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GENDER EQUALITY, CULTURAL VALUES, AND ATTITUDES TOWARD SOCIAL INCLUSION IN MODERN SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT
Gender equality, cultural orientations, and social tolerance are interconnected dimensions of contemporary social life. This study examined associations between egalitarian gender-role attitudes, cultural values and acceptance of social diversity using respondent-level data from the World Values Survey, Waves 6 and 7. Two harmonized Kaggle files provided 169,126 records across 79 countries. Gender equality was operationalized using two statements concerning men's employment priority and women's higher earnings; social acceptance was measured through four questions on willingness to live alongside people of different racial, immigrant, religious and linguistic backgrounds. Descriptive statistics characterized respondents and item responses. A cross-national linear regression incorporated country fixed effects and country-clustered standard errors. The gender-attitude scale was complete for 164,440 respondents, whereas 167,937 provided sufficiently complete social acceptance indicators. The mean gender-equality score was 2.639 on a five-point scale, and mean social acceptance was 0.814. In the adjusted model (n = 162,044), more egalitarian attitudes were positively associated with social acceptance (coefficient = 0.0327; 95% CI: 0.0263–0.0391). Teaching tolerance was positively associated with acceptance, while emphasizing obedience was negatively associated. These observational findings link gender norms, childhood-value preferences and interpersonal inclusion. Missing sampling weights and selective questionnaire coverage limit generalizability.

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1. Introduction

Questions of gender equality and social inclusion are central in the study of contemporary societies, as the commitments in laws to equal treatment do not automatically result in a change in the attitude in everyday-life. Social norms develop expectations about what women and men should do and can affect opportunities, interpersonal interactions and public acceptance of difference. Studies on adolescent beliefs demonstrate that gender expectations are formed in the interplay of family, community and institutional environments (Patel et al., 2021). Measurement research also shows that, even when support for equality is expressed, there can be less conscious assessments of gender roles, and that care is needed in developing indicators for surveys (Jain et al., 2022).

Comparative analysis with the World Values Survey indicates a significant variation in gender norms across social contexts and some link to socioeconomic and health outcomes (Cislaghi et al., 2022). It's not just about women's work. Beliefs about social hierarchies may be organized together, by attitudes towards authority, religious commitments, family obligations and child-rearing priorities. However, the attitudes in favor of feminism do not always replace the stereotypical attitudes in all situations (Jiménez-Moya et al., 2022). Therefore, studies focusing on a single measure of gender equality are likely to miss broader patterns of gender norms.

Gender attitudes also are shaped by social relationships, and from one generation to the next. In India, community norms have been shown to be linked to women's empowerment, even when considering individual factors (Gopalakrishnan et al., 2024). Men's perceptions of sexual autonomy reflect that egalitarian attitude can be found in various domains and social contexts (Pradhan & De, 2025). Research on reproductive choices also links social norms about masculinity to women's choices (Mejía-Guevara et al., 2021). The results of the study suggest that the questionnaire items be used instead of viewing equality as a general and consistent disposition.

Favorable gender attitudes are also explored in relation to general openness to others who are different in identity, religion, nationality or cultural practices in contemporary debates. Responses to equality initiatives might be influenced by ideological beliefs and identity-related processes (Fernández-Torres et al., 2025). The involvement of men in equality movements also indicates that social change is a process that engages a variety of different social groups and not one constituency (Van Laar et al., 2024). Empirical evidence on whether and how strong the link between perceived gender inequality and attitudes towards minority groups is across different domains is still underway, and findings indicate that attitudes may transfer from one domain to another (Ciaffoni et al., 2024).

The individual and intergenerational studies also suggest further motivation to look at gender attitudes in a broader cultural context. The data shows that gender-role attitudes are correlated differently with subjective well-being among the respondents in China (Chen & Zhang, 2024). Children's gender-equality consciousness may be shaped by their parents (Li et al., 2024a), and attitudinal profiles for rural/left-behind children might be unique (Li et al., 2024b). Brief interventions have been explored as potential means to decrease gender bias (Bae & Jeong, 2024). The traditional notions of gender also influence participation in certain social activities, such as sport (He et al., 2024). These kinds of studies highlight the context-specific and enduring nature of gender-related beliefs.

In the current research, cross-national secondary survey data was used to correlate gender-role attitudes with observable measures of social acceptance in everyday life. Cultural-value items included questions about tolerance and obedience, and social inclusion items included non-rejection of racially, religiously, linguistically or nationally different neighbours. These are deliberately narrow operational definitions: they cannot measure all aspects of substantive gender

equality or institutional inclusion. The analysis aimed to identify associations and relations and was cognizant that the survey findings could be influenced by country-specific contexts beyond the specific attitudes.

Research objectives:

1.To describe gender equality attitudes and their variation by respondent gender.

2.To assess tolerance- and obedience-related cultural values alongside indicators of social acceptance.

3.To estimate associations of gender equality and cultural values with social acceptance while accounting for country and survey wave.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design and Study Population

The World Values Survey Waves 6–7 Kaggle dataset (Yudin, 2025) was used for the secondary cross-sectional analysis. The downloaded archive contained a set of two respondent-level CSV format files, with one containing responses to the questions, and the other containing demographic characteristics and wave identifiers. One-to-one merging was performed on the common identifier of the record, and resulted in 169,126 observations from 79 listed countries. Pooled samples were analyzed, which are not nationally representative probability samples with recoverable original sampling design information. To achieve description of survey composition and model heterogeneity, country and wave fields were maintained. There was no recruitment of new human subjects, and no individual identifying records were acquired.

2.2. Variable Selection and Measurement

Attitudes towards gender equality were measured through Q33, "Do you think that men should have more right for scarce employment opportunities" and Q35, "Do you think there are any issues when a woman earns more than her husband? Both items were ordered responses with values ranging from 1 (strong agreement) to 5 (strong disagreement) – higher values indicated more egalitarian views. Only two items with an average were calculated when both the responses were valid. Social acceptance is based on four neighbourhood-rejection items, Q19 (different race), Q21 (immigrants or foreign workers), Q23 (different religion), and Q26 (different language). A score of 2 meant that the category was not mentioned as unwelcomed while 1 meant rejection. For those respondents who answered at least three items, the percentage of non-rejected categories was determined. The construct thus referred to the interpersonal tolerance, but not the institutional access or enacted inclusion. Cultural orientations were represented by Q12 (teaching tolerance and respect) and Q17 (teaching obedience) coded as binary indicators of whether the quality of childrearing was mentioned or not. Gender, country and wave were considered covariates. Age and age band variables were not used due to the Kaggle extraction combining age-related entries with birth years and inconsistent coding of the age categories.

2.3. Data Preprocessing and Quality Assessment

The files were loaded with pandas, and the row identifier was verified to be unique before the files were merged. The variables in the questionnaire were coded numerically. Codes outside of the substantive response range (including negative nonresponse codes) were not used to score and were coded as missing. Gender equality score needed two valid responses, social acceptance score needed 3/4 neighbour items observed. The country labels and wave identification fields were left as specified and no imputation has been performed for the missing responses. Complete cases for the multivariable specification were used to select respondents. No unsupported recoding of birth year as age was done. The reduced Kaggle release was unable to provide a validated survey weight or complete complex sampling design and instead analyses were reported as sample descriptions

and not population estimates.

2.4. Descriptive and Comparative Statistical Analysis

Survey wave, respondent gender, completeness and country representation were summarised by frequency and percentage. Percentages disagreeing or strongly disagreeing were reported as item means for valid gender-attitude responses to communicate egalitarian views. Percentages were worked out, both for cultural-value nominations and for non-rejection of different neighbour categories. Description was kept at the level of items to maintain variations in the wording of the underlying question. Graphics were presented showing the largest national subsamples as well as the gender distributions of the averaged gender-attitude score and social-acceptance indicators by wave. All graphics were computed directly from the observed respondent records, the axes and denominators were identified.

2.5. Correlation and Multivariable Regression Analysis

For the continuous variable (social acceptance fraction; range 0–1), ordinary least squares linear regression was used to evaluate the association with the gender-equality score, and with the tolerance nomination and obedience nomination. Gender and wave were added as categorical controls and country fixed-effects were used to control for stable average differences between country samples. Standard errors were grouped by country, so that residuals can be correlated within country. The observations were made and complete cases were required, that is, countries had to submit at least 50 completed cases. Regression coefficients, 95% confidence intervals and p values were reported, but statistical significance was not the sole focus, effect size was also emphasized. Models were descriptive and did not involve causal explanations. The script included variables for number of countries, R-squared, model sample size and provided all tables and independent plotting data sets in the form of an excel file. The item meaning and coding direction for each model variable were interpreted as per the original item. To facilitate further transparency, the regression was not set up as a causal design, and the confidence intervals were explained as uncertainty estimates given the specification provided. The pooled observational records were not an experiment, despite country fixed effects. Wave effects were analyzed as between-sample differences; that is, they were analyzed as differences between the repeated cross-sectional samples rather than for respondent level changes. All statistical tests were carried out at a nominal alpha of .05 with small p values not considered to represent substantive importance.

3. Results

3.1. Study Population Characteristics and Data Quality

Combined data set included 169,126 respondents from 79 countries. Wave 6 contributed 79,149 observations (46.8%) and Wave 7 contributed 89,977 (53.2%). 88,820 respondents were female (52.5%) and 80,171 respondents were male (47.4%) with the remainder being other or not specified. There was an adequate number of gender-attitude items for 97.2% (164 440) of the respondents and an adequate number of neighbour items for 99.3% (167 937). Sample composition is described in table 1. Figure 1 highlights the country samples of the 12 largest samples and the unequal national contribution to pooled frequencies.

Table 1. Survey composition and analytic completeness

Characteristic	n	Percent
Records, merged	169126	100.0
Wave 6	79149	46.8
Wave 7	89977	53.2
Countries	79	—

Female	88820	52.5
Male	80171	47.4
Complete two-item gender scale	164440	97.2
Usable social acceptance scale	167937	99.3

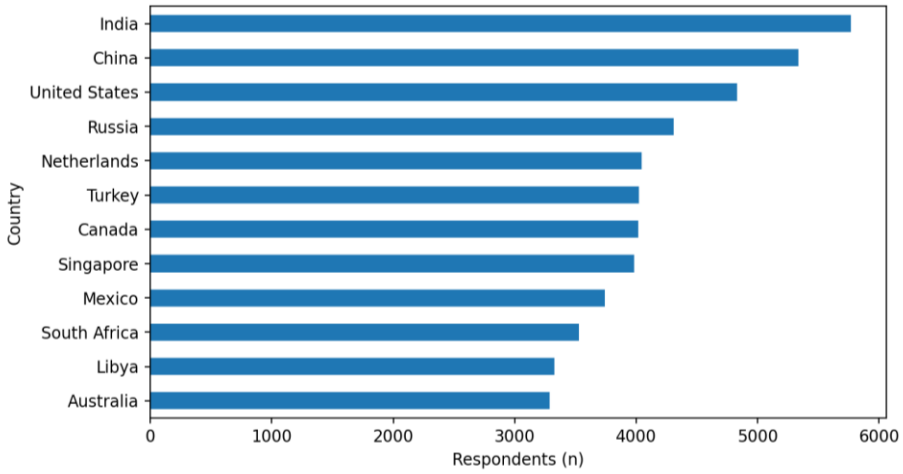


Figure 1. Largest national subsamples in the pooled extraction

3.2. Distribution of Gender Equality Attitudes

The mean for the full two-item gender-equality scale was 2.639 with a response range of 1 to 5. Of the female respondents, 28.30% disagreed or strongly disagreed with male employment priority and of the male respondents 22.60% disagreed or strongly disagreed. These figures were 25.19% and 23.98% respectively for the higher-earnings statement. So, the apparent difference in gender was greater with respect to the employment priority item than to the earnings-related item. Table 2 shows separate denominators and means. Instead of re-stating the percentages for each item, the entire distribution of the 2-item score for gender equality is presented by the gender of the respondents Figure 2.

Table 2. Gender equality attitudes by respondent gender

Gender-related attitude	Group	Valid n	Mean (1–5)	Disagree % (4–5)
Equal job rights	Male	79297	2.472	22.6
Equal job rights	Female	87623	2.761	28.3
No objection to higher female earnings	Male	78462	2.616	23.98
No objection to higher female earnings	Female	86759	2.681	25.19

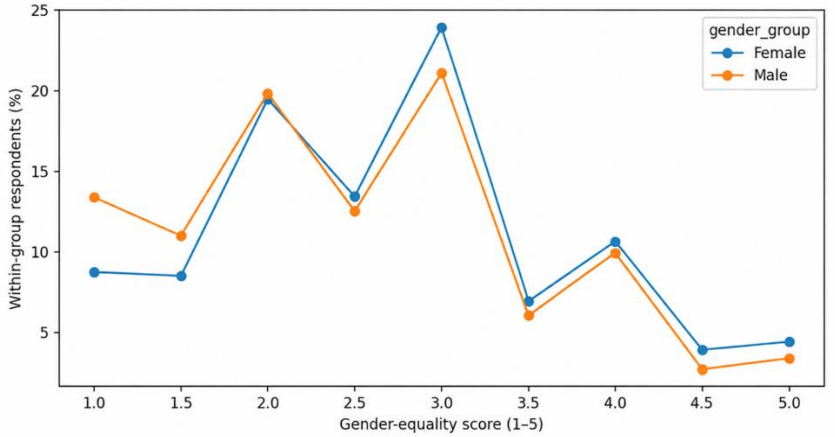


Figure 2. Two-item gender-equality scale distribution by gender

3.3. Cultural Values and Attitudes Toward Social Inclusion

65.47% of all valid responses nominated teaching tolerance and respect as an important aspect of child rearing, while 36.65% nominated obedience. In terms of social acceptance 82.79% did not reject people of a different race as neighbours, 76.71% did not reject immigrants, 81.98% did not reject people of a different religion and 84.00% did not reject people speaking a different language. The pooled mean acceptance fraction was 0.814 for those who had at least three valid neighbour responses. All indicators and their positive-response definitions are in table 3. These indicators are compared between survey waves in Figure 3, with differences indicating associations to wave membership and not within-person attitude change.

Table 3. Selected cultural-value and social-acceptance indicators

Indicator	Valid n	Positive response %	Positive response definition
Teach tolerance and respect	168477	65.47	Mentioned as important child quality
Teach obedience	167918	36.65	Mentioned as important child quality
Different race neighbours	167956	82.79	Not rejected as neighbours
Immigrant neighbours	167803	76.71	Not rejected as neighbours
Different religion neighbours	167919	81.98	Not rejected as neighbours
Different language neighbours	167922	84.0	Not rejected as neighbours

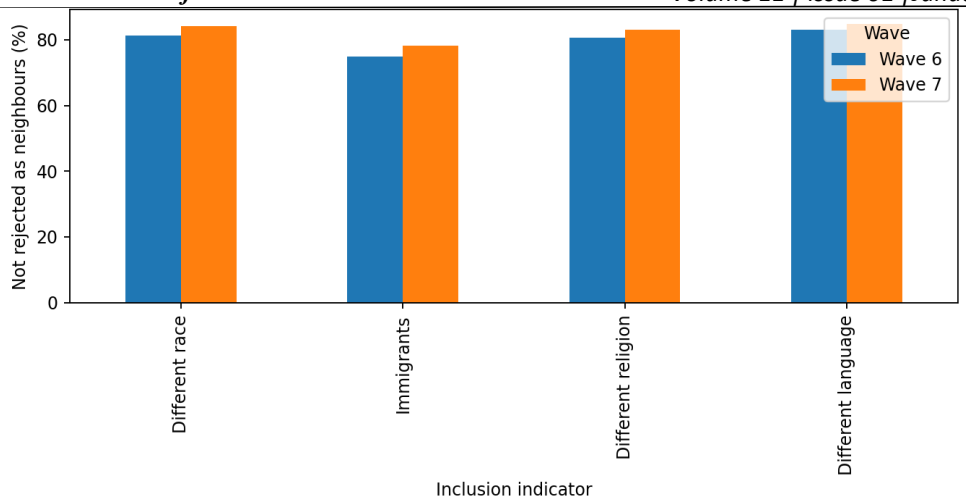


Figure 3. Non-rejection of diverse neighbours by survey wave

3.4. Associations Between Gender Equality, Cultural Values, and Social Inclusion

The adjusted analysis resulted in a sample of 162,044 respondents across 79 countries, which accounted for 18.11% of the variance in the observed score for acceptance ($R^2 = 0.1811$). The gender-equality score was positively associated with acceptance ($\beta = 0.0327$; 95% CI: 0.0263–0.0391; $p < .001$). Nomination of tolerance was also positively associated ($\beta = 0.0140$; 95% CI: 0.0059–0.0220), while nomination of obedience was inversely associated ($\beta = -0.0161$; 95% CI: −0.0254 to −0.0069). The wave contrast was not statistically different than zero after adjustment ($p = .957$). Table 4 shows estimated coefficients and clustered confidence intervals; Figure 4 concentrates on the three substantive attitudinal predictors.

Table 4. Country-adjusted associations with social acceptance

Predictor	Adjusted coefficient	95% CI lower	95% CI upper	p value
Gender-equality score (1–5)	0.0327	0.0263	0.0391	0.0
Tolerance taught (yes)	0.014	0.0059	0.022	0.0006
Obedience taught (yes)	-0.0161	-0.0254	-0.0069	0.0006
Male (vs Female)	0.0068	0.0	0.0135	0.0485
Wave 7 (vs Wave 6)	0.001	-0.0366	0.0387	0.9572

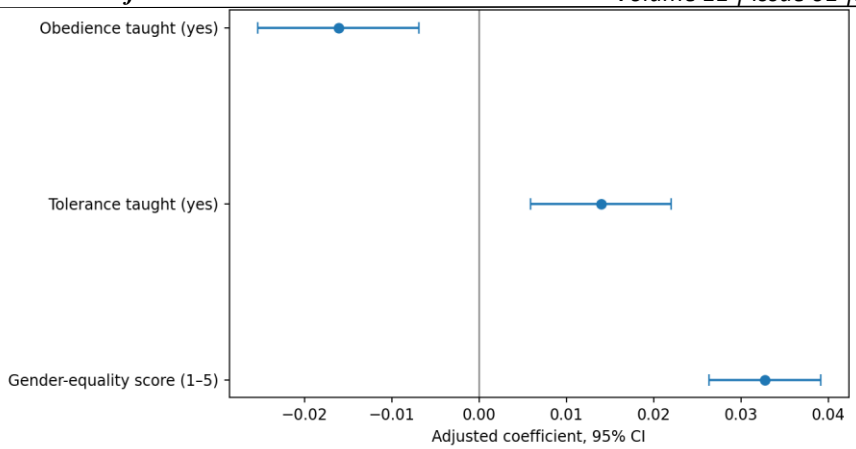


Figure 4. Country-clustered regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals

4. Discussion

Results indicate that attitudes and gender equality are correlated with being willing to accept people from different social backgrounds. The positive association between the two was small, even after adjusting for country and wave: for every unit increase in the gender-equality scale (from 1 to 5), there was a corresponding increase of 0.0327 in the proportion of social categories that were not rejected as neighbours. This finding lends support to the claim that there are some attitudinal commonalities between an egalitarian and inclusive attitude without proof that it is a causal relationship. Studies on the gendering of social perceptions reveal that social exclusion and social categorization are not the same for all social groups, but are context-dependent (Tanriverdi et al., 2024).

Results have also shown that a variety of cultural-value questions evoke different associations. The naming tolerance as an important quality for children was positively associated with neighbour acceptance, while the naming obedience was negatively adjusted associated. The above measures should not be viewed as mutually exclusive; respondents were free to nominate both qualities, and these short measures were not intended to be an exhaustive list of cultural traditions, religion/family structure. Studies on immigrant incorporation reveal that attitudes of receiving societies regarding common values do not guarantee unproblematic inclusion in the community (Suárez & Hannikainen, 2025). Longitudinal studies also indicate that attitudes towards migration can shift depending on the social context and the perceived level of cohesion (Castillo et al., 2023). The lower non-rejection percentage for immigrant neighbours compared to the race, religion/language social acceptance measures suggests that the social acceptance measures sampled in this study were not equivalent. Integration scholarship has been highlighting that there are different social fields where identification and acceptance take place (Becker, 2022). Political interpretation also hinges on the positions of groups and the perceived institutional implications (Akinyemi et al., 2025). Questionnaire-based neighbours' perceptions of asylum seekers' ability to integrate is also influenced by practical socioeconomic barriers which are not measured (Dimitriadis & Ambrosini, 2023). Thus, the results of the present article can most appropriately be called interpersonal social acceptance and not a full-scale measure of inclusion.

The country fixed-effects specification minimized national-level sample differences, and thus attitudinal sample differences, but it did not eliminate all of the individual-level confounding and could not determine the direction of causation in the timing of attitudes. Predictor and outcome measures may be impacted by national context and experiences of discrimination and social contact. Normative discussions of constitutional values and membership also argue for the need to not take a single survey question as the definition of integration practice (Manser-Egli, 2023). Interfaith public communication studies also indicate that tolerance can only be understood in the

local institutional and religious context (Dharta et al., 2025).

Special care needs to be taken when choosing measurements. The two-item gender-equality score reflected employment competition and/or household earnings, rather than political representation, equal education, or all other gender discrimination. Scale-development studies provide evidence of the importance of construct coverage and validation in order to interpret a numerical composite as a general gender norm (Sedlander et al., 2022). We also note the need for context-sensitive validation, as further work with norm adaptations also reinforces this (Sedlander et al., 2024). Respondent samples and national coverage varied and this made it difficult to give descriptive comparisons of survey waves. National prevalence and age differences could not be claimed because of missing original survey weights and the unusable age field in this derivative Kaggle release.

Nevertheless, the study provides a replicable method for measuring specific gender-role beliefs and child-rearing preferences and social acceptability in a large pooled survey extract. Future research should attempt to retrieve the official wave-specific microdata and weights, confirm comparability at the country level, harmonize sociodemographic covariates, and perform measurement invariance. Research with mixed methods could explore the motivations behind statements of ambivalence towards specific outgroups among seemingly egalitarian respondents. The implications for policy should be interpreted with caution: educational and public dialogue programs can gain from a focus on multiple facets of fairness and respect, but the current cross-sectional study is not able to evaluate the impact of such programs.

5. Conclusion

This cross-national analysis showed attitudes towards gender equality related to cultural priorities and social acceptance in a large secondary sample from the World Values Survey Waves 6-7. More egalitarian attitudes on the importance of men finding jobs compared to women who earn higher pay were more likely to indicate acceptance of neighbours with different ethnic or national backgrounds, religions, or languages. This positive association was found even after controlling for country, gender of respondent, survey wave and selected child-rearing values. The attitude of valuing tolerance and respect was positively related to the acceptance outcome, while valuing obedience was negatively. Magnitude of the observed associations was small and causal relationships were not established. The results also revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the neighbour categories; immigrants were on average less accepted than the other groups investigated. Hence, social inclusion cannot be addressed as a universal attitude which is evidenced in similar manner with each population. The results indicate that it is important to differentiate between the three types of beliefs, namely specific egalitarian attitudes, cultural-value measures and interpersonal acceptance, when considering social attitudes in the present day. They might offer clues as to the development of more accurate social research hypotheses, however, they are not a direct indicator of the effectiveness of any policy response. Future analysis needs to account for the survey design weights, harmonized demographic indicators, and other aspects of gender attitudes and specific country contexts. Longitudinal and qualitative studies would be of great importance in understanding processes of change in social values and the link between attitudinal acceptance and substantive inclusion in workplaces, communities and institutions.

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