

Applying the SIGI

The SIGI suggests that social institutions are an important determinant of gender inequality outcomes in areas such as employment, education and health, which may affect a country's overall economic performance, as illustrated in figures 3 to 5.

Figure 3: Discrimination in Social Institutions and Women's Participation in the Labour Force

As illustrated in Figure 3, women's participation in non-agricultural wage employment is strongly correlated to discrimination based on social institutions, particularly family code and early marriage. Among the countries which score low in the SIGI, labour force participation is close to 50 percent, while in countries that show high discrimination, women's average participation rate is just above 20 per cent.

Women's access to paid jobs is crucial for both their personal well-being and the overall economic development of a country.

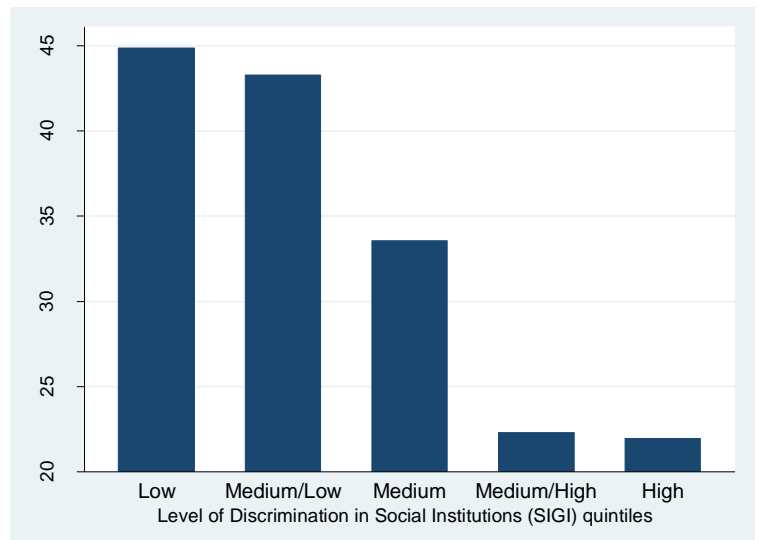


Figure 4: Discrimination in Education and Literacy

A strong relationship can equally be found between social institutions and literacy ratios. As illustrated in Figure 4, countries in which the SIGI scores are low show a ratio of female to male literacy of close to 1. The ratio is significantly lower in countries where discrimination is high.

The indicator on early marriage seems to have a particularly strong effect on this relationship. Marriage at a young age limits women's access to education. Several studies find that gender differences in education have a negative impact on a country's economic growth potential.

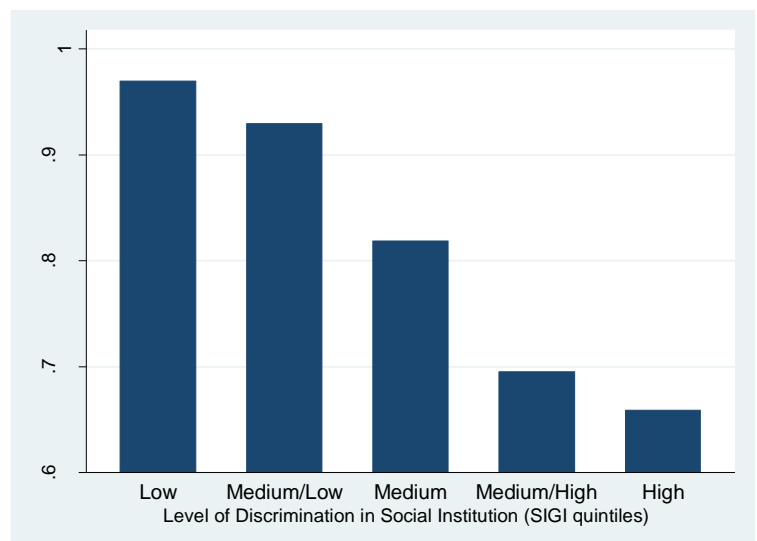


Figure 5: Physical Integrity and Fertility

A strong relationship also exists between the SIGI and fertility rates. In particular, violence against women and prevalence rate of female genital mutilation seem to be associated with a high number of children per woman.

Empirical research shows that high fertility has negative implications for women's access to education and economic opportunities, which in turn has a negative impact on economic growth.

