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Intra-household Gender Inequality, Welfare, and Economic Development*

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Abstract

Differences in economic outcomes between men and women *within* a household, or intra-household gender inequality has suffered from relative neglect despite a renewed focus on gender inequality. Using global micro-data from nearly three million households, we present evidence that this neglect renders our understanding of the relationship between gender inequality and economic development analytically and empirically incomplete. We show that intra-household gender inequality in earnings is persistent across the income distribution, across a wide range to countries, and over four-decades. For a sub-sample of countries, we show that the relationship between intra-household gender inequality and household economic status is non-monotonic – that we refer to as the “micro-Kuznets” relationship. We also develop an empirical framework to measure the aggregate welfare loss from intra-household gender inequality. For a range of plausible inequality aversion assumptions, we report an median welfare loss of over 15% of aggregate earnings.

Key words: Micro-Kuznets Relationship, Atkinson Inequality Metric, Gender Equality, LIS Global Micro-Data

JEL codes: D63, I31, J16, O10

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1 Introduction

Even as gender inequality has attracted broad attention as a key constitutive element of overall economic inequality, the economic differences between men and women *within* a household remains under-characterized (Ponthieux and Meurs, 2015; Ridgeway, 2011). However, available evidence suggests that a woman’s most immediate context – her household – can be a site of grave inequalities, especially with respect to economic resources. Women are less likely to earn the same level of income as men, less likely to own key assets, and less likely to be as wealthy as men (Ruel and Hauser, 2013; Grabka et al., 2015; OECD, 2015; Gaddis et al., 2020). There are of course, spatial and temporal variations in the levels and extent of such inequalities reflecting evolving socio-cultural norms, the institutional context, structural changes in the economy, and policy interventions. The global policy goal of gender equality will not be achieved unless we unpack the household black box.

In this paper, using global micro data from 2.85 million households (corresponding to 302 country-year datasets) we develop a global portrait of the relationship between intra-household gender inequality and economic development. We delineate four related global trends. First, we show that intra-household gender inequality is prevalent across a diverse set of countries, and across four decades (1973-2016). Second, we find that intra-household gender inequality is pervasive across the earnings distribution. Third, we present a “micro-Kuznets” framework to account for the non-linear relationship between intra-household gender inequality and household economic status. Finally, we develop a welfare theoretic framework to estimate the aggregate economy-wide welfare loss related to intra-household gender inequality.

Given our interest in gender differences in economic outcomes within the household, we focus on labor market earnings of men and women. Our primary intra-household gender inequality indicator, woman’s share of couple earnings is a function of her engagement with the labor market. Men and women differ in their labor market experience along several dimensions. On average, women are less likely to be in full-time employment, have reduced hours of work, and face greater career breaks due to life cycle events such as childbirth (?). The gender wage gap has declined but continues to exist across developed and developing countries (?). Sticky gender norms ensure that women continue to carry the main responsibility of social reproduction activities that are not only unpaid and undervalued, but also limit their labor market engagement (Bertrand et al., 2015; Pepin et al., 2018).

Women’s reduced labor market attachment has implications for gender inequality corre-

sponding to both pecuniary and non-pecuniary outcomes. Starting with obvious material losses, unequal labor market experience for women can lead to reduced income in old age when pension policies are indexed to labor earnings (Brown et al., 2016), reduced life-time wealth accumulation (Ruel and Hauser, 2013), and increasing poverty rate (Nieuwenhuis et al., 2020). Loss of earnings also increases the risk of individual (woman's) poverty even if the household as a whole is not experiencing poverty (Vijaya et al., 2014).

Women's labor force participation has a long and checkered history within the broader feminist literature. It has been argued that labor market participation is critical for empowerment beyond economic outcomes; it potentially gives women a source of independent earnings, which can alter the balance of power within the household. Indeed, "even if household income were shared completely, it is problematic to assume that it does not matter in a well-being assessment whether a person has earned this money herself or obtained it from her partner" (Robeyns, 2003, p.63). Further, the very act of stepping outside the confines of the home and interacting with others can also be empowering and liberating, particularly in certain social and geographical contexts. However, feminist scholars have also pointed to the dangers of considering all work as empowering for women. Women's work is often driven by subsistence needs, is concentrated in low-skill and poorly remunerated sectors with a high degree of drudgery with little scope for empowerment. Formal and semi-formal sector employment is preferred over informal or casual employment (Anderson and Eswaran, 2009; Kabeer et al., 2013).

Employment, individual-level earnings, and an associated sense of empowerment all reinforce each other to impact several well-being outcomes. Independent resources (property, income, wealth) and employment largely reduce the risk of intimate partner violence (Bhattacharyya et al., 2011; Oduro et al., 2015; Panda and Agarwal, 2005). Greater resource control also benefits women's empowerment as measured by involvement in household decision-making or mobility (Anderson and Eswaran, 2009; Majlesi, 2016; Swaminathan et al., 2012a). Finally, when women have independent control of household resources, it has positive impacts on childrens human capital (Allendorf, 2007; Bobonis, 2009; Lundberg et al., 1997; Park, 2007).

Most indicators of gender inequality are almost always at the population level; there are few that measure inequality *within* households. Empirically there is a disconnect between the unit of analysis and the unit of data collection. Typically, one is concerned with the well-being of the individual, but the smallest unit for which data is widely collected is usually the household. This is true for income, consumption, or wealth data, which are the typical

focus of economic inequality analysis.¹ To move from the household to the individual, a per-capita method is adopted that entails equally apportioning the household total among all its members. Sometimes, equivalence scales are used to adjust these figures for age and sex. The problem with this methodology is that it assumes away any intra-household inequality with the consequence that one gets an underestimate of poverty and inequality (Haddad and Kanbur, 1990; Swaminathan et al., 2012b; Vijaya et al., 2014). For many women, the myriad experiences within the home constitute an important element of the gender discrimination they encounter all too frequently. Power imbalances, social norms and values systems that are biased against women certainly have their basis in the larger community but are also nurtured within the household.

An important extension to this work is to trace out the relationship between intra-household inequality in earnings and economic prosperity. We investigate if there is a secular decline in intra-household inequality as one moves higher on the economic distribution of households. One would expect a convergence of earnings between spouses with greater assortative matching in the marriage market. In other words, as individuals with similar levels of education come together to form households, they are likely to encounter similar employment opportunities. How this translates into earnings is governed by structural conditions in the labor market (gender pay gap, discrimination in hiring and so on) and by the labor supply choices made by the couple (Bertrand et al., 2015). These choices will affect both the intent to participate (to work or not in the formal labor market) as well as the intensity of work (hours committed to the labor market). The focus of our work is not explaining factors driving women’s employment (see Klasen, 2019, for a comprehensive review), but rather in linking these trends to intra-household inequality.

Many studies based in OECD countries disaggregate the contribution of women’s earnings to household-level earnings inequalities (for example Esping-Andersen, 2009; ?). On average, women’s earnings have been rising largely to due to reductions in the gender employment gap (difference in employment rates between men and women) and in the gender wage gap. These studies find women’s rising earnings tend to reduce household inequalities even as there may be some regional variations (Gregory et al., 2009; Harkness, 2013). A recent study by Nieuwenhuis et al. (2017) that examined the long-term trends (1973–2013) across 18 OECD countries reinforced these results. However, there is no explicit consideration of earnings inequality within the household in these studies.

¹While developed economies where the formal sector is dominant, income data is indeed collected at the individual level even as consumption and wealth data are typically available only at the household level. However, in developing country contexts with large informal sectors, income data is also usually available only at the household level.

Our study also speaks to the literature that examines how economic growth impacts gender equality. While gender equality is a desirable outcome associated with economic development, and democratic transitions, there is no guarantee that economic development by itself will achieve this goal (Eastin and Prakash, 2013). Social norms that promote gender biases and entrenched patriarchal institutions are sometimes strengthened during the process of economic development. This relation has been examined at the country level using macro indicators (Forsythe et al., 2000; Eastin and Prakash, 2013). We draw upon the more recent (Eastin and Prakash, 2013) study, where the authors use macro data from 146 countries covering 1980-2005 to investigate the relation between a broad set of gender inequality indicators (Gender Development Index (GDI), Gender Equality Measure (GEM), female labor force participation and female parliamentary participation) and economic development (proxied by GDP). The authors find a non-monotonic association of gender equality with economic growth, which they term as a gender Kuznets curve. The evidence is suggestive of an ‘S’ shaped curve where in the first stage of development there are gains for gender equality; these are eroded in the second stage but are recouped once economic development crosses a certain threshold.

In our paper, we shift the analytic focus from sovereign nation states as the unit of analysis. Instead of large macro outcomes, we are interested in the micro dynamics of gender relationships at the most elementary aggregation of individuals – the household. Is there a micro-Kuznets relationship between intra-household gender inequality and household economic status? Our indicators for gender equality are women’s employment status, and women’s labor market earnings, both of which are directly relevant for women’s status within the household as well as other development outcomes. Household net wealth is used as a proxy for household economic status. We find that a micro-Kuznets relationship does not fully mirror macro-level findings.

2 Data

We use data from the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) global database that provides harmonized micro data over four decades across a range of countries (cf. Appendix Table A1 for details). LIS data, like most standard household surveys, has information on demographics, household structure, labor market activity, income and expenditures. Most centrally for the purposes of measuring intra-household gender inequality, income data is available at the individual level. What makes the LIS data unique is that all information has been

harmonized into a common template making it invaluable for cross country comparisons – and in our case developing a global portrait of intra-household gender inequality (LIS, 2016).²

This paper uses data from 45 unique countries, with repeated cross sections available for most countries, giving us a total of 302 country-year datasets, spanning 1973-2016. This large volume of information is used to delineate long-term patterns in intra-household inequality, while other analyses is based on more recent waves of data collection and described in the appropriate sections below. While the LIS repository has been used extensively to develop a portrait of global inequality, intra-household gender inequality has largely been ignored.³

Earnings in LIS data are at the individual level and classified as “gross” or “net” depending on how taxes and social security contributions are captured. Gross income is netted down using household-level or person-level tax information while datasets classified as “mixed” (data is a mixture of gross and net earnings) are dropped from our analysis (Nieuwenhuis et al., 2017). Negative earnings are set to zero, while the top one percentile are top-coded to the 99th percentile (Harkness, 2013). Our measure of earnings is broad and is defined as monetary returns to paid employment and includes returns to self-employment activity. Earnings are set to zero if an individual does not undertake any paid work. We use women’s share of aggregate couple earnings to track within-household gender inequality.

Our analytic sample comprises of heterosexual couple households (n = 2,847,697 couple units) where the head is living with a partner in a marriage, co-habiting, or in a consensual union. Further, both partners are working age (18 to 65 years), and not currently enrolled in a full-time educational program. Sampling weights are applied in all calculations. This analytic subset allows us to most effectively address questions surrounding gendered intra-household dynamics, our primary interest, even at the cost of understating the true extent of gender inequality in earnings. Global data shows that female-headed households and especially households where the woman is the only adult member are likely poorer than male-headed households (Maldonado and Nieuwenhuis, 2015). While our analytic sample consists of heterosexual couples, we use the terms “intra-household,” and “intra-couple” interchangeably throughout this paper in order to be consistent with the extant literature. Our analysis using LIS and LWS global micro-data repository builds on a well-established tradition that has studied intra-household inequalities in health and nutrition (Haddad and

²See <https://www.lisdatacenter.org/our-data/> for further information on LIS data

³*Cf.* <https://www.lisdatacenter.org/working-papers/> (accessed, December 24th 2020) for a list of all studies that have used the LIS micro-data.

Kanbur, 1990; Sahn and Younger, 2009; Rodríguez, 2016).

For a small subset of the over three-hundred harmonized micro datasets in the LIS repository, it is possible to merge the individual-level earnings data with the corresponding household wealth data available in the Luxembourg Wealth Study (LWS) repository. Similar to LIS, LWS is a cross-country wealth database harmonized into a common framework (LWS, 2014). For five countries (Australia, Germany, Italy, Norway, and Sweden), detailed wealth and income data were collected for the same household in the same year, making it possible to generate a combined data set to examine the micro-Kuznets relationship – a non-monotonic association between intra-household gender inequality and household economic status. We use household net-wealth to proxy economic status. The LIS-LWS merge gives us 15 country-year data sets, with an analytic sample of 301,519 couple-units.

Figure 1 illustrates why accounting for inequality within the household is analytically important in characterizing overall inequality in a society. Panel-A shows the distribution of Gini coefficients computed for the couple units from 302 LIS datasets. We compute inequality for the individual-distribution ($2n$ individuals) as well as the couple-distribution (n couples). The panel shows that over the last four decades, across a diverse set of countries, the difference between inequality measured at the individual level versus household (aggregate couple earnings) is substantial. This difference between individual and couple Gini coefficients reflects intra-household (or more accurately, intra-couple) earnings inequality. The use of the couple distribution amounts to a neglect of intra-household inequality in earnings. It is equivalent to the assumption that earnings within a household (couple unit) are equally distributed so that Gini is computed using per-capita household earnings.

Panel-B of Figure 1 presents the evolution of this intra-couple inequality, measured as the difference between individual and couple level Gini coefficients between 1973 and 2016. Inequality within couples has declined monotonically in the last forty years, consistent with increased assortative mating and also greater labor force participation by women (Harkness, 2013). Despite a 20% decline in intra-couple inequality, current levels continue to be significant. Our primary focus is on contemporary levels of intra-household gender inequality, and we further analyze the thirty-nine most recent LIS datasets (from 2010 onward); these datasets are marked in blue in Panel-B of Figure 1, and forms the main analytic data sub-sample used in further analysis.

3 Global Trends

We begin the description of key global trends in intra-household inequality by unpacking Panel-B of Figure 1 in Panel-C of the same figure. This panel plots the percentage spread between Gini coefficients computed from individual and aggregate couple distributions against overall level of individual earnings inequality (measured as Gini coefficient computed using disaggregated individual-level earnings data). We have once again separated out the 39 countries from the last wave of datasets in the LIS repository. This sub-sample contains 466,475 couple units as opposed to our full analytic sample of 2,847,697 couple units (*cf.* Appendix Table A3 for details). Overall, Panel-C of Figure 1 shows a non-monotonic relationship between the extent of intra-household gender inequality (measured crudely as the percentage spread between between Gini coefficients and the level of inequality (measured as individual-level Gini). However, for the most recent wave of global earnings data (represented by 39 countries in blue), there is no discernible relationship between level of inequality and intra-household gender inequality proxied by the percentage difference between Gini coefficients measures at aggregate couple and the individual levels. Taken together, Panel-C of Figure 1 shows how the extent of intra-household inequality is not linearly correlated with overall level of inequality.

Panel-D of Figure 1 also uses data from 39 latest datasets from around the world. For this analytic sub-sample, Panel-D of Figure 1 maps the relationship between Gini coefficients computed at individual and couple scales. The Gini coefficient for individual earnings distribution is highly correlated with the Gini for the couple earnings distribution. Thus, any macro-level or cross-country analysis of the impact of inequality is likely unaltered by the use of household, rather than the individual as the unit of analysis. However, neglecting intra-household inequality amounts to an implicit income pooling assumption that has been shown to be both theoretically and empirically untenable.

The lack of a straightforward linear relationship between intra-household gender inequality and overall level of inequality is illustrated in Figure 2. This depicts the relationship between the extent of intra-household gender inequality and overall earnings inequality as country-ranks. We rank the 39 countries by overall level of inequality in our couple-household analytic sample (on the X axis of the figure; country with the lowest inequality is ranked “1,” and the country with the highest is ranked “39”). We also ranked countries by the percentage divergence between Gini coefficients measured at the individual level, and for the aggregate couple distribution – a proxy for extent of intra-household gender inequality (the country with the lowest divergence is ranked “1” on the Y axis).

We have divided Figure 2 into four quadrants defined by midpoint country ranking. The distribution of 39 countries from the latest wave in the LIS micro-data repository across these four quadrants underscores why it is important to analytically and empirically track intra-household gender inequality separately from overall inequality. Consider the four Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Norway – all with low levels of overall inequality. While Finland and Denmark (in the **Q3** quadrant) also have low levels of intra-household gender inequality, Iceland’s intra-household inequality rank is comparable to that of United States that has much higher level of overall inequality. At the other end of the spectrum, South Africa and Egypt both have high levels of overall inequality but South Africa (along with Latin American countries of Brazil, Chile, and Panama in **Q2**) display low levels of intra-household gender inequality. Of the 39 countries in Figure 2, only Hungary, U.K., and Greece have the same ranks for both overall inequality and intra-household gender inequality (shown on the $x = y$ diagonal line).

In Figure 3, we have singled out four diverse countries (Finland, Germany, India, and United States) – each occupying a distinct quadrant in Figure 2. Taken together, the Lorenz curves in Figure 3, and the cross-national analysis in Figure 2 show why a fuller characterization of intra-household gender inequality is contingent on *within*-country micro analysis. If intra-household gender inequality is uncorrelated with overall level of inequality, how (if) is intra-household gender inequality related to the economic status of the household?

For the same set of 39 countries in Figure 2, we investigate variations in women’s share of couple earnings across the earnings distribution in Figure 4. Women’s share is shown for our full analytic sample (where one member of the couple may have zero earnings) as well as for the sub-sample with strictly positive earnings for each member of the couple unit. The trend-lines are LOESS fitted curves (Cleveland, 1979) that trace the trajectory of women’s share across the distribution of households by couple earnings quantile. The horizontal lines represent the median share of women’s earnings for the two samples. The difference between these median shares is indicative of women’s low labor force participation. For the full sample, there are five countries where the median earning share is effectively zero. At the other end of the spectrum, Nordic countries show little difference in the median shares between the two samples. Moving from the full sample to the sub sample of only positive earnings couple households ($\approx 300,000$ couple units across 39 countries), we find that women’s share of couple earnings is increasing in overall position of the household in the couple earnings distribution. This is as expected, but what is revealing is that not in a single country do women earn as much as men (with same earnings, the share would be 50%). Previous

studies of intra-couple income distribution have shown that gender identity norms explain the constraints on women earning more than 50% of the aggregate couple income (Bertrand et al., 2015), and follows more generally from how socially constructed identities such as gender mediate economic outcomes (Akerlof and Kranton, 2000).

The median woman’s share of couple earning are higher than 40% in 28 countries. While across countries, women’s share is increasing as households become more prosperous, in the top percentiles, their share either plateaus or even shows a slight decline. Figure 4 highlights the importance of women’s paid work for reducing intra-couple earnings inequality. However, when women do participate in the labor market, there continue to be differences in earnings between men and women that could reflect differences in intensity of work (hours), concentration of women in low wage and low skill jobs, and labor market discrimination against women (Harkness, 2013; ?).

Evidence suggests that intra-household earnings inequality is driven by several interacting social, cultural, and economic channels. Social norms that reinforce men as breadwinners and women as homemakers and caregivers could push women out of the workforce as households make choices about labor market engagement *v.* household duties (Fernández et al., 2004; Fortin, 2005; Andrew et al., 2020). The responsibilities of social reproduction are a major reason why women are not able to undertake, or cut back on the hours of paid work. Family support policies (such as paid maternity and paternity leave, paid sick leave, day care facilities for young children and so on) are crucial in supporting womens paid work. Social security policies that are not conditional on employment are another source of significant support (Andringa et al., 2015). We therefore investigate how full-time employment modulates intra-household gender inequality in earnings.

For the four diverse countries that we previously singled out we examine the association between paid full-time work and intra-household earnings inequality between men and women (Figure 5). The countries were chosen to represent variations in women’s labor force participation, median women’s share of couple earnings, overall level of inequality, and the level of state support for women’s employment.⁴ We use the positive earners sub-sample for these four countries. The X axis shows, as previously, the earnings quantile of the couple distribution, while the Y axis now represents the individual earnings distribution. The points in each of the panels and associated LOESS trend lines show how individual members of a couple-unit occupy different points on the individual earnings distribution across the

⁴It would have been ideal to have representation from Africa and South/Central Americas, but it was not possible as the data required for this analysis was not available.

aggregate couple earnings distribution. The four panels for each country in Figure 5 show differing combinations of labor force intensity of the couple; both partners have any sort of labor market participation (panel A), both partners have full year full-time (FYFT) jobs (panel D), and women (men) have FYFT jobs but men (women) have either part time jobs or have not worked the full year (panels B and C, respectively). The residual category where neither men nor women in couple units hold full time jobs is not shown.

As reported in Table A2, and not surprisingly, India as the only non-OECD country in Figure 5 is an outlier with only 36% of couple units where both partners have non-zero earnings. This is largely reflective of the low labor force participation rates of women (Lahoti and Swaminathan, 2016), which is also evident from the stark difference in median share of women’s earnings between the full and positive samples. Further, 66% of couples within this small sub-sample contain men and women who both do not have full-year full-time employment. In Germany, men working full-time with part-time women is by far the dominant category, while in Finland, there is greater symmetry in men and women’s roles (Table A2). Among developed countries, US is an exception with 58% of couples in full-time work.

Trends reported in Figure 5 and Table A2 make clear how FYFT employment is key to reducing earnings inequality within the household (Figure-5). Interestingly in Finland, dual income households with both partners working full-time are not even represented in the lowest 25th percentiles (panel D). There is almost complete convergence in earnings at the bottom percentiles for all countries, while in the higher percentiles, men’s earnings on average, are higher than women’s earnings. Among other factors, these trends reflect family friendly state policies or the lack thereof, tax policies that penalize a second earner in the household, and effect of gender norms surrounding motherhood (Harkness, 2013; Kleven et al., 2019). As expected, when only men are in full-time employment their earnings dominate women’s earnings with the gender gap in earnings peaking around the middle of the distribution, as seen in Figure 5. There is substantive inequality in earnings at the intra-household level at the top end of the distribution for Germany, US and India (panel C). In the former two countries, this reflects the fact that women with highly paid partners are choosing more flexible forms of labor market engagement (Goldin, 2014).

Recent evidence from developed countries suggests a ‘motherhood penalty’ or a negative impact of childbirth and caring of young children on women’s labor market outcomes (Kleven et al., 2019). Interestingly, parenthood does not impose any such penalty on fathers. Essentially, mothers either exit the labor force or reduce their hours of work, both of which impacts earnings in the immediate and long term (Kleven et al., 2019). Women

may also switch to jobs that are more family friendly and offer greater flexibility. (Goldin, 2014) shows that in certain occupations, flexibility in hours and career interruptions have disproportionate impact on earnings. The finance, legal, and corporate sectors in particular show a nonlinear relationship of earnings with respect to hours worked. In India, on the other hand, there is an income effect on women's labor supply wherein high household income causes many women to exit the labor market (Eswaran et al., 2013). However, panel B in Figure 5 suggests that the converse is not strictly true across the distribution. Men are disadvantaged in Finland, Germany and US when couple earnings are low, but catch up with women as the household economic status improves.

The impact of motherhood penalty (Kleven et al., 2019) on intra-household gender inequality in our dataset is depicted in Figure 6. For both Finland (low overall inequality and low intra-household gender inequality) and the United States (high overall inequality and high intra-household gender inequality), the figure shows how motherhood penalty operates exacerbates intra-household gender inequality across the earnings distribution.

4 A Micro-Kuznets Relationship?

In our exploration of the micro-Kuznets relationship, similar to (Eastin and Prakash, 2013), we use women's employment status as a proxy for gender equality. As we have already discussed, labor market engagement is potentially foundational for women's economic empowerment, while also serving as the mechanism for enhancing her status and agency within the household. Further, for the sub-sample of women who are employed, we probe the micro-Kuznets relationship using women's share of couple earnings as a (intra-household) proxy for gender equality. The advantage of using earnings share over labor market participation or absolute earnings is that it captures women's relative status with respect to household resources (or more accurately couple earnings). It compares her earnings in relation to her partners' earnings and thus, incorporates any changes that may be occurring in men's earning capacities. It also abstracts away from the concern about the type of employment women are engaged in. Even if women are in poorly paid jobs that are not necessarily empowering, they will still have a positive income, which could be a valuable addition to household finances.

Our key independent variable is per-capita household net wealth measured in constant 2011 PPP US.⁵ Household wealth is the closest approximation for household economic status

⁵Wealth values are deflated using the 2011 LISPPs that helps compare monetary values across coun-

over the long or at least, medium term. Wealth differs from income in that it represents accumulated stock and is likely to experience a lower level of variation. As described in our data section, we use the LIS-LWS merged 15 country-year data sets for the micro-Kuznets analysis. The analytic sample remains the same as described previously; heterosexual couple households with working age individuals not currently enrolled in full-time education (see Appendix Table A4 for details).

For our first measure of gender inequality – women’s employment status – we estimate the following linear probability model (LPM):

$$\Omega_{ikt} = \alpha + \beta W_{ikt} + \gamma \vec{X}_{ikt} + \lambda \vec{K}_{ikt} + \mu \vec{Z}_{ikt} + \epsilon \quad (1)$$

where Ω_{ikt} is a binary variable that takes on a value 1 when the woman in household i (in country k and year t) is employed. W_{ikt} is the per-capita household net wealth; we include quadratic and cubic specifications of the wealth variable to test for a curvilinear relationship between gender equality and household economic status. \vec{X}_{ikt} is a vector of individual variables that are likely to influence her labor market participation (quadratic specification of age to pick up life cycle effects, and educational attainment). \vec{K}_{ikt} is a vector of household characteristics and includes number of own children living in the household, presence of a child under five years of age, and whether the wife was considered the household head.⁶ \vec{Z}_{ikt} is a vector of spouse or partner information (husband’s education status and employment status), and couple characteristics (age gap between husband and wife). We normalize all continuous variables, and report robust standard errors.

Conditional on wife’s employment status, we estimate the second model with her share of couple earnings as the dependent variable (Y_{ikt}).

$$Y_{ikt} |_{\Omega_{ikt}} = \alpha + \beta W_{ikt} + \gamma \vec{X}_{ikt} + \lambda \vec{K}_{ikt} + \mu \vec{Z}_{ikt} + \epsilon \quad (2)$$

The independent variables in Eq. 2 are identical to the model in Eq. 1. The model is estimated using ordinary least squares (OLS). However, in order to better understand the relationship between the distribution of women’s earnings share and the independent variables, we also estimate quantile regression models at 25%, 50% (median), and 75% quantiles. All models include country-year fixed effects to control for time varying unobserved country attributes. Figure 8 shows why quantile regression estimates are needed to fully describe the

tries and over time (see <https://www.lisdatacenter.org/resources/ppp-deflators/>, accessed on 15th January 2021).

⁶We refer to the couple unit as ‘husband-wife,’ but includes all heterosexual couples living together.

association between woman’s share of couple earnings and household economic status. The figure plots the bi-variate relationship at different deciles to show how this association can vary across the earning share distribution. Models in equations 1 and 2 are estimated for all 15 country data sets.

4.1 Micro-Kuznets Results

The LPM results are presented in Table 3. We find that per capita net household wealth is significantly associated with women’s employment status. But unlike Eastin and Prakash (2013), there is no indication of a ‘S’ shaped relationship, but rather a very faint U-shaped relation, bordering on a straight line. As per capita wealth rises initially, women are less likely to be employed. But as households become wealthier and more prosperous, women are more likely to participate in the labor market. This could reflect an income effect with women initially withdrawing from employment as their work is perceived to be supplemental. But as households move along the wealth distribution, women are more likely to be employed, reflecting the higher opportunity costs of lost wages. This U-shaped relationship is a ‘Norway effect,’ that is, it reflects the relationship between women’s employment and household economic status in Norway.

Estimating the LPM excluding Norway, our results indicate a ‘S’ shaped relationship between women’s employment and household economic status. The linear and the cubic terms of per capita household wealth show a positive association with wife’s employment, while the square term shows a negative association. This result is consistent with a gender-Kuznets relationship between gender equality and economic development at the macro-scale (Eastin and Prakash, 2013). At a micro level, this suggests three stages with respect to the economic status of the household. In the first stage, one could argue that economic factors and monetary concerns push women into employment. The household and women themselves may not be in a position to exercise any discretion on their employment due to economic necessity. As households become monetarily more secure, women step back into traditionally defined social reproduction roles. However, in wealthier households, women once again are more likely to be employed. Perhaps, in such households, there is a relaxation of restrictive gender expectations on the part of both men and women to facilitate women’s entry into employment.

Our second indicator of gender equality – wife’s earning share conditional on employment – shows a curvilinear relationship with per capita household wealth.⁷ This is true for both

⁷For this second indicator, we present results from models that exclude Norway.

OLS and quantile regression estimates. The linear and cubic terms on per capita household wealth have negative signs (although the point estimates on the cubic term are very small), while the square term has a positive sign. In poorer households, wives' earnings share is low presumably due to their greater representation in jobs that are low skill or low pay. As households gain in economic status, wives' share of couple earnings also improves, driven in part by better employment options. As the household's economic status improves further, there is a slight dip in wives' earning share. This is presumably due to reduced hours of work with many of them choosing part time instead of full-time work (however, the point estimate on the cubic term is close to zero even as it is significant). Unfortunately, we are not able to control for women's intensity of work, either in terms of full-time status or hours worked as this information is not uniformly available across all countries and over the different time periods. There is also no information in the LIS or LWS data on time devoted to social reproduction activities such as care-giving and household maintenance. There is heterogeneity of the relationship of wealth with earnings share – it is strongest for women in the 25th percentile of earnings share and non-existent for women in the 75th percentile.

The regressions also control for several individual and household attributes. As wives' education increases, it is associated with higher chances of their employment and increased share of earnings. Husband's (partner's) education, on the other hand, has a positive association with wife's employment status, but a negative one with her earnings share. This is suggestive of differing labor market intensities of men and women in the couple unit being reflected in their actual earnings. Being a household head positively impacts wife's employment status and her earnings share. An increasing number of own children in the household and presence of a young child (less than five years of age) has the expected negative relationship with wife's employment and her earnings share – consistent with our descriptive childcare penalty findings (Figure 6). Interestingly, husband being employed has a negative association with wife's employment status and earning share.

Broadly, several points of interest emerge from our micro-Kuznets analysis. Both indicators of gender equality (women's employment status, and intra-household gender inequality in earnings) exhibit a non-monotonic relationship with household economic status. While there is an economic stratification, there could also be a social stratification in terms of access to jobs and gender norms governing women's employment (Ridgeway, 1997; Ridgeway and Bourg, 2004; Ridgeway, 2014). Thus, there is no guarantee that as households become richer, women's status within the household will also show an improvement. Second, while women's employment status is relevant for economic empowerment via her independent earnings, it does not reveal the full story of within-household inequalities in earnings. There is

considerable variation across countries in the direction and magnitude of the micro-Kuznets relationship (see Appendix Tables [A5](#) and [A6](#)).

5 Intra-household Gender Inequality, and Welfare

Our analysis of global data spanning multiple decades has shown that intra-household gender inequality in earnings is persistent across countries, and across the earnings and wealth distribution. Here, we develop a simple empirical framework to account for the normative welfare consequences of such inequality.

A normative welfare characterization of a society with mean income (\bar{Y}), and inequality (I ; $0 \leq I \leq 1$), is represented as ([Lambert, 1989](#)):

$$W = \bar{Y}(1 - I); \quad 0 \leq I \leq 1 \quad (3)$$

We adapt the well-studied formulation in [Eq. 3](#) to an intra-household setting. Our primary goal here is to develop an empirically useful normative welfare framework, and we steer clear of various earnings versus consumption debates ([Krueger and Perri, 2006](#); [Aguiar and Bils, 2015](#)). Welfare is clearly more directly related to consumption rather than earnings that we have used to characterize intra-household gender inequality. In particular, individual earning in a household can be pooled, and even imperfect income pooling can result in considerable consumption welfare from household-level public goods. Consider two households A , and B so that woman in household A contributes 50% of the couple income, and the woman in B only 30% of exactly the same aggregate couple income. Given that household income is potentially pooled and consumption includes household-level public goods like physical dwelling, the impact of intra-household gender inequality on aggregate household welfare is theoretically indeterminate.

Consider a household i at time t with average (per capita) earnings of \bar{Y}_{it} . Let Φ_{it} be the distribution of per capita earnings across all analytically relevant members of the household. We assume that we can define a welfare function, $U(\cdot)$ that allows for a normative characterization of household-level welfare as a function of mean earnings and the intra-household distribution of that earning.

$$W_{ijt} = U(\bar{Y}_{it}, \Phi_{it}) \quad (4)$$

The specification in [Eq. 4](#) allows for welfare computations to vary by who within the house-

hold is determining aggregate household welfare. W_{ijt} represents the welfare computed by the j th individual in household i and time t . From our perspective, this specification is important as it is conceivable that women in a household can evaluate aggregate welfare differently from men (Neumark and Postlewaite, 1998; Lambert et al., 2003), even when there is no discernible difference between how income aspirations mediate subjective well-being (Stutzer, 2004; Herreiner and Puppe, 2010).

While direct welfare comparisons across different households is theoretically fraught, the “intra-household distribution penalty” on aggregate household welfare is comparable. Thus, even when direct welfare comparison between our hypothetical households A and B is not possible, the loss in welfare as evaluated by independently by each household is indeed comparable. The existence of U in Eq. 4 is a sufficient condition for such welfare-loss comparisons. The maximum social welfare, W_{ijt}^* , that the household i (as measured by member j) can attain for a given level of mean earning, \bar{Y} , corresponds to the perfect equality case ($\Phi = \Phi^*$):

$$W_{ijt}^* = U(\bar{Y}_{it}, \Phi^*) \quad (5)$$

As long as $U(\cdot)$ is egalitarian – so that for any intra-household distribution that is not perfect equality – aggregate household welfare cannot be greater in any case than in the case of perfect intra-household equality. The household welfare lost due to intra-household inequality can be represented as:

$$\Delta_{ijt} = 1 - \left(\frac{W_{ijt}}{W_{ijt}^*} \right) \quad (6)$$

Δ_{ijt} is the fraction of aggregate household welfare lost – consistent with inequality aversion corresponding to member j . Conceivably, Δ_{ijt} can be zero in our hypothetical household B as evaluated by the woman in the household despite her earning share being only 30% of couple income. Inequality aversion can vary by individuals within a household so that the man and woman in households A or B can have divergent tolerance for inequality (“inequality aversion”). In developing our empirical measurement framework, we allow for any egalitarian preference but not inequality aversion that actually prefers greater intra-household inequality. However, it might be conceivable that a household might make completely voluntary and welfare enhancing labor market decisions resulting in intra-household inequality. For example, a couple might make a welfare enhancing decision to have the woman completely disengage from the labor market and devote herself to care-work at home (\cdot). However, we work with egalitarian preferences to account for the inherent status gradient between men and women (Ridgeway, 2014).

5.1 Empirical Framework for Welfare Loss

We empirically operationalize the intuition in Eq. 6 using the workhorse normative measure of inequality developed by Atkinson (1970). The “Equally Distributed Equivalent Income” (EDEI) formulation is easily adapted to the individual-level earnings data that we have used to characterize intra-household gender inequality. In terms of the welfare function specification in Eq. 5, Atkinson’s EDEI represents perfectly equal earning ($\Phi = \Phi^*$) such that the aggregate social welfare, W_{ijt} is no different from aggregate welfare with actual extant distribution, Φ_{it} . We define the “Equally Distributed Equivalent Earning,” or EDEE to mirror Atkinson’s EDEI. If Λ_{ijt} is the EDEE at time t for household i , corresponding to the inequality aversion of member j , we obtain:

$$W_{ijt} = U(\bar{Y}_{it}, \Phi_{it}) = U(\Lambda_{ijt}, \Phi^*) \quad (7)$$

In terms of EDEE, the aggregate household welfare loss for a household (as computed by its member j) is simply:

$$\Delta \mathbf{A}_{ijt} = 1 - \left(\frac{\Lambda_{ijt}}{\bar{Y}_{it}} \right) \quad (8)$$

For any household i , the divergence between the mean household earning (\bar{Y}_{it}) and EDEE (Λ_{ijt}) is the intra-household inequality penalty on aggregate household welfare ($\Lambda_{ijt} \leq \bar{Y}_{it}$, so that, $0 \leq \Delta \mathbf{A}_{ijt} \leq 1$).

The Atkinson’s normative measure of inequality is perfectly sub-group decomposable. We operationalize Eq. 8 by computing an Atkinson index for overall earnings inequality, decomposing it into “within-household,” and “between-household” components, and using the “within” component to characterize aggregate welfare loss related to intra-household gender inequality. We follow the specification of Atkinson (1970) to construct our intra-household welfare loss metric. For ($i = 1, \dots, n$) individuals, we begin by considering an additive social welfare function that is a function of individual earnings as well as the distribution of these earnings. For country k in year t , we can write this additive social welfare function as:

$$W_{kt} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{i=n} U_{kt}(Y_{kit}, \phi_{kt}) \quad (9)$$

Using the specification of Atkinson (1970), U_t in Eq. 9 can be written in terms of an inequality

aversion parameter.

$$U_{kt} = \begin{cases} \frac{(Y_{kit})^{1-\varepsilon_{kt}}}{1-\varepsilon_{kt}} & ; \varepsilon_{kt} \neq 1, \varepsilon_{kt} \geq 0 \\ \ln(Y_{kit}) & ; \varepsilon_{kt} = 1 \end{cases} \quad (10)$$

In the specification above, we allow for the inequality aversion, ε_{kt} , and therefore U_{kt} , to vary by place, and time (Lambert et al., 2003; Alesina et al., 2004; Harvey, 2005; Aristei and Perugini, 2010). This will allow us to make welfare-loss comparisons across time, and across different countries in our multi-year and multi-country dataset with varying preferences for redistribution (Senik, 2005; Guillaud, 2013). It is straightforward to combine Eqs. (7), (9), and (10) to compute Atkinson’s EDEE (Λ) as:

$$\Lambda_{kt} = \begin{cases} \left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_i ((Y_{kit})^{1-\varepsilon_{kt}}) \right)^{\frac{1}{1-\varepsilon_{kt}}} & ; \varepsilon_{kt} \neq 1, \varepsilon_{kt} \geq 0 \\ \left(\prod_i (Y_{kit}) \right)^{\frac{1}{n}} & ; \varepsilon_{kt} = 1 \end{cases} \quad (11)$$

The general specification of EDEE (Λ_{kt} , in Eq. 11) allows for the inequality aversion parameter to take on a wide range of values including $\varepsilon = 0$, corresponding to when the inequality aversion parameter is set to unity ($\varepsilon = 1$), the Atkinson welfare loss is the same as that computed with a Foster welfare function. We adapt the logic of Eq. 8 to compute the overall welfare loss for each one of our over 300 datasets, as the standard Atkinson’s index:

$$\mathbf{A}_{kt} = 1 - \left(\frac{\Lambda_{kt}}{\bar{Y}_{kt}} \right) \quad (12)$$

where \bar{Y}_{kt} is the mean individual earnings in country k and year t . While the Atkinson’s index in Eq.12 is computed for overall earnings inequality, we are interested in only the contribution of intra-household inequality to welfare loss. We therefore decompose the Atkinson’s inequality index into “within” and “between” household components.

$$\mathbf{A}_{kt} = \mathbf{A}_{kt}^W + \mathbf{A}_{kt}^B \quad (13)$$

In our empirical results for welfare-loss, we analyze the geographic and time trends of \mathbf{A}_{kt}^W for various plausible values of inequality aversion.

5.2 Welfare-Loss Results

We empirically examine the extent of economy-wide welfare-loss attributable to intra-household gender inequality in earnings (\mathbf{A}_{kt}^W from Eq. 13). We perform the sub-group decomposition of the Atkinson inequality metric using the method of Blackorby et al. (1981). We present summary statistics in Table 1. We used 302 country-year points (*cf.* Appendix) containing approximately 2.85 million couple-household units. We computed the intra-household component of the Atkinson welfare loss for various values of inequality aversion ($\varepsilon \in [0.1, 1.0]$). For the midpoint value of inequality aversion ($\varepsilon = 0.5$), the median value for welfare lost due to intra-household gender inequality is 21.9%. In other words, at the median level of intra-household inequality, an economy could achieve current welfare levels with over 20% less earnings if the aggregate earnings were perfectly distributed *within* each household. Even at $\varepsilon = 0.3$, an inequality aversion value that has widely been used in the literature (*cf.* for example, Lambert et al., 2003), the median economy in our dataset loses 10% of earnings welfare to intra-household gender inequality.

We once again contrast intra-household gender inequality with economy-wide inequality in earnings of men and women. In Table 2, we present welfare loss, but this time attributed to gender inequality computed as the inequality between sexes. Both Table 1 and Table 2 use exactly the same underlying data but the overall Atkinson’s index of earnings inequality is decomposed differently. In the former, gender inequality is the gendered differences in intra-household earnings, and in the latter, it is the economy-wide difference in earnings between sexes. Comparing these tables shows how gender inequality in the form of intra-household gendered differences has a significantly larger welfare consequence than aggregate economy-wide differences between the earnings of men and women.

In Figure 7, we present a detailed time-trend of welfare losses related to gender inequality in earnings. First, the figure underscores how intra-household gender differences in earnings results in greater welfare loss compared to economy-wide earnings inequality between men and women. Indeed, across four decades, the welfare loss from gender inequality within the household is at least twice as much as the loss from economy-wide gender inequality in earnings. Second, there is considerable convergence between diverse countries over time on welfare lost due to economy-wide earnings inequality between men and women. However no such convergence is seen in welfare loss attributable to intra-household gender inequality. Third, Figure 7 also shows how welfare loss related to gender inequality (and especially intra-household inequality in earnings) is persistent across geographically and economically diverse set of countries. Thus our framework to uncover the welfare consequences of gender inequality affirms our central finding that gendered patterns of intra-household inequality is

persistent across widely varying levels of economic development.

6 Conclusion

Our analysis provides compelling evidence that distributional questions within the household – the most elementary social unit – cannot be ignored. Using global micro data, we find that earnings inequality between men and women within a household is systemic and prevalent across disparate societies. Further, this intra-household gender inequality does not abate substantially across the earnings and wealth distribution. For a smaller subset of countries, we show that the non-monotonic relationship between economic development and gender inequality at the macro level has a micro parallel. Broadly, we find woman’s employment and her earnings share have a curvilinear relationship with household economic status even as there are country level variations. We also developed a simple empirical theoretic framework using the widely used Atkinson inequality metric to measure aggregate welfare loss attributable to intra-household gender inequality. We show that the welfare loss from gender inequality within households exceeds welfare loss from population level differences in the earnings of men and women.

There is considerable policy attention on gender inequality via the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5 specifically seeks to achieve gender equality, but it is also implicit in other goals). There is a principle of justice and fairness in pushing for gender equality, but there are also instrumental reasons to desire this outcome. Inequality between men and women at the population level may or may not have consequences for economic growth. Macro-studies examining this relationship have not fully resolved the debate of whether gender inequality deters or incentives growth (Klasen, 2002). While the instrumental value of gender equality is not fully settled, there is an intrinsic value to gender equality. However, even for those who are concerned mainly with instrumental outcomes, there is sufficient evidence from the intra-household literature on why gender equality in economic resources may be beneficial (?).

Intra-household inequality is correlated (as both cause and consequence) with gendered patterns of power dynamics within a household. Inequality in economic resources and power relations between partners in a couple unit has negative implications for individual outcomes, for women themselves and children especially girls in certain contexts, in the household. The intergenerational transmission of gendered disadvantages, be it in terms of economic outcomes or power relations or biased social norms, makes a compelling case for greater

attention to within-household distributions. A limitation to our work is that the findings apply only to coupled heterosexual households, which is the obvious unit of analysis in terms of intra-household gender inequalities. If the interest is inequalities within the conjugal unit, this analysis is easily extended to same sex coupled households.

There are policy implications to our work. We emphasize the multidimensional nature of gender inequality from a measurement perspective. The findings show that inequalities between men and women in the population are not to be confused by inequalities between the man and the woman within a household. Their magnitudes are different and so is their rate of decline. Both measures are important to understand how gender inequalities operate. Policies that seek to increase womens earnings generally may have to be recast for women in partnered households that we have described here. This also leads to a call for individual-level data collection on income, wealth, and consumption to calculate inequality more accurately.

The curvilinear relationship of earnings to household economic status certainly calls for more research to uncover the channels that link gendered power dynamics at the micro and macro levels. But it also suggests that relying solely on progressive social institutions and legislation may not guarantee gender equality. True equality can only be sustained if social norms are aligned with the desire for equality. This is a complex and challenging task for global policy makers. We have also shown how any reduction in intra-household gender equality results can result in substantial aggregate welfare gains even with very high degree of tolerance for intra-household inequality.

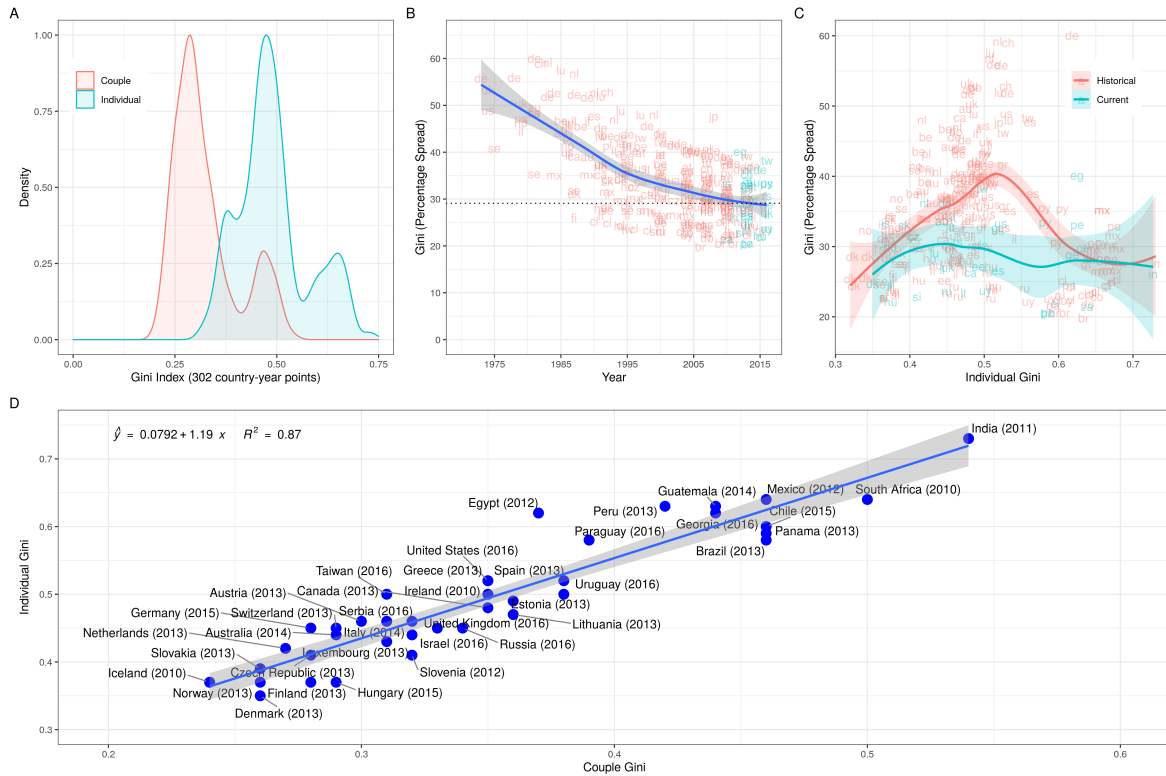


Figure 1: **Intra-household Gender Inequality: Global Trends.** Panel-A shows distribution of Gini coefficients computed at individual and couple-unit scales ($n = 302$ LIS data sets). Panel-B shows the time-trend for percentage difference between individual and couple scale Gini coefficients. The latest available data in the LIS dataset from the present decade (2010-2016) for 39 countries (identified by blue-colored points) are used for further analysis, including in Panel-D. Panel-C shows the relationship between percentage difference between individual and couple Gini coefficients as a function of individual-level Gini coefficient. Once again, the 39 datasets from the latest LIS wave are singled out. The median Gini difference for these 39 datasets is shown as a dotted line ($\approx 30\%$ spread). Panel-D is from ($n = 466,475$ couple units, $932,950$ individuals).

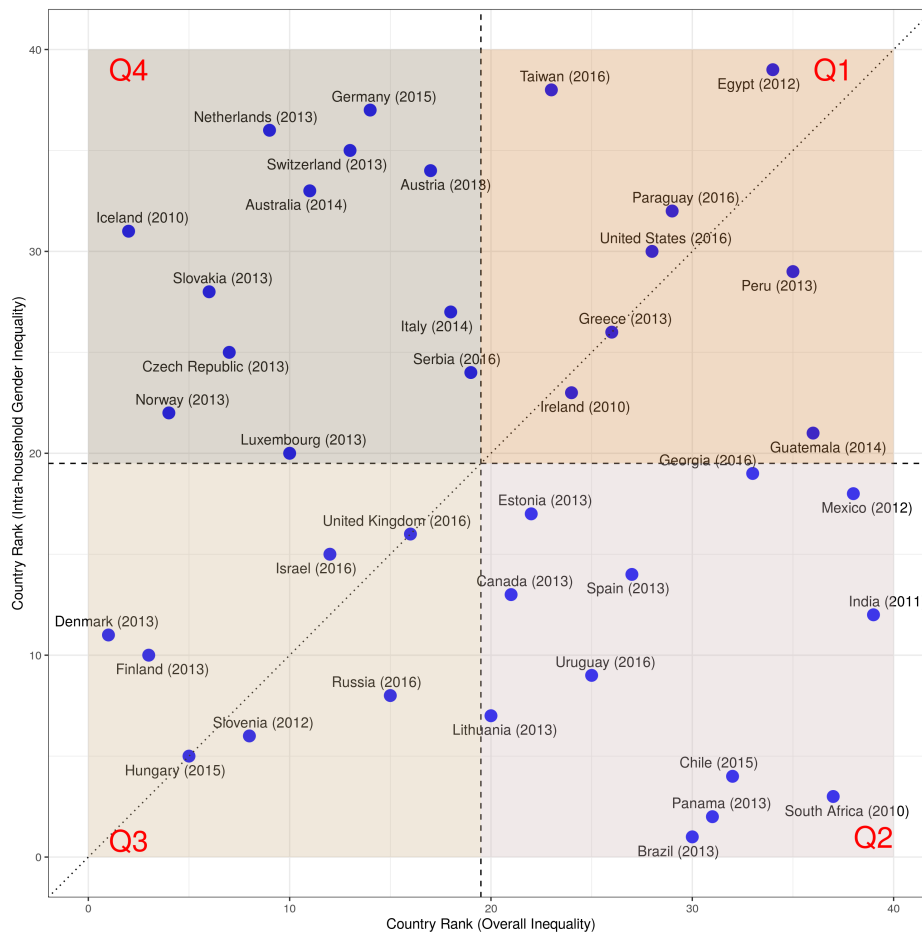


Figure 2: **Overall Inequality and Intra-Household Gender Inequality.** Countries are ranked by overall inequality in individual earnings (X axis), and intra-household gender inequality (Y axis). The most equal country (on respective dimension) is ranked '1,' and the most unequal country is ranked '39.'

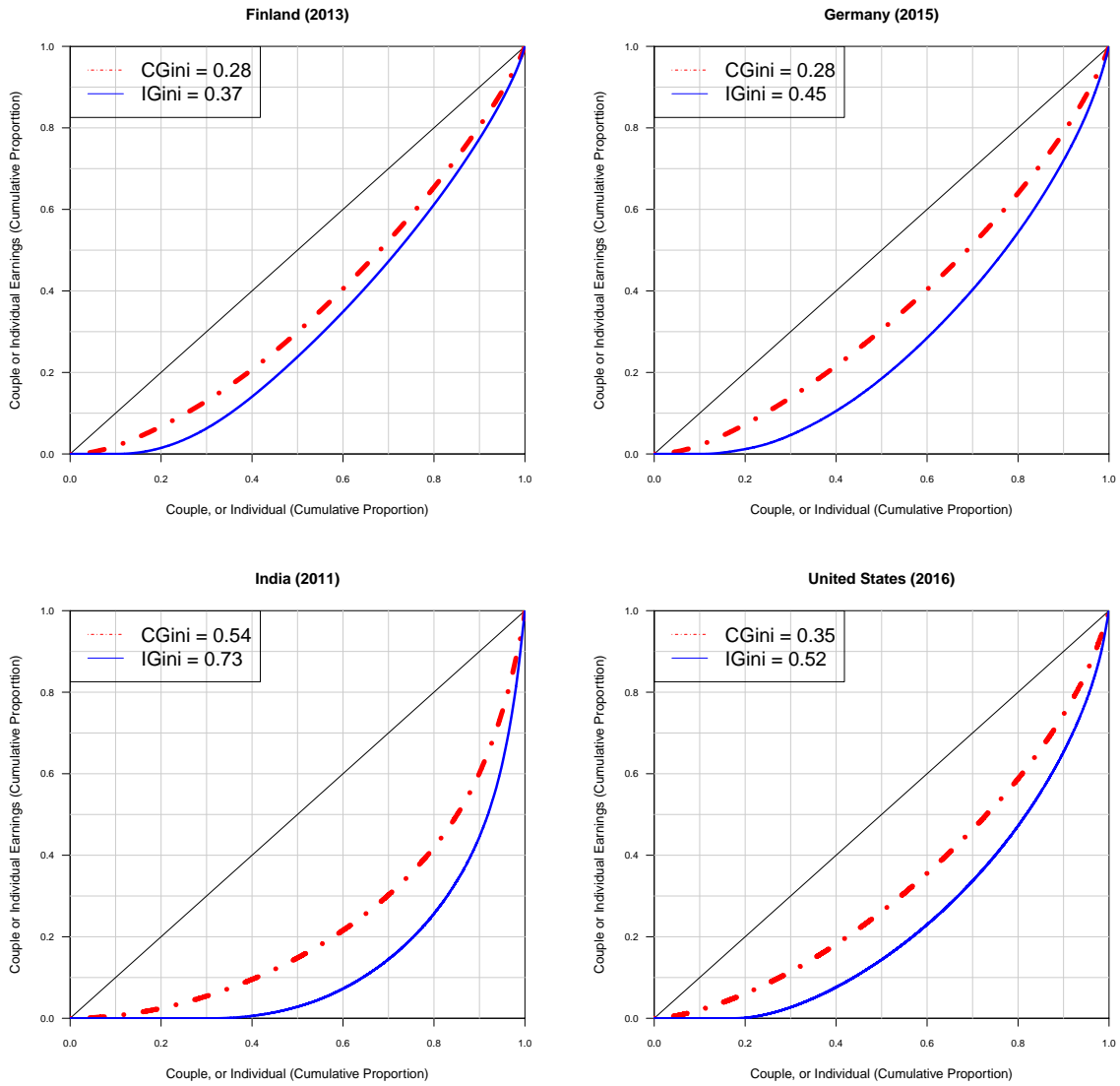


Figure 3: *Lorenz Concentration Curves*. *CGini* is couple-Gini, and *IGini* is individual-level Gini.

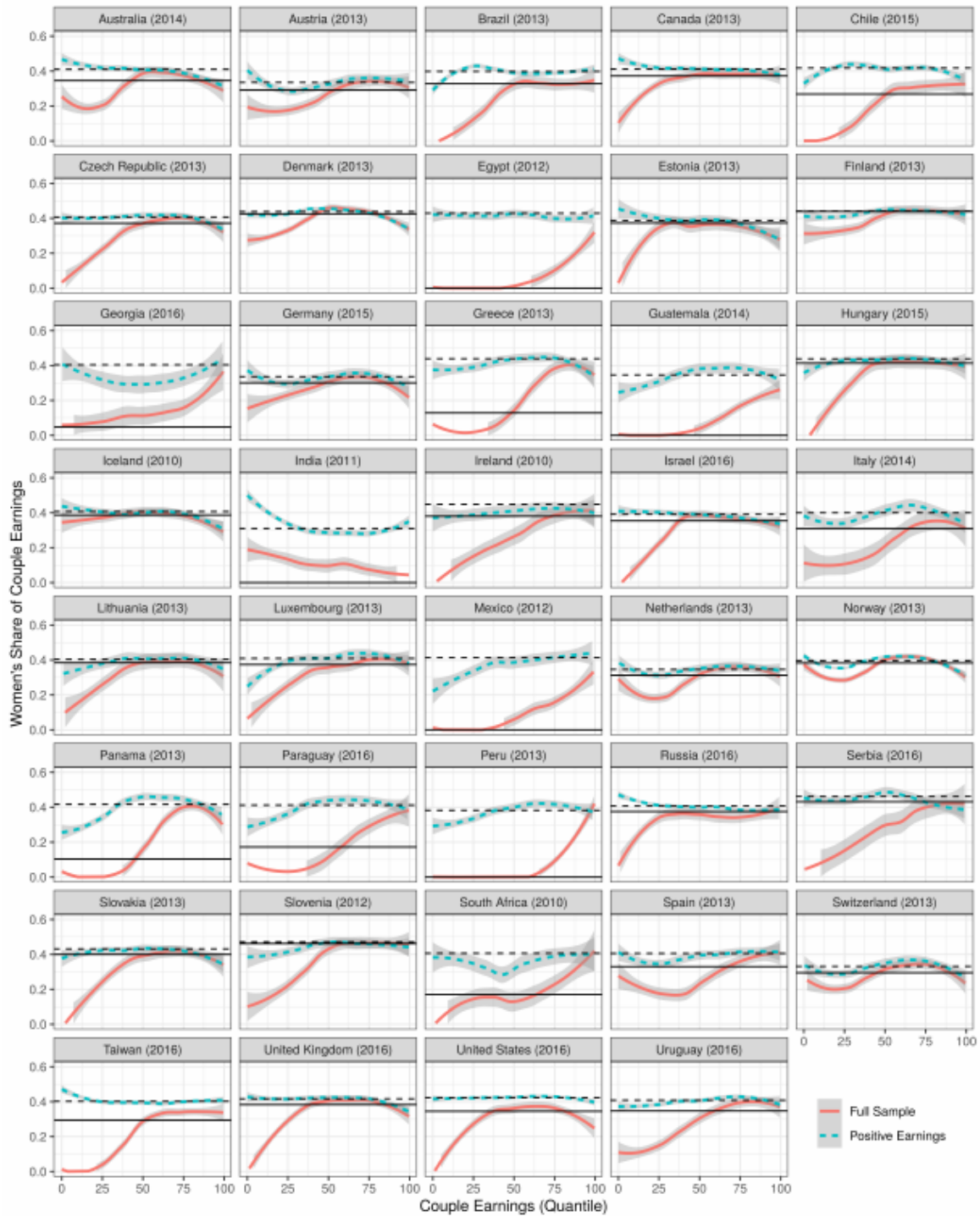


Figure 4: **Woman's Share of Couple Earning.** The red curves use the complete couple sample ($n = 932,950$ individuals across 39 datasets); and the blue curves represent only those couple units where both the man and woman have positive non-zero earnings ($n = 589,708$ individuals). The solid line represents median women's earning share of couple earnings for the full sub-sample, and the dotted line is the share for the positive earnings sub-sample. 95% confidence bands around LOESS smoothing lines (Cleveland, 1979) are shown for both schedules. Cf. main text for more details.

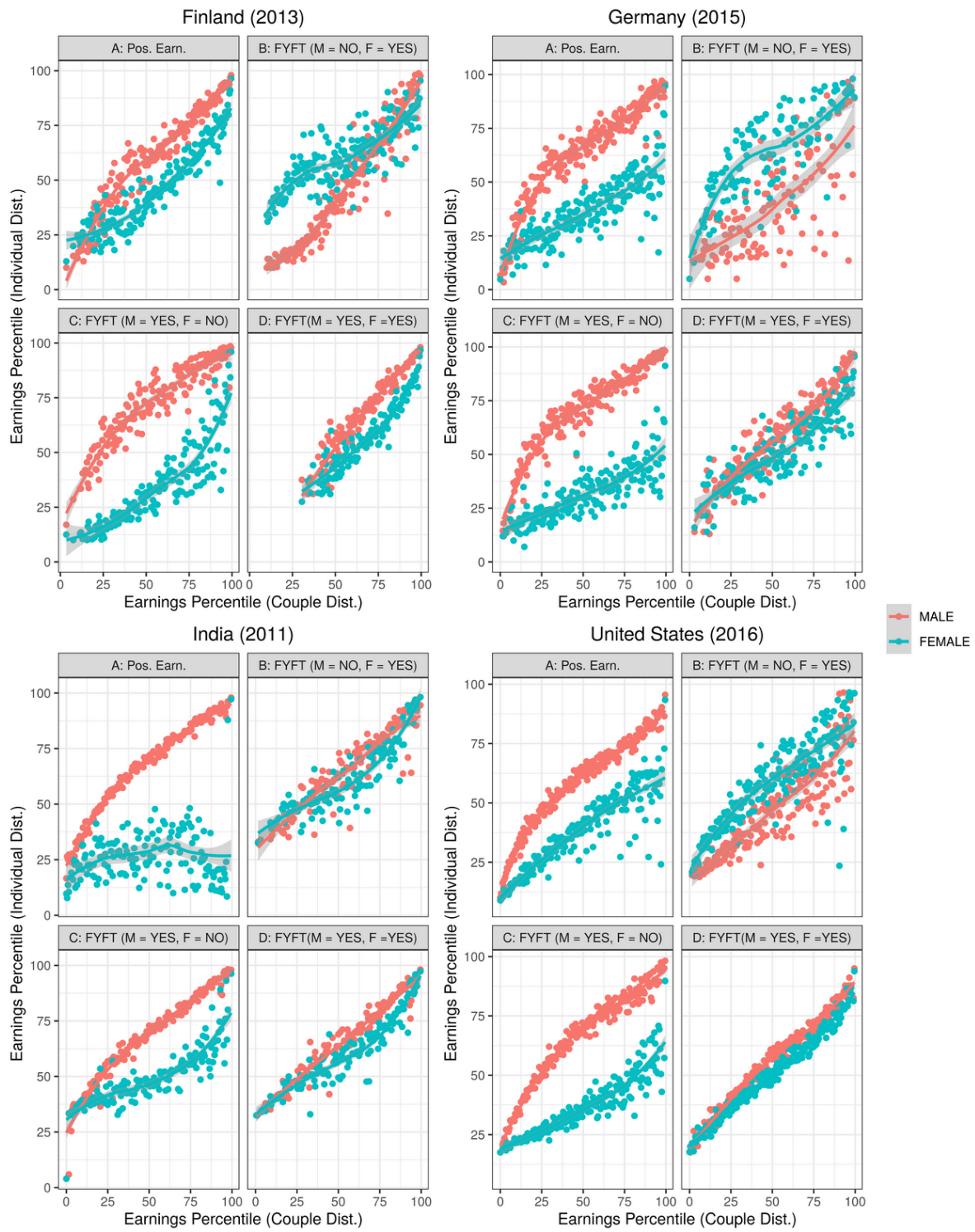


Figure 5: *Intra-Couple Inequality and Labor Market Intensity*. *FYFT* is Full Year Full Time employment. *M* is Male, and *F* is Female. Cf. main text for further details.

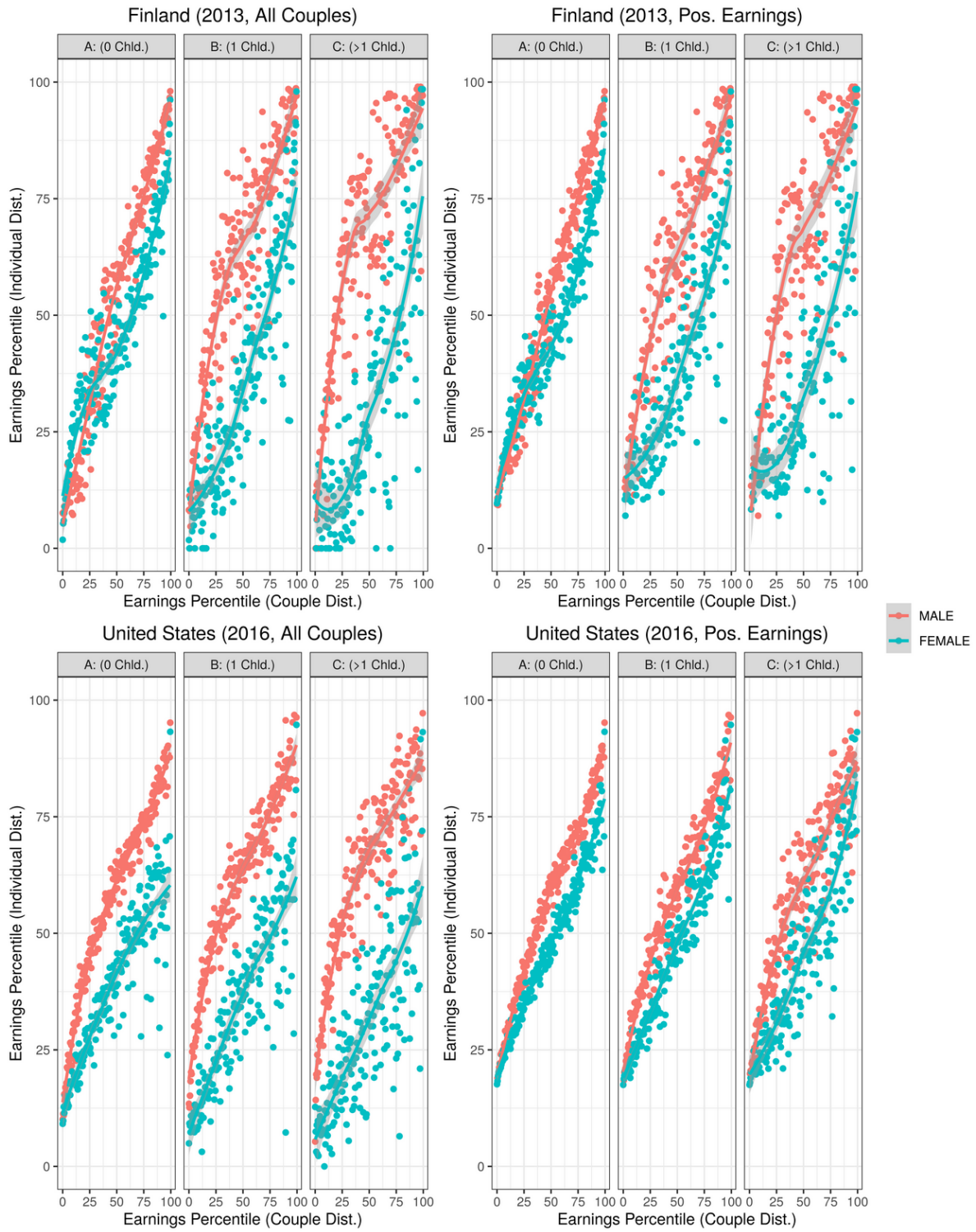


Figure 6: *Intra-Couple Earnings Inequality and Child-Care Penalty*. “Children” are defined as household members who are five or younger. Cf. main text for further details.

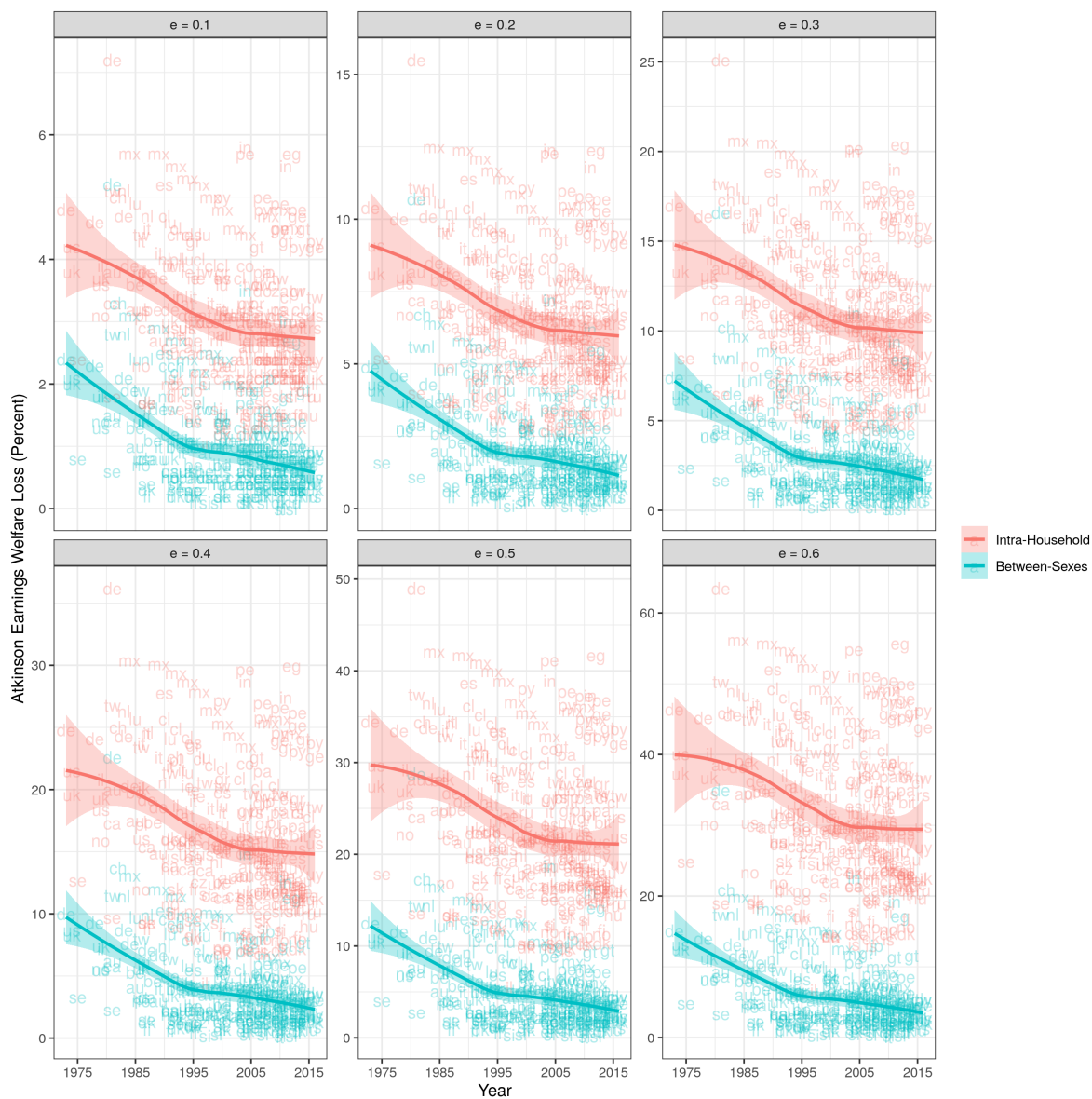


Figure 7: **Gender Inequality and Earnings Welfare Loss.** For each value of inequality aversion, the panels show aggregate economy-wide Atkinson welfare loss due to gender inequality computed by decomposing the Atkinson’s index in two different ways — between, and within households; and between, and within sexes. Each panel shows (for both decomposition exercises) 302 country-year points in the LIS repository (with a total of ≈ 2.85 million couple-households). LOESS smoothing with 95% CI bands are shown in all panels.

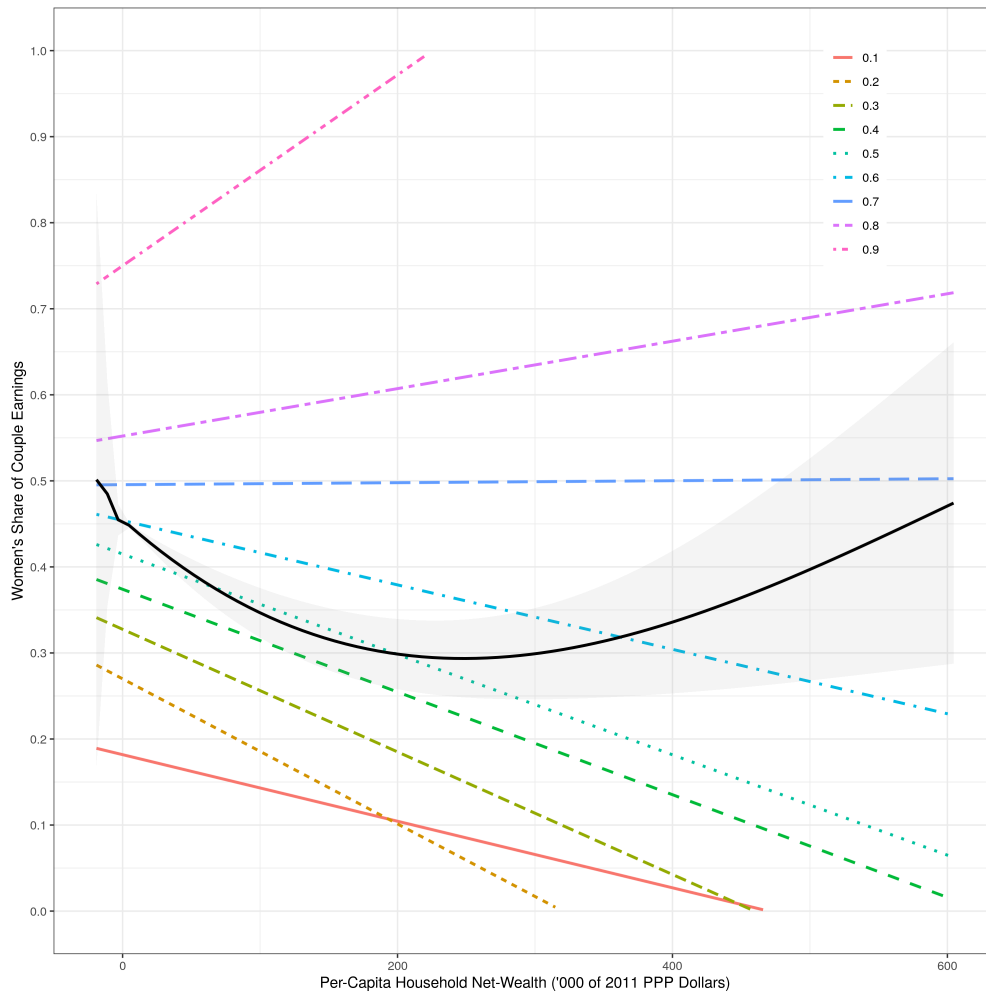


Figure 8: **Household Economic Status and Intra-household Gender Inequality.** The solid curve is the locally weighted (LOESS) regression with 95% confidence bands. The quantile regression lines for each decile represents bivariate relationship $(Y_i|_{\Omega_i} \sim W_i)$, without any controls from Eq. 2).

Atkinson Welfare Loss (Intra-Household)						
Ineq. Aversion	Min.	1st Qu.	Median	Mean	3rd Qu.	Max.
$\varepsilon = 0.1$	1.0	2.2	2.9	3.0	3.7	7.2
$\varepsilon = 0.2$	2.1	4.8	6.4	6.6	8.1	15.5
$\varepsilon = 0.3$	3.2	7.9	10.5	10.9	13.5	25.1
$\varepsilon = 0.4$	4.4	11.8	15.6	16.3	20.0	36.2
$\varepsilon = 0.5$	5.5	16.7	21.9	23.0	28.2	49.0
$\varepsilon = 0.6$	6.7	23.4	30.2	31.8	39.0	63.5
$\varepsilon = 0.7$	7.9	33.1	41.6	43.7	53.3	78.9
$\varepsilon = 0.8$	9.2	47.5	58.8	60.0	72.0	92.4
$\varepsilon = 0.9$	10.5	70.4	81.5	79.9	91.7	99.1
$\varepsilon = 1.0$	11.8	93.8	97.7	95.4	99.6	100.0

Table 1: *Atkinson Intra-household Welfare Loss (\mathbf{A}_{kt}^W , Percent). Summary statistics tabulated across 302 country-year points in the LIS repository (with a total of ≈ 2.85 million couple-households).*

Atkinson Welfare Loss (Between Sexes)						
Ineq. Aversion	Min.	1st Qu.	Median	Mean	3rd Qu.	Max.
$\varepsilon = 0.1$	0.0	0.4	0.8	0.93	1.2	5.2
$\varepsilon = 0.2$	0.0	0.9	1.5	1.88	2.4	10.7
$\varepsilon = 0.3$	0.1	1.3	2.3	2.83	3.7	16.6
$\varepsilon = 0.4$	0.1	1.7	3.0	3.79	4.9	22.6
$\varepsilon = 0.5$	0.1	2.2	3.8	4.75	6.1	28.8
$\varepsilon = 0.6$	0.1	2.6	4.6	5.72	7.4	35.0
$\varepsilon = 0.7$	0.2	3.0	5.3	6.68	8.6	41.2
$\varepsilon = 0.8$	0.2	3.5	6.1	7.64	9.9	47.1
$\varepsilon = 0.9$	0.2	3.9	6.8	8.57	11.1	52.6
$\varepsilon = 1.0$	0.2	4.3	7.6	9.51	12.3	57.6

Table 2: *Atkinson Between-Sexes Welfare Loss (Percent)*. Summary statistics tabulated across 302 country-year points in the LIS repository (with a total of ≈ 2.85 million couple-households).

Wife's Employment Status (LPM Models)		
	(1)	(2)
	All Countries	Without Norway
Per capita household net wealth	-0.0159*** (0.0032)	0.0786*** (0.0102)
Per capita household net wealth, sq	-0.0002 (0.0002)	-0.0058*** (0.0017)
Per capita household net wealth, cubic	0.0000** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)
Wife's age	0.0057*** (0.0011)	-0.0412*** (0.0023)
Wife's age, sq	-0.0911*** (0.0011)	-0.0835*** (0.0021)
Husband-wife age gap	-0.0011 (0.0010)	-0.0063*** (0.0018)
Wife's Education (Medium)	0.1499*** (0.0027)	0.1599*** (0.0051)
Wife's Education = (High)	0.2146*** (0.0027)	0.2201*** (0.0056)
Husband's Education = (Medium)	0.0292*** (0.0025)	0.0381*** (0.0050)
Husband's Education = (High)	0.0139*** (0.0028)	0.0220*** (0.0058)
Husband is employed	0.0173*** (0.0032)	-0.1413*** (0.0063)
Wife is household head	0.0137*** (0.0022)	0.0713*** (0.0038)
No. of own children in household	-0.0221*** (0.0009)	-0.0470*** (0.0019)
Child less than 5 years	-0.0031 (0.0023)	-0.0738*** (0.0049)
<i>Observations</i>	224,154	57,974
<i>R-squared</i>	0.1200	0.1535

Robust standard errors in parentheses, and all models include country-year fixed effects

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

"Low" education is less than upper secondary education completed

"Medium": upper secondary education completed or post-secondary non-tertiary education

"High": tertiary education completed

"Low" is the base education category

Table 3: *Micro-GKC: Wife's Employment and Household Wealth*

	Wife's Share of Couple Earnings			
	(1) OLS	(2) Quantile Reg (.25)	(3) Quantile Reg (.5)	(4) Quantile Reg (.75)
Per capita household net wealth	-0.0222*** (0.0046)	-0.0504*** (0.0048)	-0.0251*** (0.0053)	-0.0013 (0.0035)
Per capita household net wealth, sq	0.0015*** (0.0004)	0.0036*** (0.0003)	0.0018*** (0.0003)	0.0002 (0.0002)
Per capita household net wealth, cubic	-0.0000*** (0.0000)	-0.0000*** (0.0000)	-0.0000*** (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)
Wife's age	0.0162*** (0.0012)	0.0070*** (0.0015)	0.0103*** (0.0011)	0.0127*** (0.0010)
Wife's age, sq	-0.0046*** (0.0011)	-0.0072*** (0.0014)	-0.0024** (0.0011)	-0.0004 (0.0008)
Husband-wife age gap	0.0059*** (0.0010)	0.0012 (0.0011)	0.0017* (0.0009)	0.0048*** (0.0008)
Wife's Education (Medium)	0.0233*** (0.0025)	0.0242*** (0.0029)	0.0222*** (0.0026)	0.0130*** (0.0018)
Wife's Education (High)	0.0688*** (0.0029)	0.0675*** (0.0034)	0.0685*** (0.0029)	0.0496*** (0.0024)
Husband's Education = (Medium)	-0.0101*** (0.0024)	-0.0077*** (0.0029)	-0.0090*** (0.0024)	-0.0069*** (0.0017)
Husband's Education = (High)	-0.0458*** (0.0029)	-0.0420*** (0.0036)	-0.0461*** (0.0029)	-0.0359*** (0.0024)
Husband is employed	-0.4758*** (0.0037)	-0.5459*** (0.0045)	-0.5364*** (0.0030)	-0.5104*** (0.0019)
Wife is household head	0.1186*** (0.0022)	0.1060*** (0.0034)	0.0962*** (0.0021)	0.1002*** (0.0022)
No. of own children in household	-0.0236*** (0.0010)	-0.0270*** (0.0013)	-0.0227*** (0.0010)	-0.0130*** (0.0009)
Child less than 5 years	-0.0442*** (0.0010)	-0.0704*** (0.0013)	-0.0454*** (0.0010)	-0.0232*** (0.0009)
<i>Observations</i>	40,730	40,730	40,730	40,730
<i>R-squared</i>	0.5156	0.5048	0.5114	0.4952
Robust standard errors in parentheses				
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1				
All models have country-year fixed effects				
None of the models include Norway				
"Low" education is less than upper secondary education completed				
"Medium": upper secondary education completed or post-secondary non-tertiary education				
"High": tertiary education completed				
"Low" is the base education category				

Table 4: *Micro-GKC: Wife's Share of Couple Earnings and Household Wealth*

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Online Appendix

Country	Start Year	End Year	Total Datasets	Total Couple Households
Australia	1981	2014	10	49711
Austria	1994	2013	7	13137
Belgium	1985	2000	6	11991
Brazil	2006	2013	4	238868
Canada	1981	2013	11	130807
Chile	1990	2015	12	351287
Colombia	2004	2004	1	5306
Czech Republic	1992	2013	7	38612
Denmark	1987	2013	8	206900
Dominican Republic	2007	2007	1	4024
Egypt	2012	2012	1	6005
Estonia	2004	2013	4	8672
Finland	1987	2013	8	48174
Georgia	2010	2016	3	3263
Germany	1973	2015	27	196272
Greece	1995	2013	6	13629
Guatemala	2006	2014	3	24948
Hungary	1991	2015	8	6259
Iceland	2004	2010	3	5491
India	2004	2011	2	42629
Ireland	1994	2010	7	10540
Israel	1979	2016	11	34643
Italy	1986	2014	12	40102
Japan	2008	2008	1	1791
Lithuania	2010	2013	2	3797
Luxembourg	1985	2013	9	13599
Mexico	1984	2012	12	93285
Netherlands	1983	2013	9	32612
Norway	1979	2013	9	288153
Panama	2007	2013	3	17230
Paraguay	2000	2016	5	10364
Peru	2004	2013	4	27003
Poland	1986	1992	2	6762
Russia	2000	2016	9	130923
Serbia	2006	2016	4	5999
Slovakia	1992	2013	5	18443
Slovenia	1997	2012	6	10868
South Africa	2010	2010	1	1378
Spain	1990	2013	7	37001
Sweden	1975	2005	7	43762
Switzerland	1982	2013	5	16039
Taiwan	1981	2016	11	87485
United Kingdom	1974	2016	12	80311
United States	1974	2016	12	342464
Uruguay	2004	2016	5	87158
TOTAL	1973	2016	302	2,847,697

Table A1: *Extent of LIS Data Repository Used*

Dataset	A: Positive Sub-sample (percent of full couple sample)	B: FYFT (M = NO, F = YES, percent of Pos. Sub-sample)	C: FYFT (M = YES, F = NO, percent of Pos. Sub-sample)	D: FYFT (M = YES, F = YES, percent of Pos. Sub-sample)	E: FYFT (M = NO, F = NO, percent of Pos. Sub-sample)
Germany (2015)	77.4	5.2	58.5	24.1	12.2
Finland (2013)	81.9	20.8	19.9	30.0	29.3
India (2011)	35.9	05.0	19.1	09.4	66.6
USA (2016)	65.4	08.8	25.6	57.6	08.0

Table A2: Intra-Couple Inequality and Labor Market Intensity. Sample sizes correspond to data used in Figure 5.

Country	Year	Couple households		Women's Share of Couple Earnings				Couple Gini	Ind. Gini	Percentage Spread
		Household Total	Working-age	Working-age	Median	Median				
			(all couple units)	(Positive Earnings)	(all couple units)	(Positive Earners)				
Australia	2014	14,162	6,252	4,307	0.35	0.41	0.29	0.44	34.09	
Austria	2013	5,909	2,267	1,723	0.29	0.34	0.3	0.46	34.78	
Brazil	2013	1,16,543	56,095	28,228	0.33	0.4	0.46	0.58	20.69	
Canada	2013	23,014	10,655	8,016	0.37	0.41	0.35	0.48	27.08	
Chile	2015	83,887	36,173	15,928	0.27	0.42	0.46	0.6	23.33	
Czech Republic	2013	8,053	3,127	2,232	0.37	0.41	0.28	0.41	31.71	
Denmark	2013	87,517	31,681	26,474	0.43	0.44	0.26	0.35	25.71	
Egypt	2012	12,060	6,005	914	0	0.43	0.37	0.62	40.32	
Estonia	2013	5,871	2,433	1,773	0.37	0.39	0.36	0.49	26.53	
Finland	2013	11,030	5,871	4,812	0.44	0.44	0.28	0.37	24.32	
Georgia	2016	2,768	815	280	0.05	0.4	0.44	0.62	29.03	
Germany	2015	14,426	5,475	4,240	0.3	0.34	0.28	0.45	37.78	
Greece	2013	8,620	2,868	1,205	0.13	0.44	0.35	0.52	32.69	
Guatemala	2014	11,536	7,462	2,474	0	0.35	0.44	0.63	30.16	
Hungary	2015	2,772	904	661	0.41	0.44	0.29	0.37	21.62	
Iceland	2010	3,018	1,829	1,628	0.39	0.41	0.24	0.37	35.14	
India	2011	42,152	20,994	7,538	0	0.31	0.54	0.73	26.03	
Ireland	2010	4,333	1,534	849	0.38	0.45	0.35	0.5	30	
Israel	2016	8,903	4,615	3,150	0.35	0.39	0.32	0.44	27.27	
Italy	2014	8,156	2,498	1,236	0.31	0.4	0.31	0.46	32.61	
Lithuania	2013	5,194	1,880	1,411	0.38	0.4	0.36	0.47	23.4	
Luxembourg	2013	3,879	1,783	1,245	0.37	0.41	0.31	0.43	27.91	
Mexico	2012	9,002	3,761	1,036	0	0.41	0.46	0.64	28.13	
Netherlands	2013	10,174	5,148	4,099	0.31	0.35	0.27	0.42	35.71	
Norway	2013	2,35,732	88,412	74,610	0.38	0.4	0.26	0.37	29.73	
Panama	2013	11,905	5,639	2,640	0.1	0.42	0.46	0.59	22.03	
Paraguay	2016	10,219	3,135	918	0.17	0.41	0.39	0.58	32.76	
Peru	2013	30,453	8,875	2,113	0	0.38	0.42	0.63	33.33	
Russia	2016	1,60,008	60,252	39,578	0.38	0.41	0.34	0.45	24.44	
Serbia	2016	6,457	1,793	861	0.43	0.46	0.32	0.46	30.43	
Slovakia	2013	5,490	2,327	1,619	0.4	0.43	0.26	0.39	33.33	
Slovenia	2012	3,663	1,664	1,122	0.46	0.47	0.32	0.41	21.95	
South Africa	2010	6,786	1,378	521	0.17	0.41	0.5	0.64	21.88	
Spain	2013	11,965	5,174	3,177	0.33	0.41	0.38	0.52	26.92	
Switzerland	2013	6,792	3,009	2,528	0.29	0.33	0.29	0.45	35.56	
Taiwan	2016	16,528	7,401	3,598	0.29	0.4	0.31	0.5	38	
United Kingdom	2016	19,380	7,079	4,989	0.38	0.42	0.33	0.45	26.67	
United States	2016	69,957	30,234	19,785	0.35	0.42	0.35	0.52	32.69	
Uruguay	2016	45,158	17,978	11,400	0.35	0.41	0.38	0.5	24	

Table A3: *LIS Data: Latest Wave*

Country	Start Year	End Year	Total Datasets	Total Couple Households
Australia	2004	2014	3	18408
Germany	2002	2012	3	16609
Italy	1995	2014	6	19004
Norway	2010	2013	2	173987
Sweden	2005	2005	1	7075

Table A4: *Extent of LIS-LWS Merged-Data Used*

Wife's Employment Status (LPM)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Australia	Germany	Italy	Norway	Sweden
Per capita household net wealth	0.0312** (0.0127)	-0.0027 (0.0212)	0.1887*** (0.0245)	-0.0368*** (0.0034)	0.2664*** (0.0555)
Per capita household net wealth, sq	-0.0027 (0.0017)	-0.0042 (0.0088)	-0.0504*** (0.0117)	0.0008*** (0.0002)	-0.5002*** (0.1463)
Per capita household net wealth, cubic	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0002 (0.0003)	0.0020*** (0.0005)	-0.0000* (0.0000)	0.1944** (0.0818)
<i>Observations</i>	18,175	15,647	19,000	166,180	5,152
<i>R-squared</i>	0.1386	0.0925	0.1928	0.1084	0.1309

Robust standard errors in parentheses
All models include year fixed effect and all other controls from the full-sample regression in Table 3
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A5: **Micro-GKC: Wife's Employment and Household Wealth.** Country-subsample results using model described in Eq. 1.

Wife's Share of Couple Earnings (OLS)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Australia	Germany	Italy	Norway	Sweden
Per capita household net wealth	-0.0011 (0.0068)	-0.0247* (0.0134)	-0.0446*** (0.0075)	-0.0228*** (0.0023)	-0.0068 (0.0285)
Per capita household net wealth, sq	-0.0000 (0.0003)	0.0009 (0.0038)	0.0059*** (0.0022)	0.0009*** (0.0002)	0.0224 (0.0909)
Per capita household net wealth, cubic	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0002* (0.0001)	-0.0000*** (0.0000)	0.0234 (0.0446)
<i>Observations</i>	13,939	12,267	10,345	134,255	4,179
<i>R-squared</i>	0.6343	0.3910	0.6867	0.4243	0.5397

Robust standard errors in parentheses
All models include year fixed effect and all other controls from the full-sample regression in Table 4
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A6: **Micro-GKC: Wife's Share of Couple Earnings, and Household Wealth.** Country-subsample results using model described in Eq. 2.