



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Attitudes towards women's career advancement in Latin America: The moderating impact of perceived company international proactiveness

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Abstract

While companies operating in Latin America have witnessed increased female leadership participation, the region remains characterized by traditional gender role attitudes. This juxtaposition of traditional machismo attitudes towards women along with progress in women's leadership participation make this setting ideal for examining a topic of continued worldwide debate: women's career advancement. This study examines attitudes towards the career advancement of women—a historically marginalized group in Latin America. Building on the extant literature, we test the negative association between traditional gender role orientations and attitudes towards women's career advancement, both directly and via a mediated relationship through acceptance of women in the workplace. We then theoretically and empirically extend this literature by examining an important context-related moderator—a company's international proactiveness—which we contend serves as a mechanism for keeping traditional machismo attitudes from manifesting. We examine these relationships within a sample of 973 respondents within the Latin American countries of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela. Our findings support our hypotheses and provide practical insight into the important, yet generally not considered effects of a company's internationalization efforts on attitudes towards the career advancement of women.

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INTRODUCTION

Women are increasingly reaching organizational leadership positions (Adler, 2002; Catalyst, 2015), a phenomenon which is particularly notable in emerging markets such as those in Latin America, where the percentage of women in senior management is growing (Grant Thornton, 2013, 2014) in spite of patriarchal historical and cultural forces that marginalize women (Abramo & Valenzuela, 2005; Muller & Rowell, 1997). We suggest that one potential explanation for this may stem from the international strategies firms have developed in tandem with rapid globalization within the region, strategies which may serve as a mechanism to keep traditional machismo attitudes in check. Researchers have emphasized gendered beliefs regarding appropriate organizational roles when explaining differences in career outcomes for men and women (Levy et al., 2015; Paustian-Underdahl, Walker, & Woehr, 2014; Santacreu-Vasut, Shenkar, & Shoham, 2014). Such beliefs shape attitudes towards women's career advancement which affect not only promotion decisions per se but also social resources that support professional development through mentoring, training, special projects, or international and cross-functional assignments (Higgins & Thomas, 2001; Reicher, Haslam, & Hopkins, 2005; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001). While gender role orientation in organizations is a strong predictor of attitudes towards women's career advancement (e.g., Hoober, Wayne, & Lemmon, 2009), actual displayed leadership behaviors frequently differ from beliefs (Eagly, & Karau, 2002). This suggests that contextual factors moderate the relationship between

gender role orientation and attitudes towards women's career advancement (Newburry, Belkin, & Ansari, 2008; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). In a similar vein to studies examining the interaction of gender and transnational managerial work (e.g., Hearn et al., 2008), we suggest that company internationalization is one such contextual factor. We theoretically extend prior research by arguing that company internationalization may alter the relationship between traditional gender role orientations and attitudes towards women's career advancement. Particularly in emerging markets, employees who perceive their organization's internationalization to be strategically important may suppress traditionalist gender role orientations and display behaviors and attitudes that are congruent with global standards.

We begin our theorizing from a basic framework examining the relationships between individual-level gender role orientations, acceptance of women as colleagues and supervisors, and attitudes towards women's career advancement in Latin America. While our theory is not necessarily specific to this context and may have much broader applicability, we believe that Latin America is appropriate for examining our model given the region's historical context with respect to both marginalization of women and recent internationalization trends. These issues have created meaningful differences between companies with respect to both gender roles and internationalization, allowing us to examine our hypothesized moderating effect of perceived company international proactiveness on the relationship between gender role orientation and attitudes towards women's

career advancement. Prior research has demonstrated that in specific situations, women can succeed in industries and occupations in which they are under-represented (e.g., Cohen, Broschak, & Haveman, 1998; Dencker, 2008), suggesting that even in difficult contexts, there is possible variation in the abilities of women to achieve leadership positions. Similarly, over the last decade, a significant increase in women in leadership positions in Latin America (Grant Thornton, 2013) has occurred in a context historically characterized by low female workplace participation. French and James (1997) described early twentieth century perceptions of female employment in Latin American factories in terms of threats to working women's virtue and the survival of the family. Increases in female employment during the 1990s did not lead to significant changes in women in leadership positions, as women frequently engaged in temporary or informal jobs (Beneria, 2001). Researchers have explained the historically low female workforce participation in Latin America as resulting from a legacy of traditionalist gender roles (e.g., Newburry, Gardberg & Sanchez, 2014). In particular, 'machismo' refers to shared beliefs that emphasize male dominance and has been perceived by Latin American women as an obstacle to their career advancement (Cárdenas et al., 2014; Maxfield, 2005).

More recently, the number of women that have moved up career ladders and assumed leadership positions has increased. In 2012, women occupied 27% of senior management positions in Peru, 23% in Brazil, 23% in Mexico and 18% in Argentina (Grant Thornton, 2013). This suggests that a significant amount of variance may exist with respect to our focus on gender role orientation. However, stronger female participation in senior management is not matched by changes in beliefs regarding gender egalitarianism, where Latin American countries continue to score lower than European or North American countries (House et al., 2004; Olivas-Lujan et al., 2009). Hence in addition to gender role orientation, other factors are needed to more fully explain women's career advancement. We argue that the relationship of an individual's gender role orientation with their attitudes towards women's career advancement is attenuated by the perceived importance of his or her employer organization's exposure and openness to global management practices. Research on organizational socialization suggests that an organization's employees acquire and come to appreciate the

attitudes, behavior, and knowledge needed to participate as an organizational member (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1980). As a socializing agent, an organization influences an individual's learning (Schein, & Ott, 1962). To the extent that individuals from more traditional cultures perceive their employer's international activities to be important, they may become more open to work contexts characterized by stronger female participation and women's access to hierarchical positions.

By examining the above issues, our study helps advance the literature on attitudes towards women's career advancement by embedding individual gender role orientation and acceptance of women in the workplace in an organizational context of particular importance in a global business environment. We go beyond simple demographic differences based on gender to examine a gender belief system composed of the above variables and how they interact with a company's internationalization strategy to identify specific conditions under which relationships stemming from prior literature regarding gender role orientation and attitudes towards women's career advancement are either suppressed or become more relevant. As such, we build upon the perceptions of gender leadership contexts examined within Paus-tian-Underdahl et al. (2014). More specifically, the interaction of gender with strategic contexts of a firm is relatively understudied. Given that a major strategic emphasis of firms in a globalizing world concerns their internationalization strategies (e.g., Contractor, Kundu, & Hsu, 2003; Kirka et al., 2011; Lu & Beamish, 2004), this appears to be an appropriate strategic context to examine.

While we believe our primarily theoretical contribution relates to the moderating impact of international proactiveness strategies on relationships between gender role orientation, acceptance of women in the workplace and attitudes towards women's career advancement, an additional contribution concerns the impact of international strategies within a respondent's home country. Most research focuses on the impact of internationalization on foreign operations and performance (e.g., Contractor, Kundu, & Hsu, 2003), and how MNCs enact changes in the host countries where they operate (e.g., Meyer & Sinani, 2009). Few studies examine the impact of internationalization on perceptions of employees in their home country. By doing so, we provide insights for this literature by demonstrating the role of MNCs as

agents of change from the perspectives of local employees where they operate, regardless of the HQ location of the firm.

This article is structured as follows. We first briefly review the theoretical streams contributing to our conceptual model as presented in Figure 1, concurrent with the formulation of hypotheses predicting attitudes toward women's career advancement. We then elaborate on the methodology employed to test our hypotheses, which we examine using a first-stage moderated mediation model. Finally, a discussion of the results and some concluding comments are provided.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Gender Role Orientation

Research indicates that access to leadership positions differs between men and women, not so much for biological differences, but mainly because of gendered beliefs regarding men's and women's roles in organizations and leadership (e.g., Ely & Thomas, 2001; Hultin & Szulkin, 1999; Kent & Moss, 1994; Powell & Butterfield, 1994). Such beliefs condition perceptions of other people's behaviors. For example, Barreto and Ellemers (2013) reviewed the adverse effects on hiring decisions, promotion opportunities, salary negotiations, and performance evaluations when women display "counter-stereotypical" agentic leadership behaviors.

Gender role orientation refers to individuals' stereotypical beliefs regarding the roles that men and women should fulfill at work and at home (Ayca, 2004; Judge & Livingston, 2008). A significant body of literature addresses the impact of gender role orientation on outcomes relevant to

women's careers (e.g., Kanter, 1978; Parboteeah, Hoegl, & Cullen, 2008; Powell, Butterfield, & Parent, 2002). Gender role theory (Bem, 1993; Gutek, Searle & Klepa, 1991) and social role theory (Eagly, 1987) suggest that women are more strongly identified with fulfilling the family role than men. Individuals who have a traditional gender role orientation believe that public roles related to work and providing income for the family correspond to men, whereas women should fulfill the private, family role. In fulfilling traditional gender roles, women are expected to engage in socially facilitative behaviors, while men engage in task-oriented behaviors (Eagly & Karau, 1991). By contrast, individuals who have an egalitarian gender role orientation believe that the separation of roles to be fulfilled by women or men is less strict, and that both men and women can engage in work and family roles (Fletcher & Bailyn, 2005). While an egalitarian gender role orientation suggests a certain interchangeability between men and women, a traditional gender role orientation translates into prescriptive gender norms that establish what behaviors are appropriate for men and women and may lead to negative outcomes for individuals who violate such norms.

Research indicates that more traditional gender role orientations prevail in most Latin American countries (House et al., 2004; Olivas-Lujan et al., 2009; Ruiz-Gutierrez et al., 2012) and that such beliefs are associated with stark contrasts in career outcomes for women and men. For example, Hausmann, Tyson, & Zahidi (2011) reported that except for Costa Rica, all Latin American countries included in their study were among the bottom 41 nations (out of 131 examined) in terms of gender-based wage equality. Similarly, Newbury et al. (2014) provided evidence of lower gender egalitarianism in Latin

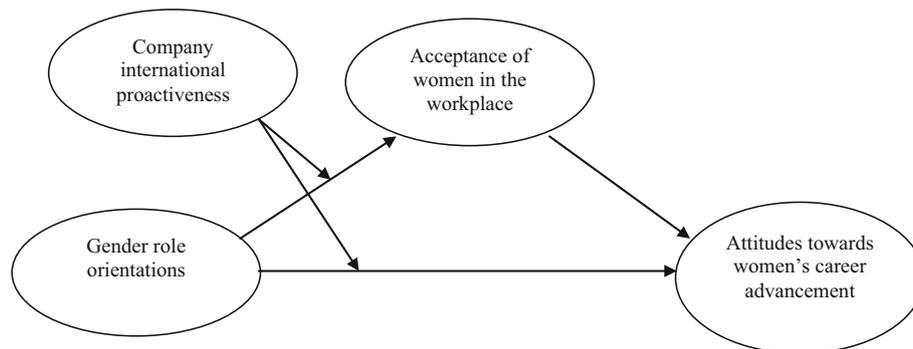


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of the study.

America compared to the major developed countries with companies investing in the region.

Women's career advancement is particularly susceptible to the effects of the prescriptive gender norms associated with traditional gender role orientations, as success in managerial positions and consideration of women to be promoted into such positions typically require behaviors that are considered inappropriate (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Schein, 2001). Liking and the perception of personal qualities are important drivers of hiring and career advancement decisions (Heilman et al., 2004), and also explain positive bias in performance evaluations towards liked individuals (Sutton et al., 2013). These findings suggest that women who display agentic behavior in work contexts where decision-makers have traditional gender role orientations risk negative attitudes towards their career advancement. Negative attitudes towards their career advancement may be associated with being disliked or perceived inadequately because their behavior is considered inappropriate.

While relationships such as these have been studied extensively in developed countries, their applicability in emerging market contexts is less well established. Given the different economic and social conditions of these markets, combined with their rapid evolution, assuming such relationships hold may be dangerous. Additionally, as noted in the introduction to this manuscript, Latin America has experienced a notable increase in women in leadership positions in recent years (Grant Thornton, 2013) while many elements of the "machismo" culture still remain, suggesting that previous rationale may not apply in this region. As such, while not directly hypothesizing regarding the role of gender role orientation in influencing attitudes towards women's career advancement, we nonetheless believe this worthy of additional empirical examination while also using it as a base for our subsequent hypotheses.

Perceived Company International Proactiveness

Researchers increasingly call for consideration of the organizational context in which women's careers develop in order to understand how perceptions of organizational realities *interact* with gendered beliefs (Ellemers et al., 2012; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014; Vecchio, 2002). One research stream has focused on the relationship between the demographic composition of leadership teams and women's career outcomes (e.g., George & Chatopadhyay, 2002; McGinn & Milkman, 2013) or

women's behavior in promoting other women to leadership positions (e.g., Duguid, 2011; Ely, 1994). Another stream has considered organizational states, such as profitability or crisis, as a moderator of the relationship between gendered beliefs and women's career outcomes. For example, women are more likely to be promoted into leadership positions at companies that have witnessed extended periods of poor share price performance (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007) as they are believed to be better people managers and to handle emotions associated with poor performance better (Ryan et al., 2011). Likewise, women are considered more suitable candidates for leadership positions in organizations that are in crisis (Haslam & Ryan, 2008) or that are under competitive threat (Brown, Diekmann, & Schneider, 2011) for similar reasons. These research streams suggest that contextual conditions moderate the association between gendered beliefs and attitudes towards women's career advancement.

Organizational strategies are less explored as potential moderators of the relation between gender role orientations and outcomes relevant to women's career advancement. Among the exceptions is a study by Dezsó and Ross (2012), who found that the pursuit of an innovation strategy interacted with female top management participation in explaining variance in performance. However, to our knowledge, no studies have examined how the effects of an individual's gender role orientation on perceptions of women's advancement can be moderated by firm strategies as a form of organizational context (particularly with respect to international activities), and by extension, the influence of these strategies in promoting outside practices with respect to gender roles. In the case of emerging markets where traditionalist gender role orientations prevail—such as those in Latin America—we posit that an organization's strategy with respect to internationalization could be especially likely to moderate the effects of gender role orientation on women's career-related outcomes. Proactiveness on international markets refers to "the anticipation of future problems, needs, and changes related to international markets, and thus as comprehension of their significance" (Nummela, Saarenketo, & Puumalainen, 2004: 55). We suggest that this strategy will impact the relationship between gender role orientation and perceptions regarding women's career advancement through several mechanisms.

First, we expect that *exposure* will be important in this process. When a firm from a traditionalist



country becomes more interconnected with the global economy, its members are exposed to different and evolving expectations regarding the role of women in society in general and the workplace in particular (see Bullough et al., 2012). As the firm becomes more international, its employees are more likely to interact with female employees of foreign companies, which may ultimately change their own views as well as strengthen the ties between gender role orientation and women's career advancement perceptions. We note that this strengthening of the relationship may occur even if the international proactiveness perceptions are not true, since merely perceiving that a company has a more international strategy should encourage greater awareness among employees of international standards regarding women's organizational roles.

A second mechanism relates to *firm adoption of international practices*, often through mimetic isomorphism (e.g., Scott, 1995) of global competitors. While the case of Japan and dual perspectives regarding the roles of foreign versus domestic women (see e.g., Napier & Taylor, 2002) demonstrates that changes to the local culture are not guaranteed, nonetheless, when firms have international goals, they may be more likely to incorporate the practices of established international firms into their operations. Siegel, Pyun and Cheon (2013) demonstrated that in South Korea, foreign multinational firms were more likely to hire women than local firms. However, it could easily be conjectured that among local firms, employees of those with foreign operations would be more likely to take cues from their multinational competitors. Over time, these employees learn that in order to perform individually and to contribute to organizational goals, they need to adjust to global expectations. Thus on a broader level, Fleury and Fleury (2011: 298) noted that successful Brazilian multinational firms have "broken with the cultural heritage" and traditions that constrain local Brazilian firms, allowing them to develop practices and competencies closer to global norms. To the extent that perceived international proactiveness is associated with firm adoption of international practices, it should strengthen the ties between gender role orientation and women's career advancement perceptions.

Occurring alongside the mechanisms described above may be the recognition that women represent an untapped source of human capital. Particularly in emerging market settings, trained managerial talent is in short supply, with Brazil and Peru from our

sample among the global top five countries having difficulties filling jobs according to the latest ManpowerGroup (2015) Talent Shortage Survey. Not taking advantage of all potential employees may leave emerging market firms more vulnerable. Involvement in international operations may lead to greater recognition of this untapped resource to effectively compete, while also serving to strengthen the gender role orientation-perceptions regarding women's career advancement relationship.

A third mechanism relates to organizational *socialization*. Likewise, in the same way that organizations need to adapt their career-related management practices to signal that they are prepared to meet global expectations regarding women in the workplace (Metcalf, 2007; Newbury et al., 2008), through ongoing organizational socialization (Schein & Ott, 1962; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), internationally proactive organizations develop the desired or necessary attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge needed to pursue this strategy (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Feldman, 1989; Jones, 1986). Effective organizational socialization tactics may help to overcome incongruence between employees' personal beliefs and organizational norms to the extent that socialization helps employees understand what is required to be successful and how they should behave to obtain rewards (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Taken together, we contend that organizations convey the importance of international proactiveness to their employees through ongoing socialization. To the extent that employees perceive their organization's internationalization to be important, they may either consciously or unconsciously suppress their individual beliefs regarding gender roles which should moderate their effect on acceptance of women in the workplace and attitudes towards women's career advancement. Given that global standards generally suggest more egalitarian standards towards gender roles, company efforts to socialize employees towards an international proactiveness strategy should strengthen the gender role orientation-attitudes towards women's career advancement relationship. Overall, the above mechanisms lead us to hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1: Individual-level perception of company's international proactiveness will positively moderate the relationship between traditional gender role orientation and attitudes towards women's career advancement.

Acceptance of Women in the Workplace

Ely and Thomas (2001) found that even people who consciously claimed to favor gender equality subscribed implicitly to stereotypes that biased their perceptions of women in the workplace. This suggests that, in addition to the association between gender role orientation and attitudes towards women's career advancement, the outcomes of individual and context specific psychological processes help shape such attitudes as well. Social identity theory provides insight into such processes as it posits that individuals distinguish between in-groups and out-groups using cognitively accessible and enduring differences between members of an organization or team, such as gender (Hogg & Terry, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). By valuing individuals who are similar to themselves, members of an in-group not only enhance their self-esteem (Tajfel, 1981), but they also signal their expectations regarding competence and knowledge required to achieve goals (Correll, Benard, & Paik, 2007). This perceived similarity influences important behaviors such as knowledge sharing (Makela, Kalla, & Piekkari, 2007). In the context of historically male-dominated organizations, social identity theory suggests that men—as members of the in-group—will have more positive evaluations of the competence of other men. By contrast, women who access high status positions evaluate other women less positively and align themselves with men as a means to avoid threats to their own identity/success (Derks et al., 2011; Duguid, 2011). All of this suggests an ingrained bias against accepting women in the workplace in Latin America. As such, we expect such acceptance is partially informed by an individual's gender role orientation to the extent that changes in gender role orientation suggest overcoming traditional in-group/out-group associations in the workplace. Being able to accommodate women in roles traditionally occupied by men would lead to broader acceptance of women in the workforce.

Nonetheless, women in Latin America increasingly achieve equal or better educational levels than men (ECLAC, 2014) and often occupy positions traditionally held by men (Ñopo, 2012), indicating a greater acceptance of women. From a social identity perspective, higher acceptance levels of women in the workplace suggest a decrease in the salience of gender as the basis for in-group identification. Such acceptance is relevant to attitudes regarding women's career advancement because promotions typically involve greater power and responsibilities (cf. Ragins

& Sundstrom, 1990: 273). Acceptance by superiors is important to obtaining their support to participate in organizational career development initiatives (Hoober, Lemmon & Wayne, 2014). Subordinates' and peers' acceptance is related with recognition of expertise, allows for greater influence in decision-making processes, creates more opportunities to perform, and increases the likelihood of being assigned informal leadership roles in teams (Bunderson, 2003; Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999). Performance management and compensation practices that involve peer-to-peer evaluations further highlight the importance of acceptance to career advancement (DiTomaso et al., 2007). Taken together, we propose that decision-makers' acceptance of female colleagues is positively associated with the extent to which they have positive attitudes regarding women's career advancement. Given that acceptance implies recognition of expertise and the provision of support in career development, it may be a necessary prerequisite towards improving attitudes towards women's career advancement. Combined with the relationship between gender role orientation and acceptance of women noted earlier, we expect acceptance of women to serve as a partial mediator in the relationship between gender role orientation and attitudes towards women's career advancement.

While relationships such as these may have been studied extensively in developed countries, their applicability in emerging market contexts is less established and is worthy of examination. Particularly within Latin America, changes in the prevalence of women in the workforce accompanied by changes in the educational status of women suggest that these relationships are worthy of reexamination in this context. Prior research has established that gender relationships may differ under conditions of changing firm performance (e.g., Ryan et al., 2011) or when firms face differing competitive dynamics (Brown, Diekmann, & Schneider, 2011). While these studies focused on the firm level, changes within the overall Latin American region as a whole towards one where the overall economic background has improved, while competition has also increased, also support a reexamination of these relationships under this new reality. Thus we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 2: An individual's acceptance of women in the workplace will partially mediate the relationship between traditional gender role orientation and attitudes towards women's career advancement.



Similar to the logic in our first moderating hypothesis above, it is suggested here that the perceived international proactiveness of a company may moderate the relationship between traditional gender role orientation and acceptance of women in the workplace. First, internationalization may expose organizational members to more global expectations regarding the role of women in society in general and the workplace in particular (Bullough et al., 2012), which may strengthen the tie between gender role orientation and acceptance of women in the workplace. Second, perceived international proactiveness may lead to the perception that their firms will adopt practices that mimic those of international firms, which are more accepting of women, which could again strengthen the relationship between gender role orientation and acceptance of women. Third, given employers' role in the socialization of their employees (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1980), individuals who perceive that their companies pursue internationalization strategies that expose the organization to global norms regarding women's workplace advancement may have stronger associations between gender role orientation and acceptance of women. Overall, these arguments suggest:

Hypothesis 3: Individual-level perception of company international proactiveness will positively moderate the relationship between traditional gender role orientation and acceptance of women in the workplace.

METHODS

Study Design and Sample

We developed a questionnaire to test our hypotheses in the context of Latin America, where despite recent advancements in women's leadership participation—similar to other emerging markets—the advancement of women in the workforce remains an important issue (see, e.g., Bullough et al., 2012). Professors fluent in English, Spanish and Portuguese translated the questionnaire from English into either Spanish or Portuguese, respectively, and then back-translated it into English (cf. Brislin, 1980). Moreover, as variations in Spanish usage exist across Latin America, we took care to ensure that the Spanish used was consistent with the country where the questionnaire would be administered. The questionnaire was designed to measure individual perceptions regarding various gender issues, company and

individual globalization capabilities, career opportunities and company performance, along with collecting basic demographic information on the respondents. It was distributed at business schools in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela in the period between May 2011 and October 2012 by professors teaching in each of these host country environments. We targeted Executive and Professional MBA students for our sample since they are employed full-time, have several years of work experience, and are focused on their career progress. Respondents with less than two years of experience were eliminated from the sample and respondents typically occupied middle management positions. Additionally, we deleted the small number of respondents whose home country differed from the country where their business school was located. According to Bello et al. (2009), this sample choice is appropriate in our research setting for several reasons. First, our study satisfies the internal validity criteria associated with fundamental research topics set by Bello et al. (2009) as basic issues regarding individual attitudes towards gender are examined. Second, because our sample respondents are employed full-time and were responding regarding their workplace environments, Bello et al.'s (2009) external validity criteria associated with proximate processes and outcomes is also satisfied. Moreover, given that these managers enrolled in their respective educational programs with the goal of advancing their careers, their perceptions regarding career advancement might be particularly worthy of study given their heightened focus on career issues.

We administered a paper-based questionnaire at all locations except Argentina, Ecuador and part of Mexico where we relied on a web-based survey. The usage of an online method in these three settings did not appear to materially impact responses. Respondents could choose to remain anonymous and were assured that their responses would be treated confidentially. Response rates ranged from 53.7% to 95.7%. Table 1 presents basic respondent demographic characteristics with respect to age, gender, education, and employment level.

Levels of Analysis

Past studies suggest that values differ among Latin American countries, although some of the evidence shows mixed results. For example, Lenartowicz and Johnson (2003) found evidence that values differ

Table 1 Sample descriptive statistics

Variable	Categories	Total sample	Argentina	Bolivia	Brazil	Chile	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Ecuador	Mexico	Panama	Peru	Venezuela
Age	Under 25	10.05%	1.20%	22.20%	15.10%	.00%	15.60%	9.10%	6.60%	9.60%	8.30%	3.70%	13.80%
	25-35	64.76%	82.60%	67.70%	59.30%	61.50%	48.40%	90.90%	65.90%	56.10%	75.00%	72.90%	71.30%
	36-45	19.83%	15.10%	9.10%	24.40%	28.20%	21.90%	.00%	23.10%	26.40%	16.70%	16.80%	11.50%
	46-60	5.36%	1.20%	1.00%	1.20%	10.30%	14.10%	.00%	4.40%	7.90%	.00%	6.50%	3.40%
Gender	Male	59.19%	81.40%	56.40%	53.50%	64.10%	71.90%	45.50%	62.60%	55.40%	41.70%	71.00%	34.50%
	Female	40.81%	18.60%	43.60%	46.50%	35.90%	28.10%	54.50%	37.40%	44.60%	58.30%	29.00%	65.50%
Education	High School	.43%	.00%	.00%	1.20%	2.90%	3.10%	.00%	.00%	.00%	.00%	.00%	.00%
	Vocat.	1.29%	.00%	.00%	4.70%	11.40%	.00%	.00%	.00%	.00%	.00%	3.80%	.00%
	School	22.80%	9.40%	1.00%	29.10%	51.40%	6.30%	.00%	9.30%	1.10%	8.30%	70.20%	87.40%
Employment level	Some College	52.31%	55.30%	52.50%	59.30%	25.70%	53.10%	22.70%	72.10%	72.90%	16.70%	25.00%	12.60%
	Bachelors	22.46%	32.90%	45.50%	4.70%	2.90%	37.50%	77.30%	18.60%	26.10%	75.00%	.00%	.00%
	Masters	.76%	2.40%	1.00%	1.20%	5.70%	.00%	.00%	.00%	.00%	.00%	1.00%	.00%
	Doctorate	34.84%	4.70%	42.40%	59.30%	28.20%	39.10%	9.10%	28.60%	43.20%	58.30%	24.30%	27.60%
	Indiv. Contributor	21.05%	37.20%	12.10%	17.40%	25.60%	15.60%	22.70%	17.60%	17.10%	25.00%	26.20%	29.90%
Sample size	Lower Mgt.	29.59%	47.70%	28.30%	17.40%	33.30%	23.40%	50.00%	36.30%	22.10%	8.30%	40.20%	29.90%
	Middle Mgt.	14.49%	10.50%	17.20%	5.80%	12.80%	21.90%	18.20%	17.60%	17.50%	8.30%	9.30%	12.60%
	Upper Mgt.	973	86	99	86	39	64	22	91	280	12	107	87
Response rate		84.0%	74.1%	88.4%	53.7%	76.5%	85.0%	95.7%	77.8%	93.0%	60.0%	87.1%	92.6%

among the 12 Latin American countries examined in their study, although they did find evidence that values representing group interests (including equality in their study) varied less than those related to individual interests. More directly related to our topic area, Brannen, Piekkari and Tietze (2014) and Santacreu-Vasut et al. (2014) noted differences in the careers of women in countries using languages with gender-marking versus those that do not. By contrast, critiques of cross-cultural research (e.g., Gelfand, Nishii, & Raver, 2006) suggest that individual level beliefs and attitudes may diverge from general cultural traits and outweigh such traits in decision-making in the workplace. Given this past mixed evidence, we felt it prudent to test for potential differences between the countries comprised in our sample with regard to cultural traits and general beliefs regarding women in the workplace using multilevel data analysis techniques. However, the data did not cluster meaningfully at the country level of analysis. The ICC(1) value was .017, providing insufficient evidence of a clustering effect at the country level. As a result, we analyzed the antecedents of attitudes towards women's career advancement at the individual level of analysis.

Dependent and Independent Variables

Our dependent and independent variables are described below. Unless otherwise noted, item responses were rated on a seven-point scale, where 1 = "do not agree" and 7 = "strongly agree".

Attitudes Towards Women's Career Advancement

We used the five-item scale developed by Aycan (2004) for our dependent variable. The scale's items are: (1) It is acceptable for women to compete with men for top executive positions; (2) Society should regard work by female managers as valuable as work by male managers; (3) The business community should someday accept women in key managerial positions; (4) Women have the objectivity required to evaluate business situations proper; and (5) Women possess the self-confidence required of a good leader ($\alpha = .850$).

Gender Role Orientation

We derived our gender role orientation variable from the scale developed by Aycan (2004) but removed items unrelated to workplace issues concerning women in management or leadership roles and one item with high conceptual overlap with our dependent variable. Higher scores on the items

indicate a traditional gender role orientation. The scale included the items: (1) On average, women managers are less capable of contributing to an organization's overall goals than men, (2) Women cannot be assertive in business situations that demand it, (3) The chance factor and the suitability of the work to women can be the reasons for the success of women managers, and (4) Challenging work is more important to men than it is to women ($\alpha = .797$).

Acceptance of Women in the Workplace

We measured respondents' acceptance of women in the workplace using the scale developed by Newbury et al. (2008). The scale items are: (1) I would feel comfortable if my colleague was a woman; (2) I would feel comfortable if my manager was a woman, (3) I am comfortable with women in the workplace, and (4) I am comfortable with women in managerial positions ($\alpha = .882$).

Perceived Company International Proactiveness

This variable was based on selected items from Nummela et al.'s (2004) Proactiveness on International Markets scale. The scale items are: (1) It is important for our company to internationalize rapidly, (2) Internationalization is the only way to achieve our growth objectives, (3) We will have to internationalize in order to succeed in the future, and (4) The growth we are aiming at can be achieved mainly through internationalization ($\alpha = .776$). Additionally, we collected supplementary data on actual firm internationalization, which is discussed in the robustness section of our results.

Control Variables

We included several control variables in our analyses to account for variance explained by rater characteristics and organizational factors that may affect women's career advancement.

Rater Gender

Prior research shows mixed results on the relationship between gender role orientation and beliefs and attitudes regarding women in the workplace and their careers. Some studies suggest that beliefs and attitudes regarding women's roles may vary as a result of the respondent's gender, particularly in Latin American contexts where men tend to hold a more traditionalist gender role orientation (e.g., Schmitz & Diefenthaler, 1998). Other studies indicate that women tend to be less supportive of the advancement of other women (Garcia-Retamero &

Lopez-Zafra, 2006), express more gender-biased perceptions of other women's career commitment (Ellemers et al., 2004), have differing perceptions of senior leadership opportunities (Levy et al., 2015), and become less supportive of equal-opportunity programs as they advance in the organization (Ng & Chiu, 2001). Consequently, we included a control variable asking respondents to indicate their gender, where "female" = 0 and "male" = 1.

Rater Age

Age is frequently considered to be related to beliefs regarding gender roles and attitudes towards women's participation in the workplace, such that older respondents are expected to favor more traditionalist positions. Considering that previous research both supports (e.g., Eagly et al., 2004) and contradicts (Judge & Livingston, 2008) relations between age, gender and workplace issues, we controlled for raters' age, where 1 = "<25 years", 2 = "25–35 years", 3 = "35–45 years", 4 = "45–60 years", and 5 = "60+ years".

Rater Job Rank

To the extent that respondents have different responsibilities, their perspective on women in the workplace and women's career advancement may vary. For example, Hoobler et al. (2009) found that female subordinates were perceived to have more family–work conflict by their bosses, and that these perceptions mediated relationships with outcomes relevant to promotability. Consequently, we controlled for rater job rank asking respondents to indicate their role in the organization, where "individual contributor" = 1, "supervisor" = 2, "middle manager" = 3, and "senior manager" = 4.

Female Manager Exposure

Prior research indicates that the overall gender-based composition of managers in a company impacts hiring and promotion decisions (e.g., Cohen, Broschak, & Haveman, 1998). This suggests that perceptions may change as the result of direct interaction with a female manager. Accordingly, we included a single item measure to control for this effect. We asked respondents: "Have you ever had a woman manager?" Negative responses were coded as 0, while affirmative responses were coded as 1.

Services Sector

Work in the services sector frequently requires front-line employees and supervisors to interact with customers, and middle and senior managers to create

an organizational context that supports such interaction. Women are perceived to be better at handling emotions (Ryan et al., 2011), socially sensitive and service-oriented (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989). These traits may be instrumental to acceptance and career advancement in contexts where fluid interaction is important. Within our sample, 59.1% of respondents worked in service sectors, while the remaining 40.9% were divided between manufactured goods (33.4%) and agriculture, forestry & fishing, mining, and construction (7.5%), all of which are traditionally male-dominated industries. Therefore, we controlled for organizational sector, where 0 = "other sectors" and 1 = "services sector".

Organization Size

Larger firms require their members to collaborate with more internal stakeholders than smaller firms. As women are perceived to be better people managers (Ryan et al., 2011), acceptance of women in the workplace and attitudes towards their career advancement could be more favorable in larger firms than in their smaller counterparts. While different categorizations are used in Latin America to classify small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) often ranging between 100 and 500 (e.g., Peres & Stumpo, 2000), 250 is a commonly used cutoff (e.g., Beck & Demirguc-Kunt, 2006; Vives, 2006). Thus we categorized raters' employer organizations using 250 employees as a cutoff point (0 = "less than 250 employees", 1 = "more than 250 employees").

Data Analysis

Edwards and Lambert (2007) identified three predominant approaches researchers have used to combine moderation and mediation in their studies: (a) the piecemeal approach, in which moderation and mediation are analyzed separately and their results are interpreted; (b) the subgroup approach, in which the sample is split into subgroups based on the moderator variable, and mediation is analyzed within each subgroup; and (c) the moderated causal steps approach, in which the causal steps procedure for testing mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986) is adapted to test moderation before and after controlling for the mediator variable. Several shortcomings of these approaches are relevant to our study. First, as the causal steps procedure typically underlies any of the three approaches, all are subject to its inherent limitations, which include the assumption of perfectly reliable measures and lack of a direct test of the

mediated effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable (MacKinnon et al., 2002). Second, none of the three approaches informs which of the paths relating an independent variable, a mediator variable, and the dependent variable vary as a result of the effect of a moderator variable. Hayes and Preacher (2013) suggested that tests of moderated mediation that include latent variables rely on the latent moderated structural equations (LMS) approach (Klein & Moosbrugger, 2000) to address these limitations and to correct for the attenuating effects of measurement error. Following this recommendation, we analyzed our data using the XWITH command in MPlus.

RESULTS

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics and a correlation matrix for our study variables. All of our measures are latent constructs, except for the control variables.

Quality of Measurement Instruments

We conducted confirmatory factor analyses to assess the psychometric properties of our measures. A four-factor model that included Gender Role Orientation (four items), Acceptance of Women in the Workplace (four items), Attitudes towards Women's Career Advancement (five items) and Perceived Company International Proactiveness (four items) demonstrated excellent fit: $\chi^2(108)$: 389.59

($p = .000$, $n = 973$), $\chi^2/df = 3.61$, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .05, GFI = .95, adjusted goodness-of-fit index = .94, TLI = .96, and CFI = .97. Given the correlation between acceptance of women in the workplace and attitudes towards women's career advancement, we tested for a three-factor model in which the indicators for these variables were combined into one latent construct. The fit indices for this model were: $\chi^2(111)$: 1,737.93 ($p = .000$, $n = 973$), $\chi^2/df = 15.66$, RMSEA = .12, GFI = .81, adjusted goodness-of-fit index = .74, TLI = .75, and CFI = .80. A Chi square difference test indicated that this model's fit was significantly worse: $\chi^2_{diff}(3, n = 973) = 1,348.34$, $p < .01$. Likewise, we tested a three-factor model in which we combined the indicators of our stereotyped gender roles variable with those of attitudes towards women's career advancement into one latent construct. The fit indices for this model were: $\chi^2(111)$: 1,463.44 ($p = .000$, $n = 973$), $\chi^2/df = 13.18$, RMSEA = .11, GFI = .84, adjusted goodness-of-fit index = .78, TLI = .80, and CFI = .83. Again, a Chi square difference test indicated that this model's fit was significantly worse: $\chi^2_{diff}(3, n = 973) = 1,073.85$, $p < .01$. Finally, we tested a one-factor model with a single latent variable underlying all nineteen items. The fit indices for this model were: $\chi^2(114)$: 4,087.47 ($p = .000$, $n = 973$), $\chi^2/df = 35.86$, RMSEA = .19, GFI = .64, adjusted goodness-of-fit index = .52, TLI = .42, and CFI = .51. Compared to the four-factor model, this model also had

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix for study variables

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Respondent gender (female = 0)	.59	.49	1								
2. Respondent age	2.20	.69	.17***	1							
3. Respondent job rank	2.24	1.08	.12***	.28***	1						
4. Female manager exposure	.67	.47	-.09**	-.03	-.09**	1					
5. Firm sector (service = 1)	.59	.49	-.10**	-.05	-.03	.10***	1				
6. Firm size (250+ employees = 1)	.58	.50	.12***	.10**	-.12***	-.03	-.14***	1			
7. Gender role orientation	2.07	1.26	.20***	.09**	.05	.00	.03	-.01	1		
8. Acceptance of women in the workplace	5.89	1.23	.07*	.02	.04	-.03	.06+	-.08*	-.17***	1	
9. Perceived company international proactiveness	4.86	1.75	.00	-.02	-.05	.05	-.01	.00	.08*	.08*	1
10. Attitudes towards women's career advancement	6.31	1.02	-.17***	-.03	-.06*	-.05	-.05+	-.06+	-.36***	.26***	.05

$n = 973$.

+ $p < .10$.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

Table 3 SEM results for simultaneous tests of all hypotheses

Variables	Acceptance of women in the workplace			Attitudes towards women's career advancement		
	β	sig.	s.e.	β	sig.	s.e.
Control variables						
Respondent gender (female = 0)	.28	***	.08	-.33	***	.09
Respondent age	.05		.05	.07		.05
Respondent job rank	.03		.04	-.06	+	.04
Female manager exposure	-.09		.08	-.15	*	.07
Firm sector (service = 1)	.16	*	.08	-.15	*	.07
Firm size (250 + employees = 1)	-.19	**	.07	-.12	+	.07
Predictor variables						
Gender role orientation	-.32	***	.07	-.45	***	.09
Perceived company international proactiveness	.17	***	.05	.11	+	.06
Gender role orientation X Perceived company international proactiveness	.21	**	.07	.16	*	.08
Acceptance of women in the workplace				.23	***	.05

n = 973.

+ p < .10.

* p < .05.

** p < .01.

*** p < .001.

significantly worse fit, $\chi^2_{diff}(6, n = 973) = 3,697.88$, $p < .01$. Thus the confirmatory factor analyses provide evidence that our proposed model provides the best fit for our data.

Test of Study Hypotheses

As can be observed in Table 3, the control variables had mixed effects. The effect of gender on acceptance in the workplace was highly significant and in the expected direction ($\beta = .28$, $p < .01$). While women were more open to including other women in the workplace, the effect of gender on attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = -.33$, $p < .01$) indicated the opposite regarding career progression. Other rater characteristics were generally not meaningfully associated with any of the variables of interest. Rater rank was not related with acceptance of women in the workplace ($\beta = .03$, $p > .10$), and marginally related with attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = -.06$, $p < .10$). Rater age was unrelated to both acceptance of women in the workplace ($\beta = .05$, $p > .10$) and to attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = .07$, $p > .10$). Work experience under supervision of a female manager was not related to acceptance of women in the workplace ($\beta = -.09$, $p > .10$) but had a significant negative effect on attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = -.15$, $p < .05$). Control variables related to organizational characteristics accounted for some

variance in the variables of interest. Respondents in organizations in the services sector accepted other women in the workplace significantly more than respondents in other sectors ($\beta = .16$, $p < .05$), but had significantly less positive attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = -.15$, $p < .05$). Organizational size was significantly but negatively related to acceptance of women in the workplace ($\beta = -.19$, $p < .01$) and marginally related to attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .10$).

Looking next at our study model, while not formally hypothesized, we first found that gender role orientation was negatively related to attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = -.45$, $p < .01$), consistent with prior literature. Building upon this base relationship, Hypothesis 1 was supported in that perceived company international proactiveness had a significant moderating effect on the direct relationship between gender role orientation and attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = .165$, $p < .05$). The interaction is graphically represented in Figure 2.

Proceeding to our Hypothesis 2 mediating relationship, in addition to being directly related to attitudes towards women's career advancement (as noted above), gender role orientation was related to acceptance of women in the workplace ($\beta = -.32$, $p < .01$). Acceptance of women in the workplace, then, anteceded attitudes towards women's career

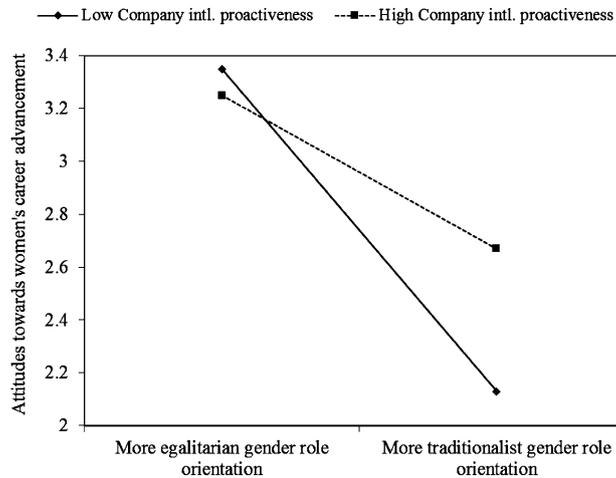


Figure 2 Interaction of perceived company international proactiveness and gender role orientation in predicting attitudes towards women's career advancement.

advancement ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$). These results support Hypothesis 2 regarding the mediating role of acceptance in the workplace. Hypothesis 3 was also supported as perceived company international proactiveness had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between gender role orientation and acceptance of women in the workplace ($\beta = .21$, $p < .01$). Figure 3 illustrates the interaction.

We assessed the product of the moderated mediation path to determine the significance of the conditional indirect effects. When perceived company international proactiveness was one standard deviation below average, the effect of gender role orientation on attitudes towards women's career advancement through acceptance of women in the workplace was $-.12$ ($p < .01$), at average levels $-.07$ ($p < .01$), and at one standard deviation above average the effect was $-.02$ ($p = .063$).

Robustness of Findings

As we obtained the data of our principal analyses through the administration of one single questionnaire, a possibility existed that the covariances found in our study result from common method variance (Chang, van Witteloostuijn, & Eden, 2010; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Anticipating this possibility, we separated independent variables from each other and from the items comprising the dependent variable, creating different sections in the questionnaire to minimize causal connections by respondents regarding the items (Chang et al., 2010). Moreover, constructs related to gender roles, internationalization and careers are theoretically distinct, further diminishing causal connections by

respondents regarding these variables. Finally, analysis of the data also suggests that the observed covariances are not the result of common method variance. A factor analysis of the entire questionnaire satisfied Harman's one factor test, as a single factor did not emerge from the factor analysis and one general factor did not account for the majority of the covariance among the variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

In order to assess the robustness of our findings based on individual-level perceptions of company international proactiveness, we collected additional data on organization-level indicators of internationalization. Acknowledging potential differences in internationalization between units of one organization (e.g., one subsidiary may focus on a national market, while another subsidiary or the company's headquarters may be more internationally oriented), we focused on the organizational unit that employed the respondent (e.g., Company ABC in Colombia). We accessed online databases such as Bloomberg, Dun & Bradstreet and organizations' local websites to obtain data on international sales and locations of organizations' headquarters. Many respondents had not identified their employer in the demographics section of the questionnaire, which reduced our original sample to a subset of 261 respondents for whom we were able to obtain complete data. This issue was particularly relevant in Mexico, where legislation aimed at preserving privacy impedes collection of data that allows for identification of respondents.

We tested our model using a measure of whether an organizational unit had international sales

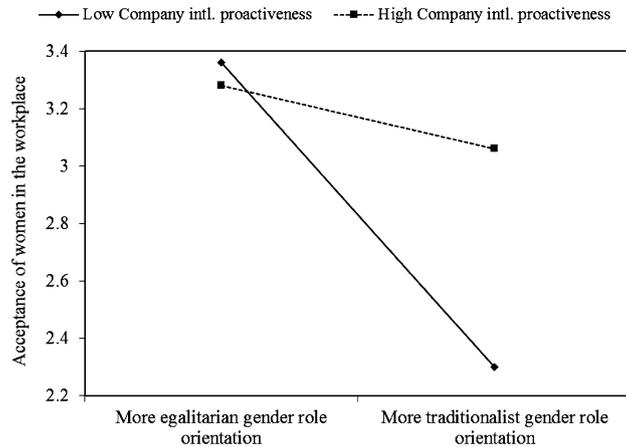


Figure 3 Interaction of perceived company international proactiveness and gender role orientation in predicting acceptance of women in the workplace.

outside the Latin America region to replace the individual-level perceptions of company international proactiveness as a moderator variable. International sales is widely used as an organization-level indicator of internationalization (e.g., Contractor et al., 2003; Sullivan, 1994), and is particularly relevant in the context of our study as selling in the global context involves meaningful interaction with individuals from other cultures or institutional contexts. Moreover, research has suggested that the vast majority of companies are regional in nature (Rugman & Verbeke, 2004), suggesting a meaningful difference between conducting operations internal to versus outside a region in terms of exposure to global practices such as attitudes towards women—particularly in a region such as Latin America where countries to a large extent speak the same language and share a common history (Cuervo-Cazzura & Dao, 2009b). Researchers in international business use different criteria to cluster countries into regions (see Flores et al., 2013). Given that our sample comprised respondents from countries that are culturally and institutionally similar, we distinguished between organizations that had national or intra-regional sales ($n = 142$), and organizations that had international sales outside the Latin American region ($n = 119$).

We invoked the SPSS PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) to analyze the moderating effects of organizations’ sales beyond Latin America and obtained effect estimates that were in line with the estimates of our main analysis. Gender role orientation was negatively related to attitudes towards women’s career advancement ($\beta = -.42, p < .001$). Likewise,

gender role orientation was negatively associated with acceptance of women in the workplace ($\beta = -.44, p < .001$), which anteceded attitudes towards women’s career advancement ($\beta = .26, p < .001$). The moderating hypotheses of our original model were supported in this analysis as well, as international sales had a positive moderating effect on the direct relationship between gender role orientation and attitudes towards women’s career advancement ($\beta = .21, p < .001$). Thus the direct conditional effect of gender role orientation on attitudes towards women’s career advancement for companies that did not have extra-regional sales was $-.42$ ($p < .001$), while the effect estimate for companies that had extra-regional sales was $-.21$ ($p < .001$). The moderating effect of international sales on the relationship between gender role orientation and acceptance of women in the workplace was marginally significant ($\beta = .19, p = .053$). Assessment of conditional indirect effects based on a bootstrap analysis with 1,000 iterations indicated that when organizations had sales outside the Latin American region, the effect of gender role orientation on attitudes towards women’s career advancement through acceptance of women in the workplace was $-.07$. For organizations that did not have sales outside the region the effect was $-.12$. However, given bootstrap standard errors of the estimates of .03 for both estimates and overlap between the 95% CI, the significance of the conditional indirect effect was weaker than in our main analysis.

A second robustness test was based on the location of the respondent organization’s headquarters.



Multinational companies face a need to adapt to the regulatory, cognitive, and normative institutions of the countries in which they operate while maintaining intra-organizational coherence in the adoption of management practices (Kostova & Roth, 2002). Human resource management practices in multinational companies typically reflect country-of-origin effects which have consequences for personnel in foreign subsidiaries (e.g., Almond & Ferner, 2006; Ferner et al., 2013; Rosenzweig & Nohria, 1994). The subsample comprised 155 respondents who were employed by an organization headquartered in Latin America and 106 respondents who were employed by subsidiaries of multinational organizations with headquarters located outside Latin America. The results of this second robustness analysis were also in line with those of our main model. Gender role orientation was negatively related to attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = -.42$, $p < .001$), as well as to acceptance of women in the workplace ($\beta = -.43$, $p < .001$). The location of the respondent's employer's headquarters had a significant moderating effect on the direct relationship between gender role orientation and attitudes towards women's career advancement ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$). Hence while the effect of gender role orientation on attitudes towards women's career advancement was $-.42$ ($p < .001$) for organizations that had their headquarters in Latin America, this effect was $-.20$ ($p < .001$) for organizations that had their headquarters outside the region. The moderating effect on the relationship between gender role orientation and acceptance of women in the workplace was marginally significant ($\beta = .18$, $p = .073$). Our analysis of conditional indirect effects analysis indicated that when organizations had their headquarters outside Latin America, the effect of gender role orientation on attitudes towards women's career advancement through acceptance of women in the workplace was $-.07$. For organizations that did not have sales outside the region the effect was $-.11$. Similar to the results of our first robustness analysis, the standard errors of the bootstrap were .03 for both estimates, while the 95% CI overlapped.

Taken together, the robustness analyses support the findings of our main analysis. The effect sizes of the main associations in our model are similar to those found in our main analysis and significant, both when perceived company international proactiveness is replaced by international sales and location of the organization's headquarters. These variables are proxies for perceived company

international proactiveness and, hence, do not fully capture respondents' perception of the importance of internationalization to his or her organization. Such measurement error and smaller sample sizes may explain why the moderated mediation effects were not as significant as in our main analysis.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study examined attitudes towards the career advancement of one historically marginalized group in Latin America, women. Within a sample of 973 respondents within the Latin American countries of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela, we found that gender role orientation impacted attitudes towards women's career advancement, both directly and via a mediated relationship through acceptance of women in the workplace. Additionally, our results suggest that the perceived international proactiveness of a company moderates the direct relationship between traditionalist gender role perceptions and attitudes towards women's career advancement. We look at these results in more detail below.

Our results suggest that acceptance of women in the workplace positively influenced attitudes towards career advancement, while gender stereotypes embedded in traditionalist beliefs negatively influenced these attitudes. Acceptance of women as managers or co-workers addresses a women's role that involves direct employee contact. Since women's career advancement could potentially involve direct contact with women, it seems logical that acceptance of women as managers was significant in predicting this variable.

Building upon gender role theory (Bem, 1993; Gutek et al., 1991) and social role theory (Eagly, 1987), which suggest that women are more strongly identified with fulfilling the family role than men, our gender role orientation results are consistent with the fact that gender inequality remains strong across Latin America (e.g., House et al., 2004; Olivas-Lujan et al., 2009) and ingrained attitudes regarding the role of women in society remain that continue to hinder their advancement.

Regarding the perceived international proactiveness of companies, we found that this variable positively moderated both the direct relationship between traditionalist gender role orientations and attitudes towards women's career advancement, along with the mediated relationship incorporating

acceptance of women in the workplace. These results may have occurred because managers realize that participation in a global economy requires companies to increasingly adopt global values to remain legitimate to outside parties (see, e.g., Deephouse, 1997; Zaheer, 1995). Women's advancement in the workplace may be one such legitimating issue. Through exposure to contexts in which women occupy leadership positions, incorporating organizational practices that favor women's career advancement, and organizational socialization, individual employees may learn about the importance of doing business beyond the Latin American region to their organizations, and the behavioral and attitudinal requirements for achieving organizational and job-related goals in the global context. As such behaviors and attitudes are more favorable to women's participation and advancement in the workplace, employees may suppress traditionalist gender role beliefs or come to appreciate global (or at least developed world) trends as the result of exposure to other cultures.

Aside from our hypothesized results, we also found interesting contrasts with our gender and service sector control variables. For both gender and the service sector, the direct relationships with acceptance of women were positive and significant in Table 3, but the relationships with attitudes towards women's career advancement were negative. Employees within services industries, which tend to have greater female participation, may be more accepting of women since this is the norm in this setting. However, additional research suggests that higher visibility for women is coupled with greater scrutiny, exaggeration of differences from males, and exclusion from informal workplace interactions (Jurik, 1985; Martin, 1985; Rustad, 1982; Yoder, Adams, & Prince, 1983). This may lead to women being perceived as less capable of advancing. By contrast, men have been shown to be promoted rapidly in more female-inclusive settings due to what has been described as a "glass escalator" effect related to their relative social status (Williams, 1992).

Contributions

Our study advances the existing literature regarding attitudes towards women's career advancement by embedding individual gender role beliefs and gendered leadership beliefs in an organizational context. Building upon the studies reviewed within Paustian-Underdahl et al. (2014), we go beyond demographic and research setting context

considerations to examine gender belief systems and how they interact with the internationalization strategy of a company. While company internationalization strategy is well established as an important explanatory variable in many research settings (e.g., Contractor et al., 2003), in the case of emerging markets such as those in Latin America, firm internationalization strategies could be particularly influential in differentiating the perceptions of employees regarding gender advancement issues, as they have similarly been shown to impact more general career perceptions (e.g., Newburry, 2001). The pursuit of internationalization strategies requires organizations to adopt management practices that signal legitimacy to exchange partners in global markets. Our study provides evidence of a moderating effect of perceived company international proactiveness on the relationships between gender role orientation, acceptance of women in the workplace and attitudes towards women's career advancement, which are shaped through exposure to contexts in which women occupy leadership positions, incorporating organizational practices that favor women's career advancement, and organizational socialization processes that help them to understand what is required to be successful and how they should behave to obtain rewards (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). As such, better understanding the impacts of internationalization strategies on gender-related career perceptions provides an important contribution to our overall understanding of the factors impacting the advancement of women.

We also build upon Newburry et al. (2008), which examined the impact of attitudes towards women and globalization-related career perceptions in the national contexts of Iran and the United States. By delving more deeply into relationships between attitudes towards women, differentiating between gender role orientation, acceptance of women in the workforce and attitudes towards women's career advancement, we achieve a more nuanced understanding of the interaction between related gender issues.

We believe that examining the relationships in our study using Latin America as our research site is a further contribution for several reasons. First, due to pronounced differences when compared to the United States and Europe, Latin America may be an important context for generalizability testing of relationships regarding attitudes towards women in the workplace, thus providing an opportunity to test how gender-related perceptions vary across



cultures. Additionally, our sample choice responds to calls to fill a much neglected void in Latin America-related management research (Castaño et al., 2015; Nicholls-Nixon et al., 2011). Vassolo, De Castro and Gomez-Mejia (2011) noted that Latin America's aggregated gross domestic product (GDP) is roughly that of China's and three times larger than India's. The countries we study account for 87.1% of the region's population and 93.8% of the total Latin America's GDP. Finally, our research includes eleven countries and focuses on the increasingly important views that may make a strategic difference in women's careers. By demonstrating gender relationships that exist region-wide, we help clarify issues that persist across the region.

Managerial Implications

The role of women in management is a major issue both in Latin America and globally. Adding to prior work on perceptions of leadership opportunities (e.g., Levy et al., 2015), and particularly, opportunities for women (e.g., Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014), our results have wide managerial applications in terms of understanding the factors contributing to positive attitudes towards women in managerial positions. They may provide guidance in factors associated with training managers to be more accepting of women, or in terms of hiring people with certain dispositions at the onset. Of particular interest to international managers is the significant moderating effect of perceived company international proactiveness on gender attitudes, which demonstrates an important context variable impacting gender role perceptions.

In addition to performance implications associated with company strategies such as internationalization, our results suggest that company managers need to be cognizant of the socialization impacts of these strategies, which have the potential to either reinforce or change company values based on the signals they send to employees. Companies that are initiating their international efforts may need to worry less about value incongruencies with regard to gender role orientations or replacing managers with a more traditionalist orientation, to the extent that they can convey the importance of internationalization and associated values through the mechanisms discussed within this manuscript related to exposure to contexts in which women occupy leadership positions, incorporating organizational practices that favor women's career advancement, and organizational socialization.

While we covered a large portion of Latin America in our sample, our findings may be generalized to some extent to other Latin American countries, since these countries are commonly noted to be going through similar periods of market reform (e.g., Cuervo-Cazurra & Dau, 2009a, b) or even to other developing regions. Thus the results may provide a valuable knowledge source regarding local employee perceptions for managers planning to conduct business in emerging markets.

CONCLUSION

This study examined attitudes towards the career advancement of one historically marginalized group in Latin America, women. Within a sample of eleven Latin American countries, we found that the international proactiveness of a company moderates the direct relationship between traditionalist gender role perceptions and attitudes towards women's career advancement, along with a mediated relationship through acceptance of women in the workplace. This manuscript contributes to various management and global business literatures, including theories on attitudes towards company internationalization (e.g., Murtha, Lenway, & Bagozzi, 1998; Nummela et al., 2004), human resource management in emerging markets (e.g., Olivas-Lujan et al., 2009; Ruiz-Gutierrez et al., 2012), and women's career advancement (Adler, 1999; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014).

While we believe this study makes a contribution, we also recognize limitations that create opportunities for future research. First, this study focuses only on Latin America; thus, future studies are needed to further generalize our findings to other emerging markets, where institutional conditions may vary significantly (e.g., Fainshmidt, Judge, Aguilera, & Smith, 2016). Within country regional variations may also be worthy of examination (see, e.g., Dheer, Lenartowicz, & Peterson, 2015 re: regional subcultures in India). Second, as our data is cross-sectional in nature, we need to be careful not to interpret causality into our results. Third, while respondents were assured of confidentiality and other procedures were implemented to ensure this was the case, a social desirability bias could nonetheless impact responses for our women-related variables. Further, as women's participation increases in Latin America, our study countries warrant additional examination as globalization affects women differently than men (e.g., Gibson, 1995; Napier & Taylor, 2002) and general

social tolerance regarding gender rights (e.g., Zanakis, Newbury, & Taras, 2016) and gender differences in expectations (e.g., Wan, Luk, & Chow, 2014) may be evolving. Finally, future research may also consider the related constructs of work role and family role (e.g., Shaffer et al., 2016) and work–family conflict (e.g., Paustian-Underdahl & Halbesleben, 2014) in the context of Latin America and other emerging markets.

As emerging markets in general and Latin America in particular continue to take stronger positions in the global economy, issues such as gender advancement will become increasingly important and worthy of further study. As such, we hope this study lays groundwork for future research in this area.

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