

Sports Participation and the Belief of Male-Dominance

A Cross-National Analysis on Gender Ideologies

Simon Lütkevitte

Bielefeld University, Faculty of Sociology / Working Group

„Quantitative Methods“ / BGHS



Why a comparative analysis on sports participation and gender ideologies attitudes is needed?

- **Empirical data** in the field of sports and gender-related attitudes remains **scarce** (Elling, 2015)
 - A few studies exist:
 - Caron et al. (1985): male sport club members in the U.S. on average **more misogynous** than non-members
 - Robins et al. (2005): AFL rugby players **attitudes towards women not different** to other males
 - Female athletes **don't hold more egalitarian views than** non-athletes (Andre & Holland, 1995; Colker & Widom ,1980).
 - **Question of generalizability (small sample sizes, developed countries)**
 - **No comparative studies yet** examined the link between sports participation and gender ideologies

Theory and Hypotheses

- Key assumption: Sport is largely **separated by gender**
 - **Group structures** in team sports (football, basketball, rugby, hockey, volleyball), **competitions** and **training groups**
 - Males tend to participate in male-dominated groups, and females in female-dominated groups
- **Male bonds** and **female bonds** can shape one's **social identity** (*social identity theory*)
 - **Ingroup-bias** can shape beliefs and attitudes towards ingroup and outgroup members

Controlled for other factors ...

- ... **males actively participating in sports hold on average more misogynous gender ideologies than males not participating in sports (H1)**
- ... **females actively participating in sports hold on average less misogynous gender ideologies than females not participating in sports (H2)**

Theory and Hypotheses

- Does the partial effect from sports participation on gender ideologies vary between egalitarian and inegalitarian countries?
 - **Messner (1988): Sport functions for males as “a retreat from perceived feminization in society”**
 - *H3: In societies with a less pronounced male-dominated gender hegemony (=more gender-egalitarian societies) differences in gender ideologies between males participating in sports and those who don't are more pronounced. (“retreat”-hypothesis)*
 - **In less gender-egalitarian societies female sport participation as crossing a symbolic/social boundary (Barker-Ruchti et al., 2015)**
 - *H4: In societies with a more pronounced male-dominated gender hegemony (less gender-egalitarian societies) differences in gender ideologies between females participating in sports and those who don't are more pronounced (“crossing a boundary”-hypothesis)*

Given Data

- Dataset from the World Value Survey (WVS) and European Values Study (EVS)
 - Final data set: **57 817 males** and **61 080 females** being at least 18 years-old
 - Coverage: Observations from 74 countries included Africa (N=14), Asia including the Middle East (N=24), Australia & Oceania (N=2), Europe (N=23), North America, Central America & the Caribbean (N=5), South America (N=6)
- Information on (misogynous) gender-ideologies (4 item-scale; Cronbach's alpha on standardized items ~ 0.77)
 - Transformed to scale from 0 to 10
- Information on sports participation (membership in sport and recreational clubs)
 - *Active, inactive or no membership*

Research Design (for Hypothesis 1 and 2)

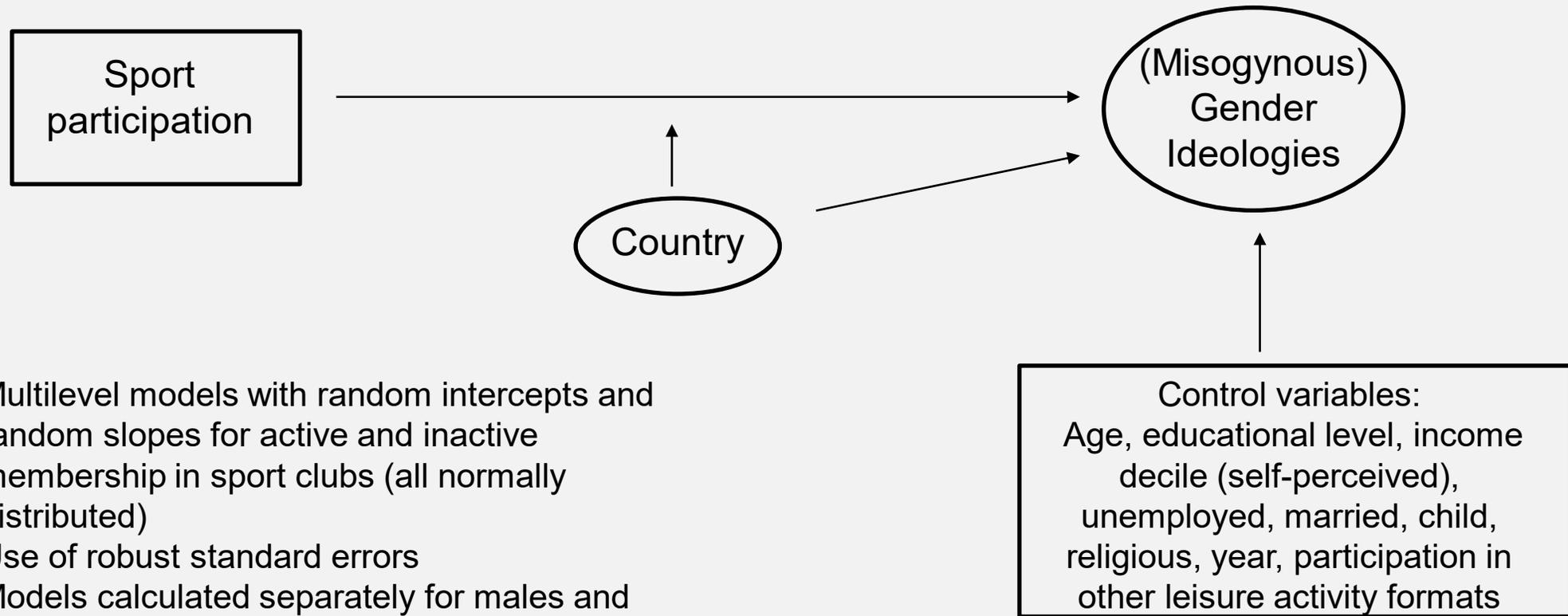


Figure 2: Model design for testing hypothesis 1 and 2. Own creation.

Research Design (for Hypotheses 3 and 4)

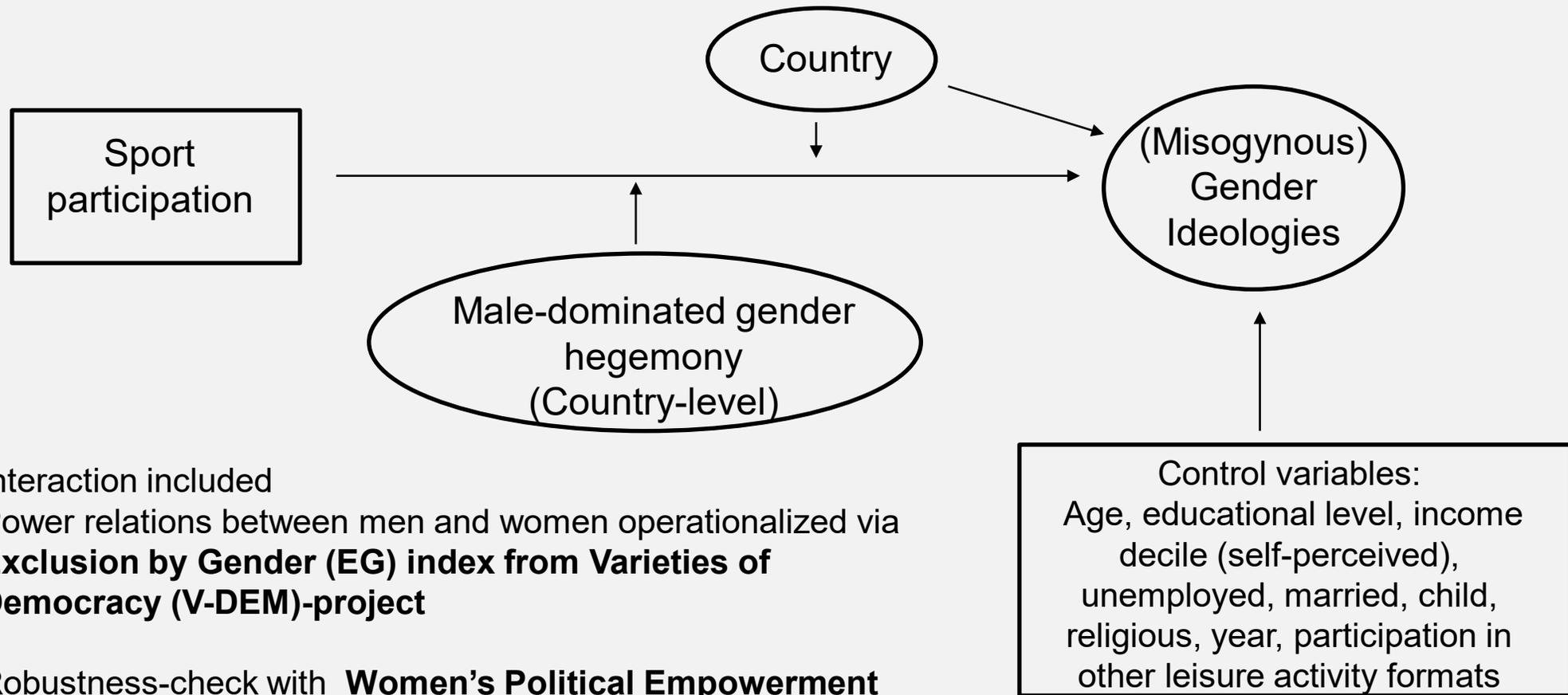


Figure 3: Model design for testing hypothesis 3 and 4. Own creation.

Results: Testing Hypotheses 1 and 2

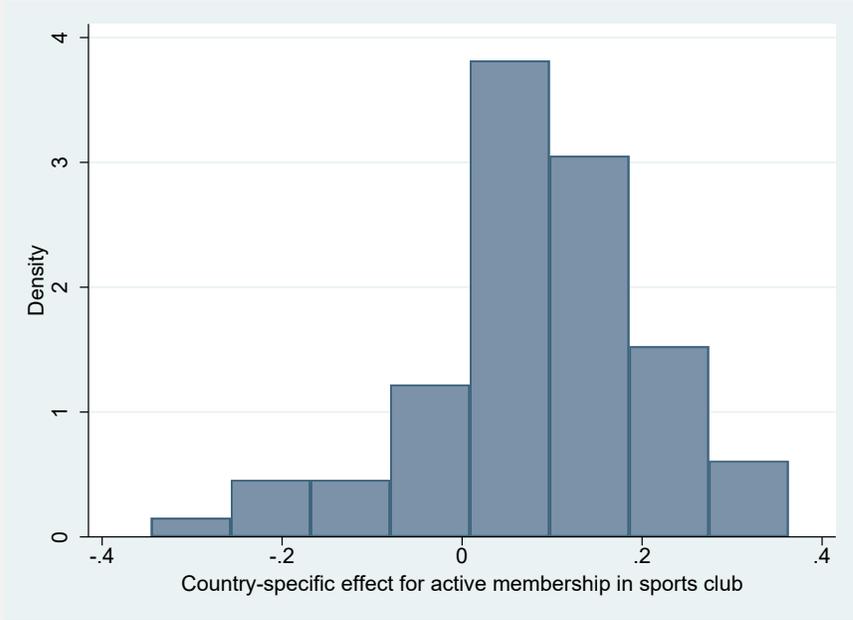


Figure 4: Distribution of country-specific effects for active membership for the **males**. Source: Own calculation.

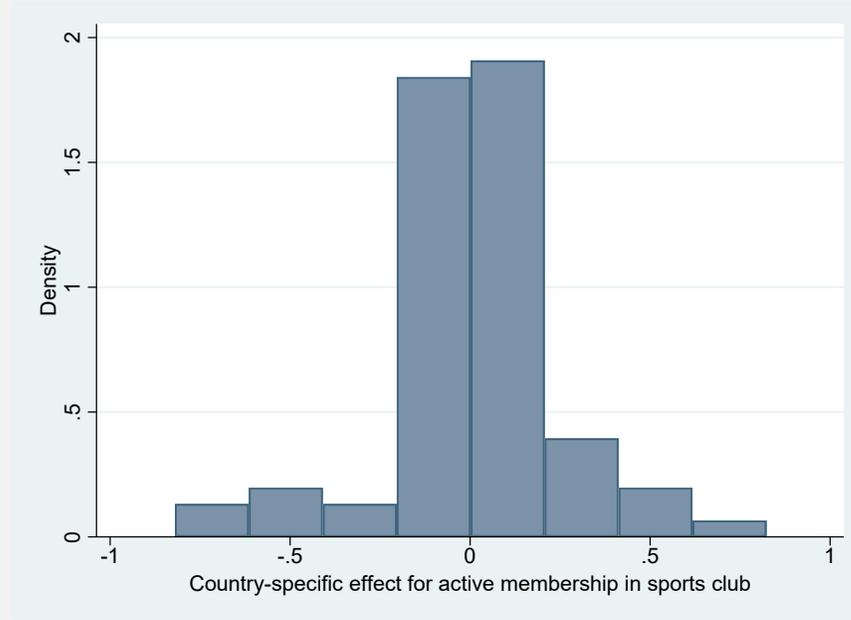
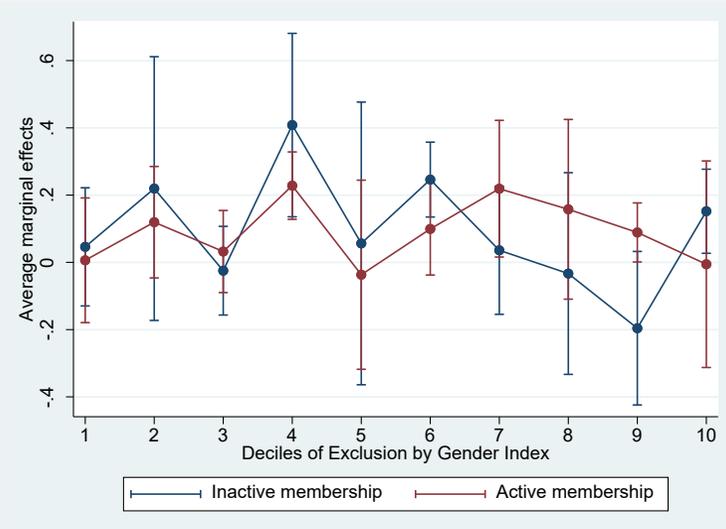


Figure 5: Distribution of country-specific effects for active membership for the **females**. Source: Own calculation.

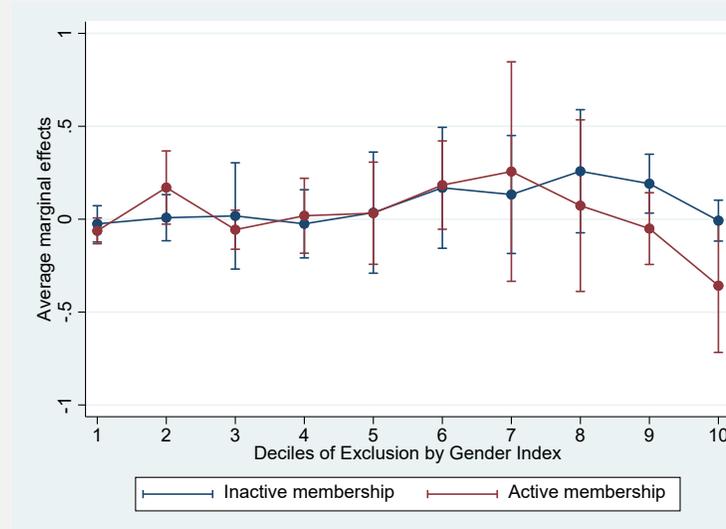
- Fixed and random effects for active and inactive membership positive and significant (fixed effect 0.0794 for active, 0.091 for inactive membership)
 - In 59 from 74 countries positive coefficients predicted (=more misogynous gender ideologies)
 - Mostly, support for hypothesis 1, though effect size rather small
- Fixed effects for active (0.013) and inactive membership (0.072) not significant, only random coefficients
 - Overall, no support for hypothesis 2

Results: Testing the “Retreat”-and “Crossing a Boundary Hypotheses (H3 and H4)



Rejection of the “retreat”-hypothesis (H3)

Figure 8: Average marginal effects with 95 %-confidence intervals using robust standard errors conditioned on deciles from the Exclusion by Gender Index. Group of **males**. Source: Own calculation.



Active female sport club members show less misogynous gender ideologies in **very gender-inegalitarian societies** (10th decile)

- Countries in 10th decile: Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Qatar, Egypt, Yemen
- For the **countries** some support for H4

Figure 10: Average marginal effects with 95 %-confidence intervals using robust standard errors conditioned on deciles from the Exclusion by Gender Index. Group of **females**. Source: Own calculation.

Conclusion

Males:

- The partial effect from active membership in sport clubs predicts more misogynous gender ideologies
 - This finding is independent from a countries' degree of gender equality

Females:

- Partial effect from active membership in sport clubs predicts less misogynous gender ideologies only in very gender-inegalitarian countries

Remark: partial effect only statistical correlation, socialization and selection effect not distinguishable with this cross-sectional design

Thank you for your attention!

Contact:

Twitter: Simon Lütkevitte
@Simon_LuetkeW

Mail: simon.luetkewitte@uni-bielefeld.de

References

- Andre, T., & Holland, A. (1995). Relationship of sport participation to sex role orientation and attitudes toward women among high school males and females. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 18(4), 241+. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A17782536/AONE?u=anon~ba7057c1&sid=googleScholar&xid=259e4cbe>
- Barker-Ruchti, N., Grahn, K., & Lindgren, E.-C. (2015). *Shifting, crossing and transforming gender boundaries in physical cultures*. *Sport in Society*, 19(5), 615–625. doi:10.1080/17430437.2015.1073942
- Duerst-Lahti, G. (2008). Gender ideology: Masculinism and feminalism. *Politics, gender, and concepts: Theory and methodology*, 159-192.
- Philips, S. U. (2001). Gender ideology: Cross-cultural aspects. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-043076-7/03962-0>
- Messner, M. A. (1988). Sports and male domination: The female athlete as contested ideological terrain. *Sociology of sport journal*, 5(3), 197-211.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon and Schuster.
- Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (2001). *Social dominance: An intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression*. Cambridge University Press.
- Caron, S. L., Carter, D. B., & Brightman, L. A. (1985). Sex-Role Orientation and Attitudes towards Women: Differences among College Athletes and Nonathletes. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 61(3), 803–806.
- Robins, G., D. Lusher, and P. Kremer. (2005). *Masculine behaviour and social networks in team structures*. AFL Research and Development Project. Melbourne: University of Melbourne, AFL, and Deakin University.
- Colker, R., & Widom, C. S. (1980). Correlates of female athletic participation: Masculinity, femininity, self-esteem, and attitudes toward women. *Sex Roles*, 6(1), 47-58.

Appendix

Coverage

- **Africa (N=14):** Algeria, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe
- **Asia including the Middle East (N=24):** Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Lebanon, Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Qatar, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen
- **Australia & Oceania (N=2):** Australia, New Zealand
- **Europe (N=23):** Andorra, Belarus, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom
- **North America, Central America & the Caribbean (N=5):** Canada, Haiti, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, United States
- **South America (N=6):** Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay

Misogynous Gender Ideologies - Conceptualization

- Duerst-Lahti (2008): gender ideology is a political ideology
 - Belief system creating a preference for certain political actions and a specific social order

Gender ideology according to Philips (2001):

- (a) **“women are conceptualized as inferior to men to justify and sustain social and cultural systems dominated by men”**
- (b) “the culturally constructed (as opposed to ‘natural’) nature of gender”

Operationalization – Gender Ideologies

- 4 items:
 - 1. “*A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl*”
 - 2. “*When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to do a job than women*”
 - 3. “*On the whole, men make better **political leaders** than women do*”
 - 4. “*On the whole, men make better **business executives** than women do*”
- Cronbach’s α (for standardized items) : ~ 0.77 (-> sufficient reliability)
- Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) conducted based on all individuals (males and females)
- CFI ~ 0.958 , RMSEA ~ 0.082 for model of metric invariance \rightarrow measurement invariance given according to CFI, but not according to RMSEA \rightarrow some countries might still be dropped from the analysis to improve measurement invariance across countries with respect to the dependent variable

Operationalization – Sports Participation

Now I am going to read off a list of voluntary organizations. For each organization, could you tell me whether you are an active member, an inactive member or not a member of that type of organization? (Read out and code one answer for each organization):

		Active member	Inactive member	Don't belong
Q94	Church or religious organization	2	1	0
Q95	Sport or recreational organization, football/baseball/rugby team	2	1	0
Q96	Art, music or educational organization	2	1	0
Q97	Labor Union	2	1	0
Q98	Political party	2	1	0
Q99	Environmental organization	2	1	0
Q100	Professional association	2	1	0
Q101	Humanitarian or charitable organization	2	1	0
Q102	Consumer organization	2	1	0
Q103	Self-help group, mutual aid group	2	1	0
Q104	Women's group	2	1	0
Q105	Other organization	2	1	0

Figure 1: Original item in the English master questionnaire of the World Value Survey. Source: <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV7.jsp> .

Between Country Differences in Gender Ideologies

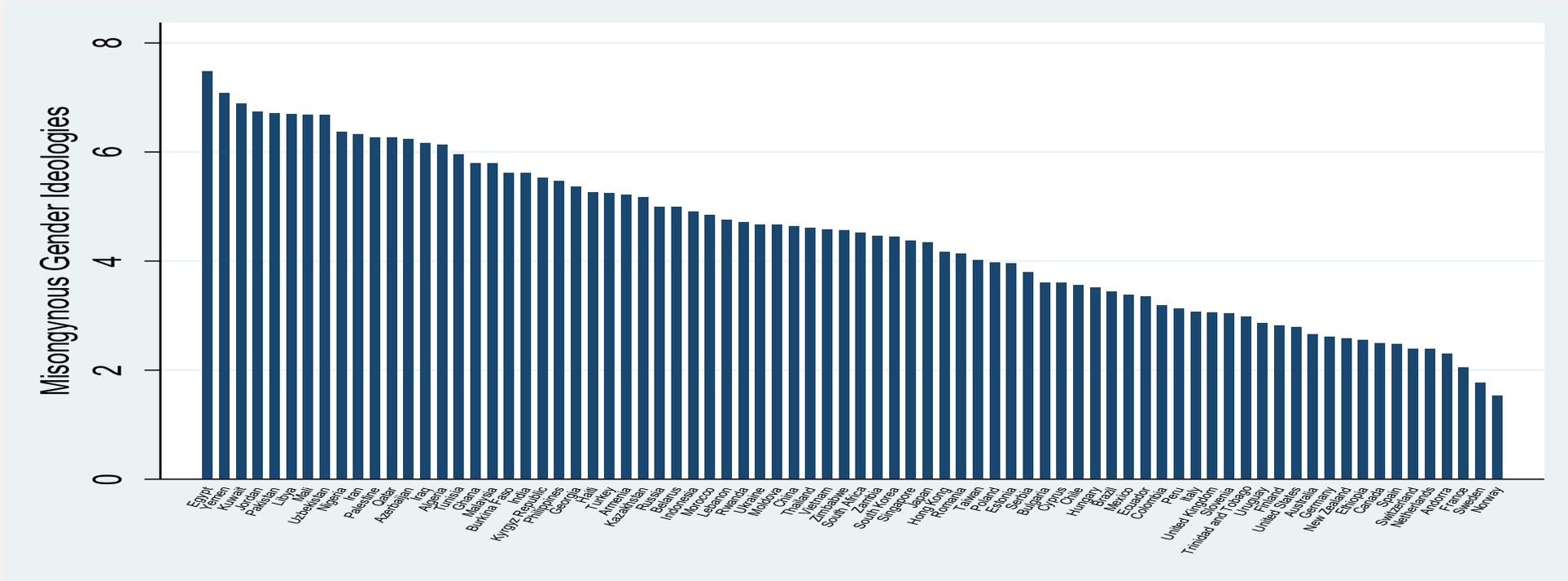
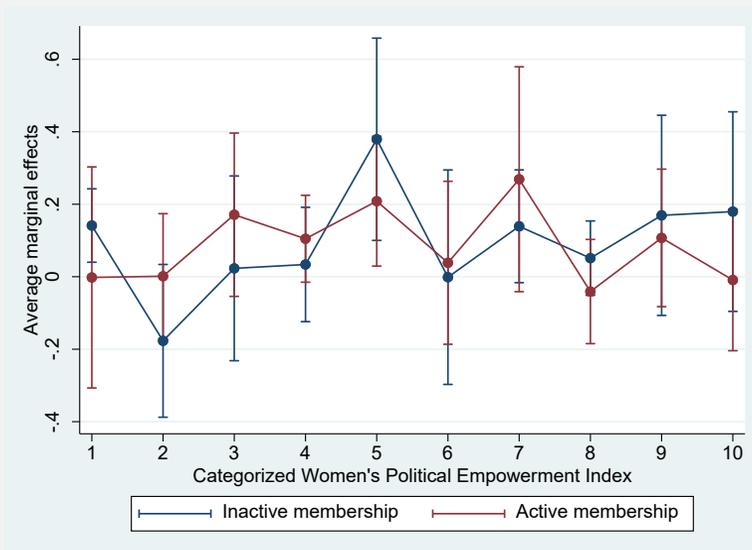


Figure 8: Average level of misogynous gender ideologies by countries. Males and females included. Source: Own calculation based on the WVS-EVS data.

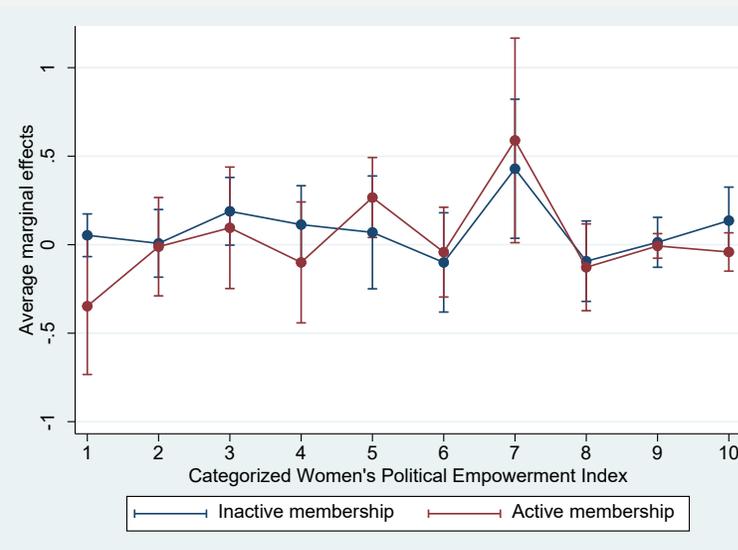
Results Robustness-Check I: Women's Political Empowerment Index

Male group:



Again, rejection of the “retreat”-hypothesis (H3)

Female group:



Some support for “crossing a boundary”-hypothesis H4 only in very inegalitarian societies. Though, effect in 1st decile not significant anymore

Figure 8: Average marginal effects with 95 %-confidence intervals using robust standard errors conditioned on deciles stemming from the Women's Political Empowerment Index. **Male group.** Source: Own calculation.

Figure 8: Average marginal effects with 95 %-confidence intervals using robust standard errors conditioned on deciles stemming from the Women's Political Empowerment Index. **Female group.** Source: Own calculation.