined as the share of time a machine is running) on a daily basis. These computer systems were designed by local vendors and could be used to generate very simple reports. These, however, were looked at only on an irregular, ad hoc basis. Quality records were worse. Plants typically had handwritten logs of defects, to which they referred only when customers complained. And most plants also did not frequently monitor inventory levels, typically running stock takes a few times a year. All this meant that the plants lacked the data needed to measure performance effectively prior to the intervention.

The consulting treatment had three stages. The first stage took one month, and was called the *diagnostic* phase, which was given to all on-site plants (treatment and control). This involved evaluating the current management practices of each plant and constructing a performance database. The construction of this database involved setting up processes for measuring a range of plant-level metrics – such as output, efficiency, quality, inventory and energy use – on an ongoing basis, plus constructing a historical database from plant records. For example, to facilitate quality monitoring on a daily basis, a single metric, termed the Quality Defects Index (QDI), was defined. The QDI is a severity-weighted average of the major types of defects. To construct historical QDI values the consulting firm converted the historical quality logs into QDI wherever possible. At the end of the diagnostic phase the consulting firm provided each treatment and control plant with a detailed analysis of their current management practices and performance. The treatment plants were given this diagnostic phase as the first step in improving their management practices. The control plants were given this diagnostic phase because we needed to construct historical performance data for them and help set up systems to generate ongoing data, which was collected by the consultants from both treatment and control plants.

The second phase was a four month *implementation* phase which was given only to the treatment plants. In this the consulting firm followed up on the diagnostic report to help implement management changes to address the identified shortcomings. This focused on introducing the key 38 management practices which the plants were not currently using. The

Nonetheless, the sum of our 38 pre-intervention management practice scores is correlated with the BVR score at 0.404 (p-value of 0.077) across the 17 firms.

consultant assigned to each plant worked with the plant managers to put the procedures into place, fine-tune them, and stabilize them so that they could be readily carried out by employees. For example, one of the practices implemented was daily meetings for management to review production and quality data. The consultant attended these meetings for the first few weeks of the implementation phase to help the managers run them, provided feedback on how to run future meetings, and fine-tuned their design to the specific plant's needs. During the rest of the implementation phase, the consultant attended the meetings on a weekly basis to check they were being maintained and to further fine-tune them. As another example, the consultant helped the plant managers set up a system for monitoring the aging of yarn stock and walked them through the steps needed to ensure old stock was used, sold or scrapped.

The third phase was a *measurement* phase which lasted until the end of the experiment (planned to be August 2010, followed by a one-year hiatus and then long-run follow-up in autumn 2011). For budgetary reasons this phase involved only three consultants and a part-time manager, who collected performance and management data from the plants. In order to elicit this data from the firms, the consultants needed to continue to provide some light consulting advice to the treatment and control plants, as providing detailed data is costly to the firms.

So, in summary, the control plants were provided with just the diagnostic phase and the measurement phase (totaling 225 consultant hours on average), while the treatment plants were provided with the diagnostic and implementation phase as well as the measurement phase (totaling 733 consultant hours on average). As such our measured impact of the experiment will be an underestimate of the impact of consulting since our control group also had some limited consulting. Nevertheless, by varying the intensity of the treatment we hoped to vary the change in management practices which occur for treatment versus control firms, enabling us to use this variation in management practices to determine the effect of management. In addition the consultants spent 12 hours on average at each off-site plant to collect data on their management practices, decentralization and IT usage.

III.C. The experimental design

We wanted to work with large firms because their operational complexity means management and organizational practices are likely to be particularly important to them. However, providing consulting to large firms is expensive, which necessitated a number of trade-offs. These are detailed below and summarized in Table 3.

Sample size:

We worked with the 28 plants within our 17 experimental firms. This small sample was necessary to allow us to use international consultants to provide hundreds of hours of consulting to each treatment plant. We considered hiring much cheaper local consultants and providing a few dozen hours to each treatment plant, which would have allowed a sample of several hundred plants. But two factors pushed against this. First, many large firms in India are reluctant to let outsiders into their plants because of their lack of compliance with tax, labor and safety regulations. To minimize selection bias we offered a high quality consulting

intervention that firms would value enough to take the risk of allowing outsiders into their plants. This helped maximize initial take-up (26% as noted in section II.B) and retention (100%, as no firms dropped out). Second, the consensus from discussions with Indian business people was that achieving a measurable impact in large firms would require an extended engagement with high-quality consultants.

On-site and off-site plants: Due to manpower constraints we could only collect detailed performance data from 20 plants. The accurate collection of weekly data on quality, inventories, output, labor, electricity was time-intensive as these plants did not typically have any formalized data recording systems. So building data collection systems and compiling historic databases required the consultants spending several hours each week on-site. However, data on slower moving management, organizational and IT choices was gathered for all 28 plants, as it required only short, bi-monthly visits. As a result the performance regressions are run only on the 20 on-site plants, while the management, decentralization and IT regressions are run on all 28 plants.

Treatment and control plants: Within the group of 20 on-site plants we randomly picked 6 control plants, and then 14 treatment plants. As Table 1 shows the treatment and control firms were not statistically different across any of the characteristics we could observe. The remaining 8 plants were defined as off-site treatment plants if they were in the same firm as another on-site treatment plant, and off-site control plants if they were in the same firm as another on-site control plant.¹⁸

Timing: The consulting intervention had to be initiated in three batches because of the capacity constraint of the six person consulting team. So the first wave started in September 2008 with 4 treatment plants. In April 2009 a second wave of 10 treatment plants was initiated, and in July 2009 the wave of 6 control plants was initiated. This design was selected to start with a small first wave as this was the most difficult because the process was new. The second wave included all the remaining treatment firms because: (i) the consulting interventions take time to affect performance and we wanted the longest time-window to observe the treatment firms; and (ii) we could not mix the treatment and control firms across waves because of the nature of the intervention process.¹⁹ The third wave contained the control firms. Management and performance data for all firms was collected from April 2008 to August 2010. We picked more treatment than control plants because the staggered initiation of the interventions meant the different groups of treatment plants provided cross identification for each other, and because the treatment plants were more likely to be more useful for trying to understand why firms had not adopted management practices before.

III.D. Statistical Power

¹⁸ Treatment and control plants were never in the same firms.

¹⁹ Each wave had a one-day kick-off meeting with all the firms, involving presentations from a range of senior partners from the consulting firm. This helped impress the firms with the expertise of the consulting firm and highlighted the huge potential for improvements in management. This meeting involved a project outline, which was slightly different for the treatment and control firms because of the different interventions. Since we did not tell firms about the existence of treatment and control groups we could not mix the treatment and control groups.

This small sample could lead to concerns about statistical power. However, there are several mitigating factors. First, these are extremely large plants with about 80 looms and about 130 employees, so that idiosyncratic shocks – like machine breakdowns or worker illness – tend to average out. Second, the data was collected on-site in a consistent manner each week across plants by the consultants, so is likely to be much more accurate and comparable than self-reported survey data. Third, we collected weekly data, which provides high-frequency observations over the course of the treatment. Fourth, the firms are extremely homogenous in terms of size, product and region, so that external shocks can be controlled for with the time dummies. Finally, the intervention was extremely intensive so that the treatment effects should be large.

We also use permutation tests to generate finite sample errors for the standard errors. These provide standard errors with exact small sample properties so do not require any asymptotic assumptions. We also generate the more usual bootstrap clustered standard errors (Cameron et al, 2008).

III.E. The impact of the intervention on plants management practices

In Figure 2 we plot the average management practice adoption of the 38 practices listed in Table 2 for the 14 treatment on-site plants, the 6 control on-site plants and the 8 off-site treatment and control plants. This data is shown at 2 month intervals before and after the diagnostic phase. Data from the diagnostic phase onwards was compiled from direct observation at the factory. Data from before the diagnostic phase was collected from detailed interviews of the plant management team based on any changes to management practices during the prior year. Figure 2 shows five key results:

First, the plants in all of the groups started off with low baseline adoption rates of the set of 38 management practices.²⁰ Among the 28 individual plants the initial adoption rates varied from a low of 7.9% to a high of 55.2%, so that even the best managed plant in the group had in place just over half of the 38 key textile manufacturing management practices. This is consistent with the results on poor general management practices in Indian firms shown in Figure 1. For example, many of the plants did not have any formalized system for recording or improving production quality so that the same quality defect would not arise repeatedly. Most of the plants also had no organized yarn inventories, so that yarn stores were mixed by color and type, without labeling or computerized entry. Consequently, yarn was being ordered despite already being in stock (see also Exhibit 5). The production floor was often blocked by waste, tools and machinery, impeding the flow of workers and materials around the factory (see Exhibits 3-4). Machines often were not routinely maintained, so that they would break down frequently, leading to low efficiency levels. Pricing was not matched against production costs, so that complex designs were charged at the same rate as simple designs because no data was collected on production costs of different designs.

Second, the intervention did succeed in changing management practices. The on-site treatment plants increased their use of the 38 management practices over the period by 37.6

²⁰ The difference between the treatment, control and other plant groups is not statistically significant, with a p-value on the difference of 0.248 (see Table 2).

percentage points on average (an improvement from 25.6% to 63.2% of practices implemented).

Third, the increase in management practices the treatment plants occurred gradually over the intervention period. In part this is because it takes time to introduce and stabilize new management practices. Typically the consulting firm would start by explaining the new management practices, then would introduce the procedures, and finally spend time giving feedback and coaching to fine-tune the process. The slow take-up also reflects the time it takes for the consulting firm to gain the confidence of the firm's directors. Initially many directors were somewhat skeptical of the suggested management changes, and they only implemented the easiest changes around quality and inventory. Once these started to generate substantial improvements in profits the firms started to introduce the more complex improvements around operations and HR.

Fourth, the control plants, which were given only the 1 month diagnostic, also increased their adoption of these management practices, but by only 12% on average. This is substantially less than the increase in adoption of the treatment wave, indicating that the four months of the implementation the treatment plants received was important in changing management practices. The control firms typically were unable to adopt the more complex practices like daily quality meetings, formalizing the yarn monitoring process or defining roles and responsibilities for managerial staff.

Fifth, the off-site plants also saw a substantial increase in the adoption of management practices. In these 8 plants the management adoption rates increased by 11.2 percentage points.²¹ This spillover of management practices occurred within the treatment firms and was driven by the directors copying the new management practices from their on-site treatment plants to their off-site plants.

III.F. Management practice spillovers across plants within firms

To test formally whether the intervention has differentially changed management practices between the treatment and control plants, what types of practices have changed the most, and if practices have spilled over between different plants within the same firm we run the following plant-level panel regression:

$$\text{MANAGEMENT}_{i,t} = \alpha_i + \beta_t + \lambda_1 \text{OWN_TREAT}_{i,t} + \lambda_2 \text{SPILLOVER_TREAT}_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (1)$$

where α_i are plant fixed effects, β_t are calendar month fixed effects, $\text{OWN_TREAT}_{i,t} = \log(1 + \text{cumulative months since the implementation phase began})$, and $\text{SPILLOVER_TREAT}_{i,t} = \log(1 + \text{cumulative months since implementation began in all other plants in the same firm})$. We use this logarithmic functional form because of concave adoption path of management practices shown in Figure 2. The parameter λ_1 estimates the semi-elasticity of the plants management practices with respect to the months of their own on-site consulting, while λ_2 estimates the semi-elasticity of spillovers from on-site consulting plants

²¹ Most of this increase was driven by the 5 off-site treatment plants, which increased the adoption of practices by 17.5%, compared with the 3 off-site control plants which increasing their adoption by 1%.

in other plants within the firm (both on-site and off-site). The standard errors are bootstrap clustered by firm.

The results are shown in Table 4. We report in column (1) that management practices significantly respond to own plant treatment, rising by about 0.121 for every unit change in $\log(1+\text{months treatment})$. We also see a response of 0.040 to $\log(1+\text{months treatment})$ in other plants within the same firm which is significant at the 10% level. This coefficient is about one third of the magnitude of the direct impact, suggesting substantial spillovers of management practices across plants within the same firm. In column (2) we add the three month lagged spillover term to investigate the timing of any potential spillover and find the lagged term dominates. This is consistent with a delay in transferring management practices across plants. This arises because the firms' directors would typically evaluate the impact of the new management practices in their on-site plants before transferring these over to their off-site plants. In column (3) we use just the three month lag and find a coefficient of 0.050, at about 40% of the direct effect. Using even longer lags leads to larger coefficients – for example for a six-month lag we obtain a coefficient (standard-error) of 0.059 (0.024) - but reduces the sample size.²² But whatever the exact specification, this data provides evidence of gradual spillovers of better management practices across plants within firms.

We also estimate the own treatment and spillover treatment effects for different subcomponents of the management practice score. In column (4) we look at inventory management, showing a direct and a spillover term. In column (5) we look at quality management, showing a large direct and spillover term, reflecting the fact that the quality management practices were some of the easiest to introduce with some of the largest performance gains, so that their adoption rates were typically the highest. In column (6) we look at operations management, again seeing a direct and spillover effect. In column (7) we examine loom planning and see small, insignificant effects, reflecting the greater complexity of these practices (using computer loom planning tools to maximize efficiency), which tended to reduce adoption rates. In column (8) we look at HR practices and again see reasonably large, significant direct and spillover effects, highlighting how incentive pay systems were also relatively easy to implement and effective in increasing performance. Finally, in column (9) we look at sales and order management practices and find very little evidence of a treatment effect, consistent with the greater complexity of these changes, which involve sophistication in customer pricing and prioritization. So overall this indicates the variation in take-up across different groups of practices reflecting their expected impact and difficult of implementation.

Most importantly for our study, these results also show that the experiment differentially changed management practices between treatment and control plants, providing variation which we can use to examine the impacts of this on plant-level outcomes. In our estimation strategy we use the $\log(1+\text{own cumulative intervention})$ as the instrumental variable given its strong predictive power for management practices.

²² Distinguishing between different lag lengths is empirically hard because of their collinearity. For example, putting in the three and six month lags of spillovers together leads to point-estimates (standard-errors) on these of 0.050 (.032) and 0.010 (0.029) respectively. The own plant treatment effect shows no preference for a lag – for example the coefficients (standard-errors) on the current and the three month-lag of own treatments are 0.170 (0.031) and -0.053 (0.030).

IV. THE IMPACT OF MANAGEMENT ON PERFORMANCE

The unique panel data on management practices and plant level performance, coupled with the experiment which induces random variation in management practices, enables us to estimate whether management matters. We have a range of plant-level performance metrics, with the key variables being measures of quality, inventories, and output. This data was recorded at a weekly frequency for the 20 on-site plants. Historical data for the period before the intervention was constructed from a range of sources, including firms' Electronic Resource Planning (ERP) computer systems, production logs, accounts and order books.

Previous literature (e.g. Black and Lynch (2001) and Bloom and Van Reenen, (2007)) has shown a strong correlations between management practices and firm performance in the cross-section, with other papers (e.g. Ichniowski et al. 1998) showing this in the panel.²³

We begin with a panel fixed-effects specification:

$$\text{OUTCOME}_{i,t} = \alpha_i + \beta_t + \theta \text{MANAGEMENT}_{i,t} + v_{i,t} \quad (2)$$

The concern is then of course that management practices are not exogenous to the outcomes that are being assessed, even in changes. For example, a firm may only start monitoring quality when it is starting to experience a larger than usual number of defects, which would bias the fixed-effect estimate towards finding a negative effect of better management on quality. Or firms may start monitoring quality as part of a major upgrade in worker quality and equipment, in which case we would misattribute quality improvements arising from better capital and labor to the effects of better management.

To overcome this endogeneity problem, we instrument the management practice score with $\log(1 + \text{weeks of treatment})$. The exclusion restriction is then that the intervention affected only the outcome of interest through its impact on management practices, and not through any other channel. A justification for this assumption is that the consulting firm focused entirely on management practices in their recommendations to firms, and firms did not buy new equipment or hire new labor as a result of the intervention (at least in the short run).²⁴ The IV estimator will then allow us to answer the headline question of this paper – does management matter? If, however, there is another channel through which the treatment works, then our estimates are for the overall impact, not just that occurring via the management practices.

²³ Note that other papers using repeated surveys have found no significant panel linkage between management practices and performance (Cappelli and Neumark (2001) and Black and Lynch (2004)), probably because of measurement error issues with repeated surveys. See Bloom and Van Reenen (2010b) for a full literature survey on management practices and productivity.

²⁴ The exceptions to this were that the firms hired on average \$34 (1,700 rupees) of extra manual labor to help organize the stock rooms and clear the factory floor, spent \$418 (10,900 rupees) on plastic display boards for the factory floor, standard-operating procedure notices and racking for the store rooms, and spent an additional \$800 on salary and prizes (like a radio and a watch) for managerial and non managerial staff. These and any other incidental expenditures are too small to have a material impact on our profitability and productivity calculations.

If the impact of management practices on plant-level outcomes is the same for all plants, then the IV estimator will provide a consistent estimate of the marginal effect of improvements in management practices, telling us how much management matters for the average firm participating in the study. However, if the effects of better management are heterogeneous, then the IV estimator will provide a local average treatment effect (LATE). The LATE will then give the average treatment effect for plants which do change their management practices when offered free consulting. If plants which stand to gain more from improving management are the ones who change their management practices most as a result of the consulting, then the LATE will exceed the average marginal return to management. While it will understate the average return to management if instead the plants that only change management when consulting is provided free are those with least to gain. There was heterogeneity in the extent to which treatment plants changed their practices, with the before-after change in average total management practice score ranging from 21.1% to 58.3%. The feedback from the consulting firm was that to some extent it was firms with the most unengaged, uncooperative managers who changed practices least, suggesting that the LATE may underestimate the average impact of better management if these firms have the largest potential gains from better management. Nonetheless, we believe the LATE estimate to be a parameter of policy interest, since if governments are to employ policies to try and improve management, information on the returns to better management from those who actually change management practices when help is offered is informative.

We can also directly estimate the impact of the consulting services intervention on management practices via the following equation:

$$\text{OUTCOME}_{i,t} = a_i + b_t + c\text{TREAT}_{i,t} + e_{i,t} \quad (3)$$

Where $\text{TREAT}_{i,t}$ is a 1/0 variable for whether plants have started the implementation phase or not. The parameter c then gives the intention to treat effect (ITT), and gives the average impact of the intervention in the treated plants compared to the control plants. This estimates the effect of giving firms the full implementation phase of the consulting, rather than just the diagnostic phase.

In all cases we include plant and time fixed effects, and we bootstrap cluster the standard errors at the firm level. We have daily data on many outcomes, but aggregate them to the weekly level to reduce higher-frequency measurement errors.

IV.A Quality

Our measure of quality is the Quality Defects Index (QDI), a weighted average score of quality defects, which is available for all but one of the plants. Higher scores imply more defects. Figure 3 provides a plot of the QDI score for the treatment and control plants relative to the start of the treatment period. This is September 2008 for Wave 1 treatment, April 2009 for Wave 2 treatment and control plants.²⁵ This is normalized to 100 for both groups of plants using pre-treatment data. To generate point-wise confidence intervals we block bootstrapped over firms.

²⁵ Since the control plants have no treatment period we set their timing to zero to coincide with the 10 Wave 2 treatment plants. This maximizes the overlap of the data.

As is very clear the treatment plants started to reduce their QDI scores significantly and rapidly from about week 5 onwards, which was the beginning of the implementation phase following the initial 1 month diagnostic phase. The control firms are also showing a mild downward trend in their QDI scores from about week 30 onwards, consistent with their slower take-up of these practices in the absence of a formal implementation phase. These differences in trends between the treatment and control plants are also significant, as indicated by the non-overlapping 95% confidence intervals towards the end of the period.

Table 5 in columns (1) to (3) examines whether management practices improve quality using a regression approach. In column (1) we present the fixed-effects OLS results which regresses the monthly $\log(\text{Quality Defects Index})$ score on plant level management practices, plant fixed effects, and a set of monthly time dummies. The standard errors are bootstrap clustered at the firm level to allow for any potential correlation across different experimental plants within the same firm. The coefficient of -0.753 implies that increasing the adoption of management practices by 10 percentage points would be associated with a reduction of 7.53% in the quality defects index.

The reason for this large effect is that measuring defects allows firms to address quality problems rapidly. For example, a faulty loom that creates weaving errors would be picked up in the daily QDI score and dealt with in the next day's quality meeting. Without this, the problem would often persist for several weeks since the checking and mending team had no system (or incentive) for resolving defects. In the longer term the QDI also allows managers to identify the largest sources of quality defects by type, design, yarn, loom and weaver, and start to address these systematically. For example, designs with complex stitching that generate large numbers of quality defects can be dropped from the sales catalogue. This ability to improve quality dramatically through systematic data collection and evaluation is a key tenet of the highly-successful lean manufacturing system of production (see, for example, Womack, Jones and Roos, 1992).

In Table 5, column (2), we instrument management practices using the experimental intervention to identify the causal impact of better management on quality. After doing this we see a significant point estimate of -2.031, suggesting that increasing the management practice adoption rate by 10% would be associated with a reduction in quality defects of 20.3%. The rise in the point estimate for the IV estimator could be due to measurement error in the underlying management index and/or because firms are endogenously adopting better management practices when their quality starts to deteriorate. There was some anecdotal evidence for the latter, in that the consulting firm reported some plants with improving quality were less keen to implement the new management practices because they felt these were unnecessary. This suggests that the fixed-effects estimates for management and performance in prior work like Ichniowski, Prennushi and Shaw (1997) may be underestimating the true impact of management on performance.

Finally, in column (3) we look at the intention to treat (ITT), which is the average reduction in the quality defects index in the period after the intervention in the treatment plants versus the

control plants. We see this is associated with a 31.9% ($\exp(-.385)-1$) reduction in the QDI index.

IV.B Inventory

Figure 4 shows the plot of inventory levels over time for the treatment and control groups. It is clear that after the intervention the inventory levels in the treatment group fall relative to the control group, with this being point-wise significant by about 30 weeks after the intervention.

The reason for this effect is that these firms were carrying about 4 months of inventory on average before the intervention, including a large amount of dead-stock. This was frequently because firms were carrying huge amounts of yarn that, because of poor records and storage practices, they did not even know they had. By cataloguing the yarn and sending the shade-cards to the design team to include in new products²⁶, selling dead yarn stock, introducing restocking norms for future purchases, and monitoring inventory on a daily basis, the firms dramatically reduced their inventories. But this takes time as the reduction in inventories primarily arises from lowering stocking norms and consuming old yarn into new products.

Table 5 columns (4) to (6) shows the regression results for raw material (yarn) inventory. In all columns the dependent variable is the log of raw materials, so the coefficients can be interpreted as the percentage reduction in yarn inventory. The results are presented for the 18 plants for which we have yarn inventory data (two plants do not maintain yarn stocks on site). In column (4) we present the fixed-effects results which regresses the monthly yarn on the plant level management practices, plant fixed effects, and a set of monthly time dummies. The coefficient of -0.707 says that increasing management practices adoption rates by 10 percentage points would be associated with a yarn inventory reduction of about 7.07%. In Table 5, column (5s), we see the impact of management instrumented with the intervention displays a point estimate of -0.939, again somewhat higher than the FE estimates in column (1). In column (6) we see the intervention is associated with an average reduction in yarn inventory of ($\exp(-.173)-1$) 15.9%.

These numbers are substantial, but in fact US automotive firms achieved much greater reductions in inventory levels (as well as quality improvements) when they adopted the Japanese lean manufacturing technology beginning in the 1980s. Many firms reduced inventory levels from several months to a few days or hours by moving to just-in-time production (Womack, Jones and Roos, 1991).

IV.C Output

In Figure 5 we plot output over time for the treatment and control plants. Output is measured in physical terms, as production picks. The results here are less striking, although output of the treatment plants has clearly risen on average relative to the control firms, and this difference is point-wise statistically significant in some weeks towards the end of the period.

²⁶ Shade cards comprise a few inches of sample yarn, plus information on its color, thickness and material. These are sent to the design teams (who are based in downtown Mumbai about 4 hours away) who use these to try and design the surplus yarn into new products.

In columns (7) to (9) in table 5 we look at this in a regression setting with plant and time dummies. In column (7) we see that for the OLS specification increasing the adoption of management practices by 10 percentage points would be associated with a 1.25% increase in efficiency, although this is not statistically significant. In column (8), we see the impact of management instrumented with the intervention displays a higher and statistically significant point estimate of 0.239, suggesting a 10% increase in management adoption would lead to a 2.39% increase in output. Finally, in column (9) we look at the intention to treat (ITT) and see a point estimate of 0.040, implying a 4.1% increase in output ($\exp(0.040)-1$), although this is not statistically significant. It seems that this is insignificant in part because the output gains take several months to arise, so that with only nine months of post-treatment data the average post-treatment level of efficiency is not significantly higher than the pre-treatment level. We expect that this is likely to change as we continue to collect data through to August 2010.

There are several reasons for these increases in output. First, undertaking routine maintenance of the looms, especially following the manufacturers' instructions, reduces breakdowns that stop production. Second, collecting and monitoring the breakdown data also helps highlight looms, shifts, designs and yarn-types that are associated with more breakdowns and thereby facilitates pro-actively addressing these. Third, visual displays around the factory floor together with the incentive schemes based on these performance metrics motivate workers to improve operating efficiency. Since these incentives are partly individual based and partly group based, workers are motivated both by personal and group rewards to keep their efficiency levels high. Fourth, advance loom planning helps to reduce the amount of time weaving machines lie idle waiting for warp beams (weaving looms need warp beams from the warping looms). Previously looms would frequently lie idle waiting for beams, but advanced planning of warp beam delivery two weeks ahead means plants can exchange warp beams (even between different firms) to keep looms running at full capacity. Finally, keeping the factory floor clean and tidy reduces the number of accidents, for example reducing incidents like tools falling into machines or fires damaging equipment. Again the experience from lean manufacturing is that the collective impact of these procedures can lead to extremely large improvements in operating efficiency, raising output levels.

IV.D Are the improvements in performance due to Hawthorne effects?

Hawthorne effects are named after the experiments carried out by industrial engineers in the Hawthorne Works in the 1920s and 1930s which attempted to raise productivity. The results apparently showed that simply running experiments led to an improvement in performance, with the most cited result being that both reducing and increasing ambient light levels led to higher productivity. While these putative Hawthorne effects in the original experiments have long been disputed (e.g. Levitt and List, 2009), there is a serious potential concern that some form of the Hawthorne effect is causing our observed increase in plant performance.

However, we think this is unlikely, for a series of reasons. First, our control plants also had the consultants on site over a similar period of time as the treatment firms. Both sets of plants got the initial diagnostic period and the follow-up measurement period, with the only difference being the treatment plants also got an intensive intermediate 4 month implementation stage. The control plants were not told they were in the control group. Hence, it cannot be simply the presence of the consultants or the measurement of performance that

generated the improvement in performance. Second, the improvements in performance took time to arise and they arose in quality, inventory and efficiency, where the majority of the management changes took place (see Table 2). Third, these improvements persisted for many months after the implementation period, so are not some temporary phenomena due to increased attention. Finally, the firms themselves also believed these improvements arose from better management practices, which was the motivation for them spreading these practices out to their other plants not involved in the experiments.

V. THE IMPACT OF MANAGEMENT ON ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND COMPUTERIZATION

V.A The impact of management practices on firm organization

Over the last thirty years a large theoretical literature on the organization of firms has developed, focusing on the decentralization of decision-making within firms. The literature generally emphasizes optimal decentralization in one of two ways.²⁷ The first is in terms of minimizing information processing costs – trading off asking better informed senior managers versus the costs of communicating these requests and commands or the initially dispersed information. In these models improving the availability information throughout the organization would typically lead to greater decentralization as decisions can be taken more effectively locally. If plant managers are able to access daily information on quality, inventory and output, they should be more able to make effective management decisions without assistance from the directors. Hence, this literature would suggest that better management practices should lead to greater decentralization of decision-making. The second literature is in terms of principal-agent models emphasizing the trade-offs between incentives and information. The principal (in our case the directors) have the better incentives while the agents (in our case the plant managers) have the better production information. In these models improving management will have an ambiguous impact – on the one hand the principals become better informed, thereby increasing centralization, but on the other they can also more easily monitor their managers, reducing the misalignment of incentives. Hence, this literature is ambiguous on the impact of better management on firm decentralization.

While the theoretical literature is expansive the empirical literature on management and decentralization is extremely limited. Some survey and case-study evidence exists, but nothing with clean identification from natural or field experiments. So we collected extensive decentralization data from our management field experiment plants. We should note that the interventions never attempted to change the organizational structure of the firms. The aim was to introduce the 38 management practices listed in Table 2, with the changes in decentralization an outcome of this.

²⁷ See, for example, Bolton and Dewatripont (1994), Garicano (2000) for examples of the first approach (information processing), and Aghion and Tirole (1997), Baker, Gibbons and Murphy (1999), Rajan and Zingales (2001), Hart and Moore (2005), Acemoglu et al. (2007) and Alonso et al. (2008) for examples of the second approach (principal-agent models).

To measure decentralization we collected data on the locus of decision-making for weaver hiring, manager hiring, spares purchases, maintenance planning, weaver bonuses, new product introductions, investment, and departmental co-ordination. Because firms' organizational designs change slowly over time, we collected this data at lower frequencies – to date gathering data once from pre-intervention and once in March 2010. For every decision except investment we scored decentralization on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 was defined as no authority of the plant manager over the decision and 5 as full authority (see Appendix Table B1 for the full survey and Table B3 for descriptive statistics). So, for example, we measured decentralization for the plant manager over weaver hiring from a scale of 1 defined as “No authority – not even for replacement hires” to 5 defined as “Complete authority – it is his decision entirely”, with intermediate scores like 3 defined as “Requires sign-off from the Director based on the business case. Typically agreed about 80% or 90% of the time”. These questions and scoring were based on the survey methodology in Bloom, Sadun and Van Reenen (2009), which measured decentralization across countries and found developing countries like India typically have very centralized decision-making within firms. The measure of the decentralization for investment was in terms of “The largest expenditure (in rupees) a plant manager (or other managers) could typically make without a Directors signature”, which had an average of 12,608 rupees (about \$250).

To combine all these eight decentralization measures into one index we took the principal factor component of the eight measures, which we called the decentralization index. Changes in this index were strongly and significantly correlated with changes in management across firms, as Figure 6 shows. Firms which had substantial improvements in management practices during the experiment also tended to have delegated more production decisions to their plant managers.

Table 6 looks at this in a regression format by estimating the following specification

$$\text{DECENTRALIZATION}_{i,t} = a_i + b_t + c\text{MANAGEMENT}_{i,t} + e_{i,t} \quad (3)$$

where DECENTRALIZATION is our measure of plant decentralization, and a_i and b_t are plant fixed effects and time dummies. In column (1) we start with regressing our decentralization index against management practices and find a statistically significant positive impact. Firms that improved their management practices during the experiment have also delegated more decisions to their plant managers. The magnitude of this effect appears reasonably large – the average change in management practices for the treatment firms (0.352) would be associated with about a 0.3 standard deviation change in the decentralization index. In columns (2) to (6) we examine the five individual components of the decentralization index that changed over the experimental time frame.²⁸ We see that all the individual sub-components also increased, although often this change is not statistically significant. The area where the change was most notable was directors' coordination, which reflects the extent to which directors are involved in decision making between managers – for example, does a director need to get involved in decisions between the inventory manager and

²⁸ We saw no changes in the degree of decentralization over weaver employment, planning of maintenance schedules and introducing new products. These decisions did have cross-sectional variation in the extent of decentralization (as shown in Appendix B) but no time variation between pre-treatment and March 2010.

the production manager. Because of the improvements in production information it became easier for different section heads to coordinate directly rather than involve the directors and for the directors to trust them to do so.

To put these results in context, however, it is worth noting that even these decentralizing Indian factories are still extremely centralized compared to factories in Europe and the US. For example, using the Bloom, Sadun and Van Reenen (2009) data we know that plant managers in developed countries are typically able to hire full-time employees with pretty minimal control from their headquarters (compared to very limited authority in our Indian factories) and can invest about \$52,000 without central clearance (compared to about \$250 in India). So, these improvements in management practices have increased delegation but still leave Indian factories very centralized compared to plants in developed countries.

V.B The impact of management practices on computerization

One of the major topics over the last decade has been the relationship between IT and productivity. Until the 1990s, convincing evidence on the aggregate impact of computers on productivity was so hard to find that Robert Solow famously quipped in 1987 that “you see computers everywhere but in the productivity statistics”. In more recent periods, however, the paradox has reversed, with a growing literature now finding that the productivity impact of IT is substantially larger than its cost share (e.g. Bresnahan, Brynjolfsson and Hitt, 2002, and Brynjolfsson and Hitt, 2003). The literature has argued this is because IT is complementary with modern management and organizational practices, so that as firms invest in IT they also improve their management practices. This leads to a positive bias on IT in productivity estimates as management and organizational practices are typically an unmeasured residual.²⁹ But none of this literature has any direct experimental evidence, instead relying on identification from observed changes in IT and management and organizational survey data.

Another related IT literature has argued that skill biased technical change (SBTC) has been the major factor driving the increase in income inequality observed in the US and most other countries since the 1970s (see surveys in Acemoglu 2002 and Autor, Katz and Kearney 2007). But SBTC is usually inferred as the residual in inequality regressions, with rather limited direct evidence on specific skill-biased technologies. Our experimental changes in management practices are clearly skilled-biased, in that computer users are highly skilled due to the need for literacy, numeracy and computer familiarity. As a result modern management practices are a skill-biased technology, which are driving both the increased use of computers and the demand for relatively skilled workers.

So to investigate the complementarity between IT and management practices we collected computerization data on ten aspects of the plants, covering the use of Electronic Resource Planning (ERP) systems, the number of computers, the age of the computers, the number of computer users, the total hours of computer use, the connection of the plant to the internet, the use of e-mail by the plant manager and the director, the existence of a firm website and the depth of computerization of production decisions (see Appendix Table B2 for the full survey and Table B3 for descriptive statistics). As with decentralization we collected this data once from before the intervention and once in March 2010. Figure 7 plots the change in the

²⁹ See, for example, Bartel, Ichniowski and Shaw (2007) and Bloom, Sadun and van Reenen (2007).

principal component factor of these ten computer measures against the change in management practices across these plants. It is clear that as firms adopted more modern management practices they significantly increased the computerization of their production.

Table 6 looks at this in a regression form by estimating the following specification

$$\text{COMPUTERIZATION}_{i,t} = a_i + b_t + c\text{MANAGEMENT}_{i,t} + e_{i,t} \quad (4)$$

where COMPUTERIZATION is various measures of computer use within plants, and a_i and b_t are plant fixed effects and time dummies. In column (7) we start with regressing our overall computer index on management practices and find a large significant positive coefficient. The magnitude of this at 0.423 suggests that for a firm changing management practices by the treatment average of 0.352 they would increase computerization use by about 0.15 of a standard deviation. In columns (8) to (10) we look at the three individual components of this measure that changed over the experimental period, and see all individually increased, most notably the number of hours of computer use and the number of computer users.

For context we should note, however, that Indian firms are very un-computerized in comparison to firms in Europe, the US and Japan. For example, comparing the numbers of the use of IT in European factories from Bloom, Sadun and Van Reenen (2007) we see that in all European firms plant managers and directors would use e-mail and all plants would have some form of ERP system, compared to 25%, 83% and 79% respectively in India.

VI. WHY ARE MANY INDIAN FIRMS BADLY MANAGED?

Given the evidence in section (IV) on the substantial impact of better management practices on plants' quality, inventory and output, the obvious question is whether these management changes increased profitability, and if so why were these not introduced before.

VI.A. *The estimated impact of management practices on profits and productivity*

In Table 7 we provide some estimates of the magnitudes of the profitability and productivity impact of the interventions, with more details in Appendix A. Firms did not provide us with any profit and loss accounts, so we have estimated the impact on profitability from the quality, inventory and efficiency improvements.³⁰ Our methodology here is very simple: for example, if a given improvement in practices is estimated to reduce inventory stock by X tons of yarn, we map this into profits using conservative estimates of the cost of carrying X tons of yarn. Or if it reduces the numbers of hours required to mend defects we estimated this reduction in hours on the firms total wage bill. These estimates are medium-run because, for example, it will take a few months for the firms to reduce their mending manpower.

³⁰ We could obtain the public profit and loss accounts, but it was unclear how accurate these were, and they were not at the plant level. We did not ask firms for their private profit and loss accounts (if they even kept them) as they would have been likely to refuse, given their fears over the information leaking out to the Indian tax authorities.

Profits:

The top panel of Table 7 focuses on profits. In the first row we see that the improvements in management practices should have increased profits via reducing mending costs by about \$13,120 for the intervention. The reason is the reduction in quality defects should lead to a fall in the mending manpower, which has an annual average wage bill of \$41,000. Mending is generally piece-work so that lower levels of defects lead directly to a lower mending wage bill. In the second row we see the reduction in defects also increased the level of fabric output by \$178,800 by reducing the amount of fabric waste. Fabric defects leads to about a 7.5% loss of fabric sales because many defects cannot be repaired and have to be cut out, or the cloth is sold at large discounts.³¹ Reducing the number of defects should lead directly to a reduction in the amount of wasted fabric, and thus an increase in output. In the third row we calculate that the reduction in inventory levels from the intervention reduced annual costs by about \$8,045. This was because yarn costs about 22% a year to hold, given the 15% nominal interest rates on bank loans, the 3% storage costs and 4% depreciation costs. In the fourth row we see the intervention and full-adoption increases in efficiency are estimated to increase profits by \$122,180 because of the higher sales from the additional output. The total increase in profits was estimated to be around \$322,145, which is about an increase in profits of about 16.8%.³²

These increases in profits are potentially lower bounds in three senses. First, they take the firms' choice of capital, labor and product range as given. But in the long-run the firms can re-optimize. For example, with fewer machine breakdowns each weaver can manage more machines (as dealing with breakdowns is time consuming) so the number of weavers can be decreased. Second, many of the management practices are arguably complementary, so they are much more effective when introduced jointly (e.g. Milgrom and Roberts, 1990). However, the intervention time-horizon was too short to change many of the complementary human-resource practices, so the full rewards would not be realized. For example, providing employees with rewards for performance above their baseline requires defining the baseline – such as the average level of efficiency over the preceding year – but this is itself impacted by the operational management interventions. As a result many firms did not want to introduce the performance bonuses until after the other interventions had stabilized and they could calculate the appropriate baseline. As a result the full impact of the interventions will take time to accrue. Third, the intervention was narrow in focus in that other management practices around activities like finance, strategy, marketing and procurement were not been addressed.

On the other hand these increases in profits may overstate the long-run impact is once the consultants leave the factory the firms backslide on the management changes. We are currently planning to revisit these firms in Fall 2011, after a one year absence, to collect longer-run data to evaluate this.

³¹ For example, one of the most common quality defects was color streaking in the fabric from different shades of yarn having been accidentally used in the same piece of fabric. This fabric is unusable for most clothing so is typically sold at a 50% discount as lining material. Another common defect was dirt and grease stains, which are often impossible to remove in light-colored fabric.

³² While we can not obtain the true profit and loss accounts for these firms, we do know the costs of capital for yarn within the textile industry (15%) and the firms' capital stock (\$13.3m on average), yielding annual profits of around \$1.9m. It is entirely possible that these family-run firms earn less than their marginal cost of capital, in which case baseline profits will be lower than this, and thus the rise in profits from our intervention will constitute a higher percentage increase.

To estimate the net increase in profit for these improvements in management practices we also need to calculate the costs of these changes (ignoring for now any costs of consulting). These costs were extremely small, averaging less than \$2000 per firm.³³ So in the absence of any costs of consulting to introduce these new management practices – which would have been substantial if firms had paid themselves – it would clearly be highly profitable to do so.

Productivity:

The bottom panel of Table 7 estimates the impact of the intervention on productivity. This is based on an assumed constant-returns-to-scale Cobb-Douglas production function:

$$Y=AL^{\alpha}K^{1-\alpha} \quad (1)$$

where Y is value-added (output – materials and energy costs), L is hours of work and K is the net capital stock. Under perfect competition the coefficient α is equal to the labor share of value-added, which is 0.59 in textiles in the 2003-04 Indian Annual Survey of Industries.

The first row in the bottom panel estimates the impact of quality improvements on the reduction in repair manpower. Repairing defects is done on a piece by piece basis, so that a reduction in the number of defects implies an equivalent reduction in the number of repair hours. Since repair hours represents 18.7% of all hours across the factory, the 31.9% reduction in QDI estimated from the intervention and full-adoption changes in management practices led to an estimated 3.5% increase in productivity. The second row in the bottom panel of Table 7 estimates the productivity impact of the lower waste of fabric in the quality repair process, with an estimated 2.4% for the intervention. The third row of the bottom panel estimates the impact of a lower capital stock from the lower inventory levels, which leads to a 0.5% estimated increase in productivity.

Finally, the fourth row in the bottom panel estimates of the impact of increased production on total factor productivity. This translates directly into an increase in output, and given the labor and capital inputs are fixed, into an equivalent increase in productivity.³⁴ Hence, the 4.1% increase in output from the intervention translates directly into proportional increases in productivity.

Overall these productivity numbers are quite substantial – a 10.5% increase from the intervention. And as discussed above we think these are lower bound figures, substantially below the long-run impact of firms improving their management practices. Hence, these numbers suggests that bad management does play an important role in explaining the productivity gap between India and the US.

VI.B. Why are firms badly managed?

³³ The \$35 of extra labor to help organize the stock rooms and clear the factory floor, about \$200 on plastic display boards, about \$200 for extra racking for stores rooms, and about \$1000 on rewards.

³⁴ In fact with higher efficiency, less labor is needed because if machines break down less frequently workers can supervise more machines, so that in the long-run these figures would be an underestimate of the impact.

Given the evidence in section (VI.A) above on the large increase in profitability from the introduction of these modern management practices, the obvious question is: why had firms not already adopted them? To investigate this we asked our consultants to document every other month the reason for any non-adoption of the 38 practices in each plant. To do this consistently we developed a flow-chart (see Figure 8) which runs through a series of questions to understand the root cause for the non-adoption of each individual practice. They collected this data from extensive discussions with owners, managers and workers, plus their own observations from working daily in the plants.

As an example of how this flow chart works, imagine a plant that does not record quality defects (the first practice in quality control in Table 2). The consultant would first ask if there was some external constraint, like labor regulations, preventing this, which we found never to be the case.³⁵ They would then ask if the plant was aware of this practice, which in the example of quality recording systems typically was the case, as it is a well known practice. The consultants would then check if the plant could adopt the practice with the current staff and equipment, which again for quality recording systems was always true, as it is a simple process. Then they would ask if the owner believed it would be profitable to record quality defects, which was often the constraint on adopting this practice. The owner often argued their quality was so good they did not need to record quality defects. This view was mistaken, however, because while these plants' quality might have been good compared to other low-quality Indian textile plants, by international standards their quality was very poor. So, as shown in Figure 3, when they did adopt basic quality control practices they substantially improved their production quality. So, in this case the reason for non-adoption would be "incorrect information" as we believed the CEO had incorrect information on the cost-benefit calculation for quality control processes.

The overall results for non-adoption of management practices are tabulated in Table 8, for the treatment plants, control plants and the non-experimental plants (the plants in the same firm as the treatment plants). This is tabulated at two-month intervals starting the month before the intervention phase. The rows report the different reasons for non-adoption as a percentage of all practices. So that, for example, the top-left cell (value 38.6) states that in the treatment plants in the month before the intervention, 38.6% of practices were not adopted because the plant was unaware of the existence of these practices (they lacked information on these). Looking across the table several results are apparent.

First, a major initial barrier to the adoption of these modern management practices was a lack of information about their existence. About 30% of practices were not adopted because the firms were simply not aware of them. These practices tended to be the more advanced practices of regular quality, efficiency and inventory review meetings, posting standard-operating procedures and visual aids around the factory, the use of historical efficiency data for design pricing, and scientific inventory methods. Many of these are derived from the Japanese inspired lean manufacturing revolution, and are common across Europe, Japan and the US but apparently have yet to permeate Indian manufacturing.

³⁵ This does not mean labor regulations do not matter for some practices – for example firing underperforming employees – but they did not directly impinge adopt the immediate adoption of the 38 practices in Table 2.

Second, another major initial barrier was incorrect information, in that firms may have heard of these practices but thought they did not apply profitably to them. For example, many of the firms were aware of preventive maintenance but few of them thought it was worth doing this. They preferred to keep their machines in operation until they broke down, and then repair them. But another lesson from the lean manufacturing revolution is that preventive maintenance reduces long-run downtimes (as faults are typically easier to fix in advance) and also production variability. Production variability itself reduces productivity as it causes other problems along the supply chain – for example, unanticipated breakdowns increase the complexity of production scheduling, increasing the downtimes from mismatched resources.

Third, as the intervention progressed the lack of information constraint was rapidly addressed. It was easy for the consultants to inform the firms about modern management practices. However, the incorrect information constraints were harder to address. This was because the owners had their prior beliefs about the efficacy of a practice and it took time to change these. This was often done using pilot changes on a few machines in the plant or with evidence from other plants in the experiment. For example, the consultants often started by persuading the managers to undertake preventive maintenance on a set of trial machines, and once it was proven successful it was rolled out to the rest of the factory. And as the consultants demonstrated the positive impact of some of these initial practice changes, the owners increasingly trusted them and would adopt more of the more complex recommendations, like introducing performance incentives for managers.³⁶

Fourth, once the informational constraints were addressed, other constraints arose. For example, even if the owners became convinced of the need to adopt a practice they would often take several months to execute these. This was particularly pertinent in the non-experimental plants, where the consultants were not on-site to drive the changes. This matches up with the evidence on procrastination in other contexts, for example Kenyan farmers investing in fertilizer (Duflo, Kremer and Robinson, 2009) or farmers in Ghana adopting new technologies (Conley and Udry, 2010).

Fifth, managerial incentives were also a cause of non-adoption of a few percent of these practices. In these firms mid-level managers did not receive any incentive pay, and they had very limited promotion incentives because the directors of all mid-size textiles firms were family members. Hence, their incentive to perform beyond the levels required to keep their jobs was muted. As a result many of the managers were happy to adopt management practices that were standard in the industry, but reluctant to do anything further if this involved additional effort. This highlights how the adoption of management practices is cross-linked, with poor human-resource management practices impeding the adoption of other management practices.

Finally, somewhat surprisingly, we did not find evidence for the direct impact of a set of other factors that have been highlighted in the literature on capital investment. One such factor is

³⁶ These sticky priors highlight one reason why management practices appear to take several years to change in the US and Europe. The evidence on this is anecdotal, but for example, the private equity industry has a 3 year minimum estimate for the time needed for a management turnaround. Similarly, consulting firms typically take at least 18 months to execute large change management programs at their clients.

capital constraints, which are a significant obstacle to the expansion of micro-enterprises (e.g. De Mel, McKenzie and Woodruff, 2008). Our evidence suggested that the medium to large firms involved in our experiment were not cash-constrained. We collected data on all the investments for our 17 firms over the period April 2008 until April 2010 and found the firms invested a mean (median) of \$880,000 (\$140,000). For example, several of the firms were setting up new factories or adding machines, apparently often financed by bank loans. Certainly, this scale of investment suggests that investment on the scale of \$2000 (the first-year costs of these management changes, ignoring the consultants' fees) to improve the factories' management practices is unlikely to be directly impeded by financial constraints.

Of course financial constraints could impede hiring in international consultants. The market cost of our free consulting would be at least \$500,000, and as an intangible investment it would be difficult to collateralize.³⁷ Hence, while financial constraints do not appear to directly block the implantation of better management practices, they may hinder firms' ability to improve their current management practices using external consultants. On the other hand, our estimates of the incremental profitability from adopting modern management practices suggest cost recovery in as little as one year.

Another factor that has been highlighted elsewhere but that played a limited direct role was poor infrastructure. For example, unreliable electricity provision is a major impediment to productivity in developing countries (e.g. World Bank, 2004). We certainly saw evidence of this in that, for example, Tarapur and Umbergaon had weekly electricity blackouts which lowered production levels on the blackout days (most firms had generators that could cover only about 50% of their electricity needs). However, this did not appear to explain firms' bad management, since they successfully adopted many of the 38 key textile practices during the intervention period, over the course of which the infrastructure was not improved. This reflects that fact these practices change the way firms internally operate and are relatively independent from infrastructure or external problems.

The same reasoning also applies to corruption, since again there is no evidence the levels of potential corruption changed over the intervention period. Also, looking at the list of individual practices it is hard to identify many that would be constrained by corruption.

VI.C. How do badly managed firms survive?

We have shown that management matters, with improvements in management practices improving plant-level outcomes. One response from economists might then be to argue that poor management can at most be a short-run problem, since in the long run better managed firms should take over the market. Yet many of our firms have been in business for 20 years and more.

One reason why better run firms do not dominate the market is constraints on growth through managerial span of control. In every firm in our sample, only members of the owning family

³⁷ Our international consulting firm estimated that to offer a standard consulting team to these firms at market rates would cost at least \$500,000. This is much more expensive than our costs per firm because: (I) we achieved substantial scale economies from working with a large number of firms simultaneously; and (II) we had 50% rates on the consultants and no partner charges.

are company directors – that is, in managerial positions with major decision-making power over finances, purchases, operations or employment. Non-family members are given junior managerial positions that have power only over low-level, day-to-day activities. The reason is the family members do not trust the non-family members not to steal from the firm. For example, they are concerned if they let their plant managers run procurement they might buy yarn at inflated rates from friends and receive kick-backs.

A key reason for this inability to decentralize is the poor rule of law in India. Even if directors found managers stealing, their ability to successfully prosecute them and recover the assets is minimal because of the inefficiency of Indian courts. In contrast, in the US if a manager was found stealing from a firm it is likely they could be successfully prosecuted and much of the assets recovered.

A compounding reason for the inability to decentralize in Indian firms is bad management, as this means the owners cannot keep good track of materials and finance, so may not even be able to identify theft within their firms.³⁸

As a result of this inability to decentralize, every factory in the firm requires a family member on-site to manage it. This means firms can only expand if male family members are available to take up plant manager positions. Thus, an important correlate of firm size in our firms was the number of male family members of the owners. For example, the number of brothers and sons of the leading director has a correlation of 0.689 with the total employment size of the firm, compared to 0.223 for their average management score. In fact the best managed firm in our sample – which was also a publicly quoted firm and apparently extremely profitable – had only one (large) production plant, in large part because the owner had no brothers or sons to run additional plants. This matches the ideas of the Lucas (1978) span of control model, that there are diminishing returns to how much additional productivity better management technology can generate from a single manager. In this model the limits to firm growth restrict the ability of highly productive firms to drive out the lower productivity firms from the market. In our India firms this span of control restriction is extremely binding so productive firms do not grow large and drive unproductive firms out from the market. This matches plant-level productivity data from China and India (Hsieh and Klenow, 2009) as well as firm-level organizational survey data (Bloom, Sadun and Van Reenen, 2009).

Entry also appears limited by the difficulty of separating ownership from control. The supply of new firms is limited by the numbers of wealthy families with finance and male family members available to run textiles plants. Given the rapid growth of other industries in India – like software and real-estate – entry into textile manufacturing is limited. Even our firms were often taking cash from their textile businesses to invest in other businesses, like real-estate

³⁸ Another compounding factor is these firms had poor human resources management practices. None of the firms had a formalized development or training plan for their managers, and managers could not be promoted because only family members could become directors. As a result managers lacked career motivation within the firm. In contrast in the Indian software and finance industries firms place a huge emphasis on development and training to motivate employees and build trust, which is essential for delegation in the absence of a strong level system (see also Banerjee and Duflo (2000)).

and retail. And even if an entrant had funding, given the informational problems identified earlier, there is no obvious guarantee their management practices would be better than the incumbent firms.

Hence, the equilibrium appears to be that Indian wage rates are extremely low so that firms can survive while operating with poor management practices. Because spans of control are constrained productive incumbent firms are limited from expanding and so do not drive out the badly run firms. And because entry is limited new firms do not enter rapidly. As a result the situation approximates a Melitz (2003) style model where firms have very high decreasing returns to scale, entry rates are low, and initial productivity draws are low (because good management practices are not widespread). The resultant equilibrium has a low average level of productivity, a low wage level, a low average firm-size, and a large dispersion of firm-level productivities.

VI.D. Why do firms not use more management consulting?

Finally, why these firms not hire consultants given the large gains from better management? The primary reason is these firms are not aware they are badly managed, as illustrated in Table 9. In the pre-intervention state for the treatment firms 93% ($93\% = (38.6 + 29.3) / 73$) of the non-adoption reasons were due to a “lack of information” or “incorrect information”.

Of course consulting firms could still approach firms for business, pointing out that their practices were bad and offering to fix them. But Indian firms, much like US firms, are bombarded with solicitations from businesses offering to save them money on everything from telephone bills to raw materials, so are unlikely to be particularly receptive (see Fuchs and Garicano 2010 for a theoretical model of these types of problems in selling advice). Of course consulting firms could go further and offer to provide their advice for free with an ex post profit sharing deal. But monitoring this would be hard – many Indian are heavily under-reporting profits to the tax authorities and would be likely to do the same with partnering consulting firm.³⁹ Moreover, numerous Indian firms are breaching tax, labor and health-and-safety laws (see Exhibits 3 to 7) and so are reluctant to let unknown outsiders into their firms. Our project benefited from the endorsement of Stanford and the World Bank, but a local firm offering free consulting would probably find it much harder to gain the trust of firms.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Management does matter. We have implemented a randomized experiment which gave managerial consulting services to textile plants in India. This experiment led to improvements in basic management practices, with plants adopting lean manufacturing techniques which have been standard for decades in the developed world. These improvements in management

³⁹ Because of this ex-post profit sharing consulting arrangements are almost unheard of even in the US and Europe. Consulting firms do occasionally consult in return for small equity stakes – as occurred during the dot-com boom for high tech firms. But this ties revenues to the sale price of the firm, which is a much more verifiable measure of performance than annual profits with less conflicting incentives since this is also the main route for the owners to extract profits from the business.

practice led to plants improving the quality of their production, reducing excess inventory levels, and improving efficiency. The result was an improvement in profitability and productivity. Firms also decentralized their production decisions as a result of better management practices, because the improved monitoring reduced the potential for plant managers to expropriate firm resources and increased their ability to effectively manage the plant. At the same time computer use increased substantially, driven by the need to collect, process and disseminate data as required by modern management practices.

What are the implications of this for public policy? First, our results suggest that firms were not implementing the better practices on their own because of lack of information and knowledge, and that to really improve quality firms needed detailed instruction in how to implement better practices. This suggests a need for better knowledge and training programs in India, and in developing countries more generally. This would include high quality business school education to teach managers better management practices, and a more vibrant local consulting industry with the ability to signal quality through reputation building. While both these are private sector activities, they depend on the government for a regulatory environment which makes entry easy and which allows quality to be the main determinant of success. A second method for knowledge transference comes from the presence of multinationals. Indeed, many of the consultants working for the international consulting firm hired by our project had worked for multinationals in India, learning from their state-of-the-art manufacturing management processes. Yet a variety of legal, institutional, and infrastructure barriers have limited the extent of multinational expansion within India, limiting the spread of knowledge on better manufacturing among the Indian managerial labor force. Finally, our results also suggest that a weak legal environment has limited the scope for well-managed firms to grow. So that improving the legal environment should encourage productivity enhancing reallocation, helping to drive out badly managed firms.

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APPENDIX

A. Estimations of profitability and productivity impacts.

We first generate the estimated impacts on quality, inventory and efficiency. To do this we take the Intention to Treat (ITT) numbers from Table 5, which shows a reduction of quality defects of 31.9% ($\exp(-0.385)-1$), a reduction in inventory of 15.9% ($\exp(-0.173)-1$) and an increase in output of 4.1% ($\exp(0.04)-1$).

Mending wage bill:

Estimated by recording the total mending hours, which is 71,700 per year on average, times the mending wage bill which is 36 rupees (about \$0.72) per hour. Since mending is undertaken on a piece-wise basis – so defects are repaired individually – a reduction the severity weighted defects should lead to a proportionate reduction in required mending hours.

Fabric revenue loss from non grade-A fabric:

Waste fabric estimated at 7.5% in the baseline, arising from cutting our defect areas and destroying and/or selling at a discount fabric with unfixable defects. Assume increase in quality leads to a proportionate reduction in waste fabric.

Inventory carrying costs:

Total carrying costs of 22% calculated as interest charges of 15% (average prime lending rate of 12% over 2008-2010 plus 3% as firm-size lending premium – see for example http://www.sme.icicibank.com/Business_WCF.aspx?pid), 3% storage costs (rent, electricity, manpower and insurance) and 4% costs for physical depreciation and obsolescence (yarn rots over time and fashions change).

Increased profits from higher output

Increasing output is assumed to lead to an equiproportionate increase in sales because these firms are small in their output markets, but would also increase variable costs of energy and raw-materials since the machines would be running. The average ratio of (energy + raw materials costs)/sales is 62%, so the profit margin on increased efficiency is 38%.

Labor and capital factor shares:

Labor factor share of 0.58 calculated as total labor costs over total value added using the “wearing apparel” industry in the most recent (2004-05) year of the Indian Annual Survey of industry. Capital factor share defined as 1-labor factor share, based on an assumed constant returns to scale production function and perfectly competitive output markets.

Table B1: The decentralization survey:

For all questions except D7 any score can be given, but the scoring guide is only provided for scores of 1, 3 and 5.

Question D1: “What authority does the plant manager(or other managers) have to hire a WEAVER (e.g. a worker supplied by a contractor)?”

	Score 1	Score 3	Score 5
Scoring grid:	No authority – even for replacement hires	Requires sign-off from the Director based on the business case. Typically agreed (i.e. about 80% or 90% of the time).	Complete authority – it is my decision entirely

Question D2: “What authority does the plant manager(or other managers) have to hire a junior Manager (e.g. somebody hired by the firm)?”

	Score 1	Score 3	Score 5
Scoring grid:	No authority – even for replacement hires	Requires sign-off from the Director based on the business case. Typically agreed (i.e. about 80% or 90% of the time).	Complete authority – it is my decision entirely

Question D3: “What authority does the plant manager (or other managers) have to purchase spare parts?”?

Probe until you can accurately score the question. Also take an average score for sales and marketing if they are taken at different levels.

	Score 1	Score 3	Score 5
Scoring grid:	No authority	Requires sign-off from the Director based on the business case. Typically agreed (i.e. about 80% or 90% of the time).	Complete authority – it is my decision entirely

Question D4: “What authority does the plant manager (or other managers) have to plan maintenance schedules?”

	Score 1	Score 3	Score 5
Scoring grid:	No authority	Requires sign-off from the Director based on the business case. Typically agreed (i.e. about 80% or 90% of the time).	Complete authority – it is my decision entirely

Question D5: “What authority does the plant manager (or other managers) have to award small (<10% of salary) bonuses to workers?”

	Score 1	Score 3	Score 5
Scoring grid:	No authority	Requires sign-off from the Director based on the business case. Typically agreed (i.e. about 80% or 90% of the time).	Complete authority – it is my decision entirely

Question D6: “What authority does the plant manager (or other managers) have to introduce new products”

	Score 1	Score 3	Score 5
Scoring grid:	No authority	Requires sign-off from the Director based on the business case. Typically agreed (i.e. about 80% or 90% of the time).	Complete authority – it is my decision entirely

Question D7: “What is the largest expenditure (in rupees) a plant manager (or other managers) could typically make without your signature?”**Question D8: “What is the extent of follow-up required to be done by the directors?”**

	Score 1	Score 3	Score 5
Scoring grid:	The Directors are the primary point of contact for exchange of all information between managers	Frequent follow ups on about half of the decisions made by managers	Minimal follow-ups on decisions taken between managers. Only dispute resolution.

Table B2: The computerization survey:

For question D9 any score can be given, but the scoring guide is only provided for scores of 1, 3 and 5.

Question C1: “Does the plant have an Electronic resource planning system?”

Question C2: “How many computers does the plant have?”

Question C3: “How many of these computers are less than 2 years old?”

Question C4: “How many people in the factory typically use computers for at least 10 minutes day?”

Question C5: “How many cumulative hours per week are computers used in the plant?”

Question C6: “Does the plant have an internet connection”

Question C7: “Does the firm (or plant) have a website?”

Question C8: “Does the plant manager use e-mail (for work purposes)?”

Question C9: “Does the plant manager use e-mail (for work purposes)?”

Question C10: “What is the extent of computer use in operational performance management?”

	Score 1	Score 3	Score 5
Scoring grid:	Computers not used in operational performance management	Around 50% of operational performance metrics (efficiency, inventory, quality and output) are tracked & analyzed through computer/ERP generated reports.	All main operational performance metrics (efficiency, inventory, quality and output) are tracked & analyzed through computer/ERP generated reports.

Table B3: Descriptive statistics for the Decentralization and Computerization survey

Decentralization questions					Computerization questions				
	Mean	Min	Max	SD		Mean	Min	Max	SD
D1 (weaver hiring)	4.71	3	5	0.683	C1 (ERP)	0.79	0	1	0.41
D2 (manager hiring)	2.19	1	4	1.19	C2 (number computers)	2.79	0	8	2
D3 (spares purchases)	2.78	1	5	0.87	C3 (number new computers)	0.54	0	8	1.65
D4 (maintenance planning)	4.69	2	5	0.76	C4 (computer users)	3	0	10	2.28
D5 (worker bonus pay)	2.54	1	5	1.22	C5 (computer hours)				
D6 (new products)	2.04	1	4	1.17	C6 (internet connection)	0.69	0	1	0.47
D7 (investment limit, rupees)	12608	1000	60000	12610	C7 (website)	0.33	0	1	0.48
D8 (director coordination)	3.20	2	5	0.88	C8 (plant manager e-mail)	0.25	0	1	0.44
Decentralization index	0	-2.07	1.53	1	C9 (directors e-mail)	0.83	0	1	0.38
					C10 (production computerization)	3.29	1	5	1.27
					Computer index	0	-1.52	2.45	1

Notes: There are about 50 rupees to the dollar.

Table 1: The field experiment sample

	All				Treatment	Control	Diff
	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Mean	Mean	p-value
<u>Sample sizes:</u>							
Number of plants	28	n/a	n/a	n/a	19	9	n/a
Number of experimental plants	20	n/a	n/a	n/a	14	6	n/a
Number of firms	17	n/a	n/a	n/a	11	6	n/a
Plants per firm	1.65	2	1	4	1.73	1.5	0.393
<u>Firm/plant sizes:</u>							
Employees per firm	273	250	70	500	291	236	0.454
Employees, experimental plants	134	132	60	250	144	114	0.161
Hierarchical levels	4.4	4	3	7	4.4	4.4	0.935
Annual sales \$m per firm	7.45	6	1.4	15.6	7.06	8.37	0.598
Current assets \$m per firm	12.8	7.9	2.85	44.2	13.3	12.0	0.837
Daily mtrs, experimental plants	5560	5130	2260	13000	5,757	5,091	0.602
<u>Management and plant ages:</u>							
BVR Management score	2.60	2.61	1.89	3.28	2.50	2.75	0.203
Management adoption rates	0.274	0.260	0.08	0.553	0.255	0.328	0.248
Age, experimental plant (years)	19.4	16.5	2	46	20.5	16.8	0.662
<u>Performance measures</u>							
Operating efficiency (%)	70.77	72.8	26.2	90.4	70.2	71.99	0.758
Raw materials inventory (kg)	59,497	61,198	6,721	149,513	59,222	60,002	0.957
Quality (% A-grade fabric)	40.12	34.03	9.88	87.11	39.04	41.76	0.629

Notes: Data provided at the plant and/or firm level depending on availability. **Number of plants** is the total number of textile plants per firm including the non-experimental plants. **Number of experimental plants** is the total number of treatment and control plants. **Number of firms** is the number of treatment and control firms. **Plants per firm** reports the total number of other textiles plants per firm. Several of these firms have other businesses – for example retail units and real-estate arms – which are not included in any of the figures here. **Employees per firm** reports the number of employees across all the textile production plants, the corporate headquarters and sales office. **Employees per experiment plant** reports the number of employees in the experiment plants. **Hierarchical levels** displays the number of reporting levels in the experimental plants – for example a firm with workers reporting to foreman, foreman to operations manager, operations manager to the general manager and general manager to the managing director would have 4 hierarchical levels. **BVR Management score** is the Bloom and Van Reenen (2007) management score for the experiment plants. **Management adoption rates** are the adoption rates of the management practices listed in Table 2 in the experimental plants. **Annual sales (\$m)** and **Current assets (\$m)** are both in 2009 US \$million values, exchanged at 50 rupees = 1 US Dollar. **Daily mtrs, experimental plants** reports the daily meters of fabric woven in the experiment plants. Note that about 3.5 meters is required for a full suit with jacket and trousers, so the mean plant produces enough for about 1600 suits daily. **Age of experimental plant (years)** reports the age of the plant for the experimental plants. Note that none of the differences between the means of the treatment and control plants are significant. **Raw materials inventory** is the stock of yarn per intervention. **Operating efficiency** is the percentage of the time the machines are producing fabric per intervention. **Quality (% A-grade fabric)** is the percentage of fabric each plant defines as A-grade, which is the top quality grade.

Table 2: The textile management practices adoption rates

Area	Specific practice	Pre-intervention <i>level</i>		Post-intervention <i>change</i>	
		Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control
Factory Operations	Preventive maintenance is carried out for the machines	0.429	0.667	0.214	0
	Preventive maintenance is carried out per manufacturer's recommendations	0.071	0	0.142	0.167
	The shop floor is marked clearly for where each machine should be	0.071	0.333	0.142	0
	The shop floor is clear of waste and obstacles	0	0.167	0.142	0
	Machine downtime is recorded	0.571	0.667	0.357	0.167
	Machine downtime reasons are monitored daily	0.429	0.167	0.5	0.167
	Machine downtime analyzed at least fortnightly & action plans implemented to try to reduce this	0	0.167	0.571	0
	Daily meetings take place that discuss efficiency with the production team	0	0.167	0.857	0.500
	Written procedures for warping, drawing, weaving & beam gaiting are displayed	0.071	0.167	0.500	0
	Visual aids display daily efficiency loomwise and weaverwise	0.214	0.167	0.571	0.167
	These visual aids are updated on a daily basis	0.143	0	0.643	0.167
	Spares stored in a systematic basis (labeling and demarked locations)	0.143	0.333	0.143	0
	Spares purchases and consumption are recorded and monitored	0.571	0.833	0	0
	Scientific methods are used to define inventory norms for spares	0	0.167	0	0
Quality Control	Quality defects are recorded	0.929	1	0.071	0
	Quality defects are recorded defect wise	0.286	0.167	0.714	0.833
	Quality defects are monitored on a daily basis	0.286	0.333	0.714	0.333
	There is an analysis and action plan based on defects data	0	0.167	0.714	0
	There is a fabric gradation system	0.571	0.833	0.357	0
	The gradation system is well defined	0.500	0.667	0.429	0
	Daily meetings take place that discuss defects and gradation	0.071	0.167	0.786	0
	Standard operating procedures are displayed for quality supervisors & checkers	0	0	0.643	0
Inventory Control	Yarn transactions (receipt, issues, returns) are recorded daily	0.928	1	0.071	0
	The closing stock is monitored at least weekly	0.214	0.167	0.571	0.333
	Scientific methods are used to define inventory norms for yarn	0	0	0.167	0
	There is a process for monitoring the aging of yarn stock	0.231	0	0.538	0
	There is a system for using and disposing of old stock	0	.2	0.692	0.600
	There is location wise entry maintained for yarn storage	0.357	0.167	0.143	0
Loom Planning	Advance loom planning is undertaken	0.429	0.833	0.143	0
	There is a regular meeting between sales and operational management	0.429	0.500	0.214	0.167
Human Resources	There is a reward system for non-managerial staff based on performance	0.571	0.667	0.071	0
	There is a reward system for managerial staff based on performance	0.214	0.167	0.214	0
	There is a reward system for non-managerial staff based on attendance	0.214	0.333	0.214	0
	Top performers among factory staff are publicly identified each month	0.071	0	0.143	0
	Roles & responsibilities are displayed for managers and supervisors	0	0	0.500	0
Sales and Orders	Customers are segmented for order prioritization	0	0	0	0
	Orderwise production planning is undertaken	0.692	1	0.231	0
	Historical efficiency data is analyzed for business decisions regarding designs	0	0	0.143	0
All	Average of all practices	0.255	0.328	0.352	0.093
p-value for the difference between the average of all practices		0.248		0.000	

Notes: Reports the 38 individual management practices measured before, during and after the management intervention. The columns **Pre Intervention level of Adoption** report the pre-intervention share of plants adopting this practice for the 14 treatment and 6 control plants. The columns **Post Intervention increase in Adoption** report the changes in adoption rates between the pre-intervention period and 4 months after the end of the diagnostic phase (so right after the end of the implementation phase for the treatment plants) for the treatment and control plants. The **p-value for the difference between the average of all practices** reports the significance of the difference in the average level of adoption and the increase in adoption between the treatment and control groups.

Table 3: The structure of the experiment

Plant sample:		Treatment	Control
On-site	Number:	14 plants (across 11 firms)	6 plants (across 6 firms)
	Intervention:	1 month diagnostic, 4 months implementation, and measurement until August 2010	1 month diagnostic and measurement until August 2010
	Timing:	Two waves – first wave diagnostic began in September 2008 and second wave in April 2009.	One wave - diagnostic began in July 2009.
	Data:	Performance, management, organizational and IT	Performance, management, organizational and IT
Off-site	Number:	5 plants (across 4 firms)	3 plants (across 3 firms)
	Intervention:	None directly – but potential spillovers from interventions on other plants within the same firm	None directly – but potential spillovers from interventions on other plants within the same firm
	Timing:	No direct intervention – for analytical purposes timing defined as relative to the diagnostic phase for the on-site plants within the same firm	No direct intervention – for analytical purposes timing defined as relative to the diagnostic phase for the on-site plants within the same firm
	Data:	Management, organizational and IT	Management, organizational and IT

Notes: The table describes the structure of the management experiment. “On-site” plants are those in which the consultants spent time on-site each week to collect detailed performance data and ran the diagnostic phase. “Off-site” plants are those the consultants only visited bi-monthly to collect management, organizational and IT data.

Table 4: The impact of the treatment on management practices within and across plants

Dependent Variable	Overall Management	Overall Management	Overall Management	Inventory Management	Quality Management	Operations Management	Loom Planning	HR Management	Sales & Orders
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Own plant treatment _{i,t} Months consulting in own plant	0.121*** (0.016)	0.121*** (0.020)	0.121*** (0.020)	0.120*** (0.021)	0.116*** (0.023)	0.178*** (0.041)	0.094** (0.039)	0.044 (0.029)	0.148*** (0.048)
Spillover treatment _{i,t} Months consulting in other plants within the same firm	0.040* (0.023)	-0.006 (0.024)							
Lag spillover treatment _{i,t-3} Lagged months consulting in other plants within the same firm		0.056*** (0.018)	0.050* (0.024)		0.046* (0.023)	0.072 (0.060)	0.047* (0.023)	0.014 (0.028)	0.098** (0.040)
Time FEs	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
Plant FEs	28	28	28	26	28	28	28	28	28
Observations	280	252	252	252	252	234	252	252	252
R-squared	0.904	0.909	0.909	0.889	0.820	0.807	0.883	0.885	0.747

Notes: The dependent variable is the share of the 38 management practices adopted in each plant (in columns (1) to (3)) and within sub-groups of practices in columns (4) to (9). This is regressed against the cumulative weeks of intervention in the own plant (“Own plant treatment”), the cumulative weeks of treatment in other plants within the same firm (“Spillover treatment”), and this variable lagged three months (“Lag spillover treatment”). The data is quarterly until April 2009 and bi-monthly thereafter, reflecting the frequency of measurement of management practices. A full set of time-dummies and plant dummies is included. Standard errors are clustered at the firm level.

Table 5: The impact of management practices on performance

Dependent Variable	Quality (log QDI)			Inventory (log tons)			Output (log picks)		
Specification	OLS	IV	ITT	OLS	IV	ITT	OLS	IV	ITT
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Management _{i,t}	-0.760	-2.024***		-0.707***	-0.939***		0.121	0.253***	
Adoption of management practices	(0.457)	(0.715)		(0.225)	(0.349)		(0.085)	(0.076)	
Intervention _{i,t}			-0.385**			-0.173*			0.018
Intervention stage initiated			(0.165)			(0.086)			(0.029)
Instrument		Log (1+ months of treatment)			Log (1+ months of treatment)			Log (1+ months of treatment)	
Time FEs	106	106	106	104	104	104	104	104	104
Plant FEs	20	20	20	18	18	18	20	20	20
Observations	1366	1366	1366	1690	1690	1690	1862	1862	1862

Notes: All regressions use a full set of plant and calendar week dummies. Standard errors bootstrap clustered at the firm level. **Quality (log QDI)** is a log of the quality defects index (QDI), which is a weighted average score of quality defects, so higher numbers imply worse quality products (more quality defects). **Inventory (log tons)** is the log of the tons of yarn inventory in the plant. **Output (log picks)** is the log of the sale quality production picks. **Management** is the adoption of the 38 management practices listed in table 2. **Intervention (implementation)** is a plant level indicator taking a value of 1 after the implementation phase has started at a treatment plant. **Log(1+months of treatment)** is the log of one plus the cumulative count of the weeks since the start of the implementation in each plant (treatment plants only), and value zero before. **OLS** reports results with plant estimations. **IV** reports the results where the management variable has been instrumented with log(1+ cumulative intervention weeks). **ITT** reports the intention to treat results from regressing the dependent variable directly on the 1/0 intervention indicator. **Time FEs** report the number of calendar week time fixed effects. **Plant FEs** reports the number of plant-level fixed effects. Two plants do not have any inventory on site, so no inventory data is available.

Table 6: The impact of management practices on organization and computerization

Measure:	Organization						Computerization			
Dependent variable:	Decentralization index (1)	Manager employment (2)	Spares purchasing (3)	Worker bonuses (4)	Investment limits (5)	Director coordination (6)	Computerization index (7)	Computer intensity (8)	Computing hours (9)	Computer users (10)
Management _{i,t}	0.833*** (0.194)	1.226 (0.928)	0.127 (0.287)	1.660* (0.862)	0.162 (0.248)	2.458*** (0.780)	1.006*** (0.285)	2.736*** (0.855)	11.320*** (3.425)	6.201*** (2.042)
SD of dep. var.	1.000	1.367	1.331	1.481	3.591	1.537	1.000	1.327	10.425	
Time FEs	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Plant FEs	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
Observations	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56

Notes: All regressions use two observations per firm (per intervention and March 2010), and a full set of plant dummies and time dummies. Standard errors bootstrap clustered at the firm level. **Management** is the adoption of the 38 management practices listed in table 2. **Decentralization index** is the principal component factor of 8 measures of decentralization around weaver hiring, manager hiring, spares purchases, maintenance planning, weaver bonuses, new products, investment, and departmental co-ordination. The other decentralization columns show the results for the individual components of this index which change over time (the omitted components do not change). **Manager employment** is the measure of the decentralization of employment decisions on hiring new junior managers. **Spares purchasing** is the measure of the decentralization over the purchasing of spare parts. **Worker bonuses** is the measure of decentralization over the ability to pay small worker bonuses. **Investment limits** is the log of the capital investment limit of plant managers. **Director co-ordination** is the extent of follow-up by directors in decision making between managers. **Computerization index** is the principal component factor of 10 measures around computerization, which are the use of an ERP system, the number of computers in the plant, the number of computers less than 2 years old, the number of employees using computers for at least 10 minutes per day, and the cumulative number of hours of computer use per week, an internet connection at the plant, the a firm web-site, if the plant-manager uses e-mail, if the directors use of e-mail, and the intensity of computerization in production. The other computerization columns show the results for the individual components of this index that changed over time (the omitted components did not change). **Computer intensity** is a measure of the extent of computers in the production management process. **Computing hours** is the number of cumulative hours per week that plant workers use computers. **Computer users** is the number of plant workers using computers for at least 10 minutes per week. **Time FEs** reports the number of time fixed effects. **Plant FEs** reports the number of plant-level fixed effects. **SD of dep. var.** reports the standard deviation of the dependent variable.

Table 7: Estimated average impact of improved quality, inventory and efficiency

Change	Impact	Estimation approach	Estimated impact
Profits (annual in \$)			
Improvement in quality	Reduction in repair manpower	Reduction in defects (31.9%) times average mending manpower wage bill of \$41,000.	\$13,120
	Reduction in waste fabric	Reduction in defects times (31.9%) the average yearly waste fabric (7.5%) times annual average sales of \$7.45m.	\$178,800
Reduction in inventory	Reduction in inventory carrying costs	Reduction in inventory (15.9%) times carrying cost of 22% times \$230,000 average inventory	\$8,045
Increased efficiency	Increased sales	Increase in output of 4.1% times 40% margin times \$7.45m sales	\$122,180
Total			\$322,145
Productivity (%)			
Improvement in quality	Reduction in repair manpower	Reduction in defects (31.9%) times share of repair manpower in total manpower (18.7%) times labor share (0.58) in output	3.5%
	Reduction in waste fabric	Reduction in defects (31.9%) times the average yearly waste fabric (5%)	2.4%
Reduction in inventory	Reduction in capital stock	Reduction in inventory (15.9%) times inventory share in capital (8%) times capital factor share (0.42)	0.5%
Increased efficiency	Increased output	Increase in output (4.1%) without any change in labor or capital	4.1%
Total			10.5%

Notes: Estimated impact of the improvements in the management intervention on firms profitability and productivity through quality, inventory and efficiency using the estimates in Table 5. Figure calculated for the average firm. See Appendix A for details of calculations for inventory carrying costs, fabric waste, repair manpower and factor shares.

Table 8: Reasons for bad management, as a percentage (%) of all practices, before and after treatment

Non-adoption reason	Firm group	1	1	3	5	7	9
		month before	month after	months after	months after	months after	months after
Lack of information (plants not aware of the practice)	Treatment	38.6	12.8	2.2	0.5	0.4	0.3
	Control	32.1	13.7	8.4	8.4	8.4	n/a
	Non-experimental	30.4	13.0	2.1	0.5	0.5	0.3
Incorrect information (plants incorrect on cost-benefit calculation)	Treatment	29.3	33.3	31.9	29.2	28.5	27.5
	Control	27.6	36.1	38.4	37.9	37.9	n/a
	Non-experimental	34.2	33.2	31.3	28.7	24.7	23.2
Low ability or procrastination of owner (the owner is the reason for non adoption)	Treatment	3.8	9.1	7.2	7.5	7	6.7
	Control	5.8	9.5	9.2	8.4	8.4	n/a
	Non-experimental	5.3	23.4	31.8	35.5	33.2	33.7
Limited manager incentives or authority (plant manager is the reason for non-adoption)	Treatment	1.3	2.1	2.4	3.0	3	3.2
	Control	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	n/a
	Non-experimental	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
Not profitable (the consultants agree non-adoption is correct)	Treatment	0	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5
	Control	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
	Non-experimental	0	0	0	0	0.5	0.5
Other (variety of other reasons for non-adoption)	Treatment	0	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.5
	Control	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
	Non-experimental	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	Treatment	73	57.7	44.3	40.9	39.8	38.6
	Control	67.1	60.8	57.6	56.3	56.3	n/a
	Non-experimental	72.3	72.1	67.9	67.3	61.6	60.3

Notes: Show the percentages (%) of practices not adopted by reason for non-adoption, in the treatment plants, control plants and non-experimental plants (the non-experimental plants belonging to firms with a treatment plant). Timing is relative to the start of the treatment phase (the end of the diagnostic phase for the control group and the start of the treatment phase for the other plant in their firm for the non-experimental plants). Covers 532 practices in treatment plants (38 practices in 14 plants), 228 practices in the control plants (38 practices in 6 plants) and 190 practices in the non-experimental plants (38 practices in 5 plants). Non adoption was monitored every other month using the tool shown in Figure 4, based on discussions with the firms' directors, managers, workers, plus regular consulting work in the factories. Note that data is only currently available up to 7 months after the end of diagnostic phase in the control firms.

Exhibit 1: Plants are large compounds, often containing several buildings.



Plant entrance with gates and a guard post



Plant surrounded by grounds



Front entrance to the main building



Plant buildings with gates and guard post

Exhibit 2: These factories operate 24 hours a day for 7 days a week producing fabric from yarn, with 4 main stages of production



(1) Winding the yarn thread onto the warp beam



(2) Drawing the warp beam ready for weaving



(3) Weaving the fabric on the weaving loom



(4) Quality checking and repair

Exhibit 3: Many parts of these factories were dirty and unsafe



Garbage outside the factory



Garbage inside a factory



Flammable garbage in a factory



Chemicals without any covering

Exhibit 4: The factory floors were frequently disorganized

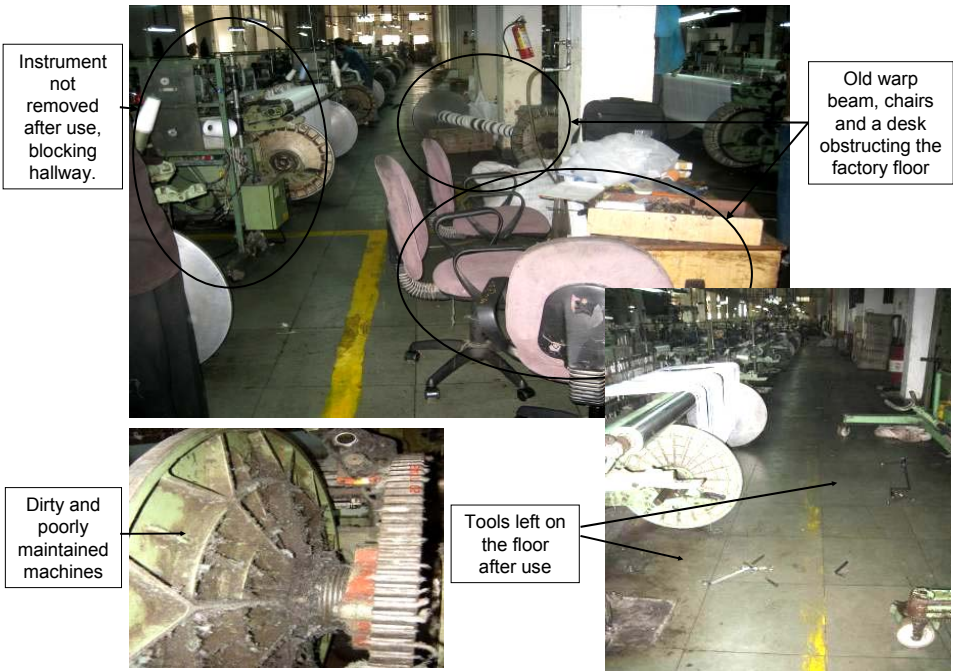


Exhibit 5: Most plants had months of excess yarn, usually spread across multiple locations, often without any rigorous storage system



Exhibit 6: The parts stores were often disorganized and dirty



Exhibit 7: The path for materials flow was frequently heavily obstructed



Unfinished rough path along which several 0.6 ton warp beams were taken on wheeled trolleys every day to the elevator, which led down to the looms.

This steep slope, rough surface and sharp angle meant workers often lost control of the trolleys. They crashed into the iron beam or wall, breaking the trolleys. So now each beam is carried by 6 men.

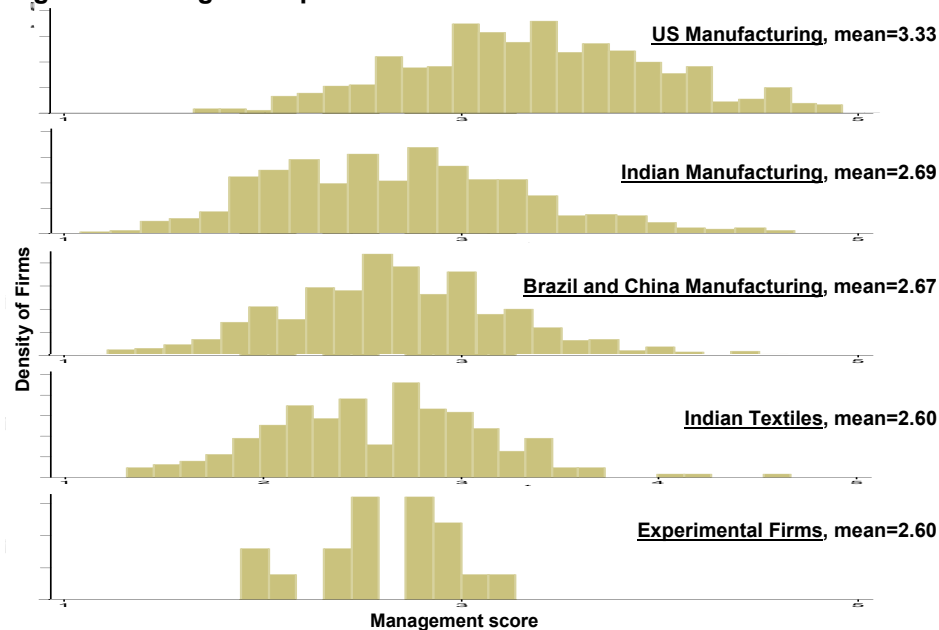


A broken trolley (the wheel snapped off)



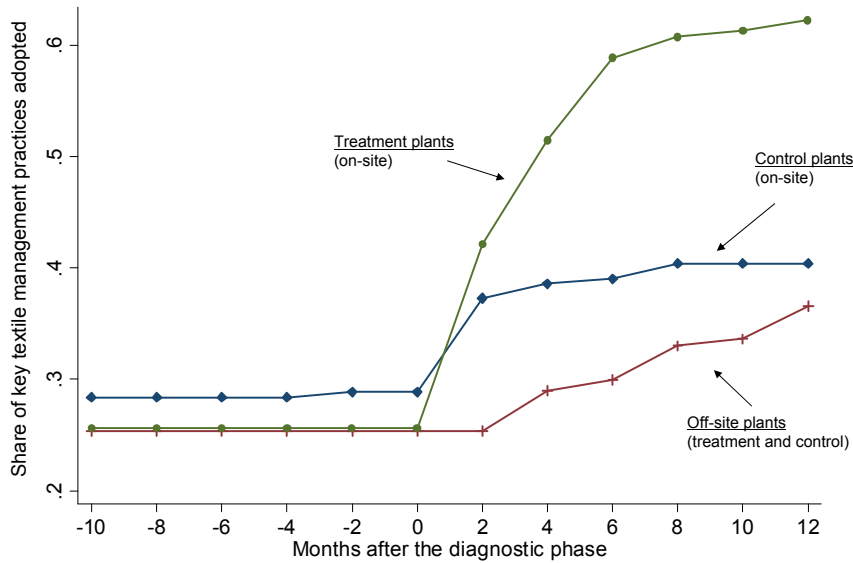
At another plant both warp beam elevators had broken down due to poor maintenance. As a result teams of 7 men carried several warps beams down the stairs every day. At 0.6 tons each this was slow and dangerous

Figure 1: Management practice scores across countries



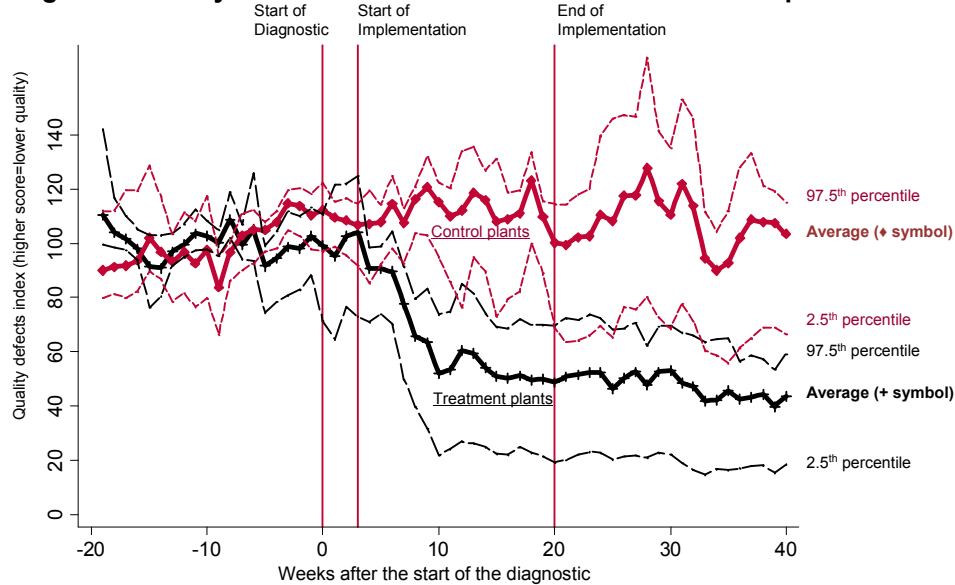
Notes: Management practice histograms using the Bloom and Van Reenen (2010) data. Double-blind surveys used to evaluate firms monitoring, targets and operations. Scores range from 1 (worst practice) to 5 (best practice). Samples are 17 experimental plants, 232 Indian textile firms, 620 Indian manufacturing firms, and 1083 Brazilian and Chinese firms.

Figure 2: The adoption of key textile management practices over time



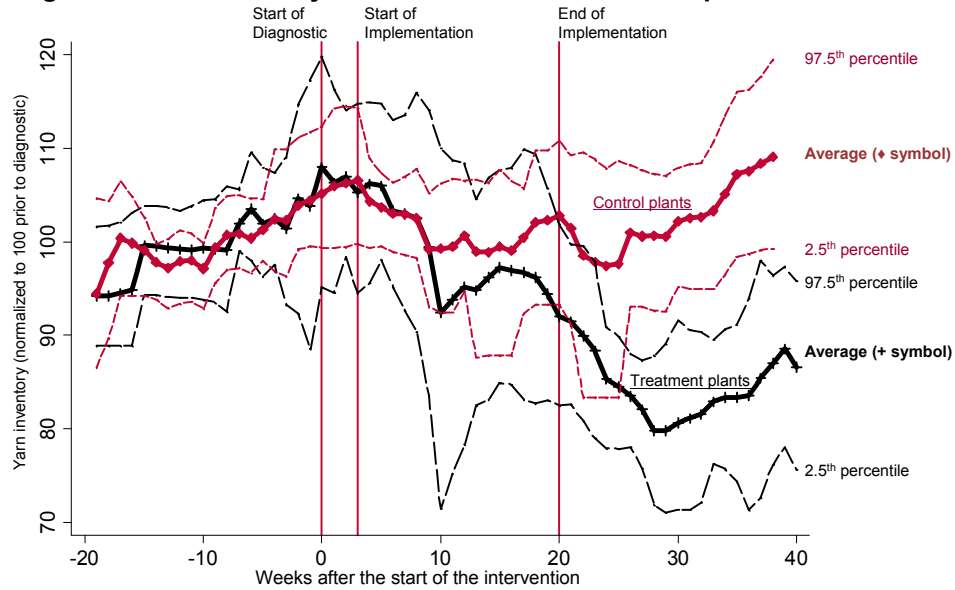
Notes: Average adoption rates of the 38 key textile manufacturing management practices listed in Table 2. Shown separately for the 14 on-site treatment plants (round symbol), 6 on-site control plants (diamond symbol) and the 8 off-site plants which the consultants did not provide any direct consulting assistance to (+ symbol). Scores range from 0 (if none of the group of plants have adopted any of the 38 management practices) to 1 (if all of the group of plants have adopted all of the 38 management practices). Initial differences across all the groups are not statistically significant.

Figure 3: Quality defects index for the treatment and control plants



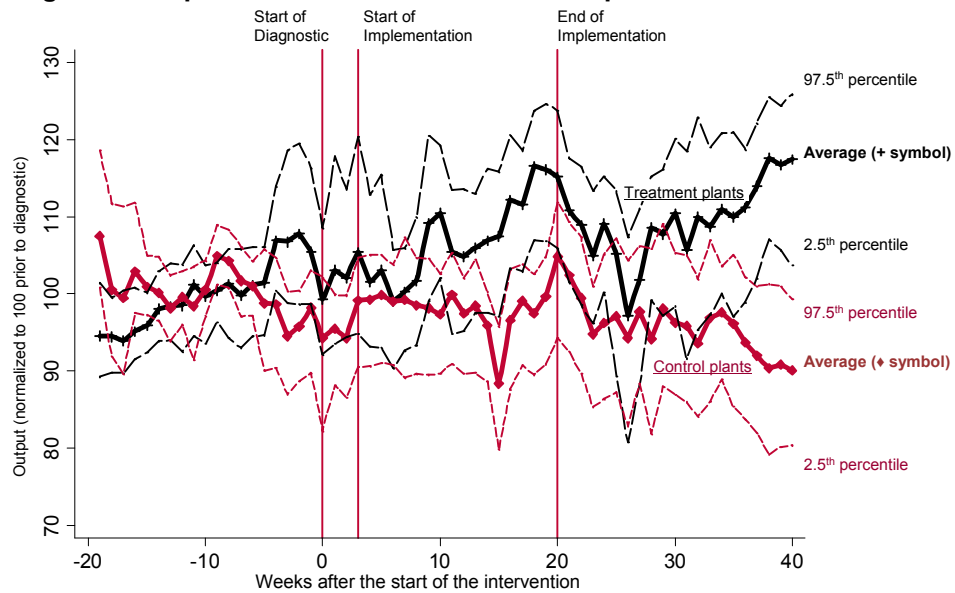
Notes: Displays the average weekly quality defects index, which is a weighted index of quality defects, so a higher score means lower quality. This is plotted for the 14 on-site treatment plants (+ symbols) and the 6 on-site control plants (♦ symbols). Values normalized so both series have an average of 100 prior to the start of the intervention. To obtain confidence intervals we bootstrapped the firms with replacement 250 times.

Figure 4: Yarn inventory for the treatment and control plants



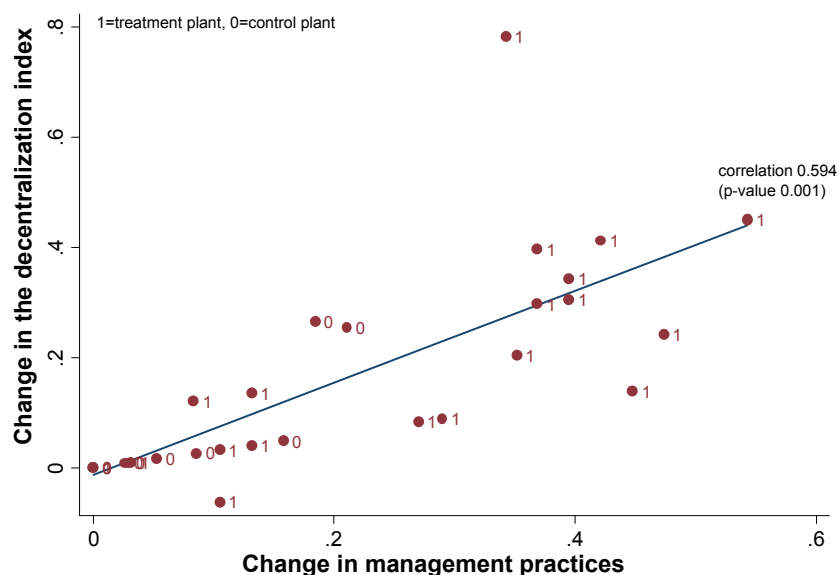
Notes: Displays the weekly average yarn inventory plotted for 12 on-site treatment plants (+ symbols) and the 6 on-site control plants (♦ symbols). Values normalized so both series have an average of 100 prior to the start of the intervention. To obtain confidence intervals we bootstrapped the firms with replacement 250 times. Slow moving fluctuations due to seasonality. 2 treatment plants maintain no on-site yarn inventory so are not included in the figures.

Figure 5: Output for the treatment and control plants



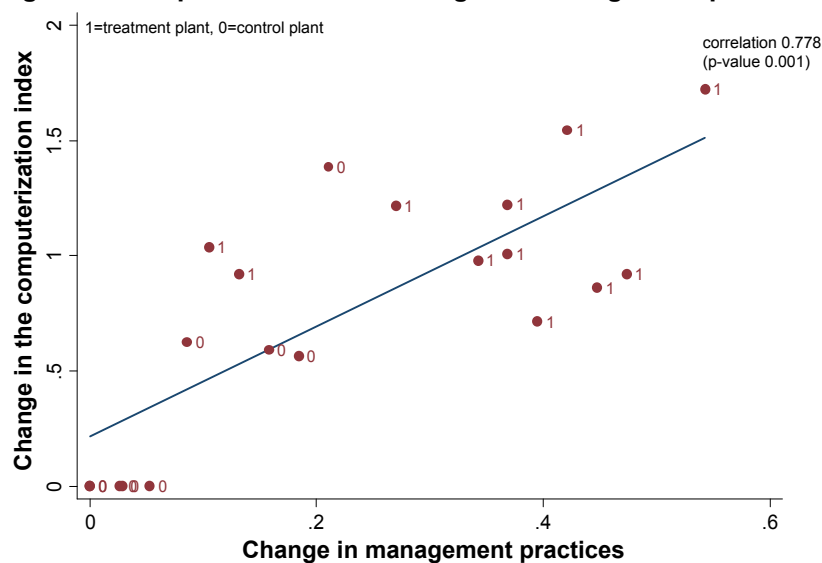
Notes: Displays the weekly average output for the 14 on-site treatment plants (+ symbols) and the 6 on-site control plants (♦ symbols). Values normalized so both series have an average of 100 prior to the start of the intervention. To obtain confidence intervals we bootstrapped the firms with replacement 250 times.

Figure 6: Decentralization and changes in management practices



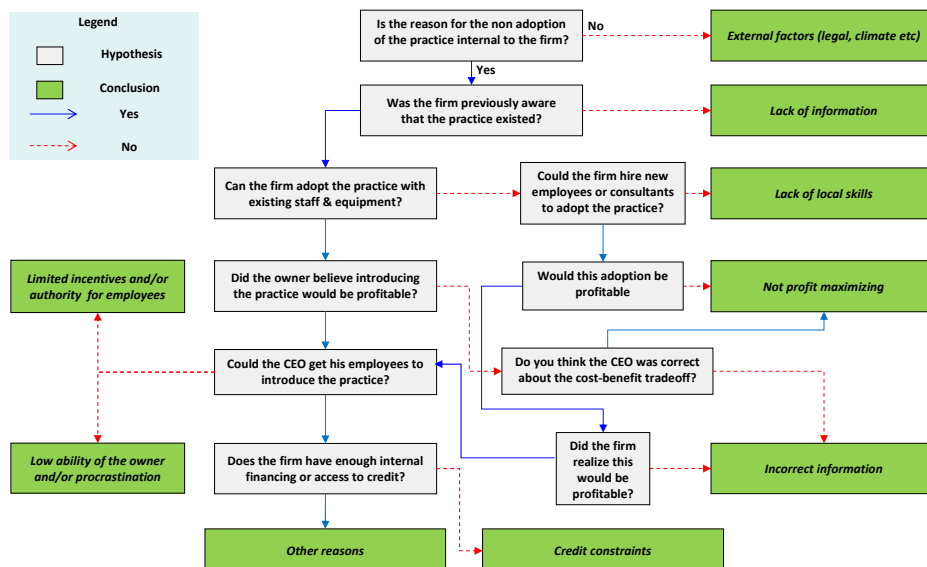
Note: Decentralization index is the principal component factor of 8 measures of decentralization around weaver hiring, manager hiring, spares purchases, maintenance planning, weaver bonuses, new products, investment, and departmental co-ordination. Changes defined over the period from pre-treatment to March 2010.

Figure 7: Computerization and changes in management practices



Note: **Computerization index** is the principal component factor of 10 measures, which are the use of an ERP system, the number of computers, the number of computers less than 2 years old, the number of employees using computers for at least 10 minutes per day, and the cumulative number of hours of computer use per week, an internet connection at the plant, the firm has a web-site, if the plant-manager uses e-mail, if the directors use of e-mail, and the intensity of computerization in production.

Figure 8: Non adoption flow chart used by consultants to collect data



Notes: The consultants used the flow chart to evaluate why each particular practice from the list of 38 in Table 2 had not been adopted in each firm, on a bi-monthly basis. Non adoption was monitored every other month based on discussions with the firms' directors, managers, workers, plus regular consulting work in the factories.