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# **Gender Equality across Global Organizations:**

Towards a Framework for Increasing Gender  
Equality

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Gender Equality across Global Organizations:  
Towards a Framework for Increasing Gender Equality

by

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Jämställdhet i Globala Organisationer:  
Mot ett Ramverk för att Öka Jämställdheten

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## Abstract

The main purpose of this thesis is to analyze how Global Organizations work with Gender Equality, what type of challenges they experience and how they can be addressed. Secondly, it addresses how Global Organizations can create an international Gender Equality strategy and how Gender Equality work differs among four countries.

Earlier research has focused on gender equality as a stand-alone topic, and few models exist to incorporate such work in global organizations that efficiently manages to address the complexity of gender equality across varying cultures and business units.

By surveying current research in gender equality, change management, and cultural management, this thesis proposes a framework for change that more adequately manages the inherently subjective nature of gender, together with the cross-cultural complexities of global organizations.

The results, analysis, and discussion are based on a literature review enumerating the components of the synthesized framework and on interviews with two Swedish multinational companies, one construction company, and a mining company. Countries of interest are Czech Republic, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States.

Analyzed through this framework, the results indicate an increasing gap between different business units across the organizations, despite an overall increase of Gender Equality in total. The framework suggests that informal systems need to be addressed more explicitly and that centralized initiatives need to better account for geopolitical contexts to stay relevant when educating, informing and dictating change initiatives. The nature of the problem suggests it be managed by a shaping type of strategy with an emphasis on international networks dedicated to the issue.

The similarities between Gender equality-specific models, selected change-models and cultural descriptive models indicate that there is possible to amalgamate insights from different academic fields more coherently. Utilizing the definition of gender and confirming the subjective nature of Gender Equality-issues leads to strategy models and cultural descriptions that - independent of Gender Equality work - confirm and strengthens the key takeaways from each model. The research shows that there are overlapping interests and areas of interest between academia and the industry, which is something that can be further developed.

Type: Master thesis

Key words: Gender, Gender Equality, Global Organizations, Change management, Culture, Cultural change, Cross-cultural management, Strategy, Diversity, Inkluderings, UN, SDG, Czech Republic, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States.



KTH Industriell teknik  
och management

## Examensarbete INDEK 2018:113

### Jämställdhet i Globala Organisationer: Mot ett Ramverk för att Öka Jämställdheten

Maria Norberg

Godkänt 2018-06-dag	Examinator Charlotte Holgersson	Handledare Monica Lindgren
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## Sammanfattning

Huvudsyftet med denna masteruppsats är att analysera hur globala organisationer arbetar med jämställdhet, vilken typ av utmaningar de upplever och hur de kan hanteras. Den behandlar även hur globala organisationer kan skapa en internationell jämställdhetsstrategi och hur jämställdhetsarbetet skiljer sig mellan fyra länder.

Tidigare forskning har fokuserat på jämställdhet som ett fristående ämne och det finns få modeller som adresserar jämställdhetsarbete i globala organisationer och som effektivt hanterar jämställdhetens komplexitet över olika kulturer och affärsenheter.

Genom att kartlägga aktuell forskning inom jämställdhet, förändringsledning och kulturhantering, föreslår denna uppsats ett ramverk för förändring som hanterar köns inherent subjektiva karaktär tillsammans med de globala organisationernas tvärkulturella komplexitet.

Resultaten, analysen och diskussionen baseras på en litteraturöversikt som sammanfattar komponenterna i ramverket och intervjuer med två svenska multinationella företag, ett byggföretag och ett gruvbolag. De länder som analyseras är: Tjeckien, Sverige, Storbritannien och USA.

Genom en analys utifrån ramverket indikerar resultaten ett ökande gap mellan olika affärsenheter i hela organisationen, trots en total ökning av jämställdheten inom organisationerna. Ramverket tyder på att informella system måste adresseras tydligare och att centraliserade initiativ behöver anpassas bättre utifrån geopolitiska sammanhang för att kunna förändringen ska vara relevant för de olika enheterna. Problemets karaktär tyder på att det hanteras av en formgivande typ av strategi med tonvikt på internationella nätverk som är avsedda för frågan.

Likheterna mellan jämställdhetsspecifika modeller, utvalda förändringsmodeller och kulturella beskrivande modeller visar att det är möjligt att sammanfoga insikter från olika akademiska områden till att bli mer sammanhängande. Att utnyttja definitionen av kön och bekräfta den subjektiva karaktären av jämställdhet leder till strategimodeller och kulturella beskrivningar som - oberoende av jämställdhetsarbete - bekräftar och stärker de viktigaste delarna från varje modell. Forskningen visar att det finns överlappande intressen och intresseområden mellan akademien och industrin, vilket är något som kan vidareutvecklas.

Typ: Masteruppsats

Nyckelord: Kön, Jämställdhet, Globala organisationer, Förändringshantering, Kultur, Kulturförändring, Tvärkulturell ledning, Strategi, Mångfald, Inkludering, FN, SDG, Tjeckien, Sverige, Storbritannien, USA

# Table of Content

1 Introduction	1
1.1 Problem Description	1
1.2 Research Questions	6
1.3 Aim	6
1.4 Research Contribution	6
1.5 Reference Companies	7
1.6 Delimitations	7
1.7 Limitations	8
1.8 Outline	8
2 Method	10
2.1 Methodological Considerations	10
2.2 Research Design	11
2.3 Literature Review	11
2.4 Theoretical Framework	12
2.5 Interviews	14
2.6 The Analysis Process	16
2.7 Credibility and Dependability	16
2.8 Ethical Considerations	18
2.9 Sustainable Development	18
3 Literature Review	19
3.1 Gender and Gender Equality	19
3.2 How to Change	20
3.2.1 Organizational Change	20
3.2.2 The Change Formula	22
3.3 What to Change	24
3.3.1 Gender at Work Framework	24
3.3.2 Organizational Culture	26
3.3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion	27
3.3.4 Schein's Organizational Culture	28
3.3.5 Diversity and Inclusion	30
3.3.6 Segregation	31
3.3.7 Norms and Stereotypes	32
3.3.8 Strategy	33
3.3.8.1 The Strategy Palette	34
3.4 External Factors	36
3.4.1 Cross-Cultural Management	37
3.4.2 GLOBE Project	38
3.4.3 Cross-Cultural Variations	42
4 Result and Analysis	44

4.1 Gender Equality in Organizations	44
4.1.1 Recruitment	45
4.1.2 Talent Development	46
4.1.3 Salaries	47
4.1.4 Working Hours	47
4.1.5 Measurements	48
4.1.6 Not Prioritizing Gender Equality Work	49
4.1.7 Ways of Doing it in the Past	50
4.1.8 External Stakeholders	51
4.1.9 Culture	52
4.1.10 Summary of Findings for 4.1	54
4.2 Gender Equality from a Cross-Cultural Perspective	55
4.2.1 Summary of Findings for 4.2	61
5 Discussion	63
5.1 Implementing Gender Equality in Global Organizations	63
5.1.2 Summary of the Discussion	72
6 Conclusions	74
6.1 Answers to Research Questions	74
6.1.1 Answer to Main Research Question	74
6.1.2 Answer to Research Question 1.1	75
6.1.3 Answer to Research Question 1.2	76
6.1.4 Answer to Research Question 1.3	76
6.2 Suggestions for Further Studies	77
7 Implications	78
7.1 Industrial Implications	78
7.2 Academic Implications	78
8 References	80
9.1 Appendix A: GLOBE Project Data	93
9.2 Appendix B: Email sent to Interviewees Company A	94
9.2.1 First Email Sent	94
9.2.2 Second E-mail Sent	94
9.3 Appendix C: Email sent to Interviewees Company B	96
9.3.1 First Email Sent	96
9.3.2 Second Email Sent	96
9.4 Appendix D: Main areas covered in the Interviews	98

## List of Tables

Table 1: Presenting the interviewees, roles, country perspectives, duration, and format	15
Table 2: The result from the GLOBE Project 2004, showing the relation between the scores of the four countries, from lowest to highest in both practice and value scores.	41
Table 3: Selected data from World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2017	43
Table 4: The results from the GLOBA Project for Czech Republic, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States	92

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Framework, structure, and foundation of the thesis	5
Figure 2: An illustration of the work process	11
Figure 3: Framework, structure, foundation of the thesis including literature review	13
Figure 4: Illustration of the Gender at Work framework	25
Figure 5: Schein's organizational culture levels	29
Figure 6: How working with inclusion and diversity affects organizational performance	31
Figure 7: Illustration of the Strategy Palette	35

## Definitions

BU: Business Unit
CZ: Czech Republic
D&I: Diversity and Inclusion
GE: Gender Equality
GO: Global Organization
GWF: Gender at Work Framework
SDG: Sustainable development Goals
SE: Sweden
UK: United Kingdom
UN: United Nations
US: United States
WEF: World Economic Forum

## Preface

After five years perusing my Master of Science from the Department of Industrial Engineering and Management at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm, this Master Thesis is the final assignment. It has been a long journey taking unexpected turns along the way. Without the support from friends, family, and teachers, it would not have been possible to complete my degree.

In the process towards the completion of this Master Thesis, I would like to thank a selected group of individuals. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor at KTH Monica Lindgren, Professor of Industrial Economics and Management for the honest and direct feedback and support during the process. Pia Höök for all the insights, recommendations, feedback and help in connecting me with the interviewees. To the interviewees, without you this thesis would not exist, thank you for sharing your knowledge, insights and taking the time talking to me.

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Stockholm, May 20th, 2018,

Maria Norberg

# 1 Introduction

*The introductions aim to provide the reader an overview, a background and an understanding of the outline of the thesis. Followed by the research questions, purpose, contribution, delimitations, limitations and the outline of the thesis.*

## 1.1 Problem Description

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In January 2016, the United Nations ("UN") officially published their 17, 2030 Sustainable Development Goals ("SDG"s) with the purpose to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all (1). In total, 193 countries have signed the SDGs and are expected to take responsibility and actions, which makes it the most comprehensive agreement the UN has made since 1945 (2, 3). One of these goals, goal number five, is to achieve Gender Equality ("GE") and empower women and girls. Despite 193 signees, recent data shows that we will see not see a gender equal world in over 200 years if we continue to develop at the pace we are doing right now (4). Around the world, we can see initiatives taken to decrease the gender inequalities, ranging from the geopolitical perspective with the UN SDGs for 2030, all the way down to grassroots movements like #metoo.

Gender, in this thesis, is defined as the social construct of what is considered to be feminine and masculine and it varies between cultures (5-7). GE means that women and men, boys and girls are treated and prioritized the same, have equal opportunities, responsibilities, rights, resources, and protection (6). GE does not imply that women and men should become the same (6). Initiatives such as the SDGs are putting pressure on different parts of our ecosystems, and all parts play an important role in creating a change in societies, organizations, and individuals (8). The world as of today is not gender equal, organizations are struggling with how to reach GE and are pressured to show progress in achieving it. GE is not only crucial regarding human rights imperatives, but it is also crucial for our economy (9, 10).

According to the World Economic Forums ("WEF"s) gender gap report from 2017, the average pay for women was USD 12.000 and men USD 21.000 and while the levels are rising; the wages do not rise as much for women (11). Studies have found that decreasing the pay gap will increase the gross domestic product per capita and

only decrease men's pay marginally (12). The predicted effect of equal pay will also increase the savings rate and expenditures on services and goods (9,10).

As the SDGs, and goal number five, are of a global scope as well, it affects explicitly Global Organizations ("GO"s) in several ways. With some relevant factors being, the inequalities in wages, inclusion, unpaid care and domestic work, women in leadership and the gender data and research gap that exists today (13). As examples, women spend on average three times more time on domestic and unpaid work and, (14, 15) women are underrepresented in middle and senior leadership positions with on average women holding 22% of managerial positions and 32% of companies having no female leaders at all (4, 16, 17). Furthermore, gender gap data serves the purpose to measure the GE gap statistically, but only 13% of the countries have a budget for gender statistics (13). Diving deeper into women in senior and middle management positions, industries who perform the worst in this statistics are mining and quarrying at 12%, construction and real-estate at 18% and transport, manufacturing, technology all at 19% (17). The trend of women in senior management positions since 2004 has in total been positive, but the change is slow, and in 2017 it was reported to be 25% (18). Women themselves believe that the reason for these numbers is the significant barriers related to family, mostly highlighting parenthood (17). Research does not truly agree with this notion, and while family and parenthood affect the GE, it is not the main reason. It comes down to the cultural norms that form the expectations from society, on the individual, and structures of the organizational processes, a fact that recently started a worldwide movement (19).

In October 2017 the attention to the #metoo movement increased drastically. It started at the grassroots in 2006 by Tarana Burke, (20) but during the autumn of 2017 **the awareness increased, and the movement received a lot of attention.** The purpose of the movement is to raise awareness of harassment and sexual assaults taking place, especially in organizations, thus highlighting the importance of the GE issue. #metoo has shown the magnitude of the problem and lead to an increase in initiatives for GE, for visualizing the gaps between the genders, and also for putting more pressure on companies to take actions and have clear goals (21). #metoo has also shown to countries, industries, and organizations who believed themselves to be doing well, regarding GE, that they also have these problems, highlighting a wider problem spread than earlier believed (22).

And looking at countries, one can see that there are those who have come a long way and those who are struggling or not prioritizing GE, often due to values and norms which are formed by local history, affecting laws and policies present in the country (23). The WEF measures the progress which countries do and ranks them accordingly. As of 2017, 68% of the gap is closed, but the result varies from 88% to 51% (4). The cultural aspects, where the culture is a result of history, is one of the reasons to why some countries and companies are struggling, and some are succeeding. Iceland is number one in WEF 2017 report and has a history of showing female role models, dating back to the pre-modern times with, for example, goddesses being, medicine doctors and runemasters (23). Sweden ("SE"), ranked number five, introduced native married women into the workforce after the labor shortage after world war two. This introduction leads to a demand for improving the public child care and parental leave for both parents in the 1960s, affecting the employment ratio and time off from work (24, 25). The policies put in place during the last decades by the countries who are close to closing the gap puts pressure on the societies on how to act and behave (26).

In organizations, women and men are treated differently, working under different conditions, facing different expectations and material conditions (27). **According to a study done in the United States ("US")** on personnel reviews, 2% of the men and 72% of the women receive comments regarding their personality, using words like, bossy and aggressive (28). **Based on a study done on a Dutch and Swedish company, it was found that when evaluating employees** for future positions, women are more likely to be judged on their weaknesses while their strengths are downplayed, with the opposite going for men (29). **Extensive research has shown that** the reason for the problem is due to management roles being described in masculine terms, (30, 31) and the role specification not being detailed enough or forgotten about in the evaluation (29). **Regarding parenthood, for example, an American study shows that men believe the women** are the prime caregiver; women think it should be equally distributed (32).

Organizations are not only responsible for themselves, but they also bear responsibility for the sustainability of the world. As of today, it is not too seldom an organization act in a global environment, putting pressure on the need to address cultural differences and variations (33). Organizations being ecosystems, consisting of formal systems and informal socio systems, serves different stakeholders both

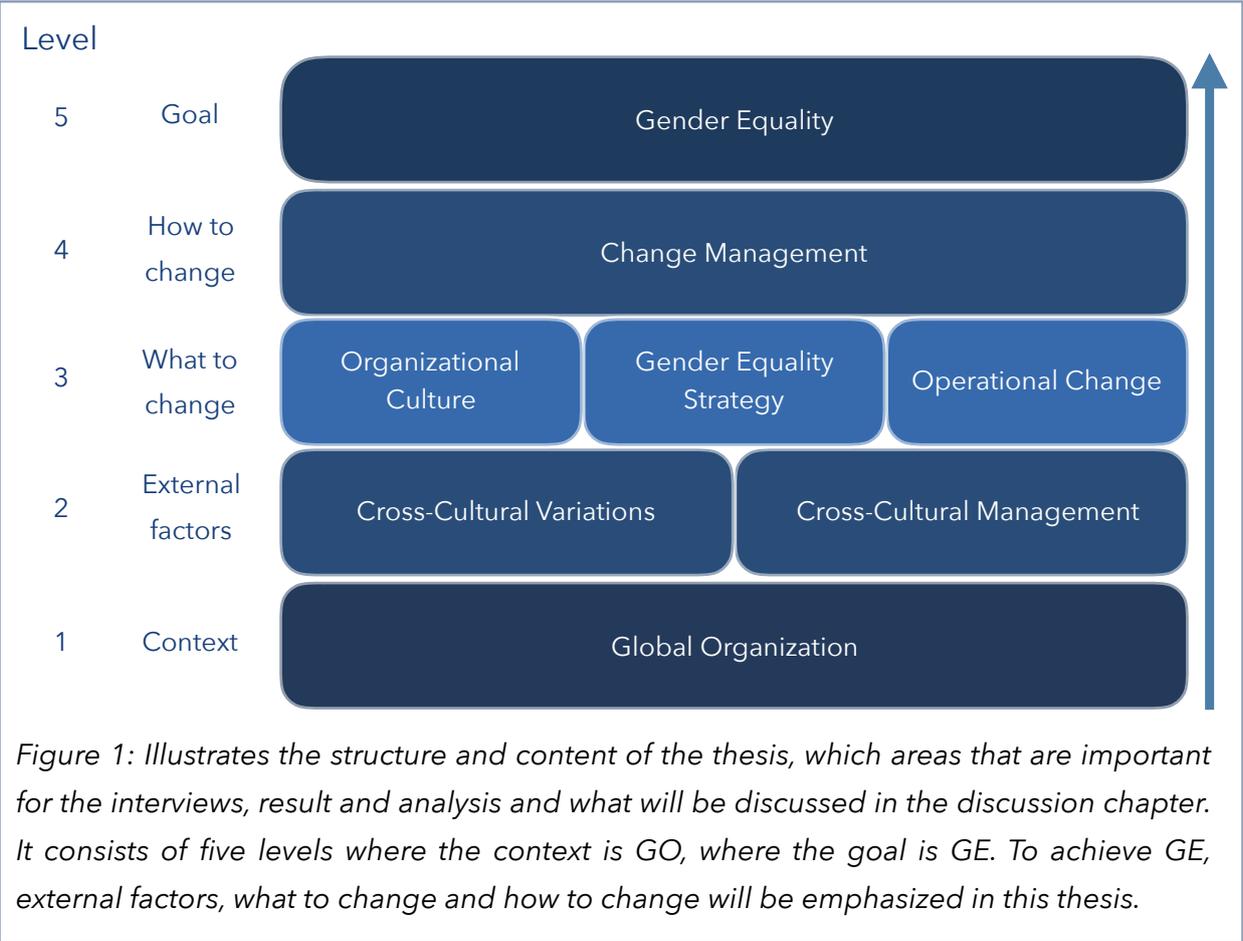
internally regarding employees, as well as external partners, customers, suppliers and collaborators across a magnitude of industries. The formal business systems consist of everything from strategies to information systems, while the informal systems include culture, norms, and assumptions (34). Both systems affect the GE work, and to increase GE in organizations, one has to address both concurrently. Creating a workplace with a culture where everyone is valued and feels welcome, removing biases and exclusive behavior is not always as easy as one wants it to be. On average, a diverse leadership team financially outperform those who are not, and the presence of a female executive is associated with strong firm performance (35, 36). For example, a profitable firm moving from zero female leaders to 30% is positively correlated with an increase of 15% in net revenue, if the firm does not struggle with unequal gender distribution in lower levels (35).

Organizations are also affected by external systems. Different countries, cultures and norms, laws, and regulations, either helping or hindering the work in achieving GE. One way of working with sustainability is incorporating the SDGs to create uniformity and the possibility to compare organizations worldwide (37). The UNs Global Compact Initiative collects and helps organizations align their sustainability initiatives, which as of today consist of over 9500 companies in 160 countries (37). SDG number five is the second largest goal organizations report on in the world, which today is 5866 companies (37). Several Swedish organizations have already included the SDGs in their sustainability or annual reports, for example, Ericsson (38), Sandvik (39), H&M (40), and IKEA (41).

In 217 years the world might be gender equal regarding pay and employment opportunities (4). In 99 years the gender gap might be closed in healthcare, education and political participation (4). It is clear that world is facing a huge hill of problems to achieve GE. One section of the problem can be worked on by organizations, and as addressed specifically in this thesis, organizations working in a global environment. An environment which is spanning several countries where different cultures and norms exist and where different laws and policies put pressure on the company. The organizations bare the responsibility for their employees and the sustainability of the world and as such is a powerful modicum of change to address.

There are industries that to a more significant extent is dominated by men, often due to norms and societal values. Not surprisingly, it requires more work in these

industries to achieve GE. Two companies have contributed to the results of the thesis, both operating in male-dominated industries, where women are strongly under-represented (4). The industries are construction and development, and engineering and mining. Within the construction industry, globally, there are 10% women, with a wage gap of 48%. The engineering industry has 11% women with a wage gap of 27% (11).



This thesis is built on the areas presented in Figure 1, which in itself is a result of the thesis. To work towards achieving GE, in a GO, one has to have a strategy that aligns the organization’s current needs, and create a culture that helps facilitate the change. As of today, there are factors within the two companies that makes their organizations struggle, processes, actions and behaviors that need to change. This thesis aims to investigate how two GOs work with GE, what challenges they experience and how those challenges can be addressed. The foundation of this thesis is the GOs which have the goal to achieve GE. To achieve GE, the thesis will take external factors into consideration, cross-cultural variations regarding the view on

gender and GE and cross-cultural management. Secondly, it will address what organizations need to change, the organizational culture and establish a GE strategy, the actual operational changes are not included as a main focus of the thesis. Thirdly how the organization can create the change through change management (see Figure 1).

## 1.2 Research Questions

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Main Research Question (“MRQ”): *“How do companies address gender equality when acting in a global environment, where cultural differences exist?”*

Research Question 1.1: *“What type of challenges do global organizations experience when working with gender equality and how could they be addressed?”*

Research Question 1.2: *“How can global organizations create an international gender equality strategy?”*

Research Question 1.3: *“How does the gender equality work differ among countries in Company A?”*

## 1.3 Aim

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The main purpose of this thesis is to analyze how GOs work with GE, what type of challenges they experience and how they can be addressed. Secondly, how GOs can create an international GE strategy and how GE work differs between four countries.

## 1.4 Research Contribution

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The thesis aims to provide empirical insights about working with GE in GOs. The research will contribute to the way of working with an increasing GE in GOs, how to create change, what to think about and how to create a strategy. The study will take cultural differences and similarities regarding the view and material prerequisites of GE in societies and organizations into account. Thus amalgamating and synthesizing previous research and knowledge into a coherent GE perspective on large, cross-cultural organizational change.

## 1.5 Reference Companies

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To gather empirical results, mainly employees from two companies have been interviewed. The interviewees have worked with diversity and inclusion ("D&I") and GE within the organizations.

Company A, a construction and development company, was founded in SE over 130 years ago, operates in 11 countries and has over 40.000 employees today. It has a well worked through concern wide D&I strategy which serves as a foundation for the work in every Business Unit ("BU"). Every region carries the responsibility of taking actions aligned with the strategy, where one can see a variation of successes and prioritization. The management team and board have made it clear, internally and externally, that the D&I work is on their agenda and they have included the SDGs in their sustainability report. The initial focus of the thesis was Company A. Hence the selection of countries is based on where they are present.

Company B was founded in SE over 150 years ago and is a multinational engineering company, primarily within mining. They have over 40.000 employees in over 150 countries. Before this thesis, they had a global D&I strategy and had included the SDG number five in their sustainability report. The D&I work started on a centralized focus arena, but today the responsibility is decentralized, and Human Resources ("HR") is responsible for the work.

At the beginning of the work, Company A was meant to be the case organization and the main contributor to the thesis, during the work the focus has changed. Thus both Company A and Company B have contributed to the result.

## 1.6 Delimitations

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The delimitations of this thesis are based on the boundaries set at the beginning of the work and conscious choices.

- Two companies have been investigated through interviews to a greater extent. One is a construction company and the other an engineering company, hence both in a male-dominated industry, excluding industries that are not.

- The selection of countries investigated are set based on where Company A is present, and in total four countries was selected, Czech Republic ("CZ"), Sweden ("SE"), United States ("US") and the United Kingdom ("UK").
- There has been a selected number of interviewees, where all have worked internationally with either D&I, HR or organizational change and leadership.
- The thesis will focus on men and women and not focus on non-binary and genderqueers.
- The primary focus of the thesis is on a higher level of analysis, excluding specific roles within organizations, leadership, and processes, and a detailed focus on material conditions, and for example wages, recruitment, working hours and unpaid work. All of these factors are crucial for achieving GE and will be addressed in the result and analysis, but it is not the primary focus of the thesis itself.

## 1.7 Limitations

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The limitations that are related to the thesis is that the focus lies on two companies and four countries, and others will not be addressed. The results might not be applicable to all organizations since the companies industries are taken into consideration. It should, however, be noted that the thesis does not aim for statistic generalizability but rather a theoretical one, limiting the detrimental effects of a small sample size. The primary purpose of the thesis is not to create actionable and specific goals, but instead to identify essential focus areas of trends and perspectives. The number of interviews is limited, and therefore they do not represent all levels within organizations, but the interviewees are seen to be key stakeholders in driving the D&I and GE work or cross-cultural management. The data presented in the thesis comes from prior research, other sources and the organizations. External interviews were held, but a limited number of them.

## 1.8 Outline

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Chapter 1: Includes background to the research, problem recognition, and research question. The delimitations and limitations are also presented.

Chapter 2: Method, that includes the theoretical framework, information about the interviewees, process of analyzation and methodological and ethical considerations.

Chapter 3: Literature review, based on the pillars of the theoretical framework (see Figure 3) addressing GE, change management, what to change, strategy and the external environment.

Chapter 4: Result and analysis, to present the results of the interviews and how it corresponds to the literature review.

Chapter 5: Discussion, to discuss implications of the findings

Chapter 6: Conclusion, answer to the research questions, comments about the research, and findings also including recommendations for further research

Chapter 7: Implications, both academical and industrial

Appendix A: GLOBE research data for CZ, SE, UK, and US

Appendix B: Email sent to interviewees Company A

Appendix C: Email sent to interviewees Company B

Appendix D: Main areas covered in the interviews

## 2 Method

*This chapter aims to describe the approach in which the research was done. The Methodological considerations are presented as well as the research design, information gathering, the theoretical frameworks and structure of the interviews, and finally the ethical considerations and sustainable development.*

### 2.1 Methodological Considerations

---

The research paradigm under which this thesis is written can be viewed as hybridization between Critical theory and Constructivism. Critical theory is here to be understood as a form of "praxeology" according to A Linklater and R Aron following the theory of Ludwig von Mises and Habermas' consensus theory of truth (42,43). Ontologically speaking, it rests on the praxeological assumption that reality and truth are deeply intertwined with the historical and cultural environment. Norms and assumptions are created, interpreted and enacted according to the particularities of the current social context, and agreed upon statements can - insofar that they form the reality in organizations - be considered as "truth" for research. The ontological standpoint of the thesis is also, in part, Constructivistic in the assumption that reality is a product of human intelligence interacting with the world and that there is no "one true" reality to analyze quantitatively but rather a constructed reality under the influence of the participants that constitute it. **This hybridization serves primarily two purposes. The praxeological standpoint makes explicit that there is truth in history, and local culture, which is important when analyzing the problem from a global perspective. The constructivistic parts capture the subjective nature of the issue of gender, equality, inclusion, and states truthiness to expressed opinions; truth is not quantifiable through quantitative analysis, but rather through an understanding of the different subjective notions opinionated from the interviewees in the companies.**

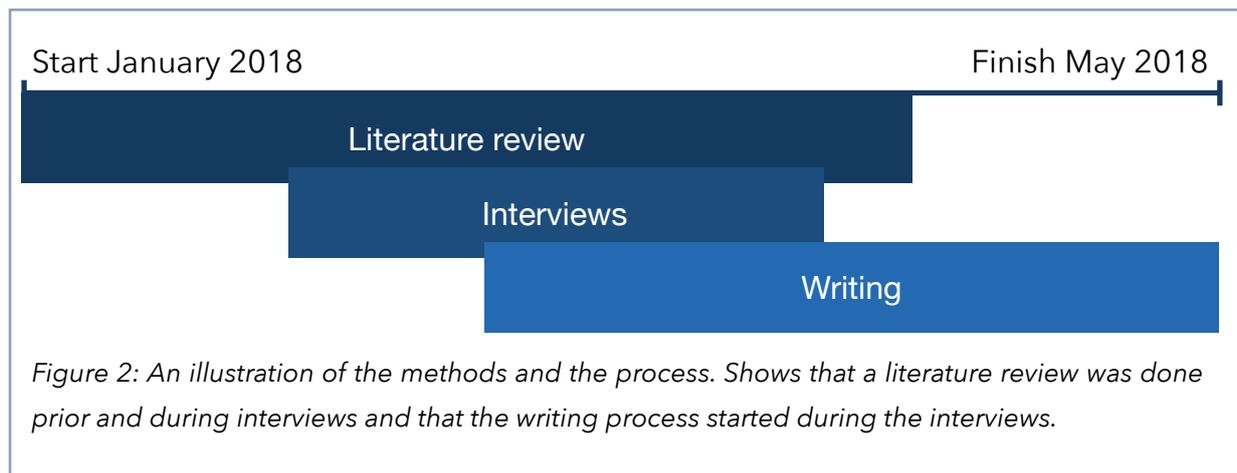
Epistemologically speaking, this has several consequences. Reality needs to be interpreted and understood, and the researcher and research need to be aware of the underlying paradigmatic assumptions that might introduce bias. This to be more open to different interpretations. Knowledge is constructed and influenced by societal power dynamics and therefore need to be interpreted concerning

organizational structures and forms. As a result of the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions, the methodological choices are valid methods to extract, analyze and utilize knowledge and data to achieve the goal of this thesis

## 2.2 Research Design

---

Firstly a literature review was conducted in areas related to the research: GE in organizations and countries, cross-cultural management, and variations, organizational strategies, and change management. Based on the results and subjects covered in the literature review the semi-structured interview questions were formed, and subsequent interviews held. The method chosen was a qualitative study, based on how to work with GE, to take the human factor into account (see Figure 2).



## 2.3 Literature Review

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The literature review was done based on the purpose of the thesis and covered GE, gender in organizations, cultural management, organizational culture and how to create a strategy and change. It included both theoretical and empirical research and case examples. To find relevant articles, books and other of information, Google Scholar, and KTHB Primo, a search engine provided by the Royal Institute of Technology, were used. Terms used in the searches, either alone or together, were "Gender", "Equality", "Organization", "Gap", "Change", "Culture", "Strategy", "Management", "Cross-cultural", "Differences", "Statistics", "Countries", "Sweden", "Czech Republic", "United States" and "United Kingdom".

## 2.4 Theoretical Framework

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Based on the literature study and interviews, a theoretical framework was built into the blocks of Figure 3 and is considered to be one of the results of the thesis. All the blocks were extended to include both empirical, analytical, conceptual, quantitative and qualitative research and were chosen based on the subject of the thesis. Figure 3 describes the structure of the theoretical framework, where level 1 represents the GO and serves as the point of departure for the other levels towards achieving level 5, GE. To understand GE empirical and theoretical studies were used as a reference. Firstly, what gender and gender equality are will be described and put into the context of GO. Working from the top down in Figure 3, the fourth level, how to change, addresses change management by using general perspectives on how to facilitate change in organizations using Michael Beers Change Formula (44).

Level 3, what to change, will be introduced by the Gender at Work Framework to create an understanding of different systems within GO in relation to GE. The organizational culture is addressed by Sarah Rutherford's work on inclusion and exclusion (45), which is compared to Schein's three cultural levels (33) and Joerg Schmitz work on inclusive leadership explaining the gains for the GO are when both diversity and inclusion are addressed (46). The organizational culture will also include a review of segregation, norms, and stereotypes. On the subject of GE strategy, the Strategy Palette will be used as its point of departure is that one needs a strategy to create a strategy, in the discussion it will be used to recommend which type of strategy to use (47). Thirdly, the operational change will be addressed, based on what is mentioned the background and interviews. As it is not the focal point of this thesis, it will not be addressed in detail. However, during the work in creating a GE strategy or in creating change to increase the GE, the need for operational change will arise. The omission from the thesis is not to suggest the unimportance of the issue, but rather to acknowledge that the sub-issues in operational change (recruitment, policies, processes, feedback structures, etc.) merit its own, more thorough examination.

In level 2, external factors, GE is viewed through the lens of cross-cultural variations using the WEF gender gap report (4) and secondly cross-cultural management using Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness ("GLOBE") research (48). Where the variations addresses the different societal views and progress

towards achieving GE. Cross-cultural Management highlights the importance of being aware of that different culture exists across the globe, it is not seen as the truth but as a way of explaining that there are differences.



The use of models comes with both pros and cons, them often being positivistic. The way this thesis sees models is as frameworks for the user to start working, finding a direction and inspiration during the work. Models free the user from figuring out

everything from the beginning and help with the thought and work process. However, an emphasis on the models being just models is needed, they describe the generic reality and not representing the truth. As this thesis is philosophically anti-realistic in its outset, the cause-effect relationships often inherent in the descriptive models included, are therefore not necessarily regarded as sound or true. The models scope and provide explanatory power but also lends themselves to dangerous oversimplification of complex realities.

## 2.5 Interviews

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The interviews were held in a semi-structured manner, and a total of 13 interviews were conducted. Seven interviewees were employed by Company A, four by company B, and at least one participant represented every country. There were several focus areas: cross-cultural differences, norms, and values within and between countries, the views GE, and what is needed to increase the GE in the organization. As 11 out of the 13 have worked with D&I to a different extent, some of the conversations took a departure from their D&I work leading on to GE (see Table 1). As the majority of the interviewees had knowledge in the area of this research, it is believed that the interview had a different point of departure and depth in the insights compared to if the selection would have been from a larger number within different parts of the organization. Resulting in that it is hard to ensure that the results are seen to be true to everyone within the organizations.

Before the interviews, in general, two emails were sent out, first to establish contact describing the purpose of the interview, and second to give an agenda and to inform about anonymity. Four of the interviews were held face-to-face, nine virtually (see Table 1). Two of the interviewees are consultants who have worked with leadership and organizational development in an international setting for 15 years. The length of the interviews was on average 57 minutes. The interviews were transcribed and then analyzed in regards to the theoretical framework. The emails sent before the interview are found in Appendix B and C and the main questions in Appendix D.

Due to the work experience with the network “Teknikkvinnor” (women in technology), I have had the honor to meet and discuss GE in other GOs. This knowledge will also be used in the result and analysis since it gives a broader view

and depth in the analysis. Based on the ethical considerations, these companies and individuals will not be mentioned, rather addressed as personal experiences.

*Table 1: Presents the interviewees, which company they come from, the perspective of the interview, roles, years within the company, the duration and format.*

Interviewee	Company	Country Perspective	Role	Years within Company	Duration	Format
Interviewee 1	Company A	Global	Global Diversity Manager	6	35 min	Live
Interviewee 2	Company A	SE	D&I Manager	1	45 min	Live
Interviewee 3	Company A	CZ, SR, RO&HU	Chief Officer Ethics, D&I	12	1h	Virtual
Interviewee 5	Company A	UK	Talent and Capability Manager	5	1h	Virtual
Interviewee 6	Company A	USA/SE	Engineer	8	1 h	Live
Interviewee 7	Company A	USA/SE	Project Manager	11	1h	Virtual
Interviewee 8	Company A	CZ, SR, RO&HU	Head of Risk & Opportunities Management	10	1h	Virtual
Interviewee 9	Company B	SE/Global	Vice President Human Resources, Global	8	1h	Virtual
Interviewee 10	Company B	SE/Global	Vice President Human Resources, Global	11	1h	Virtual
Interviewee 11	Company B	SE/Global	Manager Employer Branding & Learning, HRS	6	1h	Virtual
Interviewee 12	Company B	Global	Head of Employee Experience,	12	1h	Virtual
Interviewee 13	Company C	Global	Consultat	NA	1h	Live
Interviewee 14	Company C	Global	Consultat	NA	1h	Virtual

## 2.6 The Analysis Process

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The interviews were analyzed during the interviewing process with the purpose to ensure that the literature review was relevant and to ensure that the upcoming interviews contributed to the indicated results. (49) This leads to adaptability in the gathering of results, all though the main questions remained. The interviews were transcribed during and after the interviews to ensure that nothing was left out or interpreted freely. After the transcription of all the interviews, the transcripts were printed out and color-coded based on which research question the given information responded to. The color-code was used to find correspondence between the content, to ensure that at least two of the interviewees shared the same opinion and experience before the result was considered to be valid. The color-code was also used to find discrepancies between the interviewees answers. Based on the correspondences and discrepancies conclusions were drawn and is presented in Chapter 4, Results and Analysis.

## 2.7 Credibility and Dependability

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In this chapter, the credibility of the process and results will be described to provide the reader with important information and insights into how the research was done. By using the chosen qualitative method approach, one needs to ensure the trustworthiness and authenticity of the results. This includes the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the interviews and results as well of the interviews (50).

To ensure the credibility and dependability of the collected data, the interviewees were chosen based on knowledge and insight of the area of the research, international experience and the organizations (50). The interviewees from Company A where primarily chosen and contacted in collaboration between the author and the Global D&I Manager and Interviewee 8 provided the contact to Interviewee 7. Interviewees from Company B were selected firstly by a contact of the author, who provided further contacts, which then the other interviewees were selected based on their insight and knowledge about Company B and the subject of the thesis. The interviewees were informed about the purpose and structure of the interview and areas to be covered. (see Appendix B and C.) Only the interviewee and the author

was present during the interviews. As the interviews were held virtually or live, the researcher ensures that the interviewee was in an environment that was known and comfortable to them. When the interviews were held virtually the interviewees were asked to be in a room where they could speak freely without someone else listening. The live interviews were held at the office of the interviewees in an environment known to them. It is important to highlight that the results might be affected based on the interviewee's insight in the subject and levels within the organizations as they might see the world and issue of gender inequality to a greater extent. But it is also believed that it contributes to more credible results. To ensure the credibility of the answers from the interviewees they were asked to use concrete and specific examples and in the case of inconsistent answers or unclear answers, follow-up questions were asked to understand what they meant fully (51). Although, the confirmability and the dependability are affected by the fact that interviews were held by the author with the interviewee and that the transcripts were not read by someone else.

The interviews were analyzed based on transcripts which were written during, and after the interviews (see 2.6 The Analysis Process). The thesis employs methodological triangulation (52) to increase the credibility of the results. The interview data contributed to the direction of the literature review and the thesis is based on both empirical research, as well as analytical. Specifically, the triangulation has resulted in the following subchapters being present in the thesis: 3.1, 3.3.3, 3.3.6, 3.3.7. The transparency of the process is presented in chapter 2.2 Research Design, 2.5 Interviews, 2.6 The Analysis Process and Appendix B-D. As the author ensured that the interviews were transcribed and that the interviewees were given the opportunity to comment on the results the transparency is considered to be high. Based on anonymity and sensitive information about Company A and B the transcripts are not provided.

Confirmability is considered to be important in this specific area of research since this area itself stress the importance of being aware of biases and norms (53). By reading a significant part of the literature review before the interviews, to ensure knowledge about confirmability and how ones view, values, norms, and biases affect the interpretation of the results.

Regarding transferability, is analyzed to determine whether or not the results show external validity or generalizability (50). The results are based on the collected data

analyzed in this research is from interviews with the two reference companies and what is presented in Chapter 3, literature review. This thesis does not aim for statistic generalizability but rather a theoretical one, limiting the detrimental effects of a small sample size. Hence, the results are not to be considered to be true or transferable directly to other organizations but rather seen as it present possible similarities to other similar settings.

## 2.8 Ethical Considerations

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The ethical considerations affect three main areas, the companies, interviewees and the surrounding. The companies are assured anonymity regarding the thesis. The interviewees will be presented anonymously in the thesis and are given transparency, they where given the opportunity to read the thesis prior to it being published and had the possibility to withdraw their contribution. All the interviewees are informed prior in written text, and before the start of the interview, the purpose, how the results will be presented and other access possibilities to the information and potentially harmful aspects for the participant will be communicated. The interviewees can withdraw their contribution up until the thesis being published. The thesis has no intention of being harmful either physically or psychologically.

## 2.9 Sustainable Development

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According to the UN and the SDGs, GE is one of the subjects to consider within the area of sustainable development. The thesis is considered to contribute to the sustainability of the world, and organizations.

## 3 Literature Review

*The literature review introduces concepts and theory from previous research within gender and organization and is used as a theoretical reference framework for analyzing empirical results. It is divided into six key areas in the presented order: Gender and GE, Change management, What to change, Strategy, Cross-Cultural Management and Cross-Cultural Variations. The subjectivity of the M-RQs, the models used have to reflect that, the use of generic systematic approaches is not suitable.*

### 3.1 Gender and Gender Equality

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The definition of gender is crucial for the thesis since the definitions may vary depending on who you ask. The consensus of what Gender is, in the field of Gender research, has been and is still developing. As the definition of gender is based on an individual and subjective perception of what individuals do within groups, it is hard to define (6, 53).

When talking about GE, one often refers to men and women, which is not necessarily truly representative. The term gender can be divided into several subsets of characteristics which, as noted above, may vary (53). For instance, there is an essential difference between sex and gender. The definition of sex is being biologically male or female, which does not differ greatly regarding definition. Gender, on the other hand, refers to being feminine or masculine, and is therefore subjective and norm-dependent; the definition varying between societies making it culturally and socially constructed (54). The World Health Organization states that gender is segmented into five elements: relational, hierarchical, historical, contextual and institutional (55). In the 1960's Gayle Rubin (56, 57) an American cultural anthropologist, introduced the term gender, to differentiate sex and gender, and defined gender as a social and cultural construction of sex. Yvonne Hirdman (7) proposed in 1988 that gender should be defined as the difference between feminine and masculine. Individuals whom neither sees themselves as feminine or masculine, are referred to as non-binary or genderqueers. Research continues to find differences in the perception of gender within societies, for example between generation, classes, ethnicities, religious groups and between men and women (58-60). As mentioned in the background, Gender, in this thesis, is defined as the social construct of what is

considered to be feminine and masculine within cultures. This in accordance to the definition used by “Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research” and the UN Women (53, 54).

GE is addressed through giving it a context by itself but also in the context of organizations. In organizations, GE is often described as a change project and addresses processes, culture, and ways for organizations to work to achieve GE. The gender system is built upon two principles: male superiority and the separation of gender, that men and women are described different tasks, roles, and positions in the society (59). GE means that women and men, boys and girls are treated and prioritized the same, have equal opportunities, responsibilities, rights, resources, and protection (6). GE does not imply that women and men should become the same (6).

## 3.2 How to Change

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Organizations who want to remove inequalities to achieve GE, as stated in the Gender at Work Framework (“GWF”) (see Chapter 3.3.1 GWF), often need to change both formal and informal systems, resulting in that the change will affect the whole organization. This chapter will address how organizations can change and what factors to consider when facilitating the change.

### 3.2.1 Organizational Change

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It takes both hard effort and time to change an organization: the complexity of the ecosystem is great, and increasing GE affects all parts of the organization. Organizational change and change management are therefore complicated, and this chapter aims to provide the reader with a generic framework on how to facilitate and create change within organizations, to ensure coverage of important factors and to deepen the analysis and discussion of the thesis. After this section, specific cultural factors that need to be addressed when one has the aspiration of achieving GE will be presented. Another reason for including a separate section, not including GE, is due to the importance of analyzing GE as a business case and that classical models can create additional depth and insights. It is not enough just setting goals for an organization: the why, how and what is equally as important. As every organization is unique, and every individual in the organization is unique, the change process and

result will be unique to every organization. Models serve the purpose of emphasizing essential areas and factors to consider prior and during the change process.

There is an overflow of different models on how to change an organization. In this thesis, a selection has been made from the most well known and used frameworks, Kotter's 8-step model, McKinsey 7s model, Kübler-Ross Changing Curve, Kurt Lewin Change model, Michael Beer's Change Formula and the Prosci ADKAR model. As organizational change often is driven by a strategy, creating structural changes at any level in the organization. Change management is a subset of organizational change, and it highlights the importance of that it is the people within the organization that has to change (61). Change management is defined as the process to achieve change with people, including tools and techniques used (61).

The motivation for the chosen model is described here. The Lewin Change model, based on unfreezing, make changes and freeze is not chosen based on the fact that it is best suited for drastic immediate change, often changing the whole organization, the drastic change is not needed here (62). The McKinsey 7s model is hard to apply efficiently on large organizations with several stakeholders since different business insights will be needed, the model is preferable when the problem is not known, and the scope of the problem is big (63). Which makes the 7s model irrelevant since it is too complex, the organizations addressed in this thesis are larger and global, and the scope and goals are clear and/or well-defined (63). Kotter's 8-step model includes valuable insights addressing the importance of why and how to create change within the organization. The drawback of this model is that it uses a top-down approach, not including feedback from within the organization increasing the risk of dissatisfaction (64). The ADKAR model, on the other hand, is a bottom-up approach, focusing on the employees and includes a great deal of flexibility. The model requires you to know what to change, why and it is focused on small incremental changes (65). Kübler-ross change curve addresses how individuals react to the change, although all do not react the same way at the same time and does not include a way to guide employees through the transition (66). Michael Beer's formula for Change (67) focuses on both top-down and bottom-up aspects and highlights several of the important areas addressed by others in this field (44). Beer's research address why transformation fails, in a rational manner, and what to do about it, in fact, 70% of all change projects fail (44, 69-73). The need for a bottom-up and top-down perspective is crucial to achieving GE, as presented in the GWF (see Chapter 3.3.1, GWF) (74),

one needs to look at both informal and formal systems, and individual and systemic, which makes the Change Formula relevant (44). Therefore the Micheal Beer's Change Formula is chosen (44). To be noted, as mentioned under the method chapter (see 2.3 Method), models are seen as a description of the real world, not to be taken by the world, but merely and guidance for the user to help with the process.

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### 3.2.2 The Change Formula

The Change Formula (44), created by Michael Beer, consists of five main areas to address when one wants to create change in an organization. Those are the extent of the change, the need for dissatisfaction, the model for the future state, the process to sustain and the cost of the change (44). The Formula is presented as "CHANGE = D x M x P > COST" (44). Change, in the formula, represents to what extent the organization must change. The D, stands for dissatisfaction with the status quo, meaning the employees dissatisfaction, explaining why the change should happen. M stands for Model for a future state, sometimes referred to as vision for change, what one wants to accomplish, including goals and objectives. P stands for a process for sustained change, often represented by a plan on how to change. The cost means, what are the negative effect on the organization, the resists within, explaining why the organization should not change. Where the cost of change must be smaller than the advantages given by the dissatisfaction, model, and process, all three must be aligned with each other and where the dissatisfaction of the status quo, model, and process plays an equal role in the change (44, 71).

To build upon the model of different ways to create change, one can argue that the *how* is missing; the how to create change. The formula addresses both the systematic and human perspective, in correspondence with the GWF (44, 71, 75). As mentioned above, the how is addressed with the Change Formula, creating a systematic approach to change and addressing what is needed to be successful (44). To be noted is that the how for improvement, at a task level, will be different for different organizations, depending on the organizational knowledge and needed improvement areas. Change, in the formula, represents to what extent the organization must change. The D, stands for dissatisfaction with the status quo, meaning the employees dissatisfaction, explaining why the change should happen. M stands for Model for a future state, sometimes referred to as vision for change, what one wants to accomplish, including goals and objectives. P stands for a process

for sustained change, often represented by a plan on how to change. The cost means, what are the negative effect on the organization, the resists within, explaining why the organization should not change. Where the cost of change must be smaller than the advantages given by the dissatisfaction, model, and process, all three must be aligned with each other (44).

With the change parameter, seven main factors are described as incurring the majority of the cost as a result of that humans naturally are resistant to change (44). The resistance can be due to the loss of power and control, assumptions about the change, one's self-esteem, and identity, relationships within the organization, cost of rewards or status and lower security. It can also be due to frustration and expectations not being delivered. At the beginning of a change process, the organization normally experience a temporary decrease in productivity and performance, which can be addressed by showing the progress being made (71). The decrees the organization experiences may vary on how the other factors in the formula are addressed.

To affect dissatisfaction with the status quo, it can be addressed by creating demand or a crisis facilitating the need for the change from the organization, by for example showing statistics on the problem. Management needs to discuss and create a diagnosis, create a desire for a better world and a direction regarding values, strategy, and vision. If employees do not have an intent to change, they will not be inclined to; there must be a balance between how much dissatisfaction that is created (44).

The model for the future state should be motivational, a why and purpose; it should be multidimensional addressing, strategy, specific systems, employees, structures, shared values, and structures. It should also include a model behavior from the leadership team and for the organization. It is important to have concrete, actionable and a model for the change (44).

The process to sustain the change, creating a "how to change," requires participation, presentation, politics, performance, promotion, persistence, and planning. The process should answer questions like What, when, where and who is responsible (44).

There is often an overemphasis on the model for the future state, creating a top-down strategy where the focus lies on solutions and ideas. While the dissatisfaction and processes are forgotten, increasing the risk of dissatisfaction, decrease in honest conversation, commitment and actions (44).

## 3.3 What to Change

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This chapter will focus on the organizational culture and strategy. In the context of GE, organizations need to change both informal and formal systems affecting the individual and the system which will be addressed by the GWF (74), leading on to an increased understanding of how organizational culture affects individuals and what GO can change. How GE is affected by structures, norms and stereotypes within organizations and societies will be highlighted.

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### 3.3.1 Gender at Work Framework

The GWF, illustrates and emphasizes what one needs to change within organizations to achieve GE. It delineates between informal versus formal focus and individual versus systematic focus (74, 75) (see Figure 4). The GWF is built upon years of research on how to increase the GE within organizations. It is built upon a holistic approach on how to create change and the spectrum of where it can happen. While several researchers have created similar frameworks, Kvande, for example, created an additional four-factor framework with: interactions, practitioners, negotiations, and symbols. This framework, however, stresses more of the subjective nature of gender than the rational systemic constraints of the organization and lacks the balance from GWF (76-78).

When addressing GE within organizations with this framework, structural factors, such as the number of women, wages, recruitment and talent development are stressed as important key areas to focus on as long as one also addresses organizations culture, described below. GWF (75) is a holistic analytical framework that incorporates both individual and systemic factors, as well as the informal and formal. As gender and the notion of gender equality, defined above (see 3.1 Gender and Gender Equality), are subjective in nature, the need for informal and individual aspects to account for the variability between the people in the organization.



show that one forget about the left-hand side, emphasizing on that to create change one has to address all four quadrants (74). But, strategic initiatives in one quadrant can affect another, for example creating policies and rules might lead to an equal division of resource or create increased awareness. Although, it often takes more time to see a change in the informal norms and exclusionary practices (75). The quadrants emphasized in the GWF all play an important role for organizations when aiming remove inequalities and it is important for organizations to understand all of them (74).

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### 3.3.2 Organizational Culture

*“ Global Organizations are characterized by a high level of diversity particularly on a linguistic, cultural (national, organizational and functional) and experiential basis. What is not given however is the degree to which the organization’s culture possesses the quality of inclusiveness.”*

*Joerg Schmitz: The Guide for Inclusive Leaders. A TMC Publication (46).*

Organizational cultures are based on a subjective, individual and collective perception of how individuals act within groups and the underlying agreement within the group on what it is, making it harder to define. The organizational culture is one of the things that is making an organization unique and to change the culture is very hard (79).

Based one the GWF (74) and the Change Formula (44), one conclusion is that both GE and any organizational change addresses the cultural aspect. Regarding GE, the cultural aspect often refers to the culture being inclusive where everyone can be themselves. Therefore this part will address what one means with inclusiveness and exclusiveness but also discuss what culture within organizations is (80).

Organizations act as unique cultural ecosystems, today not too seldom in a global environment, which can be discussed from two different perspectives; cultures from a GE perspective and a general perspective. Sarah Rutherford address inclusion and exclusion regarding GE (45) and Joerg Schmitz, the author of *The guide for inclusive leadership* (46) work, is used to explaining why it is important to work with both diversity and inclusion.

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### 3.3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion

In organizations, inclusive and exclusive behaviors often exist, meaning that some groups are excluded, and others included, often unconsciously. It is not too seldom hard to address an exclusive behavior since it is built upon norms and exists with the culture (81). An inclusive environment is one that allows differences, leverages and maximizes all backgrounds, talents and all employees perspectives and takes them into account (82, 83). Several researchers argue that the culture should be related to structures and material conditions (45, 78, 84). Rutherford acknowledged eight factors that foster exclusive behaviors against women in organizations. These factors are: physical artifacts, gender awareness, leadership styles, working hours, work ideologies, language and communication, informal codes and sexuality (45).

*Physical artifacts* are the ways the workplace is built, rooms, offices, everything you can touch (45).

*The awareness* is whether or not employees are aware of sex and gender, the view of women (45).

The *leadership* refers to the way organizations make decisions, reward systems and what behaviors that are praised. The leadership style that is praised within the organization, for example, competitiveness, aggressive is appreciated from a man while not for women (84).

*Working hours* that are normal and accepted varies between countries, where sometimes the number of hours is an important measurement (86). As women spend more time on taking care of the home and children, not spending as much time at work will affect their careers (86, 87).

*Work ideologies*, whether or not work is considered to be the most important part of life or not. If the organization fosters that view, one can be considered to be disloyal if one does not agree and act as if. Work ideologies also include what one chooses to share at work, what is personal or not (45).

*Language and communication* affect the feeling of inclusiveness and exclusiveness where both subjects and words used play an important role. The language is often set

by the managers. For example, subjects like sports, sex, and the army will make women feel excluded (88). There are formal and informal interactions where the language can change.

*Informal codes*, for example, informal gatherings affect the relationship between individuals in the formal settings, which also reflects the power. Informal gatherings where women are less likely to attend, for example, sports events, saunas, sex clubs etcetera affects the inclusiveness of the organization in formal environments (45).

*The sexuality*, not only sexual harassment, often relates to male heterosexuality being represented in conversation topics, humor, clothes, pictures, metaphors and physical spaces. The informal rules on what is considered to be acceptable are often different between men and women. In regards to sexual harassment and what is seen like it, it varies depending on how and to what extent sexuality is represented in the organization. If it is common, it will make it harder to report harassment and that it is accepted at work (45).

Sarah Rutherford's research shows that to increase GE one have to address and create an inclusive culture, she also explains what foster the particular culture, which is based on the eight factors above.

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### 3.3.4 Schein's Organizational Culture

Looking at organizational cultures from a broader perspective, there are several models to use. As this thesis, will not analyze organizational cultures themselves, several frameworks with an evaluatory function can be discarded. Examples of such frameworks have been presented by Harrison (89), Deal and Kennedy (90), Schneider (91), and Cameron and Quinn (92). In this thesis, it suffices with a descriptive framework which focuses on highlighting what culture actually consists of, rather than trying to analyze or evaluate a specific culture. The most well-known framework is arguably Schein's (33), and it will serve as the foundation for the cultural discussion in this thesis.

Edgar Schein argues that organizational cultures can be represented in three layers, defined as the degree of what is visible to external people and people within the organization. These levels are called: artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic

underlying assumptions. (see Figure 5) (33). All three layers consist of assumptions, where artifacts are visible to everyone, while espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions are not, only to the people active in the organization (33). His book “*Organizational culture and leadership*” was first published in 1985 and the latest edition was published in 2016, and the theory has been altered over the years (33). One can put Rutherford eight factors into these three levels, but there are some differences, that will be presented below (80).

*The artifacts* are what you as an observer can hear, feel and see, for example, expressed in products and behaviors, visible but sometimes hard to interpret. For example, artifacts can be observed by an external person and are represented in public statements and values, logos, the way people talk, dress and furniture used. It is important to mention that artifacts are easily observed but hard to decipher, meaning that the underlying purpose of the artifact might be different to the creator (93, 94). This corresponds positively to Rutherford's factors, the physical artifacts, working hours, language and communication and to some extent sexuality, how people dress and activities. It also corresponds to the GWF in relation to the individual and systematic formal systems (74).

*Espoused beliefs and values*, are harder to observe but can be analyzed by how employees justify and explain what they do, and what you as an external observer are told. For example, company strategy, ideologies, mission and goals, how the organization achieves goals and measures results, also how the organization communicates, norms, values, stories told, ceremonies and traditions (33). Rutherford addresses this in leadership styles, ideologies, informal codes, and sexuality. Something that is not as emphasized in her work is the goal setting and strategy. Goals and strategy are addressed in the change model and the gender at work framework.

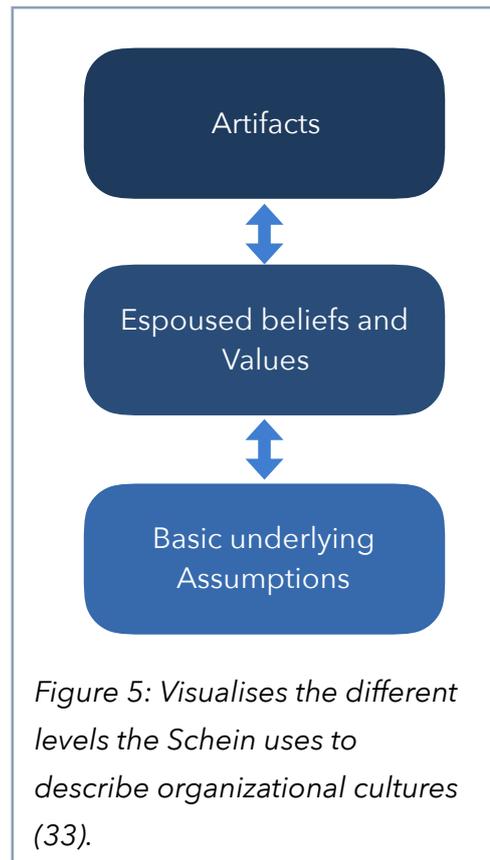


Figure 5: Visualises the different levels the Schein uses to describe organizational cultures (33).

*The basic underlying assumptions* are even harder to observe, and represents the underlying and unconscious behaviors and rules, for example, what is taken for granted, worldview, and philosophy (33). These are seen as if they generate the values and beliefs and values and beliefs, affects how the company expresses its artifacts if one does not understand the underlying assumptions one cannot truly understand the true meaning of the artifacts (33). This is aligned with Rutherford's work, the Change Formula (44) and the gender at work strategy, that one needs to analyze the underlying culture to be able to address and change it.

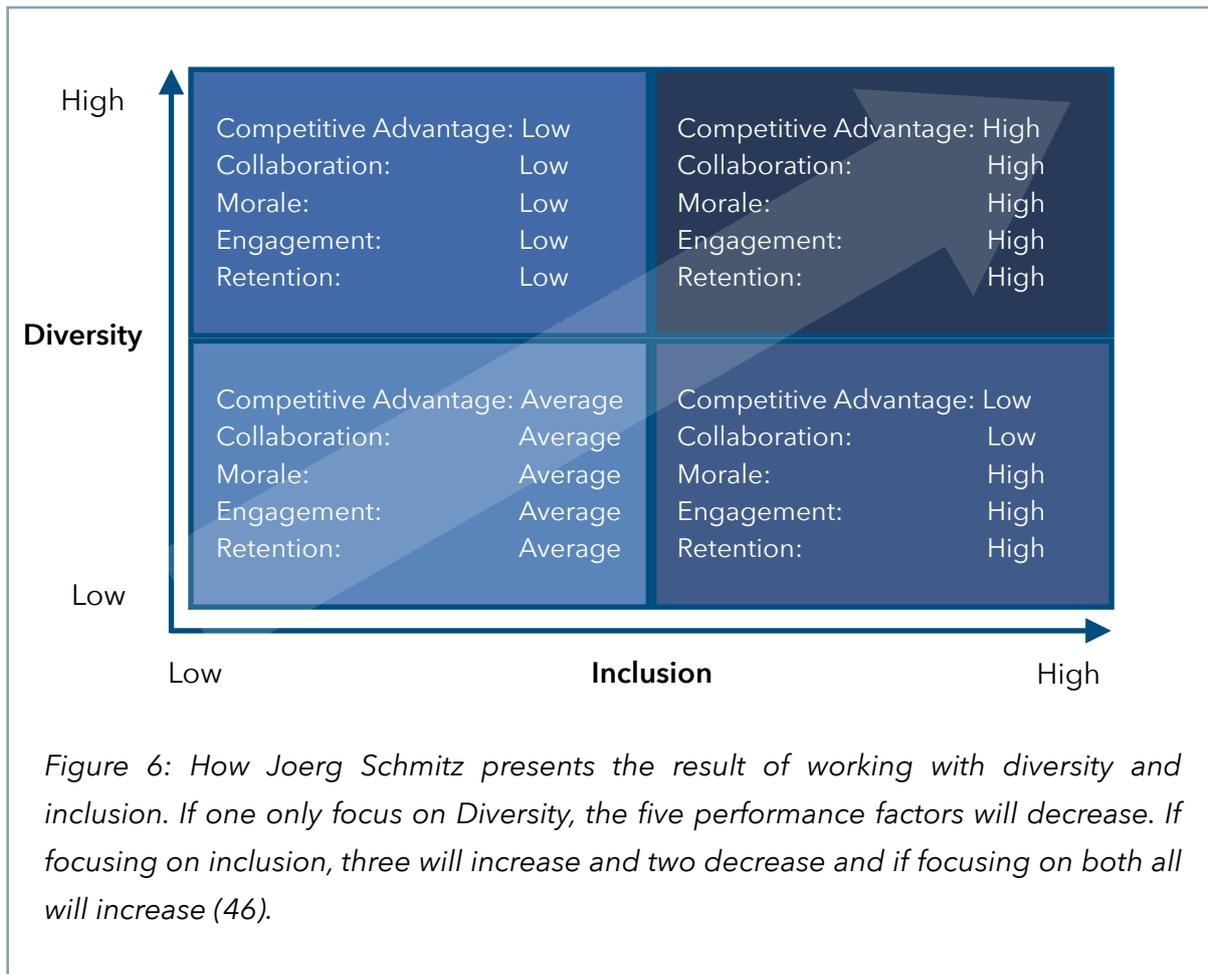
Based on Schein's view of organizations they are built upon unites with different purposes. Some are easy to determine and identify, and others are not. Tangible parts of the business can be a strategy, processes, HR policies, information systems, and technology. The intangible part, are often found in the lower levels of Schein's theory (33).

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### 3.3.5 Diversity and Inclusion

Joerg Schmitz, the author of *The guide for inclusive leadership* (46), created a framework showing what happens within organizations if they only address inclusion or diversity, giving the subject more depth (see Figure 6). Since GE is one of the factors within D&I, the framework is seen to be suitable for the thesis, explaining why it is essential to not only work with GE but also creating an inclusive environment.

The book argues that working with diversity and inclusion will have a positive effect on five performance factors: competitive advantage, collaboration, morale, engagement, and retention (95). If the organization focus on diversity without inclusiveness, it will result in a decrease in performance on all five factors. While if the organization is inclusive but not diverse, moral, engagement and retention will increase, but the competitive advantage and collaboration will decrease (46).



### 3.3.6 Segregation

To put gender into the context of societies and organizations, segregation in the labor market will be discussed since it is another vital part of describing the reason for how cultures and norms affect GE. One explanation to why the labor market is segregated is due to the structures, which in a GE perspective refers to the division of power and resources between women and men (96). Structures exist within every society, organization and between them, and the structural restraints are hard to change (see 3.5.3 Cross-cultural variations). The unequal division of power and resources are due to culture, norms and laws and rules in societies and organizations (97, 98).

Segregation refers to the difference in representation of women or men at different levels in the labor market and within organizations (99). A segregated labor market means that jobs and positions are considered to be either feminine or masculine, thus also affecting the working conditions, such as salary, hours, development

possibilities, health, the division of work at home, power and influence, in other words also the structures (99, 100).

The labor market is vertically, horizontally and internally segregated (100-103). Vertical segregation is described as where men and women are within organizational hierarchies (104). Men are generally in middle and top management; while women are at lower and middle levels (105, 106). In SE, the statistics show how men are at the top, and how the ratio women to men decrease the higher up one looks in the corporate hierarchies (107).

The horizontal segregation refers to men and women working in different organizations, sectors, industries and at different positions within the same levels (104, 108, 109). Resulting in men and women often working together with the same sex.

The internal segregation describes how men and women at the same level and position, are given different tasks, are specialized in different areas resulting in different occupations (100, 105). A level or position that might seem equal, therefore might, in fact, be segregated so that when analyzing numbers, regarding the ratio between men and women, one obtains misleading results.

The definition of what is considered to be gender segregation varies, the SCB, the Swedish central bureau of statistics, defines it as if the number of one sex is larger than 60% it is segregated (100).

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### 3.3.7 Norms and Stereotypes

Rutherford's work (45) above addresses what results in a culture being inclusive and exclusive, Schein's (33) work describes the basic underlying assumptions, the norms, the subjectivity and the nonexplicit expressed dimensions of the culture. What does one mean by norms, stereotypes and how do they affect individuals? This section aims to dive deeper into what it is and whom they affect individuals acting within one cultural context.

Norms and normal, two visually similar words that almost has the same meaning, the norms is what is considered to be normal (110). Our individual norms, our

organization's norms, and our societies norms affect our perceptions of what is normal in the world, organizations, and for our relationships. The norm is multidimensional, our definition of values consists of our, attitudes, preferences, rules, laws, beliefs, conventions, biases, assumptions, ideologies, traditions, and culture (110). Norms will change when we view our surroundings critically (111).

In the context of gender, there are socially constructed and accepted views on what is masculine and what is considered to be feminine. In a room of similar individuals, for example, a boardroom of men with the same sex, ethnicity, social class, they could find themselves diverse in terms personalities, experience, and values, and their similarities are forgotten. What they have in common is considered to be what is normal, discrepancies from their norm are considered to be abnormal, for example, women, immigrants, and homosexuals (84). In organizations that are not diverse, the norm becomes a power factor and unconsciously affect the view and what is considered to normal in the organization. Female leaders who are a minority in a context, are considered to be unique and are more visible than the majority of the people which could both affect the female positively and negatively. If she fails, it represents all women, all women in the organization, which could increase the feeling of pressure and increase stress levels (112). In a study done by McKinsey, they examined and proved some of the prior speculative unconscious biases. For example, that men are more credited for success and get more criticism for failure than women, women are more evaluated on their achievements and men on potential, and mothers are considered to not as committed to their careers (113). Gender norms affect the way we recruit wage levels and career structures (114, 115). Norms can change, unconscious biases and the view of what is a stereotype can change as well. Stereotypes are created when we are classifying, assigning attributes to individuals or groups and affect or norms (6, 110).

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### 3.3.8 Strategy

Having dived into organizational change and culture, the subject of creating a strategy for achieving GE has been touched upon but not fully deliberated. For an organizational change, one often creates a strategy to achieve the change, as organizations are complex ecosystems. As argued above, one has to understand the organization and the culture. Strategy in this section will be about what type of strategy an organization can choose to use, and good and bad examples of the

different types. There is an overflow of ways to create a strategy, over 81 frameworks have been published since 1958, meaning, to create a strategy you need a strategy, there for the Strategy Palette has been chosen as a methodological framework to focus general strategy work (47, 116, 117). An international strategy refers to maximizing the performance and aligning the organization across countries, where competencies play an important role and were the work often decentralized. Therefore the variational cultures must be taken into consideration. (see 3.5.2. GLOBE project) (118).

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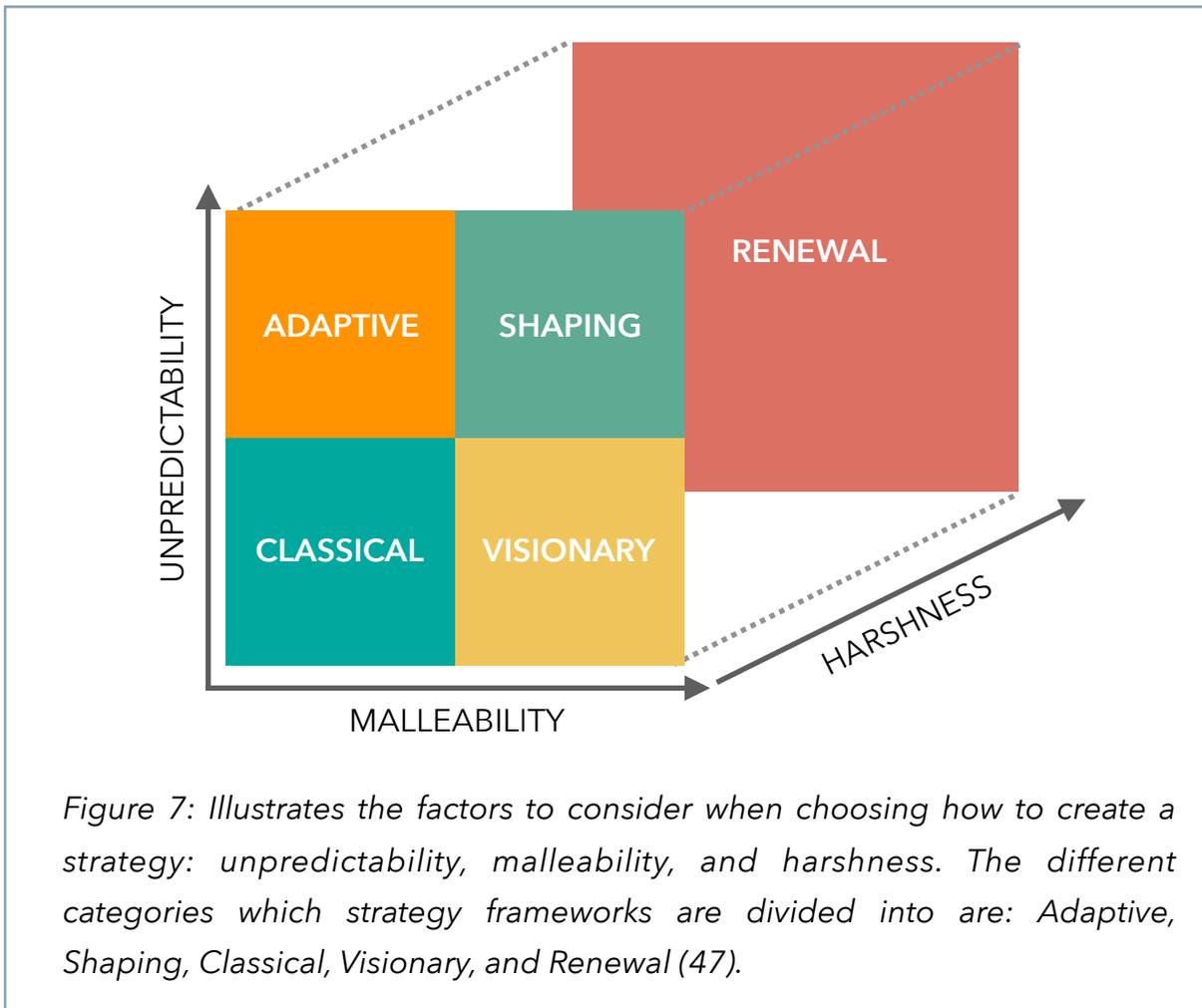
### 3.3.8.1 The Strategy Palette

The Strategy Palette (47) is a framework that emphasizes the importance of creating a strategy based on the nature of the subject, the external environment and purpose of the strategy. Meaning that you have to spend time before the creation of the strategy itself. There are three critical factors to consider, the predictability of the future - if it is forecastable - and the malleability, how the company and competition can influence the elements of the strategy and finally the hardness if the business can survive if change does not happen (see Figure 7). One can use the palette as an overall business strategy or in a particular part of the business, where different ones might require different types of strategies. Business or parts of business normally goes through the phases of a cycle, from a visionary to shaping to adaptive and finally classical (47, 92). Large organizations can and should use different types of strategies for different areas or purposes, based on the need for the business (47).

The strategy pallet divides strategies into five categories depending on the initial analysis, which are classical, adaptive, visionary, shaping and renewal (see Figure 7).

*A Classical* approach is where the environment is predictable and hard to change, the industries or subjects where this approach is most likely suitable is where the growth is low, it is mature, and you are measured in scale and market share. Recommended strategic approaches when creating the strategy are Porters five forces, BCG matrix and experience curve. The process normally starts with analyzing then plan and finally execution (47).

*The Adaptive* approach, when the environment is unpredictable and low malleability, where there are constant needs for adaptability and change within the company or



unit. In today’s market, in which companies struggle with for example globalization and increasing pace of technological innovation, an adaptive approach is better suited than the classical. The word adaptive refers to it being an approach where one can change the goals, targets, and tactics from one day to another. The indicators for when this approach is suited are, volatile growth, young industry or subject and a high technical challenge and one can measure cycle times and new product vitality index. Recommended approaches are time-based assumptions, temporary advantages, and adaptive advantage. Where you with a flexibility select and approach the problem (47).

*The Shaping* approach is suitable when the company can influence the elements of the strategy, the future environment is unpredictable, and there are no dominant players or stakeholders. This leads to that the organization can shape the regulations. The Shaping approach means that one can measure ecosystem growth and profitability by new product vitality indexes. To implement this approach one should use a strategy that is based on networks, ecosystems, and platforms, where one can learn

from each other and share a common vision. To do this, it requires engagement, orchestrating of the organization and evolving it by scaling and increasing flexibility (119).

*Creating a visionary* approach, in a predictable and malleable environment, is preferable when the one believes one can reliably change the environment. For example, creating new products or enter unexplored markets. The indicators for using this approach is high growth potential, no direct competition, and limited regulations. Two examples of measurements are first to market and new customer satisfaction. Recommended approaches are blue ocean and innovators dilemma. The process normally goes as follows: envisaging, build a company or product and persist (47).

*The Renewable* approach is needed where the environment is harsh, and the company needs to redefine its way of doing business to survive. Low growth, decline or crisis define the environment and one needs to decrease costs and secure cash flow. In these cases, one needs a transformational or turnaround approach. Where you react, economize and grow (47) .

### 3.4 External Factors

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For organizations working in a global environment, every geographical unit is affected by the norms and culture of that location. For a GO, it is crucial to understand these differences and how it affects the organizational culture. This chapter aims to give an in-depth understanding of cross-cultural differences and variations between countries, in general, and on the view of GE and gender.

As mentioned above, organizations are complex ecosystems, where the culture is built on the participants collective and subjective view of what the culture is. There are formal and informal aspects to be analyzed, and some are more or less easy to observe. As organizations today are global, the definition of organizational culture is becoming more complex. The cross-cultural differences between and within countries affect and form the organizational culture. What gender and GE is and how much it is valued also differs between them. Organizations are not a coherent organism with the same organizational culture in every country.

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### 3.4.1 Cross-Cultural Management

*“... the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next.”*

*Matsumoto definition of culture (120, p.16)*

For this thesis, the differing cultures of the different nations, CZ, SE, US, and UK, will be address, since these are the countries on focus in this thesis. To analyze the variations between countries one have to generalize and use stereotypes. Described above, stereotyping is what humans use to classify and find a way to explain the complexity of the world. Taking the organizational culture into account, one has to look at how that affects and is affected by, the countries culture and the impact they have. Cultures are formed over the years and continuously develop and change. For a multinational organization, different cultures play an important role in how the organization is run and understanding that differences can be of help when working cross-culturally in projects and through the whole value chain (121).

As the world is becoming more globalized and we are living in an increasingly more global world, people today are more influenced by different cultures and organizational cultures. It also influences managers´ way to act, creating an urgency for understanding how different cultures and differences affect their organization (122). As the world is becoming more, and more international, some argue that it should be seen as one world, where countries borders are not as important today as they were before, where cultural differences are starting to decrease as people are being influenced by different cultures more frequently (123, 124).

To get an understanding of the cultural differences between the selected countries the GLOBE research will be used. I have chosen to not use Hofstede´s or Trompenaars research due to the nature of the thesis. Hofstede´s research is receiving critique as it is based on one company´s internal survey, the data was collected over 50 years ago, the oversimplification using five aspects and not taking cultural differences within countries into account (125-127). Hofstede has influenced the GLOBE research, but his work has been altered and extended. Hofstede analyses five factors on a linear scale while GLOBE analyses eight categories are measuring the perception “Should be” and reality “what is”, also showing the variations across countries and it is considered to be more empirically true (127-129).

Trompenaars defines cultures based on values and is created by a sociologist, taking a different approach compared to Hofstede and GLOBE (124). Hofstede and GLOBE are more widely accepted. In contrast to Hofstede, both Trompenaars and GLOBE are looking at managers in different organizations (124). Another reason for choosing GLOBE is that it separates Hofstede's dimension of Masculinity-femininity into four, assertiveness, gender equalitarianism, performance orientation and humane orientation, further aligning the theoretical foundation of this thesis by acknowledging the non-binary and subjective complexities in gender equality work (124, 130).

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### 3.4.2 GLOBE Project

The GLOBE project (48) was created by a project team of 170 researchers who collected data on cultural values and leadership attributes during seven years, in both a societal and organizational context. In total 17.370 managers from 951 organizations within various industries and sectors and sizes were selected from 62 countries (131). Nine cultural dimensions were identified that distinguish one society from another: performance orientation, assertiveness, future orientation, humane orientation, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, gender egalitarianism, power distance and uncertainty avoidance (132). All dimensions are measured in two dimensions given a score between one and seven, first how it is - the practice score - and secondly how it should and aspires to be, the value score. The scoring is defined such that one is very low, two low, three relatively low, four medium, five relatively high, six high and seven very high (131). For detailed scores between the chosen countries, please see Appendix A.

*Performance orientation* is described as to which extent society is encouraging and rewarding excellence, innovation, high standards and performance improvements (131). Where a high result means that they value development, training, competitiveness, and materialism. Formal feedback is seen as something necessary for improvement, and the communication is direct and explicit. Low means that the society values the relationship to one's family and friends, a harmonious environment. Formal feedback is seen as something judgemental and uncomfortable. The scores given the four countries look as follow: The practice scores do not vary

that much, SE has the lowest and USA the highest. Regarding the value score, the difference is starting to increase, CZ aspires to score low and the other three relatively high.

*Assertiveness* is measured on the degree “of which individuals are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in their relationships with others.” (48, p. 30). High results mean that one values competition, progress, and success, communication is direct and unambiguous. One tries to have control over the environment and subordinates are expected to take initiatives. Low results reflect that the society values warm and inclusive behavior and communication is indirect. The environment is warm, and subordinates are expected to be loyal (48). Today SE has the lowest practical score and value score, 3,38 versus 3,61. The US has the highest in both scores, 4,55 vs. 4,32.

*Future orientation* is to the degree of “which a collectivity encourages and rewards future-oriented behaviors such as planning and delaying gratification” (48, p. 569). A high score signals saving for the future, focusing on long-term success, and adaptable and changing organization. Countries with low scores are focused on spending now, gratification now, inflexible and nonadaptive. Here CZ is unique, with the lowest score in both, while the others want to increase to relatively high.

*Humane orientation* is defined as being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others (48, p. 30). Characteristics of high scores are reflected in societies where the interest in others, belonging and affiliation is important; one promotes the well-being of others, racial discrimination is a sensitive subject and child labor is demolished by public sanctions. Characteristics of low scores are self-interest, the importance of power and materialism. The state provides social and economic support, child labor is not addressed, and the sensitivity for racial discrimination is low. Once again, CZ is unique in wanting to decrease in the future, and the others want to increase, SE to the highest score.

*Institutional collectivism* is defined “the degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action.” (48, p. 30). High scores are characterized by independence within organizations, group loyalty, maximization for collectives in societies economic systems, rewarding seniority, personal needs, and equal within groups and group

decisionmaking. Independence of the organization characterizes low scores, individual goals at the expense of group loyalty, societies economic systems maximize interests of the individual, individual task success and decisions are rewarded. SE has the highest practice score and wants to decrease to the others level. CZ has the lowest precise score and wants to increase a bit.

*In-group collectivism* is defined as the degree to “which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families.” (48, p. 30). High scores are defined as the pace of life is slower, love is not that important in marriage, duties, and obligations are important in social behaviors, the distinction is made between in-groups and out-groups. Low scores are in which pace of life is faster; love is an important factor in marriage, needs and attributes are important in social behaviors, little distinction is made between in-groups and out-groups. All aspire to increase their practice score; US has the highest practice score, CZ the lowest.

*Gender egalitarianism* is defined as "the degree to which a collective minimizes gender inequality." (48, p. 30). High scores are reflected in more women in leadership positions, low occupational sex segregation, similar educational attainment, women are afforded a decision-making role in community affairs. For low scores, women hold fewer management position, occupational sex segregation is high, more male than female in educational attainment and no decision-making role in community affairs. SE has the highest score of 3,84, the US the lowest 3,34, all except CZ want to increase to over 5.

*Power distance* is presented as “the extent to which the community accepts and endorses authority, power differences, and status privileges.” (48, p. 30). High scores are assigned to countries where classes are built into the society; there is a limitation to the possibility to move up, power is giving the social order, only a few have access to resources and information is localized and hoarded. Countries with a low score have a big middle class; power is linked to corruption and coercion, it is common to move upwards, almost all have resources and information is available and shared. US has the highest score, CZ the lowest, SE, and UK about the same. The UK, US, and SE value score show a decrease while CZ and increase.

*Uncertainty avoidance* is “the extent to which society, organization, or group relies on social norms, rules, and procedures to alleviate the unpredictability of future

events.”(48, p. 30) .For high uncertainty avoidance scores, policies and procedures are formalized and something you rely on, there is order and detailed records, risks are calculated and the resistance to change is high. For low uncertainty avoidance scores, there is less order and records, more informal interactions; one relies on informal norms and less calculation of risk, the resistance to change is lower. SE has the highest score; all countries want to decrease, the UK to the highest value score.

Table 2: The result from the GLOBE Project 2004, showing relation between the scores of the four countries, from lowest to highest in both practice and value scores.(131)

	CZ	SE	UK	US
Performance orientation - Practice	Middle	Lowest	Middle	Highest
Performance orientation - Value	Lowest	Middle	Middle	Highest
Assertiveness - Practice	Middle	Lowest	Middle	Highest
Assertiveness -Value	Middle	Lowest	Middle	Highest
Future orientation - Practice	Lowest	Highest	Middle	Middle
Future orientation - Value	Lowest	Middle	Middle	Highest
Humane orientation - Practice	Highest	Middle	Lowest	Highest
Humane orientation - Value	Lowest	Highest	Middle	Middle
Institutional collectivism - Practice	Lowest	Highest	Middle	Middle
Institutional collectivism - Value	Lowest	Middle	Highest	Middle
In-group collectivism - Practice	Lowest	Middle	Middle	Highest
In-group collectivism - Value	Lowest	Highest	Middle	Middle
Gender egalitarianism - Practice	Middle	Highest	Middle	Lowest
Gender egalitarianism - Value	Lowest	Middle	Highest	Middle
Power distance - Practice	Lowest	Middle	Highest	Middle
Power distance - Value	Highest	Lowest	Middle	Middle
Uncertainty avoidance - Practice	Middle	Highest	Middle	Lowest
Uncertainty avoidance - Value	Middle	Lowest	Highest	Middle

Based on the result from the GLOBE project, CZ and SE have the highest degree of unique scores, with either the highest or lowest score, while the UK is least extreme in this context. In four of the categories, SE and US are opposite to each other. (see Table 2) Regarding value score, CZ has an opposite movement in 6 categories

compared to the other countries (see Table 4). This indicates that organizations present in these countries need to be aware of where the countries are and want to move towards regarding formal and informal systems and how aligned the changes are to the systems are to their wanted situation (48).

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### 3.4.3 Cross-Cultural Variations

Being a GO, the diversity of cultures within the whole organization is often large, but it might not be in the BUs. Regarding GE, how the organizations and countries perform varies greatly. The way countries perform is often shown in laws, policies and social structures within the country, for example, childcare, norms around parenthood and the view of women at work (4). The performance reflects how much a country values and prioritizes GE, there for relevant for this thesis.

Since 2006, WEF has analyzed countries GE progress every year, in the global gender gap index, which measures gender differences in four variables: economic participation and opportunity, political empowerment, education attainment, and health and survival (4). In 2017, 144 countries, ten more than last year, were analyzed and measured on a scale from 0 to 1 on how close they were to achieving GE. The results from 2017 show that the world on average have a 32.0% gap to close and the most significant gap is within economic participation and political empowerment. 82 countries are performing better, and 60 have decreased compared to the 2016 report (4).

Taking a closer look at the countries studied in this thesis, CZ, SE, US, and the UK, for all four countries the lowest score is given in economic participation and opportunity and political empowerment. Out of the four countries, CZ is ranked lowest overall and in the economic participation and opportunity variable. SE has the highest rank and score in economic participation and opportunity and political empowerment. The US has the second lowest overall, but the lowest economic participation and opportunity. UK second place in overall and political empowerment, third on economic participation and opportunity. To be noted, CZ and UK's scores on the legislator, senior offices and managers, women in parliament and ministerial positions for CZ and US with low scores and SE with a high. Meaning that CZ and US gender gap is larger compared to the others countries. For details ranking and scores, please see table 3.

Table 3: presents the data from WEF Global Gender Gap report 2017. The four countries researched in this thesis are presented, and two main areas are included, Economic participation and opportunity, and Political Empowerment. (4)

World economic forum, the global gender gap index 2017

	CZ	SW	UK	US
<b>Overall</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>49</b>
Closed Gender Gap	0,688	0,816	0,816	0,718
<b>Economic participation and opportunity rank</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>19</b>
Labour force participation	0,816	0,949	0,871	0,855
Wage equality for similar work (survey)	0,586	0,738	0,671	0,734
Estimated earned income (PPP, US\$	0,597	0,785	0,553	0,648
Legislators, senior officials and managers	0,340	0,647	0,563	0,767
Professional and technical workers	0,957	1,0	0,973	1,0
<b>Political empowerment rank</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>96</b>
Women in parliament	0,214	0,772	0,471	0,241
Women in ministerial positions	0,25	1,0	0,444	0,20
Female head of state last 50 years	No	No	Yes	No

## 4 Result and Analysis

*The empirical results and the findings from the interviews will be presented in the context of what relates to the organizations and in a cross-cultural perspective. Where it is applicable, the interviewee's answers will be relatable to previous research. The key findings will be presented in a list below each headline. Further analysis with recommendations will not be discussed here.*

As Company B and Company A have worked with D&I previously, and specifically with GE, some of the **discussions in the interviews departed from a D&I perspective and a distinction between D&I and GE were not always easy to make. I have carefully chosen the parts of the interviews addressing GE**, even though it sometimes was discussed from D&I view in the interviews. I found that, in general, if the organizations were to separate GE from diversity, the majority of the work will be on GE.

### 4.1 Gender Equality in Organizations

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This chapter aims to describe the findings related to the organizations. First, findings related to the formal systems will be presented, followed by the informal systems.

The interviews and global research on organizations, both align around that creating change within GOs is hard (44, 74). The larger the organization, the more complex the change will be. The bigger the ship, the harder to steer and it takes more time to turn. I found three main subjects that were stressed regarding GE and the cultural change related to the: what, how and why.

First, what the organizations actually do to increase GE. Research and interviews both stress the need for cultural change by creating an inclusive environment, mostly through implementing formal policies, rules, and laws.

Secondly, how the change created is based on the previously mentioned formal components of the GWF (135), and a description of the wanted situation, that which was thought of as need to be inclusive. The formal initiatives creating the changes were, for example, recruitment, leadership programs, adjustment initiatives, and

gender relevant Key Performance Indicators ("KPI"s). A recurring theme in the discussions with representatives from the organizations is the focus on initiatives that are taken against the external environment, often related to recruitment, students, sponsorships with the explicit purpose to introduce new individuals to the company. This signals that instead of working with the internal systems, one is hoping that the number of women will increase in the organization, making it equal, by recruiting more.

Thirdly, the why, the reason for the change, is also often related to the external environment, as a competitive advantage, following the global trend and ensuring that the company has a talent pool for the future. The internal reason is often described as it being obvious that *"we need to do this to survive,"* increasing the GE will make the company more creative, and a better understanding of the surroundings.

*"When addressing GE, the most common way to do it is through numbers, which is not relevant if one does not understand the upsides and are inclusive"* Interviewee 2, Company A

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#### 4.1.1 Recruitment

Regarding recruitment, everyone agrees on the goal of hiring should mimic the distribution of the graduation rates from universities (or other relevant prerequisites). Gender quotas, was never explicitly mentioned in the context of full-time recruitment even if some BUs have extended to hire more women than distributionally represented in the pool of graduates.

The interviews also stressed the importance of working with and inspire the younger generation to apply to technical educations that the companies mainly hires from which includes Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. For example deciding only to sponsor a girl football team, ensuring that there is a 50/50 split of summer workers or in after high-school programs.

The interviewees stressed the importance of the recruitment department working actively with presenting at least one women and one male, the importance of scanning for norms, unconscious biases, ensuring that the advertisements are free from stereotypes and that the illustrative communication, photographs, and movies represent differences. However, even though the recruiters work actively with this,

the level of knowledge of the managers affects the actual choice of the candidate. For example in CZ, one manager choose to hire the male candidate for a higher position because he knew that the women most likely would conceive a child and would have to go on parental leave.

The reason for countries not performing as well, and as research on norms supports (see 3.3.6 Diversity & Inclusion), can be due to the lack of clear and controlled ways of evaluating candidates (110). The employee branding, as mentioned above, is seen as it plays an important role attracting talent. However, the companies are struggling with external norms and beliefs existing in the society, the industries history of being male-dominated and stereotypes of a typical employee.

To be noted, for some parts of the organizations, it has been easier to achieve these results, due to extensive work and it is clear that the mindset of the organization or BU matters.

*“We need to work with two main quests, one is recruiting more women, the other is making women get management positions” Interviewee 2, Company A*

*“We need to have at least one women in every recruitment process, then it is up to the manager to decide whom they want to hire” Interviewee 9, Company B*

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## 4.1.2 Talent Development

Regarding talent development and advancement, both companies highlight the importance of ensuring an increase of females in management or leadership positions. However, in for example in CZ and UK, the interviewees mention that they see a clear glass-ceiling. Reflecting the view on recruitment, it is believed that participants in leadership development programs are supposed to represent the organization or a 50/50 split. The lack of advancement and the reason for it failing to permeate lower levels is believed to be due to that, in general, men are more prone to hire men and mens work is over-evaluated whiles women under-evaluated (133, 134).

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### 4.1.3 Salaries

Salaries are, as seen in the background, not equal between gender, in most cases (11). The interviews made it clear that the wages for graduates are the same, no matter who you are or where you are. However, the increase in salary is based on your performance, but it seems that the system on how this is done varies. As the research shows, the gap normally increases with experience, which emphasizes the importance of having precise and regulated ways of evaluating employees. While the interviewees stress that their companies only judge salary on performance and experience, it is important to acknowledge that these are variables that are judged differently based on gender (29, 135, 136).

*“There is no pay gap in Company A at entry level, after that, it is based on performance, not based on any other factor” Interviewee 7, Company A*

*“In the industry, it is a pay gap, often related to the position the women choose to take within construction” Interviewee 8, Company A*

*“Usually men have a higher salary than women, which makes her the one to stay home and take care of the kids and the home” Interviewee 3, Company A*

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### 4.1.4 Working Hours

Working hours is a subject that affects the individuals within the organization's different BUs, and cultural factor that often comes from the countries cultures (86). Interviewees have stressed the need for flexibility but also mentioned the variations within Company A. As a parent in an environment where you are expected to arrive at work before your boss and leave after. The long hours increases the need for child care or a spouse that can work less. The flexibility on what hours are spent at work is crucial, for some countries more, to be able to take care of children and the household. As of today, women, in general, spend more time on unpaid work, for example on household work and caring of children (137, 138).

For both industries the flexibility is hard to achieve since at site or in production, the work starts with a morning meeting or when the shifts change diminishing the room for flexible arriving hours. Although, interviewees stress that it is often easier to leave work early then begin later. This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.2 Gender Equality from a Cross-Cultural Perspective.

*“Working at the construction site makes it hard to have kids, especially bringing them to school, since one starts work early in the morning, and at the site the day starts early with a meeting in the morning.” Interviewee 6, Company A*

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#### 4.1.5 Measurements

Both companies are working with KPIs, measuring the development with everything from people starting, advancement, people quitting, to workplace culture surveys and varies between yearly or quarterly evaluations. Company B is measuring the number of women recruited to management positions and the number leaving, If the number of women leaving is greater then starting, it signals cultural difficulties for that part of the organization. The workplace culture surveys are where the organizations hope to find cultural restraints. The theory shows the importance of both measuring and working with the culture, but in reality, it proves to be difficult to work with it in a global setting (45, 46) .When the organization measures specific numbers, it is easy to constantly put a focus on the relative number. Meaning that the ones who are initially less equal will be for some time moving forward and the ones performing better will continue to be praised. No one mentioned anything about how management or individuals are measured on his or her performance when working with D&I, GE or inclusiveness.

*“As of today, our progress is measured in KPIs, we have had focus groups, but right now, the time has been spent on making the employee survey to measure the culture and inclusiveness of the organization” Interviewee 12, Company B*

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#### 4.1.6 Not Prioritizing Gender Equality Work

There are several things mentioned that are seen to hinder the work with GE: it adds one more thing to talk about, there is often a lack of management support, and it is viewed as unimportant for units not performing well about the core of the business. Within a GO, there are different business related needs and challenges, while one unit might perform financially well, others are not. This leads to the BUs having to prioritize, and the GO adapt to these differences. BUs who are not performing well regarding tangible measurements, tend not to prioritize the intangible systems since it is a matter of surviving or not. New units or underperforming units tend to only focus on the tangible systems to get the business started. This in contrast to thinking that they have the opportunity to get the intangible systems in place.

*"I have to ensure that the work is happening, I think I have to since everyone does not prioritize it." Interviewee 2, Company A*

*"When business is bad, the management focuses on the money and not on the culture"*  
*Interviewee 3, Company B*

GE and D&I is not, by the account of any interviewee, a natural part of the core business. Instead, GE is treated as it would be put on top of the everyday work. This additive approach results in it being a "new thing" to focus on instead of a core factor in their current work. Everyone agreed on that exploring how GE could be addressed in already present subjects, educational initiatives and areas, for example, safety, ethics, and leadership programs would be a good idea.

Regarding the overall support from the management team, I have found that in BUs where the management team supports the GE agenda and are actively engaged, the organization feels as if it is essential and are prone to work on it. In the cases where the focus is diminished from the management team, the support and distress from the rest of the organization were less, influencing the overall results. This aligns well with the necessary prerequisites for success, described by the GWF (75) and by the Change Formula (44). The change model, emphasizes that the support from upper management is key to ensure longevity and success of the change that the organization wishes to incur.

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### 4.1.7 Ways of Doing it in the Past

The way the companies have worked with GE has varied over the years, today both companies are working with it in a decentralized manner, where there is pressure from the corporate management team, but every BU is responsible for taking action, setting and reaching goals and creating initiative related to the subject. Both companies have a broad D&I strategy, which mostly emphasizes target areas and recommendations on the way of working. Company B started the work in a centralized manner, which increased the KPIs for the organization and when it changed to become decentralized, the organization saw a decrease in progress and D&I was not being prioritized in the same way. Both organizations have global networks of people working with GE and are trying to spread knowledge across countries and units, with different success. Company A has several female networks in different BU. All existing female networks seem to be for the women, by the women, creating a platform for discussion and development, creating “free” space. Even if the networks in Company A is open for men as well, the focus lies on the importance for women to have the network. I also got the feeling that it is mostly women who run the GE work (except for Company A in GB), either as a D&I manager, working with HR, employee experience or as a secondary task.

*“We lost focus on the work when it became decentralized, we can see it in the surveys we do. We have lost the focus from the top.” Interviewee 9, Company B*

*“When the focus became decentralized, the work was not prioritized to the same extent, which is shown in our numbers” Interviewee 10, Company B*

When asked why the interviewees do not work with GE actively, it is often due to other needs of the organization. If the unit has economic problems, those are the top prioritization, not surprisingly enough. However, when asked for what is needed to make it a priority, the answer was that they could not see the business case for GE.

*“Need to find a way to connect it to the business case, create a feeling of it being important” Interviewee 8 Company A*

*“The global strategy has to ensure continuity and be systematical, we have to be aligned in work and have support from the management team” Interviewee 3, Company A*

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#### 4.1.8 External Stakeholders

External stakeholders are in this case either contractors working at the sites or shareholders, customers and procurements managers.

Both organizations addressed the importance of working with contractors since both industries are depending on them. As of now, working with GE with contractors is not on the top of the agenda, since prioritizing oneself is considered to be more critical

*“Working with external contractors is something we have not had the time to do, it is the next step, but we have a code of conduct that they have to follow” Interviewee 2, Company A*

Regarding procurements, the interviewees mentioned that it is today becoming essential to show progress and proving information in procurements that they work with sustainability, which includes GE (2).

The results from the interviews showcase that the SDGs are not commonly used internally, but rather for external stakeholders. The SDGs are seen as an easy and unified way for procurements managers and shareholders to assess the organization and their work. They also highlight an increased work related to the SDG from other companies, for example, the ones presented in the background. Several of the interviewees can see a trend in the external market need for proof of sustainability work, both in procurements and from the shareholders, mainly in the UK and SE.

*“The SDGs gives an opportunity for the entire sustainability area - an external framework that other companies use, that many can relate to, makes it easier to communicate outwards, and others can compare different companies.” Interviewee 1, Company A*

*“We do not talk about the SDGs internally, it is more for external communication”  
Interviewee 10, Company B*

The interviewees also mentioned the importance of understanding its customers and reflecting the society they are working in as a reason to why it is important to work with GE.

*“Our customers have different backgrounds and cultures, we need to have the competencies to understand them and the world they live in” Interviewee 5, Company A*

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#### 4.1.9 Culture

The culture was one of the most addressed topics in the interviews; there were several ways of addressing it, agreeing on the need for inclusiveness. (See 3.3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion) To reach a culture where one actively work with GE, the interviewees from Company B mention the importance of creating a “why,” not only for the organization but individuals within the organization, and then work with the awareness of what a particular culture creates. The interviewees also stressed that it is harder for them since the industry has been dominated by men.

*“It takes a long time because the culture is built upon the historical norms of the industry, where there were no women.” Interviewee 5, Company A*

When talking about cultural change and GE, the results confirm both the GWF (75) conclusion that the informal quadrants are forgotten and what the Change Formula highlights, the distress often being too little (44, 74). Company B did great work regarding starting with creating a Why for leaders in the organization at the beginning of the work, but it seems like it has been forgotten today since it is not a centralized focus of the organization and the support from the management team is less. When Company B went from a centralized world to a decentralized world, they experienced stagnation in the D&I work, and initiatives decreased, and the focus was lost in some parts of the organization. This is also the case when the BU are struggling with the core business, GE is not prioritized.

When asked, the interviewees highlighted the lack of knowledge regarding the effect and importance of GE work and how that lack is affecting the prioritization. The BU’s where management team does not see the business case working towards achieving GE are the ones not prioritizing the work. One of the most significant factors espoused in the interviews is that the local management does not have a clear purpose connected to why these questions are important to them as individuals. This seems to affect the business regarding how important the work is for them in the context of the organization, and how they facilitate these questions.

*“We started to create central initiatives, goals and awareness training, starting at the top and working our way down in the organization, everyone got to find their reason why”*

*Interviewee 9, Company B*

To create the change, one mentions culture, behaviors, and inclusiveness (33, 44, 45, 74). However, the way to do, in general, it is through implementing systems, policies, rules and give resources and create opportunities for employees and prospective employees. It is as if one understands that cultural change in behaviors is needed, but one often feels lost in how to do it. Creating awareness around GE is done through educational initiatives, and the ones that have succeeded have made it personal. They also mentioned the importance of connecting it to clear business goals, bottom line and showing the actual effect, especially when working with engineers. Addressing the stereotypical engineer, someone who looks for evidence, number and scientifically proven results. The interviewees stressed the importance of working with stereotypes within the organizations, which I found in all four countries.

*“We have worked with it in a structured way as we do with everything, created goals, regional scorecards, talent processes, recruitment, and follow-ups” Interviewee 2, Company A*

Both companies, from a Swedish point of view, value their strong culture, with an emphasis on their values and initiatives related to sustainability. The importance of the company culture and importance of GE is also true for interviewees working on a global level, higher up in the organizations. However, when talking to people at lower levels, they experience comments like *“I often got to hear that we need to do this because HQ says so, just a check-box to complete”* or *“That is just the Swedish culture, it does not work here.”* The experience of the culture and the coherence is less than HQ want it to be. This affects the engagement and motivation of the employees, both regarding uncertainties around what is true and not, and through being forced to do things just because someone said so. This implies that even if HQ is aligned around and feel the importance of working with values, the whole organization is not aligned.

One question one might ask oneself is what happens to D&I if one excludes the GE work? Several of the conversations about D&I often refers to GE work, with the author of this thesis hoping that highlighting that it will put pressure on the organizations to focus more on other factors included in D&I.

*“Our initial work with D&I, the focus has been on GE, even when we talked about diversity, we are now starting to make diversity broader” Interviewee 1, Company A*

*“When we started to discuss D&I we automatically discuss only women and men, only!”  
Interviewee 7, Company A*

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#### 4.1.10 Summary of Findings for 4.1

- Change for GO is overall hard to accomplish the larger the organization is
- The formal systems are the first to change: recruitment, leadership programs, adjustment initiatives, KPIs
- The external environment is highly prioritized: advertisements, recruitment, students, sponsorships
- The external purpose of working with GE is to ensure competitive advantages and, a pool of talents, follow global trends
- The internal reason: survival, making the company creative and understand the environment
- Recruitment: mimic graduates or more women, inspire the younger generation, represent two candidates, lack of understanding from hiring managers
- Evaluation of candidates: needs to be systemized
- Talent development: mirror the organization in leadership development, clear glass-ceiling in CZ and UK.
- Salaries: not equal, same initial wage, but gap higher up in the organization, evaluation based on performance but no fail-proof system
- Working hours: vary within the organizations, need for flexibility expressed
- KPI: absolute numbers, culture through surveys, no individual measurements,
- Not prioritizing GE work: another thing to talk about, lack of management support, not prioritizing, not part of the core business
- Ways of doing it in the past: from centralized to decentralized decreased momentum, networks for women,
- External Stakeholders: contractors not prioritized, procurements and shareholders show higher demand for the company to show it working with sustainability
- Culture: most addressed topic in interviews, need for inclusiveness but hard to achieve, the creation of the purpose not clear, lack of knowledge, connect GE to the business case, corporate value the Swedish culture but not always in other units.

- D&I or GE, what happens when one removes GE from D&I?
- How create a strategy and actual change?
- How do you ensure that there is a purpose for the organization and employees?

## 4.2 Gender Equality from a Cross-Cultural Perspective

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The second part of the result and analysis is based on how countries cultures and progress towards GE affect the way GO work with GE in local markets, **mainly from Company As perspective, with additional inputs from the other interviewees.** The results from the interviews, which are confirmed by previous research, suggests that a country's norms affect the work with GE to a great extent (33, 99, 110). A tension is created where the organizational culture, in this case, a Swedish way of working, does not overlap completely with the culture of another country. Regarding the work with GE, countries have different challenges, affected by the culture, norms and societal systems in place, making it harder to adapt too specific goals (11, 48). Where the local culture of the company is strongly bound to espoused values and beliefs within the country's culture, it will affect the organization and employees in other geographies in different ways, depending on the way this is managed. For example in cultures where one listens to the boss to a more significant extent, where hierarchies are prioritized, in this case, according to the interviews, the UK, US, and CZ (48). The employee's relationships with managers, in a more hierarchical environment, will influence both individuals and the organization as a whole, for example, employee engagement, motivation and independence and the organizational performance (139). In Company A, the differences between company culture seem to be bigger compared to Company B. In company B "a Swedish way of working" seems to be accepted, and somewhat not fully adapted to the local market.

*"Will be seen as something from Sweden, a must and something we "have to do"."*

*Interviewee 6, Company A*

For a GO, different countries cultures are mentioned by the interviewees as a constraint, when the view of GE varies between the different BUs. It is also confirm by studies that countries cultures affect the GE within a countries (140, 141). When a decentralized organization creates a strategy that is visionary and presents critical areas of focus, and all BUs are responsible for taking actions which increases the risk of decreased uniformity and knowledge sharing. The BUs country culture will

influence the actions taken. A key example found in this research, is the reactions, on a country level, to the #metoo movement. According to the interviewees based in SE, the movement got a lot of attention, from all parts of the society. In the US it was mostly expressed by individuals higher up in the hierarchy in Company A. According to the two interviewees based in CZ, however, both men and women laugh and made jokes about it.

*“Managers do not priorities it since it is not seen as a big issue since it is not part of the norm in the society.” Interviewee 3, Company A*

Regarding the focus countries where Company A operates, the result indicates some areas that distinguish them, regarding the prior work done in GE.

In CZ in **Company A**, GE is not prioritized by the management team, which hinders the progress. The initiatives are more based on grass-roots efforts, driven by a few ambassadors, but it is hard to see development. The management team thinks GE is an important subject, but they prioritize the business and creating monetary value, win procurements and to appease the shareholders. The societal norms are not in favor for GE, according to the interviewees from CZ; women are supposed to be home with the kids for three years per child, taking care of the home, #metoo was more seen as a joke and women are not supposed to work out in the field, rather in offices. The maternity leave affects the career development of the women, and the one example is of a woman not being recruited because she might have a kid. The results also indicate that even if women are studying to become engineers, they tend to end up in the offices, while men are on site.

*“If you promote women in her 30es and she starts having kids, she will be gone for a few years, and it is not practical for the employee. A colleague was looking for a new team member, chose the man and said “I know it is not fair, and the young guy will probably get a better offer and leave, but I do not want the complications of her having kids”” Interviewee 8, Company A*

*“It is good that we can spend more time with our child, but it blocks the careers of women”  
Interviewee 8 Company A*

*“In CZ we do not have a woman who is a project manager, all are men, it is probably because of our habit in our country” Interviewee 3, Company A*

*“In CZ there is a clear glass ceiling, I can see it for my self in the organization” Interviewee 8, Company A*

In the UK, the initiatives for GE in **Company A** are steered from the top by a selected group of individuals in different units, and it is managed as a business case with systems and models. They have improved and created a change. The grass-roots initiatives, engaging people in everyday life, has been harder to achieve. For example, the women’s network that they once established is not that active anymore. The KPIs measured have increased since the focus on GE have been prioritized.

*“A colleague told me: After working in SE, I would not like to go back to the UK, due to the stress and work culture in general” Interviewee 7, Company A*

Regarding the Child-care in the UK, according to a report done by The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (142), families spend 30% of their income on child-care, on average three times more compared to other countries, which affects the family situation, for example, parental leave. For some couples, it forces parents to stay home with their kids, normatively the women, since they earn less money compared to men. When the kids are old enough, and a women want to start working again, it is in general hard. This is something that the interviewees have mentioned as a critical factor to address. Company A has a program for helping people get back to work.

In the US the situation regarding child-care is similar to the UK - the option for child-care to enable equal time at work, is expensive (142). According to the interviews a couple typically has to prioritize either to have kids or a career. Since the hours one is supposed to put into work are much more than in for example SE is said to be the main reason to why it is hard to both have a career and a family. When they choose kids, it is often the woman in the relationship that needs to forego her career opportunities to take care of the children.

*“In US one have to choose between a career or family, the one who make less money needs to stay home with the kid, statistically the women. That is a conversation you have to have with your partner,” Interviewee 7, Company A*

In the US, the size of the country itself makes it harder to follow the heuristic approach of assigning one culture to one country. **According to the interviewees**, the strong business drive and focus on making money have made GE a secondary priority. **In Company A there** is not a strong purpose connected to the work . There is one particular grass-roots movement, a women network, which has succeeded and is growing. The interviews showcase that there is a problem regarding adopting the organizational culture to the Swedish organizational culture, and initiatives are seen as something one has to do because Head Quarters in SE says so. Another factor that was mentioned and seen as it hinders the work is “the lawsuit culture,” and the fine line between what is and is not seen as discrimination. **In Company A in both US and CZ**, women tend to work in other units then on site, for example, HR, marketing, communication, admin, according to the interviewees, even though they have a technical university degree.

*“I could probably count on one hand the number of women who were construction engineers, and only one project manager was a woman” Interviewee 6, Company A*

**From Company As perspective** SE has good results regarding KPIs, so far, and the culture is coherent across the country, not surprisingly, as it is a Swedish founded company. There is a mix of support from management and grass-root movements driven by employees. The GE work is, in general, higher up on the agenda, and D&I educational initiatives are available for employees. Although there are some differences across the country on how well they have succeeded, in general, the largest cities are performing better. The support from the societal systems makes it easier to take time off when becoming a parent for both sexes and laws are affecting the cash-support during the leave if both parents take it. There is also the standard of support from day-care and after-school programs. SE is perceived as less hierarchical and formalistic, more flexible and open.

*“We have a control group with the CEO and regional managers who discuss these questions, make prioritization´s and decide where the focus should be and the regional managers are responsible for taking actions” Interviewee 2, Company A*

Regarding hierarchies, the UK, US and CZ are perceived as more hierarchical than SE **by the interviewees. I was told by the interviewees from the US, that you do what your boss tells you because the boss is the one responsible for the outcome. While the interviewees view of SE was** that the team is seen as responsible if something goes wrong. "The lawsuit culture" in the US was mentioned and highlighted in several interviews regarding the hierarchies, as it puts more pressure on the boss to decrease the risk of being sued. The administrative processes in the UK were highlighted by the interviewees who came from other cultures and had worked with employees from the UK and described as more demanding regarding paperwork and forms to be filed.

Several of the interviews have mentioned the importance of working with being aware of not using stereotypes and unconscious biases. To paraphrase, they view it as the world is becoming smaller and smaller and the differences between countries are shrinking. They have also addressed that stereotypes are not always true and can influence the way of how one describes and interact with colleagues from different cultures. Some stressed the importance of individuals transferring from different countries, and that it might make the work with GE more prioritized, creating a more significant impact. Since such a transferred person comes from a different environment and views things differently, them highlighting the differences and their proposals might be more accepted. Working in a GO, on projects where several cultures are present shows the differences within the organization. Specifically, there was one specific project mentioned in three of the interviews. In the project, employees from SE, US, and the UK were working together, and it took some months to accept and learn the different ways of working, especially regarding the relationship to the managers, further strengthening the thesis that hierarchical cultural difference plays an important role for Global Organizations.

*"I tried to make him understand the importance of equality, but his point of view is that the difference between men and women working is that the women have to be at home with the children, cooking, while the man is working and making money" Interviewee 3, Company A*

*"He can address things, start a discussion, and it is now weird, they can always say "that is because he is different"" Interviewee 3, Company A*

*“She could emphasis things we did not think about, for example speaking Swedish in an informal environment.” Interviewee 11, Company B*

Several of the interviewees also address the historical perspective and the effect it can have on GE. According to interviewee 2, 7 and 10, SE has a lot of societal factors enabling the work with GE, for example, laws and regulations (87). The two interviewees from CZ referred that CZ being post-communistic affects the norms and values of the society today and that it affects women's professional opportunities. Interviewee 13 and 6 stated that the history US contributes to a strong focus on the future, that anything is possible and risk-taking.

*“CZ has a historical heritage, especially in construction, where it is only about men, women are in support functions like HR, communication, calculation” Interviewee 3, Company A*

*“Women normally old office positions instead of being out at the sites” Interviewee 8, Company A*

SE, with a history of working with GE and being less hierarchical (87, 131), where GE has been addressed by the society and organizations to a larger extent than in the UK, US, and CZ. Resulting in that SE has and is performing better regarding GE. It is clear that the history of a country affects the societal culture and norms, which affects the work towards achieving GE (33, 110). Where the view of women, laws, and support have driven progress to where it is today. In the cultures where the societal factors are unfavorable for achieving GE, the work for an organization to drive the GE agenda is harder and takes more time. In this thesis, CZ is struggling most, the US also struggling and the UK has shown an increase of GE in Company A. A gap is present prior to the increased focus of the organization, and the gap is increasing when the organizations start focusing on GE. Where some BUs in **both organizations** are performing better, improving the overall performance and others are still equally unequal. This is shown in both numbers, initiatives taken and support from management team.

*“We can see overall progress of the whole company. Some are moving quicker, others not so much, therefore the gap has increased between and within different business units” Interviewee 1, Company A*

*“Some parts of the organization are making progress and are showing good results, while others are not prioritizing it, mostly due to the need of addressing other business related problems” Interviewee 12, Company B*

**The gap** is one of the most crucial findings of this thesis since the majority of the interviewees have experienced the same thing, but initiatives are not done systematically and are not on the top of the agenda. Due to for example a decentralized worldview, where every unit is responsible for working on it by themselves. However, what effect does this have on the organization? How does an organization ensure that the best units continue to work and that the ones behind are taking initiatives to start or continue? How does an international organization create a strategy and inspires change? These questions will be discussed in the discussion section below.

*“We do not work actively with the gap, everyone is responsible for his or her work.”  
Interviewee 1, Company A*

*“As we are decentralized, everyone bears the responsibility for reaching the goals” Interviewee 12, Company B*

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#### 4.2.1 Summary of Findings for 4.2

- History and countries culture clearly affects the GE work
- The difference in prioritization between units leads to different initiatives within the organization
- Different challenges in different units, harder to create cross-organizational goals
- “The Swedish way” of working not truly accepted
- Child-care affects the possibilities, wages and career development for women
- The relationship between the managers affects the work, motivation, and performance
- The manager’s knowledge, understanding and lack of purpose can decrease the focus on GE
- CZ: mostly grass-roots movements, lack of management full support, women responsible for the household
- The UK: managed as a business case, more top-down, women generally responsible for child-care

- The US: more grass-roots initiatives, mostly women owning the question, child-care put on women, restraints from law-suit culture.
- CZ and US: women do not work at the sites
- SE: both top-down and bottom-up, structured approach, large cities performing better, support from societal systems, more inclusive culture
- Being aware of stereotypes and unconscious biases important when addressing cross-cultural aspects
- In the world, today individuals are affected by different cultures
- Working cross-organizationally is hard when the culture is different
- When working with GE, a gap between different units is increasing, even if the overall progress is positive

## 5 Discussion

*The discussion will focus on how a GO can work with GE from a management perspective and how the organization can ensure that the whole organization is on board with the work, decreasing the gap that grows bigger during the progress of the work towards becoming more gender equal.*

### 5.1 Implementing Gender Equality in Global Organizations

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As of today, Company A and Company B can show that they are increasing the GE within the organizations, based on that the measured KPIs have increased over the past years. When taking a closer look at the organizations, it is clear that a few number of units in the companies are outperforming others and that they are the ones contributing to the overall increase. This at the same time as other BUs are still at the same level of gender inequality, showing that for some BUs, GE is not an urgent or prioritized subject to address. WEF (4) and the GLOBE project (48) shows that there are cultural differences between countries, that the progress towards achieving GE differ, and that there is an initial gap between countries. The research also predicts the development that can be seen with Company A and B. It describes the dynamics of an increased Gender Equality Gap when organizations start working with GE issues. A gap is made up of leaders and laggards, both within the organization as a whole and between, and within, countries. When the entire organization reaches KPIs relevant for showcasing increase GE, it is often the leaders that constitute the majority of the change while the laggards are left at unchanged levels of GE. For example, in Company A SE is a leader and CZ a laggard, and within SE, Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmo are making contributions to the increase, while the north and south-east of SE are not contributing to the same extent. The data from WEF (4) and GLOBE project (48) shows the natural gap between countries and combined with the increasing gap in the organization it indicates the need for organizations to understand how one can work with GE cross-culturally based on the variations in the view of GE.

The observed dynamics of GE gaps are predicted by the research from the literature review and confirmed by the interviews (4, 48). As mentioned in the result and analysis chapter, it is a question of culture, knowledge, and prioritization. For

countries where GE is not a natural part of the culture, it will take more prominent efforts to make it a subject of interest. Local managers who do not have a purpose connected to it, who do not see the business outcomes will not prioritize and include it in the everyday business. Further down in the organization, people who do not understand the positive outcomes of the work will not be engaged in the change. Some even express fear of the change, aligned with the literature, due to it taking time from the core business, loss of power and the need for changed behaviors (45).

It is indicated in the results and the Change Formula (44) that it is essential that the top management express and communicate the prioritization and need for D&I and GE, but it is not enough if the local leaders do not prioritize and communicate it. Why should you spend time on something that does not have a clear personal purpose, when there is a risk of the unit losing money when you have to take the time from something considered to be more valuable? Alternatively, when you do not feel the distress or have the knowledge? The results indicate that the purpose and values are emphasized at the top of the organization, but not further down. It is reasonable to believe that this could lead to some troubles for the future and that the top management team needs to ensure that the whole organization is aligned and act according to the purpose. The cultural change will take more time and money if the employees do not understand and believe in why the change needs to happen. Instead of communicating that *“these are our values and our culture, that we now should act according to,”* the management team needs to include the employees, to understand them and to help them define it into their own words. This is not only true for GE but for the whole company purpose, as mentioned in the result, to avoid *“It is just something that HQ says and the Swedish way of doing it.”*

As WEF states (4), the GE is lower in different countries. For organizations it is described as external factors and that they hinder the work and development. For the units in these countries, the initiation of working towards GE can create an overwhelming feeling and result in a decreased motivation towards the work (139). For example in the interviews, external elements are described as the reason for why the GE is low in CZ and the reason for them underperforming. The GO has to understand the difference if BUs underperforming feel understood they would be more prone to change, and it will not be as easy to blame the slow progress on external factors. The GO can help them create creative solutions, making them see

“the light in the tunnel,” for example by showing other cases of where change has happened.

The GO can also support the women in the more unequal countries by helping them break the norms. I believe that organizations have to address and show awareness of the local culture and help women understand that it is possible to do so. For example, in a society where women normatively are not supposed to work on-site in construction it is seen as a challenge to do so, according to the interviewees there are no or a few role models. If the GO hires women and ensures that they stay and develop, it will be easier to hire more. The lack of role models is one explanation of many as to why it is tough to increase the KPIs related to the number of women in the organization. Another example, one of the reasons for the number of female managers being lower in the CZ, UK and the US, is because they are normatively supposed to stay home with the kids. By creating formal systems that facilitate the possibility for women to continue working or men to take time off and ensuring equal pay, it will contribute to an increased possibility of breaking the norms of the society (45).

What women can do is one part of the equation, but in male-dominated industries as these, it is not only the women who should be responsible for the cultural change needed, to create an inclusive culture (45, 46). Among other organizations I have talked to, GE is sometimes a question owned by HR and a question owned by the women in the organization. By letting HR own the subject, it increases the risk of losing the connection and application to the core business. Resulting in that GE tends to be something that is not seen as a priority. An example of initiatives driven by women is female networks, which are essential and serves a purpose for the women in them, creating relationships, support and role models. However, to reach the larger mass, in male-dominated industries, one needs to include men as well, to attain a critical mass. As touched on above, the knowledge needs to increase, and it might be good among those working with the GE. But somehow it seems to be restricted in the rest of the organization, thus diminishing the possibility of understanding, creating their own purpose and actions facilitating change.

*“Right now HR owns GE and the initiatives” Interviewee 11, Company B*

*“In Sweden, it is not a question that HR owns, it is a business question, and it should be handled that way, HR is an important part, a support system.” Interviewee 2, Company A*

The beauty of decentralization is that it creates ownership for the units to work and an increased possibility to adapt to the local market. Even though both Company A and B have a global network working with D&I, with one of the purposes to spread knowledge, the initiatives taken are very different and have reached different outcomes. For example, the female network in the US is performing very well, but in the UK it has stagnated. My conclusion is that there is a need for a better system to spread knowledge through the organization. This would result in continued ownership of the different units, but with the sharing of knowledge which would increase the rate of the progress and the chance of successful initiatives. Where the knowledge should be about both GE and how to facilitate change because even if the knowledge about GE increases the change will not happen if the managers do not know how to facilitate the change.

The gap creates different risk for different parts of the organization. The leaders can feel that they have done enough. The laggards, as mentioned above, can feel hopelessness and therefore not prioritize it at all. As according to Rutherford (80) and GWF (75), the cultural change is one of the most important facts driving the increase of GE, if the gap increases regarding GE, it also results in a gap increasing regarding the organizational culture. Making it harder to work as one company, with one culture. Schmitz (46) work also stress that to create positive outcomes for the company, both GE and Inclusion needs to be worked on. Organizational culture is one of the most critical factors the interviewees mentioned, both regarding GE work but they also stressed the importance of having an organizational culture which unifies the company. For example, when Company A had a project where several countries worked together, the employees experienced friction when it came to the culture, mostly explained by formal systems as management, policies, and processes. If an organization stress the work to achieve GE, one needs to understand the importance of the organizational culture change required and the impact it has on the culture, and one needs to address the most likely organizational culture gap arising when the GE gap does.

So, how do you decrease the gap and turn it into something valuable? The leaders are sitting on a goldmine of experiences and knowledge which the laggards are in

need of. How do you ensure that the leaders continue with the work and that the laggards are starting to move towards GE?

I am not proposing that the organizations should be centralized since the ownership for change is essential (44). However, when working globally, having something that unifies the organization is essential. According to the Change Formula, this need can be translated to distress for change, a shared vision, purpose and a strategy for the whole company (44). Conjoining this with the Strategy Palette, and that a company needs a strategy for its strategy, we can analyze the environment of GE work to reach the appropriate subset of strategy models to base the strategic work on.

Utilizing the Strategy Palette (47) as a framework to choose between which types of strategy approaches a GO should select from with regards to GE-work, the result from the interviews are crucial to understanding the operating environment and problem domain. The sense of urgency for a GE strategy is not extreme, and the organization will not stop existing tomorrow if the change does not happen overnight. GOs are, by necessity, large and therefore not likely to succumb to bankruptcy in short- to mid-term perspective. Taken together with the fact that the business should operate on the same market premise, a Renewal strategy approach is a poor choice of type in GE-work. The domain of the problem has been shown in theory, and affirmed in interviews, to be highly subjective, complex and viewed differently across cultures. This makes it very hard to predict the surrounding environment rendering the Classical and Visionary approaches unsuitable as they inherently cannot deal with such uncertainty and environments that are not forecastable. This leaves us with the Adaptive and Shaping strategy approaches, where the difference is the malleability. A discussion about the of malleability is merited since an organization can influence the elements of the strategy through the way one chooses to create the change in the formal and informal systems (74). As priorly stated, organizations are affected by external environments, for example, laws and external cultures. It is essential for GO to be able to include flexibility in the GE strategy since the markets overall are different and have different challenges from time to time. As stated above, when the different units experience challenges, GE seize to be prioritized. As the strategy does not have to change every day, we can exclude the Adaptive strategy approach. The Shaping strategy where the environment is unpredictable and malleable and where the organization can shape the regulations is therefore suitable. A Shaping strategy will help to share knowledge

through networks, but the different units are still responsible for the actual work and initiatives, as priorly stated as important.

Creating a strategy based on networks and ecosystems serves a GE strategy well. Based on the findings that a lack of knowledge is often restraining the development, the different initiatives to achieve GE, that is present around the organization are damaged. When creating a network, it is recommended that it should consist of people from different parts, levels, backgrounds, and sexes. This because the initiatives that have succeeded, have diversity within them. Creating a larger group of people working with these questions will create a more extensive amount of people being influenced. It will also create increased awareness and a feedback system from the organization to the network. Also confirmed by the Change Formula, the management has to create a feeling of distress for the change with the employees, and the organization has to create a context of participation in the change (44).

As addressed by the GWF (75) , organizations tend to focus on formal systems, and this is not a suggestion that the organizations should stop doing that. The Change Formula highlights the importance of including both structures and planning, as well as values and vision (44). I want to emphasize the importance of the formal systems since the policies, rules, and laws signal the importance of GE and create a frame of reference to the whole organization (74). It creates a reason for the managers to communicate the agenda and show support for the transformation. The formal systems will also help in decreasing the vertical and internal segregation, and division of power and resources (74). And as mentioned above, it is important not to forget the informal systems, which are harder to change. On that note, when one understands the present situation, differences, restraints, and structures of the organization, one can set a strategy on how to create change, also resulting in that one also has to follow up and track the progress.

Standard KPIs used are normally the number of women on different levels, women recruited, and women quitting. Through surveys, the organizations track how people experience the culture and leaders are measured on employee evaluations. As research shows, what is being measured is what people do, (although CZ has not shown any progress in what is measured regarding GE) which signals that there is room for improvements, for example increasing the individual responsibility. As

according to GWF (75), GE-change must be anchored on an individual level which is also reinforced in Michael Beer's Change Formula (44). By individualizing the rationale for GE to the managers responsible for implementing it, one deepens the why's so that managers can be more locally effective in their "whats" and "hows." Addressing a concrete example, recruitment, the interviewees addressed the need and work towards fail proof recruitment systems and advancement processes, where the specification for roles are clear and not open to biases. But even though employees at HR are educated in biases and present both male and female candidates, it is the hiring managers who have the final say. By measuring managers individually and ensuring that they are educated and understand their own purpose of GE, the statistics might improve. As countries in the world have different prerequisites, I also suggest that using indexes to track the development is more suitable than to highlight the absolute numbers. By indexing the statistics, one puts a premium on the relative change over time as opposed to the GE-values in absolute. This change in perception incentivizes the part of the organization that has fallen behind to continuously work with GE, despite the fact that they are laggards. In essence, it sends the message that the work towards change is the most important instead of putting a premium on past results and achievements. It thus removes barriers inherent in starting out from a position that is too far behind to be competitive.

Regarding the laggards, the interviews and research support that three important factors explain why they stay as laggards. Firstly, it is due to the lack of knowledge, not understanding why they should change since everything is "*going great without GE.*" Secondly, GE is not presented with a clear connection to the core business, and thirdly, which and the nature of how these initiatives are taken.

It might currently be that the knowledge is given to them in educational initiatives, often coming from corporate, and during the education, they can relate to what is being said in the room. However, as soon as the participants leave the room, it is not relatable to their environment and current situation. For example, if the education in CZ is about parental leave, or women working in the historically male-dominated industry, the response will be that it is not the way the country works. If one talks to someone in the US, it often comes down to conscious prioritization between a career or family life, since the social system is close to non-existent. So, there has to be a change in how the educational initiatives are formed. The educational initiatives

have to be relevant and adapted to the local market, for both genders and letting them find their own gains and actions. People often do not feel like they and their positions and situations are being understood. This does not eliminate the possibility to share knowledge across organizational boundaries. The feeling of losing power is also an essential factor contributing to the lack of progress; why should someone take that risk? The bigger picture, what is it that individuals can contribute to the world?

The second problem, as stated above, is the lack of a clear connection to core business values and bottom-line impact; essential metrics for managers across all levels of an organization. The understanding of how a more gender equal organization relates to business goals, margins, and the bottom line is essential to produce willingness in the layers of the organization where the actual decisions are being made. The connection obviously needs to be clearer through systems that show the effect on the bottom line, making it trackable. This can also help with creating quick wins, essential to increase the momentum of change. One idea, obtained through the interviews and aligned with the Change Formula, is to create a system that informs about the progress on a weekly basis, with an emphasis on celebrating wins (44). Including GE in present subjects of interests, normally not signified by equality, could also help lower the cost for the business. It would reduce time spent away from nominally "core work" thus also reducing the tendency of GE to become "another thing to talk about." By partnering with departments working with today higher valued areas, such as safety, might also increase the willingness to listen and learn. One can also integrate it into the work being done on ethics, and leadership programs.

Thirdly, the interviews and organizational analysis performed in this thesis indicate that initiatives are formed bottom-up or driven by HR. This is not necessarily bad, but when there is a lack in support from the management, it makes it harder to create a change, reaching out to the organization and get the resources that it might be needed. By ensuring that the managers understand and communicate the purpose and economic gains of GE, increasing the prioritization would lead to an increase in resources and possibilities and improvements.

Regarding the leaders, it is great that there are those who are further ahead on their journey towards GE. One risk factor is arising for the leaders when the GO work with GE in a decentralized manner is the loss of ownership. Company B went from seeing evident improvements when GE was driven as a centralized initiative, and the

stagnation when it became decentralized. One reason for the stagnation and loss of momentum is that the management moved on to other areas of prioritization when the ownership of the progress was unclear. There is a need for balance between individual purpose and ownership versus collective ownership in ensuring that the units continue to develop. According to the Change Formula, if the purpose is clear the stagnation of momentum will not happen as easily (44). One other potential risk when the gap in the organization increases and the ones doing good see other units not performing well is that they acknowledge that they have accomplished something and become good enough. What happens to the momentum then?

Aligned with the suggested strategy of creating networks, one can use the leaders to facilitate change, as a source of inspiration. What this will create is not only for the laggards getting organizational specific knowledge, it will also make the leaders reflect on their work and what they can do better. While the proposed networks increase the organizational learning, there is certainly room to learn additional lessons faster by incorporating other companies and industries, extending the networks outside the organization. The construction and the mining industry are not the only ones struggling with GE, and I propose that organizations can put more efforts into learning from each other.

In GO today, the diversity is more significant due to the globalization, an organization consists of more cultures. Due to new business needs, often related to trends in the society, for example, digitalization, the core business is in need of different academic backgrounds and competencies, also affecting diversity. It is often so that within the BU the diversity regarding cultures is less. Due to the natural differences existing within organizations, one has to create an organizational alignment around something different than the similarities, the purpose, what is it that the organization want to contribute to the world, what are we working towards? However, what happens to organizations that do not have a clear purpose? What happens to organizations that do not have a clear and accepted purpose and are actively aiming to increase the diversity even more? And what happens to individuals in organizations who do not have a purpose? More specifically, when the GO acts within male-dominated industries and wants to increase the GE. My suggestion is, as has been touched upon above, starting with the purpose. However, starting with the purpose in a broader context, for the business in general and after that start with the purpose connected to GE. Facilitating their employees work

towards their own purpose and getting them to accept the organizations' purpose. After that work, initiate the work forming a Shaping strategy and creating a distress and understanding for the change. Working with networks to continue to raise awareness and increase the number of initiatives that fit the organization. My recommendation is not to follow specific steps, because the specific need for one organization is often different compared to others, even though the goal is the same. Your overall purpose is often the one making your organization unique, and what will make it successful for the future.

Although the suggestion of not following specific steps, the framework presented in Figure 1 can serve as a way to analyze, understand and take actions based on the needs of your organization.

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### 5.1.2 Summary of the Discussion

- As the GE gap increases, so does the gap in the organizational culture, and to ensure positive performance outcomes the inclusive culture needs to be worked on
- Start by creating a shared purpose for the organization, managers, and employees
- Ensure that the whole organization understands the purpose of working with GE
- Help managers and employees create their own purpose for working with GE
- Organizations and managers need to understand that the gap exists, and the reason why, cultural differences and variations of the view of GE
- Understand that for countries where the GE is low and not seen as a priority. It will take more prominent efforts to make it a subject of interest.
- HQ needs to address the differences, show understanding, and adapt the way of addressing GE
- Ensure understanding the positive outcomes, business case and bottom-line results connected to GE
- Connect GE to the core business, incorporate in present systems within the organization, for example, safety and ethics
- Management need to express the importance of GE, both the top and local management
- The importance of purpose and values being collectively created, otherwise result in something "you have to do" or that "the HQ says so"
- The importance of hiring and develop women is crucial, but facilitate the change, since it is affected by the norms of societies

- Let more people own the questions, include men, not primarily HR or women
- When the culture within the company differs, makes it harder to work cross-functionally, it is increased when the gap increases, therefore essential to ensure that all onboard
- Decentralization is good, creates ownership and can increase motivation
- Ensure that the knowledge from the leading units is spread to the lagging units, to increase learning for both groups
- Employees need to be given the knowledge as well, not primarily managers
- Not only address knowledge around GE but also change management
- Can increase the progress of laggards by increasing the distress
- Creating a strategy based on shaping view, based on networks, cross organizational boundaries and different parts of the organization
- Ensuring that both formal and informal systems are addressed, formal systems are essential to decrease segregation, but the informal systems are harder to change and often not the top priority
- Create KPIs that are based on indexes
- Create a system for measuring individuals work and progress
- Have a fail-proof recruitment system and advancement system, not only for HR but for recruiting managers as well
- Create quick wins in the beginning, more frequent tracking or progress
- Ensure that leaders are still motivated to improve to avoid the sense of completion and loss of momentum
- Take learnings from other industries and sectors

## 6 Conclusions

*This chapter aims to answer the MRQ and Research Questions 1.1-1.3 based on the findings in the Result and Analysis and the Discussion chapters. This chapter also includes suggestion for further studies.*

### 6.1 Answers to Research Questions

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This section aims to answer the research questions for the thesis by summarizing the result and analysis and the discussion chapters with what relates to the Research Questions.

#### 6.1.1 Answer to Main Research Question

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*“How does companies address gender equality when acting in a global environment, where cultural differences exist?”*

Both Company A and B address GE in a decentralized manner, where every BU own the responsibility for actions. Initiatives and results which creates ownership are believed to increase the motivation. The GE work is facilitated through an international D&I strategy, which is visionary and includes critical areas to focus on. This leads to the units taking different actions or the same type of actions in different ways with varying success, best exemplified with the differences in the execution and maintenance of female networks. Working towards an inclusive culture is on the top of the agenda but, at the same time, seen as hard to achieve. The purpose for the GE work is created at HQ-level and not fully accepted by the rest of the organization. This non-acceptance is believed to be due to the knowledge gaps and that GE is not clearly connected to the business case. The organizations have also created actions regarding the formal systems, for example, evaluations, KPIs measured quarterly or yearly, formal recruitment policies and by including GE in leadership programs. They also ensure that the external environment is addressed by working to attract graduates, having GE advertisements, and investing in sponsorships for the younger generation. Regarding recruitment and talent development, they believe it is essential to mimic the organization with the pool of graduates in distributional terms, or to actively engage more women. In recruitment processes, at least one woman and one

man are presented, and it is up to the hiring manager to decide how to hire. Salaries are believed to be equal between genders. The same initial wage is given, and the increase is based on performance. It is not however a fail-proof system, as the higher up one looks in the organization, the bigger the gap is.

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### 6.1.2 Answer to Research Question 1.1

*“What type of challenges do global organizations experience when working with gender equality and how could they be addressed?”*

The GE gap is increasing within the organizations, which affects the culture and creates an organizational culture gap. The progress and result of different BUs vary within the organization. Local managers do not prioritize the work, there is a gap in the knowledge about GE and change management, employees do not understand the purpose and the culture of the company is not fully accepted.

HQ needs to address the different views of GE, knowledge, and cultural differences and show an understanding that ensure that communication, educational initiatives are adapted to the local market. The organization can ensure that knowledge is spread through the organization and use the leaders to influence the laggards. One also needs to understand that for some countries GE is not a natural part of the culture and that it will take more prominent efforts to make it a subject of interest. When addressing the subject one needs to increase the knowledge, both regarding GE and change management, for all, in different ways. To achieve the change, top and local management need to express the importance of GE and ensure that employees feel a distress for change, ensure quick wins and track the progress more frequently. It is believed that when the work is connecting to the bottom-line results, exemplification and positive outcomes understood, the managers will take the time and prioritize the work.

The culture of the company, which today is not coherent with an increasing gap, can be addressed by a collectively created purpose for the organization by the individuals within it, as they do not always understand the purpose of GE and instead create their own. This is crucial since GE affects the culture, creating a change just by initializing the GE work.

As of today, the recruitment and advancement system is not fail-proof, which should be worked on by the hiring managers and HR, to ensure that they do not contribute to the segregation and enforce destructive norms. On that note, to fully create change, the GE work should be owned by more people within the organization, not only HR or the women, which also serves the purpose of increasing the learning and improving prioritization.

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### 6.1.3 Answer to Research Question 1.2

*“How can global organizations create an international gender equality strategy?”*

The findings of the thesis emphasize the need for a Shaping strategy approach, based on building an ecosystem and network of employees. The KPIs should be extended to include indexes, measure individuals work and progress and measured more frequently. The strategy should include a clear purpose accepted by the local management and ensure quick wins. The strategy should facilitate the cooperation between other areas already present in the company, for example, safety and ethics.

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### 6.1.4 Answer to Research Question 1.3

*“How does the gender equality work differ among countries in Company A?”*

The work clearly differs among the countries and it is affected by the history, which affects the culture and norms. CZ is mostly defined by their grass-roots movements, and there is a lack of management support. In the UK, it is managed as a business case, more top-down. In the US, as is the case in CZ, there exists grass-roots initiatives where mostly women own the question. In both CZ and the US, women generally do not work on-site. In SE, the work is done both top-down and bottom-up in a structured manner, and the larger cities are performing better, benefited by a support from the societal system which contributes to the work.

## 6.2 Suggestions for Further Studies

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This section does not only aim to suggest further studies but also to critically view the process and validation of the method how it affects the findings.

First, it would be interesting to increase the number of interviewees and companies, both to extend the validity of the results and to get more views on the subject. The recommendation is to extend the interviewees to individuals at more levels within the organizations, not only the ones with knowledge within the area. This might have affected the result since their understanding of the subjects deepens the discussions.

Secondly, a more thorough analysis of the different initiatives in different BUs would lead to a greater understanding of what and why some have succeeded, and others failed, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Lastly, one could extend the research to look at other cultural change initiatives, to compare the process and progress and then apply best practices to the cultural work related to achieving GE. And, of course, to implement the findings and to investigate the result of the actions.

## 7 Implications

*Implications for the industrial and the academic world will be presented, the industrial implications are defined as findings that could be of practical use, and the academic implications are for theoretical use.*

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### 7.1 Industrial Implications

The finding of the thesis shows that the industry should ensure that the purpose of the GE work exists for both individuals as well as for organizations. The management team need to understand the importance so that they can facilitate grass-roots movements. The industry should also ensure that individuals are included at different levels, roles, and gender. When creating a GE strategy, the research implies that it should be of a shaping view, creating ecosystems and networks. Organizations could also explore how GE can be included in other areas affecting the culture of the company to be able to find synergies between different initiatives. A GO should ensure that the knowledge and experience is shared within the organization between units and individuals in order to ensure value maximization of money spent. Regarding the culture differences of the people within the organization, working cross-functionally should be facilitated to better understand those differences and how to work efficiently. The formal factors, e.g. recruitment and talent development, needs more work then what one might expect.

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### 7.2 Academic Implications

The similarities between GE-specific models, selected change-models and cultural descriptive models indicate that there is possible to amalgamate insights from different academic fields more coherently. Utilizing the definition of gender and confirming the subjective nature of GE-issues leads to strategy models and cultural descriptions that - independent of GE work - confirm and strengthens the key takeaways from each model. The effect of organizations creating a purpose for the individuals and organizations should be acknowledged, investigated and included. The research shows that there are overlapping interests and areas of interest between academia and the industry, which is something that can be further developed. The

need to connect the work towards GE to actual figures is today requested from the industry, which is something that academia could contribute to.

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## 9.1 Appendix A: GLOBE Project Data

Table 4: The result from the GLOBE Project 2004, showing both the practice scores and values score for all nine categories (48)

	<b>CZ</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>UK</b>	<b>US</b>
Performance orientation - Practice	4,11	3,72	4,08	4,25
Performance orientation - Value	2,35	5,80	5,90	6,14
Assertiveness - Practice	3,69	3,38	4,15	4,55
Assertiveness -Value	4,14	3,61	3,70	4,32
Future orientation - Practice	3,63	4,39	4,28	4,15
Future orientation - Value	2,95	4,89	5,06	5,31
Humane orientation - Practice	4,17	4,10	3,72	4,17
Humane orientation - Value	3,39	5,65	5,43	5,53
Institutional collectivism - Practice	3,60	5,22	4,27	4,20
Institutional collectivism - Value	3,85	3,94	4,31	4,17
In-group collectivism - Practice	3,18	3,66	4,08	4,25
In-group collectivism - Value	4,06	6,04	5,55	5,77
Gender egalitarianism - Practice	3,79	3,84	3,67	3,34
Gender egalitarianism - Value	3,78	5,15	5,17	5,06
Power distance - Practice	3,59	4,85	5,15	4,88
Power distance - Value	4,35	2,70	2,80	2,85
Uncertainty avoidance - Practice	4,44	5,32	4,65	4,15
Uncertainty avoidance - Value	3,64	3,60	4,11	4,00

## 9.2 Appendix B: Email sent to Interviewees Company A

### 9.2.1 First Email Sent

---

Dear XX,

Hope everything is well with you.

I hope you have seen the mail about me writing my master thesis for Company A; the goal is to create a global gender equality strategy for you.

I would love to interview you, if it possible, I´m available, either:

- 
- 

All CET-time

The interview should take about 1h and cover the subjects:

- Company A´s D&I strategy
- Your view on Company A´s work
- Gender equality in the US
- What you would like to see in the strategy
- What would be beneficial to you?

Best regards,

Maria Norberg

### 9.2.2 Second E-mail Sent

---

Dear XX,

I´m really looking forward to our interview tomorrow! Please read through the message below prior to the interview.

.....

Here is a brief agenda for the interview:

- Introduction of:
  - You and I
  - The thesis
  - The purpose of the thesis
  - If you have any questions
  - The interview
    - Background: Structure and Ethics
- Focus areas -
  - Company A's D&I strategy
  - Your view on Company A's work regarding GE
  - Gender equality in your country
  - What you would like to see in the strategy
  - What would be beneficial to you?
  - Cross-cultural management
- Questions

For your information, if you want to, the interview will be anonymous for both you and Company A, you will be given the opportunity to read the thesis prior to it being published and withdraw your participation.

It will help if you before the interview think of concrete examples of how you and Company A has worked with gender equality. Also, if you have experience in working with gender equality questions in an international setting, it would be helpful if you reflect on this as well.

Best regards,  
Maria Norberg

## 9.3 Appendix C: Email sent to Interviewees Company B

### 9.3.1 First Email Sent

---

Dear XX,  
Hope all is well with you!  
We met when I was a participant in FLE this autumn.

At the moment, I am writing my master thesis with the purpose to develop an international gender equality strategy that strikes off the UN's 2030 goal number five. After some googling, it became clear to me that Company B has worked on it and I would very much like to interview someone of you who have work with gender equality or D&I. Do you have any tips on who it could be?  
Would really really appreciate if it is possible.

Best regards,  
Maria Norberg

### 9.3.2 Second Email Sent

---

Hi again,  
I'm really looking forward to our interview tomorrow! Please read through the message below prior to the interview.

.....

Here is a brief agenda for the interview:

- Introduction of:
  - You and I
  - The thesis
    - The purpose of the thesis
  - If you have any questions
- The interview
  - Background: Structure and Ethics
  - Focus areas
    - Gender Equality

- SDGs
- Cross-cultural management
- Questions

For your information, if you want to, the interview will be anonymous for both you and your organization, you will be given the opportunity to read the thesis prior to it being published and withdraw your participation.

It will help if you before the interview think of concrete examples of how you and your organization has worked with gender equality, and if you have worked with the SDGs. Also, if you have experience in working with gender equality questions in an international setting, it would be helpful if you reflect on this as well.

.....

Best regards,  
Maria Norberg

## 9.4 Appendix D: Main areas covered in the Interviews

### Focus areas

- Company A/B's D&I strategy
- Your view on Company A/B's work regarding GE
- Gender equality in from your global experience
- GE initiatives that have been successful and not so successful
- Strategy - how and what to include?
- Cross-cultural management, variations between countries
- Questions

Depending on the interviewee, follow-up questions were asked depending on the interviewees' answers and questions.

