SILESIAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY PUBLISHING HOUSE

SCIENTIFIC PAPERS OF SILESIAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY 2025
ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT SERIES NO. 230

CULTURAL CONTEXT OF GENDER INEQUALITIES IN SOCIOECONOMIC LIFE AND MANAGEMENT

Anna WIECZOREK-SZYMAŃSKA

University of Szczecin, Institute of Management; anna.wieczorek-szymanska@usz.edu.pl,
ORCID: 0000-0002-2923-2302

Purpose: Closing the gender gap in access to education, the labour market, politics and health care should be one of the key objectives of socioeconomic policy at national and international level. However, the gender gap still exists, which is why it is so important to identify its causes in order to increase the effectiveness of taken actions. The goal of the article is to check the relationship between national culture and the level of gender inequality across countries.
Design/methodology/approach: A study has been based on the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) published by the World Economic Forum. A correlation analysis between GGGI and Hofstede's Cultural Dimension (HCD)has been conducted.
Findings: The party results support the main hypothesis, confirming a significant and positive link between GGGI and some of HCD.
Research limitations/implications: A key limitation is that the research was conducted at a single point in time and, therefore, does not reflect changes over time. Another limitation pertains to the lack of data for all of the countries, as Hofstede's model did not cover some of them. Further research should address these methodological limitations by exploring the longitudinal study that expand the scope of analysis. The research could also refer to another models of cultural differences between countries like Hall's model of high and low context cultures.
Practical implications: The results can be useful in building both gender equality policies and specific tools to reduce gender inequalities, taking into account the cultural context. They can be used both by institutions aiming to combat gender inequality, e.g., the European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Equality Commission, International Labour Organization, and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, but also by managers of enterprises operating in a multicultural environment.
Originality/value: This study sheds light on the relationship between gender inequality and culture and offers a novel data-driven perspective to reduce gender inequality by referring to the issue of national culture more.
Keywords: gender, inequality, Global Gender Gap Index, culture, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions.
Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

The issue of gender is complex, and nowadays, it is widely understood to refer to a socially constructed rather than a biological category (Milkman, Townsley, 1994). Thus, gender cannot be adequately defined by the traditional binary classification of male and female based on sex; instead, it is a multifaceted social system that shapes the life experiences of all individuals (Heise et al., 2019). Furthermore, it encompasses the fundamental aspects of social relations and structures that both arise from and perpetuate differences and inequalities between women and men. It serves as a key indicator of power in determining access to resources and social status (Acker, 1992).

According to Htun and Weldon, gender equality reflects an "ideal condition of social reality that gives groups constituted by gender institutions similar opportunities to participate in politics, the economy, and social activities; that values their roles and status and enables them to flourish; in which no gender group suffers from advantage or discrimination; and in which all are considered free and autonomous beings with dignity and rights" (2018, pp. 6-7). On the contrary, the phenomenon of gender inequalities refers to the unequal treatment of people based on their gender, which leads to differences in access to resources, opportunities, rights and opportunities. These inequalities may occur in many areas of social life, including education, the labour market, politics, health, as well as culture and family. Furthermore, emerging research suggests that gender inequalities effectively limit women's chances of economic independence, making them far more likely than men to fall into poverty and to low or secondary earners throughout their lives (Daly, 2020).

There is substantial research on the gender inequality in different spheres of the socioeconomic life. J.M. Landmesser, A.J. Orłowski and M.A. Rusek (2020) discuss inequalities by comparing differences in pay and conclude that the gender income gap in each EU country is present. The situation is similar across the globe, as women often earn less than men despite performing the same work at the same level (International Trade Union Confederation, 2018). Gender inequalities also appear in the access to education and career advancement. According to the data given by UNICEF (2022) worldwide, nearly 1 in 4 girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are neither employed nor in education or training – compared to 1 in 10 boys.

Additionally, women fall behind in promotions from the very first step on promotion leader (Frankiewicz, 2020) and in consequence, they are underrepresented among executive committee members and corporate boards in companies (Devillard et al., 2016). Concurrently, women are less likely than men to hold top political positions (Uwa et al., 2018). The United Nations highlights that women around the world remain significantly underrepresented in the political arena, often due to discriminatory laws, practices, and attitudes, entrenched gender stereotypes, limited educational opportunities, inadequate access to healthcare,

and the disproportionate impact of poverty on women (United Nations, 2025). The next issue is an imbalance in the division of household and caregiving responsibilities. Cerrato and Cifre (2018) and Nishaat (2017) show unequal involvement in household chores by women and men, as women are still responsible for the majority of housework and childcare, which limits their professional and social opportunities. Women also, more often than men, face gender-based violence, including domestic, sexual and psychological violence (Cruz, Klinger, 2011). Since gender inequalities are the result of historical, social and cultural conditions that maintain gender stereotypes and structural barriers in society, their elimination requires changes in politics, education, culture and everyday social practices. Furthermore, gender gaps favouring males—in education, health, personal autonomy, and more—are systematically larger in less developed countries than in rich countries (Jayachandran, 2015). For the reasons mentioned, it is crucial to examine the impact of the culture on gender inequalities.

The socioeconomic status of women is effectively captured by the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI), introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006. Since its inception, the methodology has remained consistent, and the index serves as a tool to assess gender equality in a given country. The index ranges from zero to one, where 0 represents total gender inequality (complete exclusion of women from socioeconomic life), and 1 signifies full gender equality (no discrimination against women in socioeconomic life). The Global Gender Gap Index evaluates the current status and progress of gender parity across four key dimensions (World Economic Forum, 2022):

1. Economic Participation and Opportunity: This subindex examines three areas: the participation gap (differences in labour force participation rates between women and men), the remuneration gap (ratio of estimated female-to-male earned income and wage equality for similar work), and the advancement gap (ratio of women to men in leadership roles such as legislators, senior officials, managers, and technical and professional workers).
2. Educational Attainment: This subindex assesses the gap in access to education between women and men and the country's ability to provide equal educational opportunities at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.
3. Health and Survival: This subindex reviews the sex ratio at birth and life expectancy for both genders to highlight health disparities between women and men in a particular country.
4. Political Empowerment: This subindex measures the gender gap in high-level political decision-making, focusing on the ratio of women to men in parliamentary positions and the duration of time women have held executive offices (such as prime minister or president).

In 2024, the "Global Gender Gap Report" covered 146 countries and benchmarked gender equality among them.

Taking into account the discussion presented in the introduction, the topic of gender inequality in the context of culture is worth analysing for several reasons. Firstly, it has been shown that gender inequalities still exist in various spheres of socio-economic life and cause serious problems in access to the labour market, promotion opportunities, or education. Secondly, despite numerous studies on the impact of culture on gender inequality, no analysis has yet been conducted on the relationship between the size of the gender gap measured by the GGGI and different dimensions of culture in Hofstede's model. Addressing this topic is therefore justified from both, a practical and scientific point of view.

2. Theoretical framework

Culture is defined in many ways. As Hofstede (2011) notices, most commonly, the term culture is used for tribes or ethnic groups (anthropology), nations (political science, sociology), and organizations (management), but also the genders, generations, or social classes. For this paper, the author considers the culture in the national context. According to the Oxford Dictionary, culture is "the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society". Keesing (1981) states that culture refers to learned and accumulated experiences and socially transmitted patterns of behaviour that are typical for a particular social group. Harris (1975) defines culture as the total socially acquired way of life or lifestyle of a group of people. It consists of patterns and repetitive ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that are characteristic of the members of a particular society or segment of society. What is important is that the culture is always shared or learned by a group of people and includes norms, values, shared meanings, and patterned ways of behaving. It is worth noticing that nowadays, globalization has brought about the problem of the interaction of cultures (Birukou et al., 2009), which results in the blending of cultural boundaries. However, at the same time, it highlights the growing necessity for culturally aware managers and professionals.

Apart from differences in defining the term culture, there is a broad discussion on classifying cultures in the literature. In 1976, U.S. anthropologist Edward T. Hall (1976) categorized cultures based on their communication styles into high-context cultures, where much of the information is conveyed implicitly, and low-context cultures, where most information is explicitly stated. In turn, Inkeles and Levinson (1969) acknowledged that culture is not static and can change over time. Moreover, they emphasized the importance of defining specific dimensions for analyzing culture using so-called standard analytic issues: relation to authority, the conception of self, and primary dilemmas or conflicts. Another well-known concept is the Cultural Dimension Theory (Hofstede, 1980). Developed in 1980 by Dutch

management researcher Geert Hofstede, the theory is a model designed to analyze cultural differences among countries. It serves as a tool to identify and compare national cultures, explore various cultural dimensions and their effects on social etiquette, and enhance communication in contexts ranging from business to diplomacy. The theory emerged from a comprehensive survey conducted in the 1960s and 1970s. It results in identifying six categories that define culture: Power Distance Index, Collectivism vs Individualism, Uncertainty Avoidance Index, Femininity vs Masculinity, Short-Term vs Long-Term Orientation, and Restraint vs. Indulgence (Hofstede, Hofstede, Minkov, 2010). In 2023 the Masculinity and Femininity dimension was renamed the Motivation toward Achievement and Success dimension to reflect changes in our understanding that gender is not binary and to clarify that the dimension does not solely measure gender roles (Figure 1).

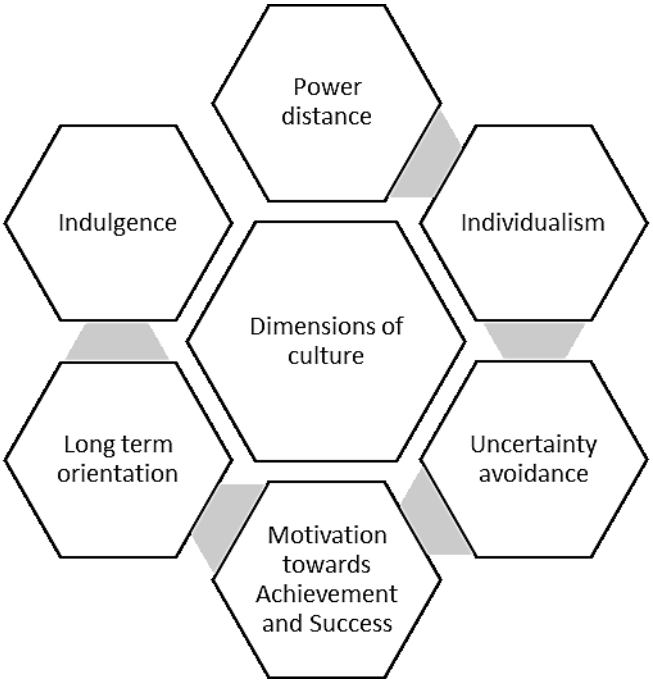

Figure 1. Hofstede's model of culture dimensions.

Source: own study.

Each dimension is defined in the model to provide an accepted understanding of the concept. Moreover, the model assumes that each dimension can be measured, and as a result of the country analysis, each dimension can be scored on a scale of 0-100 points. The following table (Table 1) provides a brief overview of the dimensions of culture in the Hofstede's model.

Table 1.
Characteristics of the cultural dimensions

Dimension	Description	High score	Low score
Power Distance	How does the society handle inequalities among people?	Acceptation of a hierarchical order in which everybody has their place without a need for justification, relations are more autocratic, decisions are centralized, and employees do not express disagreement with managers.	People strive to equalize the distribution of power and more democratic and consultative relations between people; employees want to participate in the process of decision-making.
Individualism	To what extent are people expected to take care of themselves and their families?	Individual contribution to the culture and economy; personal initiative and achievement are core values; employment mobility is high; verbal communication is the most important.	Social identity is rooted in the group, great emphasis is placed on belonging, group decisions are made, group responsibility and nonverbal communication are important.
Uncertainty Avoidance	The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by unknown situations.	Rigid codes, beliefs and behaviours, intolerance of unorthodox behaviours and ideas, employees' belief that company rules should not be broken, the expectation that employees will work for the same company for many years.	More relaxed attitudes where practice counts more than principles, more flexibility in changing the place of working, more risk-oriented society.
Motivation towards Achievement and Success	What motivates people: the desire to be the best (Decisive) or enjoy what they do (Consensus-oriented).	A society is driven by competition, achievement, and success, where success is defined by being the best or a top performer—a value system ingrained in school and carried into organizational life.	A society where the dominant values are caring for others and prioritizing quality of life. In such societies, success is measured by quality of life, and standing out is not considered admirable.
Long Term Orientation	The orientation towards future rewards.	A pragmatic type of society, the important role of education in preparing for the future.	Searching for absolute truth, normative societies, social change is suspicious, short-term future-oriented.
Indulgence	The extent to which people believe they are in control of their own lives.	People enjoy their lives and express emotions, both verbal and non-verbal communication is important.	A social control is high, strict social norms in social life, and communication is based on exchanging information.

Source: own study.

Hofstede's model has been praised for its wide applicability across diverse cultural settings. It offers a practical framework for comparing cultural norms and behaviours between countries, making it an essential resource for multinational corporations aiming to manage cross-cultural differences effectively. For mentioned reason the author of the article has decided to use it as a toll for cross-cultural comparison of countries. At the same time, it should be remembered that Hofstede's model is one of many that can be used to analyse cultural differences (alongside other models, for example Schwartz Culture Model or Inglehart-Welzel Cultural Map). However, the aim of this article is to analyse gender inequality in the context of culture based on a specific indicator and a specific cultural model, hence the GGGI indicator and Hofstede's model were chosen.

There are numerous studies on gender inequality in cross-cultural contexts. Kinas and Kim (2012) show that perception of gender inequality varies depending on the culture, as Asian women value gender equality less than European American women. In consequence, the culture may also have an impact on women's interpretation of the unacceptability of intrusive behaviour enacted by men (Sheridan et al.), including gender-based violence. The conceptualizations of sexual harassment vary widely and are strongly influenced by sociocultural factors like patriarchal norms, gender inequalities and the normalization of gender-based violence (Hardt et al., 2023). Additionally, the gendered self-views correlate differently with cultural egalitarianism. Research indicates that in more egalitarian countries, the gender gaps in agency are smaller, while the gender gaps in communality are larger. These patterns are driven primarily by Hofstede's Power Distance Index (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2023). Hofstede's model is also used to examine the gender gap in work-family issues. The research shows that parental work-family experiences are susceptible to cultural values and gender roles (especially to the level of individualism/collectivism in society) (Hsiao, 2022).

In a subsequent study by Collins (2020), the phenomenon of work-family conflict was exanimated as an outcome of public policies and cultural attitudes that shape women's expectations and behaviours regarding work and family. Another area of importance within the culture and gender inequalities is the issue of subjective well-being. Li, Zukerman and Diener (2021) examined the mechanism through which culture moderates the relationship between gender inequality and subjective well-being (SWB). Their study showed that the relation between inequality and SWB is contingent on where specific cultures are located on the liberal-conservative continuum. To better understand the relationship between the culture and gender inequality and the gender-job satisfaction gap, a study by Perugini and Vladisavljevic (2019) found that there is a relationship between exposure to more gender-equal settings in the early stages of life and smaller gender gaps in job satisfaction. Moreover, as Malaquias, Matsumoto and Valado (2022) identified in their study of the effect of countries' culture on women's right to economic participation, dimensions of culture (according to Hofstede's model) like Individualism, uncertainty avoidance and power distance affect women's right to economic participation and the evolution of laws in this direction. In addition, Eriksson and Lindvall (2023) found that cultural factors determine how the socioeconomic achievement gaps differ between boys and girls. Such a finding supports the belief that there is a significant association between cultural norms and attitudes towards gender equality and the levels of political and socioeconomic gender equality (Ekvall, 2013; Allen, Cutts, 2019). Finally, culture, especially religion, underlies gender inequality also in education. Cooray and Potrafke (2011) proved that discrimination in education against girls is pronounced in Muslim-dominated countries. However, at the same time, it is important to note that promoting women's core rights in education and labour force participation can moderate the effects of religious culture (Cherif, 2010).

Summing up, the literature highlights a range of areas that sought better to understand the culture as the antecedent of gender inequality. The culture influences the perception of gender inequality itself, the conceptualization of intrusive behaviors towards women, the gender self-view, the work-family gender experiences (including work-family conflict and job satisfaction), the subjective well-being and socioeconomic participation gender gap.

3. Methodology

This study follows a structured approach to ensure the validity and replicability of results. The question for the research is as follows: How does the national culture affect gender inequalities?

Based on the research question, the main hypothesis has been formulated:

National culture influences the level of gender inequality in a country.

In order to achieve the aim of the paper, the following hypotheses have been set:

1. There is a relationship between the value of the Individualism index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
2. There is a relationship between the value of the Power Distance Index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
3. There is a relationship between the value of the Uncertainty Avoidance index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
4. There is a relationship between the value of the Long Term Orientation index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
5. There is a relationship between the value of the Motivation towards Achievement and Success index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
6. There is a relationship between the value of the Indulgence index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.

The theoretical part of this paper is based on a literature review (the Web of Science Core Collection, EBESCO and SpringerLink databases were used as the main sources of data). The aim of the topic search (that the author carried out in the period of September-December 2024) was to identify publications for the phrases "gender diversity", "gender equality", "gender inequalities", and "national culture", "Hofstede's cultural dimensions". The empirical part is based on the data collected from the secondary data analysis. The secondary data was gained from research articles, Global Gender Gap Reports, and websites. The article presents data on Hofstede's survey as it is one of the most well-known and widely cited research on national cultural values (Epaminonda, 2021). The results of Hofstede's model are compared with

international data on gender inequalities, such as the Global Global Gender Gap Index published by the World Economic Forum.

Out of the 146 countries for which the World Economic Forum presented the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) indicators for 2024, 107 have been analyzed. This selection has been driven by the availability of data on cultural dimension indicators within Hofstede's model for these 107 countries.

The Statistica software is used for data analysis. The independent variable in the analyzed study is the value of each cultural dimension indicator, while the independent variable is the level of gender inequality expressed by the GGGI indicator. Correlation analysis is used to assess the relationship between the quantitative variables, using Pearson's r coefficient (for two variables with a normal distribution) and Spearman's rho (when at least one variable had a non-normal distribution). Analysis of normality of the distributions of quantitative variables has been carried out using the W Shapiro-Wilk test. GGGI, MAS, LTO, and INDUL are normally distributed, while PD, I, and UA have non-normal distribution.

4. Analysis and discussion

Table 2 lists GGGI for 107 countries and the values of different cultural dimensions: Power distance (PD), Individualism (I), Motivation towards Achievement and Success (MAS), Uncertainty Avoidance (UA), Indulgence (IND), Long Term Orientation (LTO).

Table 2.
Values of GGGI and cultural dimensions at the national level

	Country	**GGGI**	**PD**	**I**	**M**	**UA**	**LTO**	**INDULG**
1.	Albania	0.780	90	27	80	70	56	15
2.	Algeria	0.612	80	29	35	70	25	32
3.	Angola	0.668	83	18	20	60	15	83
4.	Argentina	0.772	49	51	56	86	29	62
5.	Armenia	0.721	85	17	50	88	38	25
6.	Australia	0.780	38	73	61	51	56	71
7.	Austria	0.743	11	77	79	70	47	63
8.	Azerbaijan	0.685	85	28	50	88	59	22
9.	Bangladesh	0.689	80	5	55	60	38	20
10.	Belarus	0.733	95	48	20	95	53	15
11.	Belgium	0.793	65	81	54	94	61	57
12.	Bhutan	0.651	94	52	32	28	-	-
13.	Bolivia	0.746	78	23	42	87	21	46
14.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.710	90	40	48	87	36	44
15.	Brazil	0.716	69	36	49	76	28	59
16.	Bulgaria	0.723	70	50	40	85	51	16
17.	Burkina Faso	0.661	70	15	50	55	77	18
18.	Canada	0.761	39	72	52	48	54	68
19.	Cape Verde	0.755	75	20	15	40	12	83

Cont. table 2.

20.	Chile	0.782	63	49	28	86	12	68
21.	China	0.684	80	43	66	30	77	24
22.	Colombia	0.745	67	29	64	80	6	83
23.	Costa Rica	0.785	35	15	21	86	-	-
24.	Croatia	0.723	73	42	40	80	40	33
25.	Czech Republic	0.684	57	70	57	74	51	29
26.	Denmark	0.789	18	89	16	23	59	70
27.	Dominican Republic	0.706	65	38	65	45	11	54
28.	Ecuador	0.788	78	24	63	67	24	-
29.	Egypt	0.629	80	13	55	55	22	0
30.	El Salvador	0.695	66	19	40	94	20	89
31.	Estonia	0.774	40	62	30	60	71	16
32.	Ethiopia	0.709	70	7	65	55	14	46
33.	Fiji	0.642	78	14	46	48	-	-
34.	Finland	0.875	33	75	26	59	63	57
35.	France	0.781	68	74	43	86	60	48
36.	Georgia	0.716	65	15	55	85	24	32
37.	Germany	0.810	35	79	66	65	57	40
38.	Ghana	0.701	80	9	40	65	1	72
39.	Greece	0.714	60	59	57	100	51	50
40.	Guatemala	0.697	95	36	37	98	25	-
41.	Honduras	0.726	80	20	40	50	-	-
42.	Hungary	0.686	46	71	88	82	45	31
43.	Iceland	0.935	30	83	10	50	57	67
44.	India	0.641	77	24	56	40	51	26
45.	Indonesia	0.686	78	5	46	48	29	38
46.	Iran	0.579	58	23	43	59	30	40
47.	Ireland	0.802	28	58	68	35	51	65
48.	Israel	0.699	13	56	47	81	47	-
49.	Italy	0.703	50	53	70	75	39	30
50.	Jamaica	0.758	45	39	68	13	-	-
51.	Japan	0.663	54	62	95	92	100	42
52.	Jordan	0.652	70	20	45	65	20	43
53.	Kazakhstan	0.710	88	20	50	88	85	22
54.	Kenya	0.712	70	4	60	50	11	-
55.	Kuwait	0.636	90	28	40	80	31	-
56.	Latvia	0.773	44	70	9	63	69	13
57.	Lebanon	0.632	62	27	48	57	47	10
58.	Lithuania	0.793	42	55	19	65	49	16
59.	Luxemburg	0.744	40	60	50	70	64	56
60.	Malaysia	0.668	100	27	50	36	47	57
61.	Malta	0.723	56	59	47	96	47	66
62.	Mexico	0.768	81	34	69	82	23	97
63.	Moldova	0.791	90	27	39	95	71	19
64.	Mongolia	0.705	93	37	29	39	50	42
65.	Montenegro	0.718	88	27	48	90	40	20
66.	Morocco	0.628	70	24	53	68	25	25
67.	Mozambique	0.776	85	15	38	44	11	80
68.	Namibia	0.805	65	30	40	45	35	-
69.	Nepal	0.664	65	30	40	40	-	-
70.	Netherlands	0.775	38	100	14	53	67	68
71.	New Zealand	0.835	22	69	58	49	55	75
72.	Nigeria	0.650	80	0	60	55	8	84
73.	North Macedonia	0.727	90	40	45	87	35	35
74.	Norway	0.875	31	81	8	50	55	55
75.	Pakistan	0.570	55	5	50	70	19	0

Cont. table 2.

76.	Panama	0.742	95	11	44	86	-	-
77.	Paraguay	0.707	70	12	40	85	20	56
78.	Peru	0.755	64	20	42	87	5	46
79.	Philippines	0.779	94	17	64	44	46	42
80.	Poland	0.740	68	47	64	93	49	29
81.	Portugal	0.787	63	59	31	99	42	33
82.	Qatar	0.640	93	18	55	80	14	-
83.	Romania	0.717	90	46	42	90	32	20
84.	Saudi Arabia	0.647	72	48	43	64	27	14
85.	Senegal	0.679	70	25	45	55	25	-
86.	Serbia	0.779	86	42	43	92	37	28
87.	Sierra Leone	0.708	70	20	40	50	-	-
88.	Singapore	0.744	74	43	48	8	67	46
89.	Slovakia	0.731	100	57	100	51	53	28
90.	Slovenia	0.766	71	81	19	88	50	48
91.	South Africa	0.785	49	23	63	49	18	63
92.	South Korea	0.696	60	58	39	85	86	29
93.	Spain	0.797	57	67	42	86	47	44
94.	Sri Lanka	0.653	80	35	10	45	45	-
95.	Suriname	0.739	85	47	37	92	-	-
96.	Sweden	0.816	31	87	5	29	52	78
97.	Switzerland	0.785	34	79	70	58	42	66
98.	Thailand	0.720	64	19	34	64	67	45
99.	Tunisia	0.668	70	27	40	75	24	-
100.	Turkey	0.645	66	46	45	85	35	49
101.	Ukraine	0.722	92	55	27	95	51	14
102.	United Arab Emirates	0.713	74	36	52	66	22	22
103.	United Kingdom	0.789	35	76	66	35	60	69
104.	USA	0.747	40	60	62	46	50	68
105.	Uruguay	0.715	61	60	38	98	28	53
106.	Viet Nam	0.715	70	30	40	30	47	35
107.	Zambia	0.697	60	35	40	50	30	42

Source: own study based on: (World Economic Forum, 2024; The Culture Factor Group).

It is clear that in a pooled sample of 107 countries, the gender gap is observed among all of the countries. However, the GGGI differs across countries. For example, in Iceland, the gender gap is closed the most (over 90%). Similarly, in Norway and Finland, the gender gap is closed by more than 80 %. New Zealand is a country outside Europe where gender inequality is at its lowest level (GGGI = 0.835). By comparison, African (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco) and Asian (Pakistan, Iran, Lebanon) countries are among those where gender inequality is at the highest level. In summary, 98,13% of countries listed in Table 2. closed more than 60% of the gender gap, and 68.22% of them have a GGGI higher than 0.7.

On the other hand, in the case of 6.54% of counties, the gender gap is lower than 20%. Moreover, only one country (0.93%) achieved over 90% in closing the gender gap. Iceland is ranked 1st, and generally speaking, European economies lead the ranking.

Regarding Hofstede's indexes of cultural dimensions, it is demonstrated that countries also differ from each other. The first indicator, Power Distance, is high (the value of 80 or more points) in the case of 30,84% of countries. In consequence, these societies can be described as valuing hierarchy and subordination to authority. By comparison, 2.80% of countries were

given 20 or fewer points in the discussed dimension. As a consequence, these countries have a more democratic attitude towards power distribution and, more often, question authorities. The average level of PD indicator (the level between 40 to 60 points) refers to 16.82% of countries. When considering the index of Individualism (I), one could observe the lowest level in the case of 25.23%, the average level in the case of 27.10% and the high level only in the case of 6.54% countries. Thus, societies with high Individualism, like the Netherlands, Iceland, and Denmark, value personal initiative and success. Conversely, low Individualism, which is typical (among others) for Nigeria, Pakistan, and Kenya, means that individuals define themselves through the group to which they belong. Thus, the social pressure of the group can be strong. When it comes to the issue of Motivation towards achievement and success, most countries are ranked in the middle of the scale (53.27%).

An interesting phenomenon is that only four countries (3.74%) present high levels of MAS indicators, and 11.22% of countries were given low scores on the mentioned index. More specifically, those with a low MAS index tend to attach less importance to the clear definition of social roles, while societies with higher scores on the index describe gender roles more traditionally. It is interesting to observe that in the case of the Uncertainty Avoidance (UA) indicator, over 38% of countries are ranked as high, over 32% as average and only 1.87% as low. As a result, people in most societies avoid risk and prefer stability. In contrast, only 3.06% of countries are given high Long Term Orientation (LTO) indicators. In almost 40% of countries, the indicator is on average, and 17.35% is on the low level. Under these conditions, typically pragmatic countries are in the minority. Finally, the level of Indulgence (INDUL) indicator is average, and it is also the most frequent indicator (30.68% of countries). 7.95 % of countries have high, and 18.18% have low value of INDUL. Thus, social control and norms are not so very strict in most cases.

Additionally, it is worth noticing that the indicator has the highest average value for UA and PD (Table 3).

Table 3.
Arithmetic means of Hofstede's indicator for the countries surveyed in the research

Indicator	**Average**
Individualism	41.05
Motivation towards success and achievement	46.15
Uncertainty Avoidance	66.37
Long Term Orientation	41.10
Indulgence	44.31
Power Distance	65.74

Source: own study based on: The Culture Group.

Having analyzed the GGGI values and cultural dimensions indicators for different countries, the next step of the research process was to investigate the occurrence of potential relationships between GGGI and cultural dimensions. In order to achieve the goal of the paper, six hypotheses were tested:

1. There is a relationship between the value of the Individualism index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
2. There is a relationship between the value of the Power Distance Index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
3. There is a relationship between the value of the Uncertainty Avoidance index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
4. There is a relationship between the value of the Long Term Orientation index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
5. There is a relationship between the value of the Motivation towards Achievement and Success index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.
6. There is a relationship between the value of the Indulgence index (according to Hofstede's model) and the level of gender inequality in a given country.

The first hypothesis suggested that Individualism (I) and the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) are positively correlated. The results are in Table 4. reveal that I's total effect on GGGI is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$; $R = 0.4884$). These findings indicate that the more individualistic the society, the lower the gender inequality. Thus, H1 is supported by the data.

The second hypothesis assumes that there is a relationship between Power Distance (PD) and GGGI. According to the data, when PD increases, the inequality phenomenon is also higher ($p < 0.05$; $R = -0.3848$), but the correlation is weak.

The third hypothesis postulates that GGGI varies depending on Uncertainty Avoidance index (UA). The UA – GGGI relationship is statistically insignificant and very weak ($p > 0.05$; -0.0001). In consequence the hypothesis number three cannot be confirmed.

Table 4.
Relationship between GGGI and PD, I, UA Indexes (Spearman's correlation)

Pairs of variables	**Correlation (Hofstede and GGGI index database) Correlation coefficients are significant with p < ,05000**		
	N	**R Spearman**	**p**
GGGI & Power Distance	107	-0.3847	0.0000
GGGI & Indyvidualism	107	0.4883	0.0000
GGGI & Uncertainty Avoidance	107	-0.0001	0.9989

Source: own study.

The fourth hypothesis claims that Long Term Orientation (LTO) of society has an impact on gender inequalities. The results verify that LTO positively influences GGGI ($p < 0.05$; $r = 0.2699$), but the effect is weak (Table 5).

The fifth hypothesis presumes a relationship between the level of Motivation towards Achievement and Success (MAS) and the level of GGGI (Table 5). The impact of MAS on GGGI level is weak and not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

Finally, the sixth hypothesis posits the existence of a relationship between Indulgence (INDUL) and GGGI. The data confirms this relationship ($p < 0.05$; $r = 03788$), but again the impact is weak (Table 5).

Table 5.
Relationship between GGGI and MAS, LTO, and INDUL indexes (Pearson's correlation)

Pairs of variables	Correlation (Hofstede and GGGI index database) Correlation coefficients are significant with p <, 05000		
	N	Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	p
GGGI & Motivation towards Achievement and Success	107	-0.1806	0.063
GGGI & Long Term Orientation	98	0.2699	0.007
GGGI & Indulgence	88	0.3788	0.000

Source: own study.

The results of the statistical analysis presented in Tables 4 and 5 are discussed in details in the next section of this study.

5. Conclusions and future research

The findings of this research highlight a significant relationship between gender inequalities measured by GGGI and different culture dimensions that refer to Hofstede's model. Four of the six sub-hypotheses were positively verified. Indeed, a statistically significant relationship was found between the value of the GGGI index and the dimensions of culture from the Hofstede model, such as I, LTO, INDUL, and PD. In the case of I, LTO, and INDUL, a positive relationship was found with the GGGI index, so that increases in I, LTO, and INDUL correspond to increases in GGGI. As a consequence, in societies with higher levels of Individualism, gender inequality is lower as the gender gap closes at a higher level. The results obtained on the positive correlation between indicator I and GGGI are confirmed by the research of other scientists. Similar to the research of Hsiao (2022) and Malaquias, Matsumoto and Valado (2022), the presented results confirm that as the level of Individualism in society increases, the level of gender inequality decreases. Similarly, when societies are more pragmatic than normative, gender inequality is lower. This claim is confirmed by Cherif's (2010) research on the influence of religion on gender inequality. Finally, higher indulgence favours an increase in GGGI and, therefore, a smaller gender gap. This correlation was also confirmed in studies by Li, Zukerman and Diener (2021) showing that liberal societies, which give individuals greater rights to self-determination, have lower levels of gender inequality. It is also worth emphasizing that I is the variable with the strongest impact on the increase in the level of gender inequality in the countries studied (moderate impact). At the same time, an inverse relationship is observed for the PD indicator. Consequently, a strong respect for

hierarchy and authority and an adherence to an autocratic management style decrease the GGGI index and promote an increase in gender inequality. Once again, the results of the analyses are consistent with the research of other authors, e.g. Kosakowska-Berezecka (2023), who also confirms that higher levels of gender inequality can be observed in more hierarchical societies.

No statistically significant relationships were confirmed between UA and GGGI and MAS and GGGI. This is an interesting phenomenon as for example Malaquias, Matsumoto and Valado (2022) proved in their research that the level of uncertainty avoidance has an impact on the level of gender inequality. Similarly, Nayoung and Cunningham (2017) note that uncertainty avoidance is negatively associated with gender equity as is motivation towards success. The lack of correlation between UA and GGGI in the following studies may be due to various reasons. According to Hofstede's model, cultures low on uncertainty avoidance are expected to give women more opportunities to participate in the labour force, which in turn decreases men's employment opportunities. However, the results of the study by Terzi, Özdemir, and Özkan (2022) proves that both women's and men's labour force participation rate are negatively related to country scores on uncertainty avoidance. According to mentioned authors the fact that more women and men participate in the labour force in countries with low uncertainty avoidance can be interpreted as women's labour force participation creating new job opportunities that both women and men benefit from. Such results may in turn confirm the lack of a clear impact of the level of UA on the extent of gender inequality. However, in order to confirm this thesis, more in-depth research should be conducted on the relationship between the level of UA and the specific dimensions in which gender inequalities are observed in socio-economic life.

As four of the six sub-hypotheses have been confirmed, the main hypothesis that national culture determines differences in gender inequality cannot be clearly validated.

Despite the promising results, the research has certain limitations. One key limitation is that the research was conducted at a single point in time and, therefore, does not reflect changes over time. Another limitation pertains to the lack of data for all of the countries, as Hofstede's model did not cover some of them.

Further research should address these methodological limitations by exploring the longitudinal study that expand the scope of analysis. The research could also refer to another models of cultural differences between countries like Hall's model of high and low context cultures, Schwartz Culture Model or Inglehart–Welzel Cultural Map.

Nevertheless, this study sheds light on the relationship between gender inequality and culture. It can, therefore, be useful in building both gender equality policies and specific tools to reduce gender inequalities, taking into account the cultural context. Additionally, the results of the research can be used both by institutions aiming to combat gender inequality, e.g., the European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Equality Commission, International Labour Organization, and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, but also by managers of enterprises operating in a multicultural environment.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Minister of Science under the program "Regional Initiative of Excellence".

References

1. Acker, J. (1992). Gendered Institutions. From Sex Roles to Gendered Institutions. *Contemporary Sociology, Vol. 21*, pp. 565-569. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2075528
2. Allen, P., Cutts, D. (2019). Women are more likely than men to balm structural factors for women's political under-representation: Evidence from 27 countries. *European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 58, No. 2*, pp. 465-487.
3. Birukou, A., Blanzieri, E., Giorgini, P., Giunchiglia, F. (2009). *A formal definition of culture.* The Workshop on Modeling Intercultural Collaboration and Negotiation (MICON) at International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI'09). DOI:10.1007/978-94-007-5574-1_1
4. Cerrato, J., Cifre, E. (2018). Gender Inequality in Household Chores and Work-Family Conflict. *Frontiers in Psychology, Vol. 9, No. 1330.* DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01330
5. Cherif, F.M. (2010). Culture, Rights, and Norms: Women's Rights Reform in Muslim Countries. *Journal of Politics, Vol. 72, No. 4*, pp. 1144-1160.
6. Collins, C. (2020). Who to Blame and How to Solve It: Mothers' Perceptions of Work–Family Conflict Across Western Policy Regimes. *Journal of Marriage and Family, Vol. 82, No. 3,* pp. 849-874.
7. Cooray, A., Potrafke, N. (2011). Gender inequality in education: Political institutions or culture and religion? *European Journal of Political Economy, Vol. 27, Iss. 2*, pp. 268-280.
8. Cruz, A., Klinge, S. (2011). *Gender-based violence in the world of work: Overview and selected annotated bibliography*. Switzerland: International Labour Office, Bureau for Gender Equality, Working Paper, Vol. 3. Retrieved from: https://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/gbv_work_bibliography_ilo_2011.pdf, 14.10.2024.
9. Daly, M. (2020). *Gender Inequality and Welfare States in Europe*. Chaltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
10. Devillard, S., Sancier-Sultan, S., de Zelicourt, A., Kossoff, C. (2016). *Women Matter 2016 Reinventing the workplace to unlock the potential of gender diversity*. McKinsey & Company.

11. Ekvall, Å. (2013). Gender equality, attitudes to gender equality, and conflict. *Gender Perspectives on Conflict and Violence, PT A Vol. 18A*, pp. 273-295.
12. Epaminonda, E. (2021). Drawing a Sociocultural Profile of Cyprus by Reviewing Some Key Findings and Discussing Change and Diversity. *Cyprus Review, Vol. 33, No. 2*, pp. 21-39.
13. Eriksson, K., Lindvall, J. (2023). Cultural variation in the SES-gender interaction in student achievement. *Frontiers in Psychology, Vol. 14*. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1120211
14. Frankiewicz, B. (2020). *5 Ways We Lack Gender Balance in the Workplac*e. World Economic Forum. Retrieved from: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/01/5-ways-companies-can-progress-more-women-into-leadership-roles/, 14.09.2024.
15. Hall, E.T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. NY: Anchor, Garden City.
16. Hardt, S., Stöckl, H., Wamoyi, J., Ranganathan, M. (2023). Sexual Harassment in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Qualitative Systematic Review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, Vol. 24, No. 5,* pp. 3346-3362. DOI: 10.1177/15248380221127255
17. Harris, M. (1975). *Culture, people, nature: An introduction to general anthropology*. NY: Thomas Y. Crowell.
18. Heise, L., Greene, M.E., Opper, N., Stavropoulou, M., Harper, C., Nascimento, M., Zewdie, D. (2019). Gender inequality and restrictive gender norms: framing the challenges to health. *The Lancet, Vol. 393, Iss. 10189*, pp. 2440-2454.
19. Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
20. Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, Vol. 2, Iss. 1*. DOI: https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014
21. Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J., Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (Rev. 3rd ed.). NY: McGraw-Hill.
22. Hsiao, H. (2022). A cross-cultural study of organizational work–family initiatives, work demands and conflict, and job-related outcomes among working parents across 24 countries. *Cross-Cultural Research: The Journal of Comparative Social Science, Vol. 56, No. 2-3*, pp. 268-300. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/10693971221075208
23. Htun, M., Weldon, S.L. (2018). *The Logics of Gender Justice: State Action on Women's Rights Around the World (Cambridge Studies in Gender and Politics)*. Cambridge: Cabridge University Press.
24. Inkeles, A., Levinson, D.J. (1969). National character: The study of modal personality and socio-cultural systems. In: G. Lindzey, E. Aronson (Eds), *The handbook of social psychology, Vol. 4.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, pp. 418-506.

25. International Trade Union Confederation (2018). *ITUC Economic and Social Policy Brief: The Gender Wage Gap, ITUC CSI IGB*. Retrieved from: https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/the_gender_wage_gap_en.pdf, 03.03.2025.
26. Jayachandran, S. (2015). The Roots of Gender Inequality in Developing Countries. *Annual Review of Economics, Vol. 7*, pp. 63-88. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-economics-080614-115404
27. Keesing, R.M. (1981). *Cultural anthropology: A contemporary perspective*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
28. Kinias, Z., Kim, H.S. (2012). Culture and gender inequality: Psychological consequences of perceiving gender inequality. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, Vol. 15, No. 1*, pp. 89-103. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430211408940
29. Kosakowska-Berezecka, N., Bosson, J.K., Jurek, P., Besta, T., Olech, M., Vandello, J. A., Bender, M., Dandy, J., Hoorens, V., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I. (2023). Gendered Self-Views across 62 Countries. *Social Psychological and Personality Science, Vol. 14, No. 7,* pp. 808-824. DOI: 10.1177/19485506221129687
30. Landmesser, J., Orłowski, A., Rusek, M. (2020). Gender Pay Gap Across the Income Distribution: Analysis for the EU. *Acta Physica Polonica A, Vol. 138, No. 1,* pp. 31-40.
31. Li, C., Zukerman, M., Diener, E. (2021). Culture Moderates the Relation Between Gender Inequality and Well-Being. *Psychological Science, Vol. 32, No. 6,* pp. 823-835. DOI: 10.1177/0956797620972492
32. Malaquias, F.F.D., Matsumoto, P.A., Valado V.M. Jr (2022). Women, Business and the Law: Does Culture Matter? *Global business Review, Jul*. DOI:10.1177/09721509221108822
33. Milkman, R., Townsley, E. (1994). Gender and the Economy. In: Smelser N., Swedberg R. (Ed.), *The Handbook of Economic Sociology* (pp. 600-619). New York: Princeton University Press and New York Russell Sage Foundation.
34. Nayoung A., Cunningham, G.B. (2017). Cultural Values and Gender Equity on National Olympic Committee Boards. *International Journal of Exercise Sciences, Vol. 10, No. 6,* pp. 857-874.
35. Nishaat, B.-M.Z. (2017). Achieving Work Family Balance (WFB) among Professional Working women in Mauritius: A qualitative study. *PEOPLE International Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 3, No. 2*, pp. 2053-2074. DOI: 10.20319/pijss.2017.32.20532074
36. Perugini, C., Vladisavljević, M. (2019). Gender inequality and the gender-job satisfaction paradox in Europe. *Labour Economics, Vol. 60,* pp. 129-147. DOI: 10.1016/j.labeco.2019.06.006
37. Terzi, H., Özdemir, F., Özkan, T. (2022). Gender Gap in Employment and Culture. *Psikoloji Çalışmaları - Studies in Psychology Cilt, Vol. 42, Iss. 2*, pp. 473-507. DOI: 10.26650/SP2021-941054

38. *The Culture Group, Country Comparison Tool*. Retrieved from: https://www.theculturefactor.com/country-comparison-tool?countries, 10.09.2024.
39. UNICEF (2022). *Gender Equality. Equal rights and opportunities for girls and boys help all children fulfil their potential.* Retrieved from: https://www.unicef.org/gender-equality, 09.03.2025.
40. UNITED NATIONS (2025). *Facts and figures: Women's leadership and political participation.* Retrieved from: https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-womens-leadership-and-political-participation, 09.03.2025.
41. Uwa, O.G., John, A.E., Dauda, B.O., Oyindamola, O. (2018). Political participation and gender inequality in Nigerian fourth republic. *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration, Vol. 6, No. 5*, pp. 22-38.
42. World Economic Forum (2022). *The Global Gender Gap Report 2022*. Geneva: World Economic Forum. Retrieved from: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2022.pdf, 10.09.2024.
43. World Economic Forum (2024). *The Global Gender Gap Report 2024*. Geneva: World Economic Forum. Retrieved from: https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2024/, 10.09.2024.
44. Worthy, L., Lavigne, T., Romero, F. (2022). *Culture and Psychology*. Gelendale Community Colledge: Libre Texts. Retrieved from: https://open.maricopa.edu/culturepsychology/front-matter/about-this-book/, 04.08.2025.