

GENDER EQUALITY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION:
A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY TO BRIDGE THE KNOWLEDGE
BETWEEN NORTH AMERICA AND LATIN AMERICA

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the topic of gender equality in public relations and communication in North America and Latin America. By comparing the responses from communication professionals in four regions (i.e., Northern North America, Southern North America, South America, and Central America and the Caribbean), the data confirmed that unequal treatment, nontransparent promotion policies, the lack of networks and development programs, and the limited number of inspiring female role models in those regions are key factors hindering women's professional development.

INDEX WORDS: Gender Equality; Gender Inequality; North America; Latin America; Communication professionals; Public Relations practitioners; Glass ceiling; Job disparity; Leadership.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims at identifying the perception on gender equality and the factors attribute to the gender inequality in the communication and public relations industry in four regions of America. These four regions include Northern North America (Canada and the United States), Southern North America (Mexico and Puerto Rico), Central America and the Caribbean (Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Dominican Republic), and South America (Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela).

To achieve the research goal, this thesis used the method of secondary data analysis based on the most recent survey results from the 2020- 2021 North America Communications Monitor (NACM) and the 2020-2021 Latin America Communication Monitor (LCM). The rationale was to explore whether any changes have taken place regarding gender equality in communications and public relations in the past few years. The thesis also sought to explore whether there are particular barriers for women to reach leadership positions in strategic communication and public relations across the four regions of America. Additionally, this study pursued to evaluate the differences between the regions and identify the potential leader(s) for a real change in this matter: the professionals, the organizations, or the professional associations? Specifically, the design of this thesis was driven by the following five research objectives:

1. Evaluate if gender equality in communications has improved in the four regions in America: North America, Southern North America, Central America and the Caribbean, and South America;
2. Assess how communication practitioners have perceived the impact of the glass ceiling in communications in the four regions in America;
3. Determine the potential reasons that contribute to the glass ceiling issue for women across the four regions;
4. Identify who is most capable of leading the change in gender equality situation faced by women in these regions of America; and
5. Establish what is the representation of women in leading communication positions in the four regions of America.

Overall, results from this thesis research will build a strong foundation for future research focusing on advancing gender equality in public relations practice. Findings from this thesis will also facilitate more effective practice in achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion in public relations. After addressing some research limitations embedded in this study, this thesis concludes with directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Background: Public Relations as a Gendered Profession

In the 1980s the number of working women in public relations in the United States increased dramatically, surpassing the number of male practitioners for the first time (Fitch & Third, 2010). The number of women working in public relations doubled from 25 to 50 percent between 1970 and 1982 (Horsley, 2009). This increase in female practitioners gave the prospect of feminization to the public relations profession, resulting in reduced reputation, status, salaries, and exclusion from important decision-making in organizations (Aldoory, 2005). Women in public relations began to become a more frequent subject of study in the 1980s, mostly by scholars in the United States, who focused their research on the positions of women in the public relations industry in their own country.

In 1986, the study of women in public relations began to gain more force and to attract the attention of academics after the *Velvet Ghetto* study was published (Topić et al., 2020). Some of the most important findings of this study revealed that women are “locked” in what was called the pink ghetto, which means that they have no real power in the organization for which they work (Cline et al., 1986). The study also revealed that women receive a lower salary than men do since, women are expected to function as technical personnel (Cline et al., 1986). In this stream of research, some main topics were focused on *employment discrimination*, analyzing sub-topics including salary gap, glass ceiling, technical positions for women, and educational differences

and *biases against women*, which center on discrimination in job promotion, chauvinism, stereotypes against women, and feminization (Topić et al., 2020).

Feminist Theory in Public Relations

The roles of women in public relations have been studied from various feminist points of view and theories. There is no single movement or a unified theory (Fitch & Third, 2010). From the 1980s onwards, a greater number of studies of women in public relations adopted liberal feminist approaches, and to a lesser number, radical feminists (Fitch, 2015). Analyzing public relations from a feminist perspective can challenge existing belief and investigate power and power relations, as well as structural systems that produce gender practices and discourses (Fitch, 2015).

Scholars who have adopted the feminist theory to study the status of women in public relations focused mainly on two perspectives: the first is to reveal subtle and obvious gender inequalities. The second is oriented towards changes to eradicate or reduce these inequalities (Martin, 2003). Numerous studies have found gender discrepancies in public relations in aspects such as hiring, salary, promotions, and power positions (Aldoory & Toth, 2002). Although women in public relations occupy more than 70% of jobs, valid and reliable studies and surveys continue to show that men tend to be favored in hiring, with higher salaries and promotions to managerial positions (Aldoory & Toth, 2002).

No wonder, the female workforce feels discouraged and disheartened with their future career prospects. Further looking into this, are several reasons why women feel disadvantaged. Some of those reasons include the wages disparity (Toth & Cline, 1991), the assignment of technical function over managerial roles (Cline et al., 1986), existing barriers (i.e., glass ceiling and unconscious gender bias towards women in managerial positions) limiting women's

advancement opportunities (Wright et al., 1991), and finally the challenges faced by women when choosing between work and family (Hon, 1995).

The culture of masculinity in organizational structure and its relationship with power affects women in public relations. Some studies explore the relationship between masculinity and power, which is linked to organizational culture, has created male networks and prejudices against women (Topić et al., 2020). For example, in a study published in 2019 by the Institute for Public Relations (IPR), a female mid-to-senior-level leaders practitioner said: "I see a lot of men pick other men for leadership positions and they may know other men. And they're going to their network. [Not consisting of women.]" (Dubrowski et al., 2019, p.4). In addition, stereotypes against women were promoted, such as not competent to be good managers, too emotional, lack of corporate spirit, not good team members and just not part of the gang (Topić et al., 2020).

The impact of masculinity and masculine organizational structures leads women who have reached leadership positions to reflect the queen bee syndrome, being unwilling and refusing to support other women achieve the same success they worked so hard for. (Cline et al., 1986) and, also to women adopting masculine forms to be successful (Topić et al., 2020). As a result, younger women in the profession find it difficult to identify themselves with this type of masculinity and see women who are already in leadership positions as role models (Mills, 2014). However, feminist theory has made important gains in public relations. For instance, discrediting research that proposes that women do not possess what is necessary to be successful in public relations, exposing how androcentric social sciences have neutralized the asymmetric gender prejudice against women, and advocating for a change in the environment that empowers women and enrich public relations (Toth & Cline, 2007). An advantage of most feminist research and theory in public relations is that it has focused on empirical work, which helps improve the lives

of women and men involved in the applied practices and, to a lesser extent in the publics of the field (Golombisky, 2015).

Leadership and Gender

In terms of leadership roles, undoubtedly exist a disbalance in the number of men and women in these roles in the US. Across the workforce who are in leadership roles, 64% are males, with the percentage of women decreasing with the seniority level (Zenger & Folkman, 2012). Looking into the national statistics, women made up 71.4% of the workforce in public relations and fundraising, with 63.6% being public relations specialists (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). The 2020 data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics revealed that, in North America women represent 64 percent of public relations specialist and/or practitioners (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020).

Academic studies conducted between 2010 and 2019 show that although the number of female practitioners has increased in the field of public relations, they still do not have a significant representation in leadership positions (Place & Vardeman-Winter, 2018; Tench & Topić, 2017). For example, in a study carried out by the Institute for Public Relations (IPR) in collaboration with KPMG, it is reported that men occupy most CEO positions in the most important public relations agencies, estimating that they exceed almost 80 percent (Dubrowski et al., 2019). In a most recent book on women and leadership in public relations, Meng, and Neill (2021) examined the ethical and leadership challenges faced by women in public relations. Their research confirmed that women need to devote extra efforts to empower themselves and their followers to achieve leadership and carry out ethical responsibilities.

These results demonstrate a fairly pronounced leadership gap between men and women, in a predominantly female industry (Dubrowski et al., 2019). Furthermore, the investigation

identified several factors that affect the rise of women to executive-level managers, which include, "work-life considerations and practices, reduced likelihood to receive milestone promotions or pay increases, and unconscious biases" (Dubrowski et al., 2019, p. 2). Findings on recent studies show that the issue of the salary gap continues to persist. The glass ceiling problem and the pay gap remain predominantly linked to the fact that women mainly hold technical jobs (CIPR, 2017; Moreno, 2018).

New Theoretical Perspective: The Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality offers an important framework to understand the macro systems of subordination and domination such as patriarchy, classism, heteronormativity, and racism seen as mutually constructive elements, which means, that systems of power simultaneously shape and are shaped by one another (Greenwood, 2016). Therefore, intersectionality examines the phenomenon of oppression in the cascade effect to which some individuals and communities are exposed (Vardeman-Winter & Tindall, 2010). That is, for some people and communities, gender, class, race, sexuality, or disability are not unique and individual characteristics by which they are oppressed by systematic power. Rather, systematic oppression can occur simultaneously, in an interlocking way, thus creating a web of inequity (Zinn & Dill, 1996). In simpler words, intersectionality "offers a wide range of methodological approaches to the study of multiple and complex social relationships." (Dill et al., 2007, p. 629).

Golombisky (2015) argues that the feminist theory of public relations approach is ready to embrace gender theorizations of performative intersectionality, along with feminist commitments to social justice (Golombisky, 2015). In the last decade, researchers in public have

expanded their scope in order to study identity problems of practitioners including age, race, class, sexuality, sexual orientation, country of origin, among others (Meng & Neill, 2021).

Several academics work on identity from the theory of intersectionality focused on public relations, with the aim of analyzing and shedding light on how the different levels of identity have implications and should be approached in the study of the practice of the profession (Vardeman-Winter & Tindall, 2010; Vardeman-Winter et al., 2013). These implications can be seen at all levels and aspects of public relations. For example, in the salary difference, there is a marked gap between wages of men and women (Chitkara, 2018). Race (e.g., white to non-white professionals in the same professional position) presents a greater increase in the pay gap (Shah, 2017).

Feminist public relations theory has a potential downside by failing to take full advantage of contemporary approaches offered by intersectionality and feminist approaches that have been developed by women of color (Golombisky, 2015). Moreover, focusing on the profession results in a narrow look focused on radical and liberal feminist notions of inequality rather than seeing the role of public relations as a matter of social justice (Golombisky, 2015). The theoretical framework of intersectionality allows to criticize the limited view of public relations and its reference points that support binary dualism (i.e., black/white, female/male, young/old) that leave aside variety, fostering the neglect of the intersectionalities of social identities in a system of institutionalized inequalities. (Pompper, 2013). For example, researchers in public relations have been eluding the intersectionality of social identities such as age and ethnicity which represent important challenges when studying power/conflict (Pompper, 2013).

New Research Trends Related to Gender and Public Relations in North America

In 2020, Topić and associates published a study that analyses the literature of the topics studied on women in public relations for decades starting from 1982 to 2019 to identify trends, research areas, and gaps for future studies. The researchers identified that two main themes shaped the last decade of gender studies in public relations. The first is job discrimination, which includes subtopics of technical vs. managerial positions, glass ceiling and salary gap, culture, and male labor diversity. The second is prejudice against women, which addresses stereotypes about women's organizational and communication skills, power, intersectionality, and criticism of liberal feminism (Topić et al., 2020). However, the majority of the research remains U.S.-centric and lacks diversity in presenting the current landscape of gender inequality in other cultures and societies.

Based on the study by Moreno et al. (2021), the universe of public relations practitioners in Latin America remains an uncharted territory. Thus, no clear research trends have been developed. To the best of my knowledge, there is only one study published that focuses on gender issues in public relations in Latin America (Moreno et al., 2021). Furthermore, this study confirms the findings from previous diverse gender studies concerning the profession in Western Northern countries, for an unexplored region in the public relations and communication management field like Latin America (Moreno et al., 2021).

In the last two versions of the Latin American Communications Monitor reports, some gender issues in communications and public relations were explored that could be considered as the beginning of research trends. For example, in the 2018-2019 report, the following topics were included: work stress - determinant factors, salary, and work satisfaction - predisposition to change (Moreno, Molleda, Nobell, et al., 2019). This initial approach to gender issues in

communications and public relations cleared the path for the most recent version, the 2020-2021 report, to have a section dedicated to evaluating and promoting gender equality (Nobell et al., 2021). Topics covered in this section include leadership, gender equality, barriers to advancement, and leader of change (Nobell et al., 2021).

Since the new research trends in gender in communications and public relations share common ground between the regions, there is still a research void concerning this topic, mainly in Latin America where a negligible amount of contributions has been made. To fill this gap, this study performs a comparative analysis between the four regions of America to identify any improvement in terms of gender equality, impact of professional promotion issues, reasons to attribute this, and finally, identify key players that could trigger a change.

The Necessity to Study Gender and Public Relations in Latin America

The restricted theoretical and empirical work carried out in Latin America on public relations contrasts with the advanced research work that has been carried out in the United States, Europe, and Asia in this field (Molleda et al., 2017). Scholars agree that one of the reasons that help to explain the lack of research on the practice of public relations in Latin America is the authoritarian regime and dictatorships that were experienced in the region during the twentieth century (Mellado & Barría, 2012). The importance of public relations in the region began to emerge, only after the authoritarian government regimes began to decline in the 1970s and 1980s (Mellado & Barría, 2012).

Another characteristic that scholars have noticed in Latin America is that public relations is highly connected to the profession of journalism, unlike in most developed countries (Mellado & Hanusch, 2011). The origin of public relations as a profession in Latin America was

conditioned by the birth of journalism schools in the region during the first half of the 20th century (Suárez-Monsalve, 2022). Schools of social communication began to open their doors in different countries of the region after 1960, which gave rise to an empirical differentiation between journalism, cinematography, advertising, and public relations (Suárez-Monsalve, 2022). This connection has created an ambiguous and hybrid definition between the two professions (Mellado & Barría, 2012). Furthermore, Ferrari points out that the weaknesses of professional organizations and low participation in international associations have made it difficult to professionalize the public relations field (Ferrari, 2011). Analyzing this background of public relations in Latin America, it is understood the reason for the scarcity of research in the region (Thelen, 2021).

In Latin America, the evolution of public relations as a profession occurred when the social approach was adopted in all fields of communication studies with the aim of responding to the political, economic, and cultural concerns of Latin American society (Suárez-Monsalve, 2022). Traditionally, public relations researchers have maintained an environmental approach when defining the variables that mainly affect the profession of public relations and practitioners (Yang & Taylor, 2014). Sriramesh and Verčič (2003) highlight the importance of studying and creating descriptive reports on the practice of public relations by country or region. For this, they have defined three contextual factors: infrastructure of the country, social culture, and media environment (Sriramesh & Vercic, 2003). In 2017, a study carried out in 20 Latin American countries provides evidence of how the professionalism of public relations is affected by the level of democracy, economic development, and the media system (Molleda et al., 2017).

Although it is known that gender inequalities are cultural and social constructions, there is no

research in Latin America that specializes in this contextual factor in public relations (Moreno et al., 2021).

Around the world, evidence of gender differences can be found when it comes to time spent on housework and care (Moreno et al., 2021). However, in the case of Latin America, the evidence on the gender division in domestic work is limited, although women tend to play the role of caregivers of children, the elderly, and the sick (Campaña et al., 2015). The first communication studies focused on feminist contributions were recorded at the beginning of the 90s, publications were made in specialized magazines and in conference proceedings (Gonem, 2012). Based on the large increase in women who have entered the public relations sphere in the last decade, scholars studying this phenomenon speak of the feminization of the field and a predominantly female industry (Moreno, Molleda, Álvarez-Nobell, et al., 2019).

Although there are few studies focused on the Latin American region, these indicate a greater presence of women in the profession. Furthermore, gender differences in the workplace are also evident (Khalil et al., 2018). Based on Moreno and colleagues (2021), there is scarce information available about the gender disparity in the communications and public relations industry in Latin America. Another aspect of interest when examining the profile of women in the field of public relations and communication management is the implication that being a woman can have in their professional careers and salary (Khalil et al., 2018). However, in Latin America no specific studies have been carried out on gender discrimination in the profession. Likewise, the observed reality does not have empirical data and theoretical literature to support it (Moreno et al., 2021).

Research Questions

Based on the knowledge gained in the literature review, the following research questions were developed to guide this thesis research:

RQ1: Do communication practitioners in four regions in America (i.e., the Northern North America, the Southern North America, the South America, and the Central America and the Caribbean) feel gender equality in communications has improved?

RQ2: Do communication professionals in four regions of America perceive that the glass ceiling affects women in the profession? And at what level do they perceive this barrier: organization, departmental, same professional level, or personal?

RQ3: What are the reasons that communication professionals from four regions of America believe contribute to the problem of the glass ceiling for women in the profession? Are these reasons the same between regions or is there a difference?

RQ4: Who is perceived by the communication professionals as the most capable leader in changing the current gender inequality situation faced by women in America?

RQ5: What is the situation regarding women in leading communication positions in the four regions of America?

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHOD

This thesis research uses the method of secondary data analysis to answer the proposed research questions. It is an international comparative analysis of the data collected through international online surveys of the North American Communication Monitor (NACM) and the Latin American Communication Monitor (LCM) in their 2020-2021 reports. Although both NACM and LCM have examined various topics in each report, this thesis only focuses on the section of gender equality in communications from both reports. Thus, the quantitative approach was based on the data collected on sections of the reports that are focused on assessing and promoting gender equality in communication and public relations industry.

Samples

The NACM and the LCM are part of the Global Communication Monitor, a research initiative that takes place on five continents and in which more than 6,000 communication professionals in more than 80 countries participate in each phase of the study.

Sample 1: NACM 2020-2021

The NACM was chosen as part of this study because it investigates current practices and future developments of strategic communication in public and private companies, nonprofits, governmental organizations and other communication sectors in Canada and the United States. The report used for this specific analysis is the second edition of a survey that focuses on the

strategic communication practices in North America, i.e., Canada and United States, sponsored and organized by The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations (Meng et al., 2021).

Summary of the NACM

This survey was conducted in the year of 2021 by using the Qualtrics online survey platform. The final data set included 1,046 communication professionals in North America (268 in Canada and 778 in the U.S.) that provided valid answers for the 40 questions. On the topic of gender equality in the profession, two thirds (65.6%) of respondents observed improvement in their country, though nearly half (49.5%) of surveyed women said they were personally affected by the glass ceiling barrier in leadership advancement. Additional questions explored were gender equality in communications with a specific focus on reasons thwarting women from reaching management positions in the communication profession (Meng & Neill, 2021) and competency development for communication professionals (Moreno et al., 2017).

Countries: Two country clusters were included in North America: 1) **the Northern North America** (i.e., Canada and the United States) (n= 1,046) and 2) **the Southern North America** (i.e., Mexico and Puerto Rico) (n= 189). It is important to clarify that the data from the Southern North America region was collected by the LCM report due to cultural and language reasons. However, for geographic accuracy, during the recoding process, this region (i.e., Southern North America) was included in the overall North America data set.

Sample 2: LCM 2020-2021

The LCM was selected to be part of this study because it explores current practices and future developments of strategic communication and public relations in companies, non-profit organizations, and the public sector, including communication agencies in Latin America. Furthermore, it aims to contribute to disciplinary and professional development in strategic

communication and public relations, evaluating the trends and changes that are taking place in Latin America (Álvarez-Nobell, 2021).

Summary of the LCM

This report used a database of email addresses of more than 20,000 communication and public relations professionals throughout Latin America to compile the survey data. A total of 1,850 professionals who work in communication departments of companies, consultants, non-profit and government organizations participated in this fourth biennial edition (2020-2021), which includes 1,638 valid cases that represent 20 countries of the subcontinent, encompassing for the first time Puerto Rico and Cuba. The research systematically made the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking communication function visible in the world, thus empowering professionals within their organizations, academics, and researchers, as well as sector associations in their social environment. On the important issue of gender equality at work, the LCM reported that in more than half of the communication departments and agencies most professionals were women, but only one in two achieved management positions.

Countries: Two country clusters are organized in this sample: 1) **South America** (i.e., Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela) (n= 1,170) and 2) **Central America and the Caribbean** (i.e., Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Dominican Republic) (n= 324). The data was collected through the LCM 2020-2021 report, which included responses from communication professionals from 20 countries in Latin America providing detailed knowledge for 12 key markets. As noted earlier, responses from Mexico and Puerto Rico are re-grouped and re-organized as the region of Southern North America. **Table 3.1** summarizes the geographic regions included in this thesis research.

Table 3.1. Geographic regions and countries included in the study

	Geographic region	Countries	Sample
North America	Northern North America	Canada and the United States	1,046
	Southern North America	Mexico and Puerto Rico	189
Latin America	Central America and the Caribbean	Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama, and Dominican Republic	297
	South America	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela	1,152

Statistical Analysis

To run statistical analyses and answer the proposed research questions, the IBM SPSS statistical software was used to combine the dataset, recode the variables, and to determine any significant differences by testing different variables based on the research questions. Some of the statistical analyses that have been applied to this thesis research include the parametric tests such as frequency analyses, the *t*-tests, chi-square tests, the analysis of variance or ANOVA (i.e., One-way ANOVA tests). The detailed results of the analyses are reported in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

RQ1: Current situation of women in communications and public relations

Currently, gender issues are heavily discussed across all professions especially concerning the equality of women and men. Women make up most of the strategic communications and public relations workforce. Thus, it is important to analyze whether there has been any improvement on the issue of gender inequality and its current reality. Therefore, the first research question focuses on investigating communication professionals' perceptions on the gender inequality in the four regions about its improvement. Results indicated that overall, the surveyed communication professionals agreed that gender equality has improved over the last five years in their country ($M= 3.75$, $S.D.= 1.12$, $F [3, 2606] = .55$, $p= .65$) on a scale ranging from 1 (fully disagree) to 5 (fully agree). Details of the means by regions for this question are summarized in **Table 4.1**. When analyzing the data between regions, no statistically significant differences were found.

Communication professionals in these four regions reported a very similar score acknowledging they have experienced an improvement in gender equality in communications in their country. Although results showed a neutral perception reflecting on the number of efforts that have been done towards supporting women in communications in their country ($M= 2.96$, $S.D.= 1.40$). Details of the mean comparisons across the four regions are summarized in **Table 4.2**.

Table 4.1. Perception of communication professionals towards the improvement of gender equality in the past five years.

<i>Gender equality in communications has improved within the last five years</i>			
Geographic region	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	95% C. I.
Northern North America	3.72	.924	3.67 - 3.78
Southern North America	3.79	1.293	3.61 - 3.98
Central America and the Caribbean	3.73	1.442	3.57 - 3.90
South America	3.78	1.271	3.71 - 3.86

Table 4.2. Perception of communication professionals with regards to the support of women in communications in the past five years.

<i>Enough is done to support women in communications</i>			
Geographic region	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	95% C. I.
Northern North America	3.28	1.18	3.21 - 3.35
Southern North America	3.17	1.38	2.97 - 3.38
Central America and the Caribbean	3.09	1.48	2.92 - 3.26
South America	2.59	1.48	2.51 - 2.68

When evaluating mean differences, there were significant differences across the four regions ($F [3, 2605] = 48.47, p < .001$). Specifically, communication professionals in South America reported a significantly low score when assessing if enough is done to support women in communications when compared with the other three regions. In general, communication professionals in the Northern North America, Southern North America, and Central America regions assessed the support significantly higher than their peers in South America. Overall, the results showed although professionals perceived some improvement in gender equality in communications, they also acknowledged that there is still much work to be done towards

supporting women in the communication field. Details of the mean comparisons between regions are summarized in **Table 4.3**.

Table 4.3. Mean comparisons by region of perception of communication professionals towards the improvement of gender equality and with regards to the support of women in communications in the past five years.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>								
Dependent Variable			M.D.	Std. Error	P-Value	95% C.I.		
Gender equality in communications has improved within the last five years in my country	NNA	SNA	-0.07	0.093	0.878	-0.31	0.17	
		SA	-0.058	0.051	0.655	-0.19	0.07	
		CAC	-0.009	0.077	0.999	-0.21	0.19	
	SNA	NNA	0.07	0.093	0.878	-0.17	0.31	
		SA	0.011	0.093	0.999	-0.23	0.25	
		CAC	0.061	0.11	0.946	-0.22	0.34	
	SA	NNA	0.058	0.051	0.655	-0.07	0.19	
		SNA	-0.011	0.093	0.999	-0.25	0.23	
		CAC	0.049	0.077	0.919	-0.15	0.25	
	CAC	NNA	0.009	0.077	0.999	-0.19	0.21	
		SNA	-0.061	0.11	0.946	-0.34	0.22	
		SA	-0.049	0.077	0.919	-0.25	0.15	
	Enough is done to support women in communications in my country	NNA	SNA	0.108	0.11	0.76	-0.17	0.39
			SA	.688*	0.059	0*	0.54	0.84
			CAC	0.194	0.091	0.142	-0.04	0.43
SNA		NNA	-0.108	0.11	0.76	-0.39	0.17	
		SA	.580*	0.11	0*	0.3	0.86	
		CAC	0.086	0.13	0.911	-0.25	0.42	
SA		NNA	-.688*	0.059	0*	-0.84	-0.54	
		SNA	-.580*	0.11	0*	-0.86	-0.3	
		CAC	-.495*	0.09	0*	-0.73	-0.26	
CAC		NNA	-0.194	0.091	0.142	-0.43	0.04	
		SNA	-0.086	0.13	0.911	-0.42	0.25	
		SA	.495*	0.09	0*	0.26	0.73	

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [3, 2605] = 48.47$). Northern North America (NNA), Southern North America (SNA), Central America and the Caribbean (CAC), and South America (SA).*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.

Different Standpoints between Men and Women

When analyzing the perceptions towards the improvement of gender equality or if enough has been done to support women in communications, gender becomes a germane demographic factor that shows significant differences. Interestingly, the results showed that male respondents ranked significantly higher in agreement that the efforts towards gender equality in their country has improved (M= 3.98, S.D.= 1.03), if compared to women (M= 3.61, S.D.= 1.22, $Mean_{diff}=.38$, S.E.= .05, $p < .001$). Following this same trend, women’s perspective concerning if enough has been done to support women in communications in their country, was significantly lower (M= 2.69, S.D.= 1.38, $Mean_{diff} = -.70$, S.E.= .05, $p < .001$) compared to the men’s point of view (M= 3.39, S.D.= 1.30) as displayed in **Table 4.4**.

Table 4.4: Mean comparisons of the current situation of women in strategic communication and public relations vs gender.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>							
Dependent Variable			Mean Diff.	Std. Error	P-Value	95% C.I.	
Gender equality has improved	Female	Male	-.377*	0.046	0*	-0.49	-0.27
	Male	Female	.377*	0.046	0*	0.27	0.49
Enough is done to support women	Female	Male	-.700*	0.054	0*	-0.83	-0.57
	Male	Female	.700*	0.054	0*	0.57	0.83

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [2, 32.99] = 43.98$) and ($F [2, 83.36] = 152.71$).*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Opinions Varied Based on Educational Background

When comparing the ratings by educational background, it is interesting to find that respondents with the highest degree (i.e., doctoral degree) gave the highest rating in agreement that gender equality has improved in the last five years ($M= 3.94$, $S.D.= 1.12$) as displayed in **Table 4.5**. This trend continued when looking if enough has been done to support specifically women in communications in their country, with respondents having a doctoral degree rated the highest in agreement ($M= 3.43$, $S.D.= 1.36$). Their ratings are significantly higher than respondents with some college education or college degree ($M= 2.77$, $S.D.= 1.36$, $Mean_{diff}=.66$, $S.E.= .11$, $p < .001$), followed by respondents without a college or high school degree ($M= 3.25$, $S.D.= 1.36$) and those with a master's degree ($M= 3.11$, $S.D.= 1.42$). **Table 4.6** displays the details in mean comparisons.

Table 4.5: Mean comparisons of the gender equality has improved within the last five years in strategic communication and public relations vs education.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>							
Dependent Variable			Mean Diff.	Std. Error	P-Value	95% C.I.	
Gender equality has improved	Non college degree /High school	S.C.E. /C.D.	-0.006	0.101	1.000	-0.28	0.27
		M.D.	-0.121	0.103	0.766	-0.40	0.16
		D.D.	-0.253	0.134	0.320	-0.62	0.11
		O.	-0.311	0.338	0.889	-1.23	0.61
	Some college education/college degree	N.C./H.S.	0.006	0.101	1.000	-0.27	0.28
		M.D.	-0.115	0.049	0.137	-0.25	0.02
		D.D.	-0.247	0.099	0.089	-0.52	0.02
		O.	-0.305	0.325	0.883	-1.19	0.58
	Master's degree	N.C./H.S.	0.121	0.103	0.766	-0.16	0.40
		S.C.E. /C.D.	0.115	0.049	0.137	-0.02	0.25
		D.D.	-0.133	0.100	0.679	-0.41	0.14
		O.	-0.190	0.326	0.978	-1.08	0.70
	Doctoral degree	N.C./H.S.	0.253	0.134	0.320	-0.11	0.62
		S.C.E. /C.D.	0.247	0.099	0.089	-0.02	0.52
		M.D.	0.133	0.100	0.679	-0.14	0.41
		O.	-0.057	0.337	1.000	-0.98	0.86
	Other	N.C./H.S.	0.311	0.338	0.889	-0.61	1.23
		S.C.E. /C.D.	0.305	0.325	0.883	-0.58	1.19
		M.D.	0.190	0.326	0.978	-0.70	1.08
		D.D.	0.057	0.337	1.000	-0.86	0.98

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [4, 15.43] = 29.40$).*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Non college degree/high school (N.C./H.S.), Some college education/college degree (S.C.E./C.D.), Master's degree (M.D.), Doctoral degree (D.D.), and Other (O.).

Table 4.6: Mean comparisons of enough is done to support women in strategic communication and public relations vs education.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>						
Dependent Variable			Mean Diff.	Std. Error	P-Value	95% C.I.
Enough is done to support women	Non college degree / high school	S.C.E. /C.D.	.486*	0.119	0.000*	0.16 0.81
		M.D.	0.146	0.121	0.751	-0.19 0.48
		D.D.	-0.174	0.157	0.802	-0.60 0.25
		O.	0.253	0.399	0.969	-0.84 1.34
	some college education /college degree	N.C./H.S.	-.486*	0.119	0.000*	-0.81 -0.16
		M.D.	-.340*	0.058	0.000*	-0.50 -0.18
		D.D.	-.660*	0.116	0.000*	-0.98 -0.34
		O.	-0.232	0.385	0.975	-1.28 0.82
	Master's degree	N.C./H.S.	-0.146	0.121	0.751	-0.48 0.19
		S.C.E. /C.D.	.340*	0.058	0.000*	0.18 0.50
		D.D.	-0.320	0.118	0.053	-0.64 0.00
		O.	0.108	0.385	0.999	-0.94 1.16
	Doctoral degree	N.C./H.S.	0.174	0.157	0.802	-0.25 0.60
		S.C.E. /C.D.	.660*	0.116	0.000*	0.34 0.98
		M.D.	0.320	0.118	0.053	0.00 0.64
		O.	0.428	0.398	0.820	-0.66 1.51
	Other	N.C./H.S.	-0.253	0.399	0.969	-1.34 0.84
		S.C.E. /C.D.	0.232	0.385	0.975	-0.82 1.28
		M.D.	-0.108	0.385	0.999	-1.16 0.94
		D.D.	-0.428	0.398	0.820	-1.51 0.66

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [4, 15.43] = 29.40$).*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Non college degree/high school (N.C./H.S.), Some college education/college degree (S.C.E./C.D.), Master's degree (M.D.), Doctoral degree (D.D.), and Other (O.).

Does the Type of Organization Matter?

Another demographic component assessed was the type of organization where the respondents worked at. Interestingly, there were no significant difference across the different categories. However, respondents working at a communication or public relations agency ranked higher towards agreement ($M= 3.84$, $S.D.= 1.22$) regarding if gender equality has improved in the last five years (**Table 4.7**). When looking if enough has been done to support specifically

women in communications in their country, respondents working in a publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) ($M= 3.11$, $S.D.= 1.39$) ranked the highest overall towards agreement and significantly compared to workers of a nonprofit organization or association ($M= 2.73$, $S.D.= 1.28$, $Mean_{diff}= .38$, $S.E.= .12$, $p < .05$) (**Table 4.8**).

Different Perspectives Offered by Work Position

When comparing the results along the leadership reporting line, the respondents identifying themselves as a head of corporate or organizational communication/agency CEO rated highest in agreement ($M= 3.86$, $S.D.= 1.12$), if compared to respondents who are team member/consultant ($M= 3.64$, $S.D.= 1.18$, $Mean_{diff}= .22$, $S.E.= .07$, $p < .05$) or other ($M= 3.56$, $S.D.= 1.25$, $Mean_{diff}= .30$, $S.E.= .11$, $p < .05$) as displayed in **Table 4.9**. The same trend regarding if enough has been done to support specifically women in communications in their country was also reflected in the data analysis. Respondents identifying themselves as head of corporate or organizational communication/agency CEO offered the highest rating in agreement ($M= 3.28$, $S.D.= 1.35$), if compared to team leaders/unit leaders ($M= 3.05$, $S.D.= 1.27$, $Mean_{diff}= .23$, $S.E.= .08$, $p < .05$), team member/consultant ($M= 2.73$, $S.D.= 1.41$, $Mean_{diff}= .55$, $S.E.= .09$, $p < .001$), and other ($M= 2.63$, $S.D.= 1.45$, $Mean_{diff}= .66$, $S.E.= .13$, $p < .001$). Also, team leaders/unit leaders ranked significantly higher than team member/consultant ($Mean_{diff}= .32$, $S.E.= .08$, $p < .001$) as displayed in **Table 4.10**.

Table 4.7: Mean comparisons of the gender equality has improved within the last five years in strategic communication and public relations vs type of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>							
Dependent Variable		<i>Mean Diff.</i>	Std. Error	<i>P-Value</i>	95% C.I.		
Gender equality has improved	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) (P.H.C.)	P.C.	0.093	0.074	0.809	-0.12	0.30
		G.P.P.O.	0.141	0.084	0.539	-0.10	0.38
		N.O.A.	0.140	0.100	0.724	-0.14	0.42
		C.P.R.A.	-0.010	0.080	1.000	-0.24	0.22
		S.F.C.	0.114	0.085	0.760	-0.13	0.36
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) (P.C.)	P.H.C.	-0.093	0.074	0.809	-0.30	0.12
		G.P.P.O.	0.049	0.072	0.985	-0.16	0.25
		N.O.A.	0.048	0.090	0.995	-0.21	0.31
		C.P.R.A.	-0.103	0.068	0.659	-0.30	0.09
		S.F.C.	0.022	0.074	1.000	-0.19	0.23
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O)	P.H.C.	-0.141	0.084	0.539	-0.38	0.10
		P.C.	-0.049	0.072	0.985	-0.25	0.16
		N.O.A.	-0.001	0.099	1.000	-0.28	0.28
		C.P.R.A.	-0.151	0.079	0.388	-0.38	0.07
		S.F.C.	-0.027	0.084	1.000	-0.27	0.21
	Nonprofit organization or association (N.O.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.140	0.100	0.724	-0.42	0.14
		P.C.	-0.048	0.090	0.995	-0.31	0.21
		G.P.P.O.	0.001	0.099	1.000	-0.28	0.28
		C.P.R.A.	-0.150	0.096	0.618	-0.42	0.12
		S.F.C.	-0.026	0.100	1.000	-0.31	0.26
Communication / public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.H.C.	0.010	0.080	1.000	-0.22	0.24	
	P.C.	0.103	0.068	0.659	-0.09	0.30	
	G.P.P.O.	0.151	0.079	0.388	-0.07	0.38	
	N.O.A.	0.150	0.096	0.618	-0.12	0.42	
	S.F.C.	0.124	0.080	0.630	-0.10	0.35	
Self-employed /Communication consultancy/Freelance consultant (S.F.C.)	P.H.C.	-0.114	0.085	0.760	-0.36	0.13	
	P.C.	-0.022	0.074	1.000	-0.23	0.19	
	G.P.P.O.	0.027	0.084	1.000	-0.21	0.27	
	N.O.A.	0.026	0.100	1.000	-0.26	0.31	
	C.P.R.A.	-0.124	0.080	0.630	-0.35	0.10	

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 1.34] = 1.83$) *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.8: Mean comparisons of enough is done to support women in strategic communication and public relations vs type of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>							
Dependent Variable		<i>Mean Diff.</i>	Std. Error	<i>P-Value</i>	95% C.I.		
Enough is done to support women	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) (P.H.C.)	P.C.	0.174	0.088	0.356	-0.08	0.42
		G.P.P.O.	0.079	0.100	0.969	-0.21	0.36
		N.O.A.	.381*	0.119	0.018*	0.04	0.72
		C.P.R.A.	0.111	0.096	0.857	-0.16	0.38
		S.F.C.	0.220	0.101	0.253	-0.07	0.51
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) (P.C.)	P.H.C.	-0.174	0.088	0.356	-0.42	0.08
		G.P.P.O.	-0.095	0.086	0.881	-0.34	0.15
		N.O.A.	0.207	0.108	0.391	-0.10	0.52
		C.P.R.A.	-0.063	0.081	0.972	-0.29	0.17
		S.F.C.	0.047	0.088	0.995	-0.20	0.30
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O)	P.H.C.	-0.079	0.100	0.969	-0.36	0.21
		P.C.	0.095	0.086	0.881	-0.15	0.34
		N.O.A.	0.302	0.118	0.108	-0.03	0.64
		C.P.R.A.	0.032	0.094	0.999	-0.24	0.30
		S.F.C.	0.141	0.100	0.719	-0.14	0.43
	Nonprofit organization or association (N.O.A.)	P.H.C.	-.381*	0.119	0.018*	-0.72	-0.04
		P.C.	-0.207	0.108	0.391	-0.52	0.10
		G.P.P.O.	-0.302	0.118	0.108	-0.64	0.03
		C.P.R.A.	-0.270	0.115	0.171	-0.60	0.06
		S.F.C.	-0.161	0.119	0.759	-0.50	0.18
	Communication / public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.111	0.096	0.857	-0.38	0.16
		P.C.	0.063	0.081	0.972	-0.17	0.29
		G.P.P.O.	-0.032	0.094	0.999	-0.30	0.24
		N.O.A.	0.270	0.115	0.171	-0.06	0.60
S.F.C.		0.109	0.096	0.863	-0.16	0.38	
Self-employed /Communication consultancy/Freelance consultant (S.F.C.)	P.H.C.	-0.220	0.101	0.253	-0.51	0.07	
	P.C.	-0.047	0.088	0.995	-0.30	0.20	
	G.P.P.O.	-0.141	0.100	0.719	-0.43	0.14	
	N.O.A.	0.161	0.119	0.759	-0.18	0.50	
	C.P.R.A.	-0.109	0.096	0.863	-0.38	0.16	

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 2.56] = 4.97$) *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.9: Mean comparisons of the gender equality has improved within the last five years in strategic communication and public relations vs work position.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>							
Dependent variable			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Gender equality has improved	Head of corporate/ Agency CEO	T.U.L.	0.098	0.063	0.406	-0.06	0.26
		T.M.C.	.216*	0.071	0.012*	0.03	0.40
		O.	.297*	0.108	0.031*	0.02	0.57
	Team/Unit leader	H.C.A.CEO	-0.098	0.063	0.406	-0.26	0.06
		T.M.C.	0.118	0.065	0.270	-0.05	0.29
		O.	0.199	0.104	0.227	-0.07	0.47
	Team member /Consultant	H.C.A.CEO	-.216*	0.071	0.012*	-0.40	-0.03
		T.U.L.	-0.118	0.065	0.270	-0.29	0.05
		O.	0.081	0.109	0.880	-0.20	0.36
	Other	H.C.A.CEO	-.297*	0.108	0.031*	-0.57	-0.02
		T.U.L.	-0.199	0.104	0.227	-0.47	0.07
		T.M.C.	-0.081	0.109	0.880	-0.36	0.20

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [3, 4.40] = 5.49$)*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Head of corporate Agency CEO (H.C.A.CEO), Team/unit leader (T.U.L.), Team member/consultant (T.M.C.), and Other (O).

Table 4.10: Mean comparisons of enough is done to support women in strategic communication and public relations vs work position.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>							
Dependent variable			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Enough is done to support women	Head of corporate /Agency CEO	T.U.L.	.233*	0.076	0.011*	0.04	0.43
		T.M.C.	.551*	0.085	0.000*	0.33	0.77
		Other	.655*	0.129	0.000*	0.32	0.99
	Team/Unit leader	H.C.A.CEO	-.233*	0.076	0.011*	-0.43	-0.04
		T.M.C.	.318*	0.078	0.000*	0.12	0.52
		O.	.422*	0.125	0.004*	0.10	0.74
	Team member/Consultant	H.C.A.CEO	-.551*	0.085	0.000*	-0.77	-0.33
		T.U.L.	-.318*	0.078	0.000*	-0.52	-0.12
		O.	0.104	0.130	0.856	-0.23	0.44
	Other	H.C.A.CEO	-.655*	0.129	0.000*	-0.99	-0.32
		T.U.L.	-.422*	0.125	0.004*	-0.74	-0.10
		T.M.C.	-0.104	0.130	0.856	-0.44	0.23

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [3, 18] = 32.39$)*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Head of corporate/Agency CEO (H.C.A.CEO), Team/Unit leader (T.U.L.), Team member/Consultant (T.M.C.), and Other (O).

Panorama Based on Career Length

For the last demographic variable compared, when referring to if gender equality has improved in the last five years, professionals with more than 10 years of experience had a significantly higher perception in agreement ($M= 3.80$, $S.D.= 1.18$), if compared with up to 5 years of experience ($M= 3.64$, $S.D.= 1.18$, $Mean_{diff} = .16$, $p < .05$). When looking at if enough has been done to support specifically women in communications in their country, practitioners with 6 to 10 years of experience ranked significantly higher in agreement ($M= 3.02$, $S.D.= 1.35$) compared with those having up to 5 years of experience ($Mean_{diff} = .24$, $p < .05$). Those with more than 10 years of experience had a significantly higher perception in agreement ($M= 3.02$, $S.D.= 1.42$), if compared with those having up to 5 years of experience ($Mean_{diff} = .25$, $S.E.= .07$, $p < .05$) (see **Table 4.11** for details).

Table 4.11: Mean comparisons of the current situation of women in strategic communication and public relations vs year of experience.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Gender equality has improved	Up to 5 years	6 - 10 years	-0.141	0.065	0.077	-0.29	0.01
		> 10 years	-.158*	0.057	0.014*	-0.29	-0.03
	6 to 10 years	≤ 5 years	0.141	0.065	0.077	-0.01	0.29
		> 10 years	-0.017	0.056	0.949	-0.15	0.11
More than 10 years	≤ 5 years	.158*	0.057	0.014*	0.03	0.29	
	6 - 10 years	0.017	0.056	0.949	-0.11	0.15	
Enough is done to support women	Up to 5 years	6 - 10 years	-.239*	0.078	0.006*	-0.42	-0.06
		> 10 years	-.247*	0.067	0.001*	-0.41	-0.09
	6 to 10 years	≤ 5 years	.239*	0.078	0.006*	0.06	0.42
		> 10 years	-0.008	0.066	0.993	-0.16	0.15
More than 10 years	≤ 5 years	.247*	0.067	0.001*	0.09	0.41	
	6 - 10 years	0.008	0.066	0.993	-0.15	0.16	

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [2, 4.11] = 5.60$) and ($F [2, 7.36] = 14.26$) *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

RQ2: The glass ceiling in communications

The second research question was interested in investigating how the glass ceiling phenomenon was perceived by communication professionals in their country and within their organization. Overall, communication profession tended to agree that the glass ceiling was an issue in their country ($M= 3.74$, $S.D.= 3.95$, on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) or 6 (do not know). Statistically, significant differences were found across the four regions ($F [3, 2617] = 16.14$, $p < .001$). Professionals in Southern South America reported a significantly high score, indicating the glass-ceiling problem affects the communication profession in their country/region (i.e., Mexico and Puerto Rico). When asked specifically if this affected their own communication department/agency and the female practitioners working in similar positions, the average response tended to neutrality ($M= 2.91$, $S.D.= 3.04$; $M= 3.24$, $S.D.= 5.20$), respectively. When looking if enough has been done to support women in communications in their country, female practitioners rated this significantly lower ($M= 2.69$, $S.D. = 1.38$, $F [5.61, 2600] = -.70$, $p < .001$) compared to their male counterpart ($M= 3.39$, $S.D.= 1.31$).

More importantly, when looking at the data resulting from the comparisons of responses across the four regions, statistically significant differences were found: the Southern North America region scored significantly higher than the Northern North America region ($Mean_{diff} = 2.06$, $S.E.= .31$, $p < .001$), followed by the Central America region ($Mean_{diff} = 1.92$, $S.E.= .37$, $p < .001$) and the South America region ($Mean_{diff} = 2.08$, $S.E.= .31$, $p < .001$). Moreover, the next significant differences were found when asked if the glass ceiling issue affected their communication department/agency. Communication professionals in the Northern North America ($Mean_{diff} = .61$, $S.E.= .13$, $p < .001$) and the Southern North America ($Mean_{diff} = .92$,

S.E.= .24, $p < .001$) regions reported significantly higher scores than those in the South America region. Professionals in Southern North America also reported a significantly higher score than those in Central America ($Mean_{diff} = .77$, S.E.= .29, $p < .001$). Specifically in relation to whether female practitioners in similar positions were affected, more significant differences were found. Professionals in Southern North America reported a significantly higher score than those in Northern North America ($Mean_{diff} = 2.95$, S.E.= .41, $p < .001$), followed by professionals in Central America ($Mean_{diff} = 3.23$, S.E.= .48, $p < .001$) and South America ($Mean_{diff} = 3.47$, S.E.= .40, $p < .001$). Evaluating if the female professionals themselves are affected directly by the glass ceiling effect. The findings indicate that women agreed that the glass ceiling phenomenon affected them directly ($M = 3.73$, S.D.= 1.77). The Southern North America ($Mean_{diff} = .76$, S.E.= .15, $p < .001$), the Central America ($Mean_{diff} = .38$, S.E.= .13, $p < .001$), and the South America ($Mean_{diff} = .52$, S.E.= .09, $p < .001$) perceived this issue statistically significantly higher than the Northern North America region.

Different Standpoint between Men and Women

When assessing the opinion of practitioners with regards to if the glass ceiling issue affected different components such as the communication profession in their country, their communication department/agency, communication practitioners in their organization working in similar positions, and in case of women, themselves personally, gender becomes an important demographic factor to consider. Results showed that female respondents rated significantly higher on the glass ceiling problem in their country ($M = 3.71$, S.D.= 1.29, $Mean_{diff} = 0.30$, S.E.= 0.05, $p < .001$), if compared to men ($M = 3.40$, S.D.= 1.35). Furthermore, women's perception towards this issue specifically in their communication department/agency was significantly higher in agreement ($M = 2.90$, S.D.= 1.49, $Mean_{diff} = 0.16$, S.E.= 0.06, $p = .02$), when compared

to men ($M= 2.74$, $S.D.= 1.42$). When asked if this had affected their peers, women classified this significantly higher again in agreement ($M= 3.08$, $S.D.= 1.48$, $Mean_{diff}= 0.24$, $S.E.= 0.06$, $p < .001$), if compared to men ($M= 2.84$, $S.D.= 1.46$). Finally, women agreed when enquired that this issue had affected them personally, ($M= 3.15$, $S.D.= 1.50$).

Perceptions Varied Based on Educational Background

Moreover, when looking into the education demographic, even though there were no statistically significant differences in terms of how people with different educational backgrounds perceived this issue in their country, it was very interesting that respondents with the highest degree (doctoral), ranked their perception higher ($M= 3.87$, $S.D.= 1.17$) when compared to “other” ($Mean_{diff}= .72$, $S.E.= .38$, $p = .33$), “non college degree or high school” ($Mean_{diff}= 0.39$, $S.E.= .15$, $p = .08$), “some college education or college degree” ($Mean_{diff}= 0.29$, $S.E.= .11$, $p = .08$), and “Master’s degree” ($Mean_{diff}= 0.30$, $S.E.= .11$, $p = .07$). In terms of how this issue affected their communication department/agency, again the same trend was observed, respondents with the highest educational degree (doctoral), classifying their perception higher ($M= 3.29$, $S.D.= 1.37$).

However, this was statistically significant only when compared to respondents with master’s degree ($Mean_{diff}= .47$, $S.E.= .13$, $p < .05$), and people with some college education or college degree ($Mean_{diff}= .50$, $S.E.= .12$, $p < .001$) (**Table 4.12**). When asked if this had affected female practitioners in their organization, again respondents with the highest degree (doctoral) ($M= 3.42$, $S.D.= 1.38$) classified this higher again in agreement with statistical differences when compared to respondents with a master’s degree ($Mean_{diff}= .44$, $S.E.= .13$, $p < .05$), and people with some college education or college degree ($Mean_{diff}= .49$, $S.E.= .12$, $p < .05$) (**Table 4.13**). Finally, with regards to women being affected personally, women with a doctoral degree ($M=$

3.90, S.D.= 1.72) were in a higher level of agreement than the other education groups albeit these differences not being statistically significant (**Table 4.14**).

Table 4.12: Mean comparisons of the glass ceiling problem affects my department/agency vs education.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
The glass ceiling problem affects my department/agency	Non college degree or high school	S.C.E./C.D.	0.098	0.128	0.939	-0.25	0.45
		M.D.	0.067	0.130	0.986	-0.29	0.42
		D.D.	-0.403	0.168	0.117	-0.86	0.06
		O.	-0.033	0.423	1.000	-1.19	1.12
	Some college education / college degree	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.098	0.128	0.939	-0.45	0.25
		M.D.	-0.031	0.062	0.987	-0.20	0.14
		D.D.	-.501*	0.124	0.000*	-0.84	-0.16
		O.	-0.131	0.408	0.998	-1.24	0.98
	Master's degree	N.C.D./ H.S.	-0.067	0.130	0.986	-0.42	0.29
		S.C.E./C.D.	0.031	0.062	0.987	-0.14	0.20
		D.D.	-.470*	0.126	0.002*	-0.81	-0.13
		O.	-0.100	0.409	0.999	-1.22	1.02
	Doctoral degree	N.C.D./ H.S.	0.403	0.168	0.117	-0.06	0.86
		S.C.E./C.D.	.501*	0.124	0.000*	0.16	0.84
		M.D.	.470*	0.126	0.002*	0.13	0.81
		O.	0.370	0.422	0.906	-0.78	1.52
	Other	N.C.D./H.S.	0.033	0.423	1.000	-1.12	1.19
		S.C.E./C.D.	0.131	0.408	0.998	-0.98	1.24
		M.D.	0.100	0.409	0.999	-1.02	1.22
		D.D.	-0.370	0.422	0.906	-1.52	0.78

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [4, 2.04] = 9.8$). The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Non college degree/high school (N.C./H.S.), Some college education/college degree (S.C.E./C.D.), Master's degree (M.D.), Doctoral degree (D.D.), and Other (O.).

Table 4.13: Mean comparisons of the glass ceiling problem affects practitioners in my organization working in positions like mine vs education.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
The glass ceiling problem affects female practitioners in my organization working in positions like mine	Non college degree or high school	S.C.E./C.D.	0.110	0.128	0.912	-0.24	0.46
		M.D.	0.061	0.130	0.990	-0.30	0.42
		D.D.	-0.380	0.169	0.162	-0.84	0.08
		O.	0.272	0.426	0.969	-0.89	1.43
	Some college education / college degree	(N.C.D./ H.S.)	-0.110	0.128	0.912	-0.46	0.24
		M.D.	-0.049	0.062	0.934	-0.22	0.12
		D.D.	-.489*	0.124	0.001*	-0.83	-0.15
		O.	0.162	0.410	0.995	-0.96	1.28
	Master's degree	(N.C.D./ H.S.)	-0.061	0.130	0.990	-0.42	0.30
		S.C.E./C.D.	0.049	0.062	0.934	-0.12	0.22
		D.D.	-.440*	0.127	0.005*	-0.79	-0.09
		O.	0.211	0.411	0.986	-0.91	1.33
	Doctoral degree	(N.C.D./ H.S.)	0.380	0.169	0.162	-0.08	0.84
		S.C.E./C.D.	.489*	0.124	0.001*	0.15	0.83
		M.D.	.440*	0.127	0.005*	0.09	0.79
		O.	0.651	0.425	0.540	-0.51	1.81
	Other	(N.C.D./ H.S.)	-0.272	0.426	0.969	-1.43	0.89
		S.C.E./C.D.	-0.162	0.410	0.995	-1.28	0.96
		M.D.	-0.211	0.411	0.986	-1.33	0.91
		D.D.	-0.651	0.425	0.540	-1.81	0.51

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [4, 4] = 8.66$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Non college degree/high school (N.C./H.S.), Some college education/college degree (S.C.E./C.D.), Master's degree (M.D.), Doctoral degree (D.D.), and Other (O.).

Does the type of organization matter?

Another demographic component evaluated was the type of organization where the respondents worked at. Interestingly, regardless of where the respondents worked at, there were no statistically significant differences in terms of how respondents perceived the glass ceiling issue in their country. However, self-employed/communication consultant/freelance consultant professionals had the highest perception in agreement (M= 3.71, S.D.= 1.34) (**Table 4.15**).

Regarding if this issue affected their communication department agency, respondents working in

a publicly-held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) ranked significantly higher in agreement when compared to employees of a private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) ($Mean_{diff} = .30$, $S.E. = .09$, $p = .01$), or working in a communication or public relations agency ($Mean_{diff} = .71$, $S.E. = .10$, $p < .001$) (Table 4.16).

Table 4.14: Mean comparisons of the glass ceiling problem affects a woman like me personally vs education.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
The glass ceiling problem affects a woman like me personally.	Non college degree or high school (N.C./H.S.)	S.C.E./C.D.	-0.101	0.182	0.981	-0.60	0.40
		M.D.	-0.259	0.185	0.630	-0.76	0.25
		D.D.	-0.333	0.245	0.654	-1.00	0.34
		O.	-0.151	0.692	0.999	-2.04	1.74
	Some college education / college degree (S.C.E./C.D.)	(N.C.D./ H.S.)	0.101	0.182	0.981	-0.40	0.60
		M.D.	-0.157	0.081	0.290	-0.38	0.06
		D.D.	-0.232	0.180	0.698	-0.72	0.26
		O.	-0.050	0.672	1.000	-1.88	1.78
	Master's degree (M.D.)	(N.C.D./ H.S.)	0.259	0.185	0.630	-0.25	0.76
		S.C.E./C.D.	0.157	0.081	0.290	-0.06	0.38
		D.D.	-0.075	0.183	0.994	-0.57	0.42
		O.	0.107	0.672	1.000	-1.73	1.94
	Doctoral degree (D.D.)	(N.C.D./H.S.)	0.333	0.245	0.654	-0.34	1.00
		S.C.E./C.D.	0.232	0.180	0.698	-0.26	0.72
		M.D.	0.075	0.183	0.994	-0.42	0.57
		O.	0.182	0.691	0.999	-1.71	2.07
	Other (O.)	(N.C.D./ H.S.)	0.151	0.692	0.999	-1.74	2.04
		S.C.E./C.D.	0.050	0.672	1.000	-1.78	1.88
M.D.		-0.107	0.672	1.000	-1.94	1.73	
D.D.		-0.182	0.691	0.999	-2.07	1.71	

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [4, 1.41] = 4.44$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Looking how this affected female peers in their organizations, employees working in a publicly-held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) ($Mean_{diff} = .51$, $S.E. = .10$, $p < .001$) or a private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) ($Mean_{diff} = .35$,

S.E.= .09, $p < .001$), or in a government-owned, public sector or political organization ($Mean_{diff} = .48$, S.E.= .10, $p < .001$) ranked statistically higher in agreement when compared to people working in a communication or public relations agency (**Table 4.17**).

Lastly, when enquired women specifically if it had affected them personally, interestingly female employees as a self-employed/communication consultant/freelance consultant professionals had the highest perception in agreement ($M = 4.03$, S.D.= 1.73) with statistical differences when compared against employees from a government-owned, public sector or political organization ($Mean_{diff} = .39$, S.E.= .13, $p < .05$) or a private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) ($Mean_{diff} = .41$, S.E.= .12, $p < .05$) (**Table 4.18**).

Table 4.15: Mean comparisons of the glass ceiling problem affects the communication profession in my country vs types of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
The glass ceiling problem affects the profession in my country	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) (P.H.C.)	P.C.	0.009	0.083	1.000	-0.23	0.25
		G.P.P.O.	-0.033	0.095	0.999	-0.30	0.24
		N.O.A.	-0.046	0.113	0.999	-0.37	0.28
		C.P.R.A.	0.125	0.090	0.735	-0.13	0.38
		S.F.C.	-0.120	0.096	0.816	-0.39	0.15
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) (P.C.)	P.H.C.	-0.009	0.083	1.000	-0.25	0.23
		G.P.P.O.	-0.042	0.082	0.996	-0.28	0.19
		N.O.A.	-0.054	0.102	0.995	-0.35	0.24
		C.P.R.A.	0.116	0.077	0.652	-0.10	0.34
		S.F.C.	-0.128	0.084	0.643	-0.37	0.11
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O)	P.H.C.	0.033	0.095	0.999	-0.24	0.30
		P.C.	0.042	0.082	0.996	-0.19	0.28
		N.O.A.	-0.012	0.112	1.000	-0.33	0.31
		C.P.R.A.	0.158	0.089	0.479	-0.10	0.41
		S.F.C.	-0.086	0.095	0.945	-0.36	0.19
	Nonprofit organization or association (N.O.A.)	P.H.C.	0.046	0.113	0.999	-0.28	0.37
		P.C.	0.054	0.102	0.995	-0.24	0.35
		G.P.P.O.	0.012	0.112	1.000	-0.31	0.33

	C.P.R.A.	0.171	0.108	0.613	-0.14	0.48
	S.F.C.	-0.074	0.113	0.987	-0.40	0.25
Communication/public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.125	0.090	0.735	-0.38	0.13
	P.C.	-0.116	0.077	0.652	-0.34	0.10
	G.P.P.O.	-0.158	0.089	0.479	-0.41	0.10
	N.O.A.	-0.171	0.108	0.613	-0.48	0.14
	S.F.C.	-0.245	0.091	0.076	-0.50	0.01
Self-employed /Communication consultancy/Freelance consultant (S.F.C.)	P.H.C.	0.120	0.096	0.816	-0.15	0.39
	P.C.	0.128	0.084	0.643	-0.11	0.37
	G.P.P.O.	0.086	0.095	0.945	-0.19	0.36
	N.O.A.	0.074	0.113	0.987	-0.25	0.40
	C.P.R.A.	0.245	0.091	0.076	-0.01	0.50

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 1.6] = 2.8^*$). The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.16: Mean comparisons of the glass ceiling problem affects my department/agency vs types of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
The glass ceiling problem affects my department/agency	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) (P.H.C.)	P.C.	.303*	0.091	0.012*	0.04	0.56
		G.P.P.O.	0.193	0.104	0.433	-0.10	0.49
		N.O.A.	0.329	0.124	0.085	-0.02	0.68
		C.P.R.A.	.708*	0.099	0.000*	0.42	0.99
		S.F.C.	0.251	0.106	0.171	-0.05	0.55
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) (P.C.)	P.H.C.	-.303*	0.091	0.012*	-0.56	-0.04
		G.P.P.O.	-0.111	0.090	0.820	-0.37	0.15
		N.O.A.	0.025	0.112	1.000	-0.29	0.34
		C.P.R.A.	.405*	0.084	0.000*	0.16	0.64
		S.F.C.	-0.052	0.092	0.993	-0.32	0.21
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O.)	P.H.C.	-0.193	0.104	0.433	-0.49	0.10
		P.C.	0.111	0.090	0.820	-0.15	0.37
		N.O.A.	0.136	0.123	0.878	-0.21	0.49
		C.P.R.A.	.515*	0.098	0.000*	0.24	0.79
		S.F.C.	0.058	0.105	0.994	-0.24	0.36
	Nonprofit organization or association (N.O.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.329	0.124	0.085	-0.68	0.02
		P.C.	-0.025	0.112	1.000	-0.34	0.29
		G.P.P.O.	-0.136	0.123	0.878	-0.49	0.21
		C.P.R.A.	.379*	0.119	0.018*	0.04	0.72
		S.F.C.	-0.078	0.125	0.989	-0.43	0.28
Communication/public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.H.C.	-.708*	0.099	0.000*	-0.99	-0.42	
	P.C.	-.405*	0.084	0.000*	-0.64	-0.16	
	G.P.P.O.	-.515*	0.098	0.000*	-0.79	-0.24	

	N.O.A.	-.379*	0.119	0.018*	-0.72	-0.04
	S.F.C.	-.457*	0.100	0.000*	-0.74	-0.17
Self-employed /Communication consultancy/Freelance consultant (S.F.C.)	P.H.C.	-0.251	0.106	0.171	-0.55	0.05
	P.C.	0.052	0.092	0.993	-0.21	0.32
	G.P.P.O.	-0.058	0.105	0.994	-0.36	0.24
	N.O.A.	0.078	0.125	0.989	-0.28	0.43
	C.P.R.A.	.457*	0.100	0.000*	0.17	0.74

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 11.47] = 24.19^*$). The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.17: Mean comparisons of the glass ceiling problem affects female practitioners in my organization working in positions like mine vs types of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
The glass ceiling problem affects female practitioners in my organization working in positions like mine	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) (P.H.C.)	P.C.	0.156	0.092	0.542	-0.11	0.42
		G.P.P.O.	0.027	0.105	1.000	-0.27	0.33
		N.O.A.	0.236	0.125	0.414	-0.12	0.59
		C.P.R.A.	.511*	0.101	0.000*	0.22	0.80
		S.F.C.	0.087	0.107	0.966	-0.22	0.39
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market)	P.H.C.	-0.156	0.092	0.542	-0.42	0.11
		G.P.P.O.	-0.128	0.091	0.722	-0.39	0.13
		N.O.A.	0.080	0.114	0.981	-0.24	0.40
		C.P.R.A.	.355*	0.086	0.000*	0.11	0.60
		S.F.C.	-0.069	0.094	0.978	-0.34	0.20
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O)	P.H.C.	-0.027	0.105	1.000	-0.33	0.27
		P.C.	0.128	0.091	0.722	-0.13	0.39
		N.O.A.	0.208	0.124	0.548	-0.15	0.56
		C.P.R.A.	.483*	0.099	0.000*	0.20	0.77
		S.F.C.	0.060	0.106	0.993	-0.24	0.36
	Nonprofit organization or association (N.O.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.236	0.125	0.414	-0.59	0.12
		P.C.	-0.080	0.114	0.981	-0.40	0.24
		G.P.P.O.	-0.208	0.124	0.548	-0.56	0.15
		C.P.R.A.	0.275	0.120	0.200	-0.07	0.62
		S.F.C.	-0.149	0.126	0.847	-0.51	0.21
Communication or public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.H.C.	-.511*	0.101	0.000*	-0.80	-0.22	
	P.C.	-.355*	0.086	0.000*	-0.60	-0.11	
	G.P.P.O.	-.483*	0.099	0.000*	-0.77	-0.20	
	N.O.A.	-0.275	0.120	0.200	-0.62	0.07	
	S.F.C.	-.424*	0.102	0.000*	-0.71	-0.13	
Self-employed /Communication consultancy/Freelance	P.H.C.	-0.087	0.107	0.966	-0.39	0.22	
	P.C.	0.069	0.094	0.978	-0.20	0.34	
	G.P.P.O.	-0.060	0.106	0.993	-0.36	0.24	

consultant (S.F.C.)	N.O.A.	0.149	0.126	0.847	-0.21	0.51
	C.P.R.A.	.424*	0.102	0.000*	0.13	0.71

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 7.32] = 15.72$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.18: Mean comparisons of the glass ceiling problem affects a woman like me personally vs types of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
The glass ceiling problem affects a woman like me personally.	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) (P.H.C.)	P.C.	0.156	0.130	0.837	-0.21	0.53
		G.P.P.O.	0.133	0.141	0.935	-0.27	0.53
		N.O.A.	0.097	0.162	0.991	-0.37	0.56
		C.P.R.A.	0.084	0.134	0.989	-0.30	0.47
		S.F.C.	-0.254	0.142	0.476	-0.66	0.15
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market)	P.H.C.	-0.156	0.130	0.837	-0.53	0.21
		G.P.P.O.	-0.023	0.120	1.000	-0.36	0.32
		N.O.A.	-0.060	0.144	0.998	-0.47	0.35
		C.P.R.A.	-0.072	0.112	0.987	-0.39	0.25
		S.F.C.	-.410*	0.122	0.010*	-0.76	-0.06
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O)	P.H.C.	-0.133	0.141	0.935	-0.53	0.27
		P.C.	0.023	0.120	1.000	-0.32	0.36
		N.O.A.	-0.037	0.154	1.000	-0.48	0.40
		C.P.R.A.	-0.049	0.124	0.999	-0.40	0.30
		S.F.C.	-.387*	0.133	0.042*	-0.77	-0.01
	Nonprofit organization or association (N.O.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.097	0.162	0.991	-0.56	0.37
		P.C.	0.060	0.144	0.998	-0.35	0.47
		G.P.P.O.	0.037	0.154	1.000	-0.40	0.48
		C.P.R.A.	-0.013	0.148	1.000	-0.43	0.41
		S.F.C.	-0.351	0.156	0.213	-0.79	0.09
Communication / public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.084	0.134	0.989	-0.47	0.30	
	P.C.	0.072	0.112	0.987	-0.25	0.39	
	G.P.P.O.	0.049	0.124	0.999	-0.30	0.40	
	N.O.A.	0.013	0.148	1.000	-0.41	0.43	
	S.F.C.	-0.338	0.126	0.078	-0.70	0.02	
Self-employed /Communication consultancy/Freelance consultant (S.F.C.)	P.H.C.	0.254	0.142	0.476	-0.15	0.66	
	P.C.	.410*	0.122	0.010*	0.06	0.76	
	G.P.P.O.	.387*	0.133	0.042*	0.01	0.77	
	N.O.A.	0.351	0.156	0.213	-0.09	0.79	
	C.P.R.A.	0.338	0.126	0.078	-0.02	0.70	

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 2.7] = 8.45$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Different Perspectives Offered by Work Position

When comparing the perceptions on this question along the leadership line, overall, there were no significant differences. However, the respondents identifying themselves as a team member/consultant, were the highest in agreement ($M= 3.68$, $S.D.= 1.28$) when looking at how this issue affected the communication profession in their country. Whereas professionals identifying themselves as a team member/unit leader were the highest in agreement ($M= 3.01$, $S.D.= 1.37$) when referring to this issue with regards to their communication department/agency. When communication practitioners were asked how this affected their peers working in similar positions, again professionals identifying themselves as a team member/unit leader were the highest in agreement ($M= 3.13$, $S.D.= 1.36$). Specifically, in the case of women, how this affected themselves personally, team member/consultant, were the highest in agreement ($M= 3.71$, $S.D.= 1.74$). The significant statistical results are reported in **Table 4.19**.

Panorama Based on Career Length

For the last demographic variable evaluated, regardless of how many years of experience the respondents had, there were no statistically significant differences in terms of how these perceived the glass ceiling issue in their country. However, professionals with 6 to 10 years of experience had the highest perception in agreement ($M= 3.65$, $S.D.= 1.26$). Regarding if this issue affected their communication department agency, again professionals with 6 to 10 years of experience were significantly higher in agreement when compared to professionals with up to 5 years of experience ($Mean_{diff}= .22$, $S.E.= .08$, $p= .02$) and more than 10 years of experience ($Mean_{diff}= .30$, $S.E.= .07$, $p < .001$).

Table 4.19: Mean comparisons of the glass ceiling problem affects the communication profession vs work position.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
The glass ceiling problem affects female practitioners in my organization working in positions like mine	Head of corporate / Agency CEO	T.U.L.	-0.009	0.080	1.000	-0.21	0.20
		T.M.C.	0.157	0.090	0.303	-0.07	0.39
		O.	0.185	0.137	0.535	-0.17	0.54
	Team / Unit leader	H.C.A.CEO	0.009	0.080	1.000	-0.20	0.21
		T.M.C.	0.165	0.083	0.192	-0.05	0.38
		O.	0.193	0.133	0.466	-0.15	0.54
	Team member/ Consultant	H.C.A.CEO	-0.157	0.090	0.303	-0.39	0.07
		T.U.L.	-0.165	0.083	0.192	-0.38	0.05
		O.	0.028	0.139	0.997	-0.33	0.39
	Other	H.C.A.CEO	-0.185	0.137	0.535	-0.54	0.17
		T.U.L.	-0.193	0.133	0.466	-0.54	0.15
		T.M.C.	-0.028	0.139	0.997	-0.39	0.33
The glass ceiling problem affects a woman like me personally.	Head of corporate/ Agency CEO	T.U.L.	0.001	0.116	1.000	-0.30	0.30
		T.M.C.	-0.095	0.121	0.862	-0.41	0.22
		O.	0.012	0.177	1.000	-0.44	0.47
	Team/Unit leader	H.C.A.CEO	-0.001	0.116	1.000	-0.30	0.30
		T.M.C.	-0.095	0.108	0.815	-0.37	0.18
		O.	0.011	0.169	1.000	-0.42	0.45
	Team member/ Consultant	H.C.A.CEO	0.095	0.121	0.862	-0.22	0.41
		T.U.L.	0.095	0.108	0.815	-0.18	0.37
		O.	0.107	0.173	0.926	-0.34	0.55
	Other	H.C.A.CEO	-0.012	0.177	1.000	-0.47	0.44
		T.U.L.	-0.011	0.169	1.000	-0.45	0.42
		T.M.C.	-0.107	0.173	0.926	-0.55	0.34

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [3, 1.94] = 3.9$) and ($F [3, 0.33] = 0.97$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Head of corporate/agency CEO (H.C.A.CEO), Team/unit leader (T.U.L.), Team member/consultant (T.M.C.), and Other (O).

When enquired if this affected peers in their organizations, professionals with 6 to 10 years of experience ($M= 3.14$, $S.D.= 1.38$) had a significant higher perception in agreement when compared to professionals with more than 10 years ($Mean_{diff} = .24$, $S.E.= .07$, $p < .05$). Finally, when women were asked if this affected them personally, professionals with more than 10 years scored highest in agreement ($M= 3.80$, $S.D.= 1.86$)

RQ3: Reasons hindering women from reaching the top leadership positions

There is a common belief that women are not able to reach top positions in strategic communication and public relations because there are factors hindering them, which was the purpose of the third research question. When examining the data, several factors were rated high by professionals on a Likert-scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) as displayed in **Table 4.20**. When looking into the statistical meanings of the data, multiple significant differences were identified across the regions as displayed in **Table 4.21**.

Table 4.20. Factors preventing women from reaching top positions.

Factors preventing women from reaching top positions	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D.</i>	95% C. I.
Lack of specific competences	2.46	4.27	2.26 – 2.66
Lack of ambition	2.41	4.27	2.21 – 2.61
Informal and non-transparent promotion policies	3.91	4.76	3.69 – 4.14
Lack of flexibility to meet family obligations	3.93	2.57	3.81 – 4.05
Lacks networks and specific development programs	3.80	4.19	3.60 – 4.00
Lacks inspiring female role models	3.33	4.83	3.10 – 3.56

Different Standpoint between Men and Women

When assessing the opinion of communication professional with regards to the factors deterring them from achieving top leadership positions, gender becomes a paramount demographic factor to consider. Interestingly, results showed that when referring to a lack of specific competencies necessary for more senior levels, male respondents rated this significantly higher ($M= 2.76$, $S.D.= 1.48$, $Mean_{diff}= .74$, $S.E.= .07$, $p < .001$) than women ($M= 2.02$, $S.D.= 1.38$). Furthermore, when respondents were asked if women who do not get promoted is because they lack the ambition for this, men again classified this as significantly higher in agreement ($M= 2.69$, $S.D.= 1.50$), $Mean_{diff}= .70$, $S.E.= .07$, $p < .001$) compared to women ($M= 1.99$, $S.D.= 1.34$).

Table 4.21. Statistical differences across the four regions indicating a higher score for factors preventing women from reaching top positions in the communications.

Factors	Geographical regions	Mean diff.	p-value
Lack of specific competences	NNA vs SA	1.48	< .001
	NNA vs CAC	.98	< .03
	SNA vs NNA	1.16	< .04
	SNA vs SA	2.64	< .001
	SNA vs CAC	2.14	< .001
Lack of ambition	NNA vs SA	1.35	< .001
	NNA vs CAC	1.09	< .02
	SNA vs NNA	1.24	< .001
	SNA vs SA	2.58	< .001
	SNA vs CAC	2.33	< .001
Informal and non-transparent promotion policies	SNA vs NNA	3.16	< .001
	SNA vs SA	3.18	< .001
	SNA vs CAC	3.40	< .001
Lack of flexibility to meet family obligations	SNA vs NNA	1.04	< .001
	SNA vs SA	.78	< .02
	SNA vs CAC	.95	< .02
Lacks networks and specific development programs	SNA vs NNA	2.08	< .001
	SNA vs SA	2.11	< .001
	SNA vs CAC	2.06	< .001
Lacks inspiring female role models	NNA vs SA	.69	< .04
	SNA vs NNA	2.41	< .001
	SNA vs SA	3.10	< .001
	SNA vs CAC	3.01	< .001

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [3, 169.18] = 277.19$). Northern North America (NNA), Southern North America (SNA), Central America and the Caribbean (CAC), and South America (SA).

When asked if organizations promoted employees based on informal and non-transparent promotion policies, women classified this higher in agreement ($M= 3.72$, $S.D.= 1.24$) compared to men ($M= 3.65$, $S.D.= 1.21$). Women ranked significantly higher ($M= 3.94$, $S.D.= 1.16$, $Mean_{diff} = .16$, $S.E.= .06$, $p < .05$) compared to men ($M= 3.78$, $S.D.= 1.14$). Likewise, when asked about the lack of flexibility to deal with family obligations. Moreover, when asked if the

profession lacked specific networks and development programs specifically for women, women ranked this significantly higher in agreement ($M= 3.71$, $S.D.= 1.28$), $Mean_{diff} = .22$, $S.E.= .06$, $p < .05$) compared to men ($M= 3.50$, $S.D.= 1.26$). Lastly, men were in a higher agreement when questioned if the profession lacked inspiring female role models, ($M= 3.13$, $S.D.= 1.41$).

Perceptions Varied Based on Educational Background

When assessing this demographic, it was very interesting that respondents with the highest degree (i.e., PhD), overall ranked their perception higher in 4 out of 6 factors preventing women from reaching top positions. Also, specifically for lack of specific competencies necessary for more senior levels, respondents with a doctoral degree ($M= 2.98$, $S.D.= 1.51$) ranked significantly higher than people with some college education or college degree ($M= 2.20$, $S.D.= 1.34$), $Mean_{diff} = .79$, $S.E.= .14$, $p < .001$), and people with a master's degree ($M= 2.24$, $S.D.= 1.46$, $Mean_{diff} = .75$, $S.E.= .14$, $p < .001$). Regarding if women do not get promoted because they lack the ambition for this, again doctoral respondents were in a higher agreement ($M= 2.82$, $S.D.= 1.44$) than people with some college education or college degree ($M= 2.13$, $S.D.= 1.40$), $Mean_{diff} = .69$, $S.E.= .14$, $p < .001$), and people with a master's degree ($M= 2.23$, $S.D.= 1.44$, $Mean_{diff} = .59$, $S.E.= .14$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, people with non-college degrees or high school ($M= 2.68$, $S.D.= 1.64$, tended to a significant agreement when compared with people with some college education or college degree ($Mean_{diff} = .55$, $S.E.= .16$, $p < .05$), and people with a master's degree).

When asked if organizations promoted employees based on informal and non-transparent promotion policies or about the lack of flexibility to deal with family obligations, people with a doctoral degree ranked higher in agreement ($M= 3.97$, $S.D.= 1.04$), and ($M= 3.96$, $S.D.= 1.03$), respectively (**Table 4.22**). Interestingly, when enquired if the profession lacked specific

networks and development programs specifically for women, people without a college degree or high school ranked higher in agreement (M= 3.77, S.D.= 1.20). Finally, people with a doctoral degree (M= 3.42, S.D.= 1.32) ranked significantly higher in agreement than people with some college education or college degree (M= 3.04, S.D.= 1.44, $Mean_{diff} = .38$, S.E.= .14, $p < .05$) when enquired if the profession lacked inspiring female role models (**Table 4.23**).

Table 4.22: Mean comparisons of nontransparent and informal policies and not flexibility to take care of family obligations vs education.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P- Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
Organizations promote employees based on nontransparent and informal policies	Non college degree or high school	S.C.E./C.D.	-0.009	0.138	1.000	-0.38	0.37
		M.D.	0.035	0.140	0.999	-0.35	0.42
		D.D.	-0.291	0.170	0.429	-0.75	0.17
		O.	-0.036	0.481	1.000	-1.35	1.28
	Some college education/ college degree	N.C.D./H.S.	0.009	0.138	1.000	-0.37	0.38
		M.D.	0.044	0.064	0.962	-0.13	0.22
		D.D.	-0.282	0.116	0.107	-0.60	0.03
		O.	-0.027	0.464	1.000	-1.30	1.24
	Master's degree	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.035	0.140	0.999	-0.42	0.35
		S.C.E./C.D.	-0.044	0.064	0.962	-0.22	0.13
		D.D.	-.325*	0.119	0.049	-0.65	0.00
		O.	-0.071	0.465	1.000	-1.34	1.20
	Doctoral degree	N.C.D./ H.S.	0.291	0.170	0.429	-0.17	0.75
		S.C.E. /C.D.	0.282	0.116	0.107	-0.03	0.60
		M.D.	.325*	0.119	0.049	0.00	0.65
		O.	0.254	0.475	0.984	-1.04	1.55
	Other	N.C.D./H.S.	0.036	0.481	1.000	-1.28	1.35
		S.C.E./C.D.	0.027	0.464	1.000	-1.24	1.30
		M.D.	0.071	0.465	1.000	-1.20	1.34
		D.D.	-0.254	0.475	0.984	-1.55	1.04
Organizations don't offer enough flexibility to take care of family obligations	Non college degree or high school	S.C.E./C.D.	0.044	0.131	0.997	-0.31	0.40
		M.D.	0.064	0.133	0.989	-0.30	0.43
		D.D.	-0.042	0.162	0.999	-0.48	0.40
		O.	0.061	0.456	1.000	-1.18	1.31
	Some college education/ college degree	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.044	0.131	0.997	-0.40	0.31
		M.D.	0.020	0.061	0.997	-0.15	0.19
		D.D.	-0.086	0.110	0.937	-0.39	0.21

	O.	0.018	0.440	1.000	-1.18	1.22
Master's degree	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.064	0.133	0.989	-0.43	0.30
	S.C.E./C.D.	-0.020	0.061	0.997	-0.19	0.15
	D.D.	-0.106	0.113	0.883	-0.41	0.20
	O.	-0.002	0.441	1.000	-1.21	1.20
Doctoral degree	N.C.D./H.S.	0.042	0.162	0.999	-0.40	0.48
	S.C.E./C.D.	0.086	0.110	0.937	-0.21	0.39
	M.D.	0.106	0.113	0.883	-0.20	0.41
	O.	0.103	0.450	0.999	-1.13	1.33
Other	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.061	0.456	1.000	-1.31	1.18
	S.C.E. /C.D.	-0.018	0.440	1.000	-1.22	1.18
	M.D.	0.002	0.441	1.000	-1.20	1.21
	D.D.	-0.103	0.450	0.999	-1.33	1.13

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [4, 1.89] = 2.82$) and ($F [4, 0.25] = 0.34$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Non college degree/high school (N.C./H.S.), Some college education/college degree (S.C.E./C.D.), Master's degree (M.D.), Doctoral degree (D.D.), and Other (O.).

Table 4.23: Mean comparisons of the lacking specific networks and development programs and lacking inspiring female role models vs education.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
The profession lacks specific networks and development programs for women	Non college degree or high school	S.C.E./C.D.	0.136	0.145	0.881	-0.26	0.53
		M.D.	0.159	0.147	0.819	-0.24	0.56
		D.D.	0.093	0.179	0.986	-0.40	0.58
		O.	0.339	0.503	0.962	-1.04	1.71
	Some college education/ college degree	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.136	0.145	0.881	-0.53	0.26
		M.D.	0.023	0.067	0.997	-0.16	0.21
		D.D.	-0.043	0.122	0.997	-0.38	0.29
		O.	0.203	0.486	0.994	-1.12	1.53
	Master's degree	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.159	0.147	0.819	-0.56	0.24
		S.C.E./C.D.	-0.023	0.067	0.997	-0.21	0.16
		D.D.	-0.066	0.125	0.985	-0.41	0.28
		O.	0.180	0.487	0.996	-1.15	1.51
	Doctoral degree	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.093	0.179	0.986	-0.58	0.40
		S.C.E./C.D.	0.043	0.122	0.997	-0.29	0.38
		M.D.	0.066	0.125	0.985	-0.28	0.41
		O.	0.246	0.497	0.988	-1.11	1.60
	Other	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.339	0.503	0.962	-1.71	1.04
		S.C.E. /C.D.	-0.203	0.486	0.994	-1.53	1.12
		M.D.	-0.180	0.487	0.996	-1.51	1.15
		D.D.	-0.246	0.497	0.988	-1.60	1.11

The profession lacks inspiring female role models	Non college degree or high school	S.C.E./C.D.	0.406	0.163	0.093	-0.04	0.85
		M.D.	0.342	0.166	0.238	-0.11	0.79
		D.D.	0.023	0.202	1.000	-0.53	0.58
		O.	-0.128	0.572	0.999	-1.69	1.43
	Some college education / college degree	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.406	0.163	0.093	-0.85	0.04
		M.D.	-0.064	0.076	0.918	-0.27	0.14
		D.D.	-.383*	0.139	0.046	-0.76	0.00
		O.	-0.534	0.553	0.870	-2.04	0.97
	Master's degree	N.C.D./H.S.	-0.342	0.166	0.238	-0.79	0.11
		S.C.E./C.D.	0.064	0.076	0.918	-0.14	0.27
		D.D.	-0.319	0.142	0.164	-0.71	0.07
		O.	-0.470	0.554	0.915	-1.98	1.04
	Doctoral degree	N.C.D./ H.S.	-0.023	0.202	1.000	-0.58	0.53
		S.C.E. / C.D.	.383*	0.139	0.046	0.00	0.76
		M.D.	0.319	0.142	0.164	-0.07	0.71
		O.	-0.151	0.566	0.999	-1.70	1.39
	Other	N.C.D./ H.S.	0.128	0.572	0.999	-1.43	1.69
		S.C.E. / C.D.	0.534	0.553	0.870	-0.97	2.04
		M.D.	0.470	0.554	0.915	-1.04	1.98
		D.D.	0.151	0.566	0.999	-1.39	1.70

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [4, 0.37] = 0.61$) and ($F [4, 3.32] = 7.04$)*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Non college degree/high school (N.C./H.S.), Some college education/college degree (S.C.E./C.D.), Master's degree (M.D.), Doctoral degree (D.D.), and Other (O.).

Does the type of organization matter?

Another demographic component assessed was the type of organization where the respondents worked at. Interestingly, respondents working at a publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) ($M= 2.66$, $S.D.= 1.52$) ranked significantly higher towards agreement when referring to the lack of specific competencies necessary for more senior levels, when compared to government-owned, public sector or political organization ($M= 2.26$, $S.D.= 1.48$, $Mean_{diff}= .41$, $p < .05$). Professionals working in a nonprofit organization or association also rated this question low ($M= 2.01$, $S.D.= 1.32$, $Mean_{diff}= .65$, $p < .001$). So do professionals work in communication or public relations agency ($M= 2.03$, $S.D.= 1.34$, $Mean_{diff}= .64$, $p < .001$)

and those identified themselves as self-employed/communication consultant/freelance consultants ($M= 2.01$, $S.D.= 1.41$, $Mean_{diff}=.65$, $p < .001$).

Also, respondents working in a private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) ($M= 2.50$, $S.D.= 1.45$) ranked significantly higher towards agreement than people working in a nonprofit organization or association ($Mean_{diff}=.49$, $S.E.= .12$, $p < .05$), a communication or public relations agency ($Mean_{diff}=.48$, $S.E.= .10$, $p < .001$), and self-employed/communication consultant/freelance consultant professionals ($Mean_{diff}=.49$, $S.E.= .11$, $p < .001$).

Concerning if women do not get promoted because they lack the ambition for this, people working in a publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) ($M= 2.64$, $S.D.= 1.52$) ranked significantly higher towards agreement when compared to the workers in nonprofit organization or association ($M= 2.03$, $S.D.= 1.41$, $Mean_{diff}=.61$, $S.E.= .15$, $p < .001$), communication or public relations agency ($M= 1.89$, $S.D.= 1.32$, $Mean_{diff}=.75$, $S.E.= .12$, $p < .001$), and self-employed/communication consultant/freelance consultant professionals ($M= 2.01$, $S.D.= 1.33$, $Mean_{diff}=.63$, $S.E.= .13$, $p < .001$).

Looking into if organizations promoted employees based on informal and non-transparent promotion policies, interestingly people working in a government-owned, public sector or political organization ($M= 3.85$, $S.D.= 1.23$) ranked the highest in agreement and with a significant difference with people working in a communication or public relations agency ($M= 3.47$, $S.D.= 1.32$, $Mean_{diff}=.38$, $S.E.= .10$, $p < .05$) (see **Table 4.24 for details results.**). When asked if organizations did not offer flexibility to meet family matters, interestingly people working in a government-owned, public sector or political organization ($M= 3.95$, $S.D.= 1.13$) ranked the most in agreement (see **Table 4.25 for detailed results.**) Looking into if the

profession lacked specific networks and development programs specifically for women, again employees of a publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the *stock market*) (M= 3.79, S.D.= 1.15) ranked the highest in agreement. **Table 4.26** displays the detailed results.

Finally, when questioned if the profession lacked inspiring female role models, workers of publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) (M= 3.39, S.D.= 1.4) ranked significantly the highest in agreement compared with employees of a government-owned, public sector or political organization (M= 3.03, S.D.= 1.52, $Mean_{diff} = .34$, S.E.= .13, $p < .05$), nonprofit organization or association (M= 2.91, S.D.= 1.40, $Mean_{diff} = .49$, S.E.= .15, $p < .05$), communication or public relations agency (M= 2.98, S.D.= 1.51, $Mean_{diff} = .42$, S.E.= .12, $p < .05$), and self-employed/communication consultant/freelance consultant professionals (M= 2.97, S.D.= 1.58, $Mean_{diff} = .42$, S.E.= .13, $p < .05$) (**Table 4.27**)

Table 4.24: Mean comparisons of organizations promote employees based on nontransparent and informal policies vs type of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
Organizations promote employees based on nontransparent and informal policies	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market) (P.H.C.)	P.C.	0.022	0.093	1.000	-0.24	0.29
		G.P.P.O.	-0.091	0.105	0.955	-0.39	0.21
		N.O.A.	0.083	0.128	0.987	-0.28	0.45
		C.P.R.A.	0.289	0.103	0.059	-0.01	0.58
		S.F.C.	0.099	0.108	0.943	-0.21	0.41
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market)	P.H.C.	-0.022	0.093	1.000	-0.29	0.24
		G.P.P.O.	-0.113	0.092	0.826	-0.38	0.15
		N.O.A.	0.061	0.117	0.995	-0.27	0.39
		C.P.R.A.	.267*	0.090	0.036	0.01	0.52
		S.F.C.	0.077	0.096	0.966	-0.20	0.35
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O)	P.H.C.	0.091	0.105	0.955	-0.21	0.39
		P.C.	0.113	0.092	0.826	-0.15	0.38
		N.O.A.	0.174	0.127	0.744	-0.19	0.54
		C.P.R.A.	.379*	0.103	0.003	0.09	0.67
		S.F.C.	0.190	0.108	0.490	-0.12	0.50
	Nonprofit organization	P.H.C.	-0.083	0.128	0.987	-0.45	0.28

or association (N.O.A.)	P.C.	-0.061	0.117	0.995	-0.39	0.27
	G.P.P.O.	-0.174	0.127	0.744	-0.54	0.19
	C.P.R.A.	0.205	0.125	0.573	-0.15	0.56
	S.F.C.	0.016	0.129	1.000	-0.35	0.39
Communication or public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.289	0.103	0.059	-0.58	0.01
	P.C.	-.267*	0.090	0.036	-0.52	-0.01
	G.P.P.O.	-.379*	0.103	0.003	-0.67	-0.09
	N.O.A.	-0.205	0.125	0.573	-0.56	0.15
Self-employed /Communication consultancy/Freelance consultant (S.F.C.)	S.F.C.	-0.190	0.106	0.469	-0.49	0.11
	P.H.C.	-0.099	0.108	0.943	-0.41	0.21
	P.C.	-0.077	0.096	0.966	-0.35	0.20
	G.P.P.O.	-0.190	0.108	0.490	-0.50	0.12
	N.O.A.	-0.016	0.129	1.000	-0.39	0.35
	C.P.R.A.	0.190	0.106	0.469	-0.11	0.49

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 3.18] = 4.75$).*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.25: Mean comparisons of organizations don't offer enough flexibility to take care of family obligations vs type of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
Organizations don't offer enough flexibility to take care of family obligations	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market)	P.C.	0.021	0.088	1.000	-0.23	0.27
		G.P.P.O.	-0.099	0.100	0.922	-0.38	0.19
		N.O.A.	0.156	0.120	0.788	-0.19	0.50
		C.P.R.A.	0.008	0.098	1.000	-0.27	0.29
		S.F.C.	-0.191	0.102	0.417	-0.48	0.10
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market)	P.H.C.	-0.021	0.088	1.000	-0.27	0.23
		G.P.P.O.	-0.120	0.088	0.745	-0.37	0.13
		N.O.A.	0.134	0.110	0.827	-0.18	0.45
		C.P.R.A.	-0.013	0.085	1.000	-0.26	0.23
		S.F.C.	-0.212	0.089	0.168	-0.47	0.04
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O)	P.H.C.	0.099	0.100	0.922	-0.19	0.38
		P.C.	0.120	0.088	0.745	-0.13	0.37
		N.O.A.	0.254	0.120	0.276	-0.09	0.60
		C.P.R.A.	0.107	0.097	0.884	-0.17	0.38
	Nonprofit organization or association (N.O.A.)	S.F.C.	-0.092	0.101	0.945	-0.38	0.20
		P.H.C.	-0.156	0.120	0.788	-0.50	0.19
		P.C.	-0.134	0.110	0.827	-0.45	0.18
		G.P.P.O.	-0.254	0.120	0.276	-0.60	0.09
		C.P.R.A.	-0.148	0.118	0.810	-0.48	0.19
	Communication/ association (N.O.A.)	S.F.C.	-.346*	0.121	0.050	-0.69	0.00
P.H.C.		-0.008	0.098	1.000	-0.29	0.27	

public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.C.	0.013	0.085	1.000	-0.23	0.26
	G.P.P.O.	-0.107	0.097	0.884	-0.38	0.17
	N.O.A.	0.148	0.118	0.810	-0.19	0.48
	S.F.C.	-0.198	0.099	0.340	-0.48	0.08
Self-employed /Communication consultancy/Freelance consultant (S.F.C.)	P.H.C.	0.191	0.102	0.417	-0.10	0.48
	P.C.	0.212	0.089	0.168	-0.04	0.47
	G.P.P.O.	0.092	0.101	0.945	-0.20	0.38
	N.O.A.	.346*	0.121	0.050	0.00	0.69
	C.P.R.A.	0.198	0.099	0.340	-0.08	0.48

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 2.18] = 2.92$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.26: Mean comparisons of the profession lacks specific networks and development programs for women vs type of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>		<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>		
The profession lacks specific networks and development programs for women	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market)	P.C.	0.175	0.098	0.475	-0.10	0.45
		G.P.P.O.	0.081	0.111	0.978	-0.24	0.40
		N.O.A.	0.269	0.134	0.341	-0.11	0.65
		C.P.R.A.	0.244	0.108	0.213	-0.06	0.55
		S.F.C.	0.213	0.113	0.409	-0.11	0.53
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market)	P.H.C.	-0.175	0.098	0.475	-0.45	0.10
		G.P.P.O.	-0.094	0.097	0.929	-0.37	0.18
		N.O.A.	0.095	0.123	0.973	-0.26	0.45
		C.P.R.A.	0.069	0.094	0.977	-0.20	0.34
		S.F.C.	0.039	0.099	0.999	-0.24	0.32
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O)	P.H.C.	-0.081	0.111	0.978	-0.40	0.24
		P.C.	0.094	0.097	0.929	-0.18	0.37
		N.O.A.	0.188	0.134	0.723	-0.19	0.57
		C.P.R.A.	0.163	0.107	0.653	-0.14	0.47
		S.F.C.	0.132	0.112	0.847	-0.19	0.45
	Nonprofit organization or association (N.O.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.269	0.134	0.341	-0.65	0.11
		P.C.	-0.095	0.123	0.973	-0.45	0.26
		G.P.P.O.	-0.188	0.134	0.723	-0.57	0.19
		C.P.R.A.	-0.025	0.132	1.000	-0.40	0.35
		S.F.C.	-0.056	0.135	0.998	-0.44	0.33
Communication/ public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.H.C.	-0.244	0.108	0.213	-0.55	0.06	
	P.C.	-0.069	0.094	0.977	-0.34	0.20	
	G.P.P.O.	-0.163	0.107	0.653	-0.47	0.14	
	N.O.A.	0.025	0.132	1.000	-0.35	0.40	
	S.F.C.	-0.031	0.110	1.000	-0.34	0.28	
Self-employed	P.H.C.	-0.213	0.113	0.409	-0.53	0.11	

/Communication consultancy/Freelance consultant (S.F.C.)	P.C.	-0.039	0.099	0.999	-0.32	0.24
	G.P.P.O.	-0.132	0.112	0.847	-0.45	0.19
	N.O.A.	0.056	0.135	0.998	-0.33	0.44
	C.P.R.A.	0.031	0.110	1.000	-0.28	0.34

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 1.59] = 2.59$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.27: Mean comparisons of the profession lacks inspiring female role models

vs type of organization.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>						
Dependent Variable			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>
The profession lacks inspiring female role models	Publicly held company (multiple owners, quoted on the stock market)	P.C.	0.179	0.110	0.582	-0.14 0.49
		G.P.P.O.	.369*	0.125	0.039	0.01 0.73
		N.O.A.	.486*	0.151	0.016	0.06 0.92
		C.P.R.A.	.418*	0.122	0.008	0.07 0.77
		S.F.C.	.423*	0.128	0.013	0.06 0.79
	Private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market)	P.H.C.	-0.179	0.110	0.582	-0.49 0.14
		G.P.P.O.	0.189	0.110	0.514	-0.12 0.50
		N.O.A.	0.307	0.138	0.230	-0.09 0.70
		C.P.R.A.	0.238	0.106	0.216	-0.06 0.54
		S.F.C.	0.243	0.113	0.258	-0.08 0.56
	Government-owned, public sector or political organization (G.P.P.O)	P.H.C.	-.369*	0.125	0.039	-0.73 -0.01
		P.C.	-0.189	0.110	0.514	-0.50 0.12
		N.O.A.	0.117	0.151	0.971	-0.31 0.55
		C.P.R.A.	0.049	0.122	0.999	-0.30 0.40
		S.F.C.	0.054	0.127	0.998	-0.31 0.42
	Nonprofit organization or association (N.O.A.)	P.H.C.	-.486*	0.151	0.016	-0.92 -0.06
		P.C.	-0.307	0.138	0.230	-0.70 0.09
		G.P.P.O.	-0.117	0.151	0.971	-0.55 0.31
		C.P.R.A.	-0.068	0.148	0.997	-0.49 0.35
		S.F.C.	-0.064	0.153	0.998	-0.50 0.37
Communication/ public relations agency (C.P.R.A.)	P.H.C.	-.418*	0.122	0.008	-0.77 -0.07	
	P.C.	-0.238	0.106	0.216	-0.54 0.06	
	G.P.P.O.	-0.049	0.122	0.999	-0.40 0.30	
	N.O.A.	0.068	0.148	0.997	-0.35 0.49	
	S.F.C.	0.005	0.124	1.000	-0.35 0.36	
Self-employed /Communication consultancy/Freelance consultant (S.F.C.)	P.H.C.	-.423*	0.128	0.013	-0.79 -0.06	
	P.C.	-0.243	0.113	0.258	-0.56 0.08	
	G.P.P.O.	-0.054	0.127	0.998	-0.42 0.31	
	N.O.A.	0.064	0.153	0.998	-0.37 0.50	
	C.P.R.A.	-0.005	0.124	1.000	-0.36 0.35	

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [5, 4.25] = 8.98$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Different Perspectives Offered by Work Position

When analyzing this demographic, the respondents identifying themselves as a head of corporate or organizational communication/agency CEO, were significantly the highest in agreement ($M = 2.87$, $S.D. = 1.55$) when referring to women lacking specific competencies necessary for more senior levels compared to team leaders/unit leaders ($M = 2.50$, $S.D. = 1.40$, $Mean_{diff} = .37$, $S.E. = .10$, $p < .05$), team member/consultant ($M = 2.19$, $S.D. = 1.41$, $Mean_{diff} = .67$, $S.E. = .11$, $p < .001$), and other ($M = 1.94$, $S.D. = 1.33$, $Mean_{diff} = .92$, $S.E. = .17$, $p < .001$).

This followed the same trend regarding women not getting promoted because they lack the ambition for this as head of corporate or organizational communication/agency CEO, were significantly the highest in agreement ($M = 2.86$, $S.D. = 1.55$), compared to team leaders/unit leaders ($M = 2.46$, $S.D. = 1.42$, $Mean_{diff} = .40$, $S.E. = .10$, $p < .001$), team member/consultant ($M = 2.11$, $S.D. = 1.39$, $Mean_{diff} = .75$, $S.E. = .11$, $p < .001$), and other ($M = 1.91$, $S.D. = 1.31$, $Mean_{diff} = .96$, $S.E. = .17$, $p < .001$).

Furthermore, looking if organizations promoted employees based on informal and non-transparent promotion policies, again head of corporate or organizational communication/agency CEO, were the highest in agreement ($M = 3.78$, $S.D. = 1.15$). When assessing if organizations did not offer flexibility to meet family matters or if the profession lacked specific networks and development programs specifically for women, interestingly people classified as “other” when referring to this demographic ranked the highest in agreement ($M = 4.07$, $S.D. = 1.07$), ($M = 3.83$, $S.D. = 1.24$) respectively (**Table 4.28 and Table 4.29**). To conclude, when estimating if the profession lacks inspiring female role models, again head of corporate or organizational communication/agency CEO were the highest in agreement ($M = 3.37$, $S.D. = 1.40$), and

significantly compared with team members/consultant ($M = 3.21$, $S.D. = 1.35$, $Mean_{diff} = .35$, $S.E. = .11$, $p < .05$) (Table 4.29).

Table 4.28: Mean comparisons of promoting employees based on nontransparent and informal policies, and not enough flexibility to take care of family obligations vs work position.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>95% C.I.</i>	
Dependent Variable							
Organizations promote employees based on nontransparent and informal policies	Head of corporate/ Agency CEO	T.U.L.	0.057	0.079	0.889	-0.15	0.26
		T.M.C.	0.006	0.089	1.000	-0.22	0.24
		O.	0.008	0.139	1.000	-0.35	0.36
	Team/Unit leader	H.C.A.CEO	-0.057	0.079	0.889	-0.26	0.15
		T.M.C.	-0.052	0.083	0.926	-0.27	0.16
		O.	-0.049	0.135	0.983	-0.40	0.30
	Team member /Consultant	H.C.A.CEO	-0.006	0.089	1.000	-0.24	0.22
		T.U.L.	0.052	0.083	0.926	-0.16	0.27
		O.	0.002	0.141	1.000	-0.36	0.36
	Other	H.C.A.CEO	-0.008	0.139	1.000	-0.36	0.35
		T.U.L.	0.049	0.135	0.983	-0.30	0.40
		T.M.C.	-0.002	0.141	1.000	-0.36	0.36
Organizations don't offer enough flexibility to take care of family obligations	Head of corporate/ Agency CEO	T.U.L.	0.059	0.076	0.864	-0.14	0.25
		T.M.C.	-0.124	0.085	0.465	-0.34	0.10
		O.	-0.258	0.133	0.213	-0.60	0.08
	Team/Unit leader	H.C.A.CEO	-0.059	0.076	0.864	-0.25	0.14
		T.M.C.	-0.183	0.080	0.099	-0.39	0.02
		O.	-0.317	0.130	0.069	-0.65	0.02
	Team member /Consultant	H.C.A.CEO	0.124	0.085	0.465	-0.10	0.34
		T.U.L.	0.183	0.080	0.099	-0.02	0.39
		O.	-0.134	0.135	0.757	-0.48	0.21
	Other	H.C.A.CEO	0.258	0.133	0.213	-0.08	0.60
		T.U.L.	0.317	0.130	0.069	-0.02	0.65
		T.M.C.	0.134	0.135	0.757	-0.21	0.48

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [3, 0.22] = 0.30$) and ($F [3, 3.13] = 3.88$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Head of corporate/ Agency CEO (H.C.A.CEO), Team/unit leader (T.U.L.), Team member/consultant (T.M.C.), and Other (O).

Table 4.29: Mean comparisons of the profession lacks specific networks and development programs for women and inspiring female role models vs work position.

<i>Multiple Comparisons</i>							
Dependent Variable			<i>Mean Diff.</i>	Std. Error	P-Value	95% C.I.	
The profession lacks specific networks and development programs for women	Head of corporate/ Agency CEO	T.U.L.	0.192	0.083	0.093	-0.02	0.40
		T.M.C.	0.022	0.093	0.995	-0.22	0.26
		O.	-0.098	0.145	0.907	-0.47	0.28
	Team/Unit leader	H.C.A.CEO	-0.192	0.083	0.093	-0.40	0.02
		T.M.C.	-0.170	0.087	0.201	-0.39	0.05
		O.	-0.290	0.141	0.167	-0.65	0.07
	Team member /Consultant	H.C.A.CEO	-0.022	0.093	0.995	-0.26	0.22
		T.U.L.	0.170	0.087	0.201	-0.05	0.39
		O.	-0.120	0.147	0.849	-0.50	0.26
	Other	H.C.A.CEO	0.098	0.145	0.907	-0.28	0.47
T.U.L.		0.290	0.141	0.167	-0.07	0.65	
T.M.C.		0.120	0.147	0.849	-0.26	0.50	
The profession lacks inspiring female role models	Head of corporate/ Agency CEO	T.U.L.	0.163	0.095	0.311	-0.08	0.41
		T.M.C.	.348*	0.107	0.006	0.07	0.62
		O.	0.217	0.168	0.566	-0.21	0.65
	Team/Unit leader	H.C.A.CEO	-0.163	0.095	0.311	-0.41	0.08
		T.M.C.	0.185	0.099	0.243	-0.07	0.44
		O.	0.054	0.163	0.988	-0.37	0.47
	Team member /Consultant	H.C.A.CEO	-.348*	0.107	0.006	-0.62	-0.07
		T.U.L..	-0.185	0.099	0.243	-0.44	0.07
		O.	-0.131	0.170	0.868	-0.57	0.31
	Other	H.C.A.CEO	-0.217	0.168	0.566	-0.65	0.21
T.U.L.		-0.054	0.163	0.988	-0.47	0.37	
T.M.C.		0.131	0.170	0.868	-0.31	0.57	

Note: Mean comparison showed significant differences ($F [3, 2.88] = 4.20$) and ($F [3, 3.61] = 7.01$). *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Head of corporate/Agency CEO (H.C.A.CEO), Team/Unit leader (T.U.L.), Team member/Consultant (T.M.C.), and Other (O).

Panorama Based on Career Length.

For the last demographic assessed, when referring to women lacking specific competencies necessary for more senior levels, professionals with 6 to 10 years of experience had the significantly the highest perception in agreement ($M = 2.53$, $S.D. = 1.48$) compared with up to 5 years of experience ($Mean_{diff} = .25$, $S.E. = .08$, $p = .02$), and more than 10 years of

experience ($Mean_{diff} = .36$, $S.E. = .08$, $p < .001$). This continued the same trend regarding women not getting promoted because they lack the ambition for this with professionals with 6 to 10 years of experience significantly having the highest perception in agreement ($M = 2.52$, $S.D. = 1.53$) compared with up to 5 years of experience ($Mean_{diff} = .33$, $S.E. = .08$, $p < .05$), and more than 10 years of experience ($Mean_{diff} = .39$, $S.E. = .08$, $p < .001$). Interestingly, when looking if organizations promoted employees based on informal and non-transparent promotion policies or if these did not offer flexibility to meet family matters, there were no statistically significant differences with professionals with more than 10 years of experience with the highest in agreement in both cases ($M = 3.73$, $S.D. = 1.20$, ($M = 3.91$, $S.D. = 1.17$), respectively.

Moreover, with regards if the profession lacked specific networks and development programs specifically for women again, professionals with 6 to 10 years of experience significantly having the highest perception in agreement ($M = 3.79$, $S.D. = 1.18$) compared with up to 5 years of experience ($Mean_{diff} = .25$, $S.E. = .08$, $p < .05$), and more than 10 years of experience ($Mean_{diff} = .20$, $S.E. = .08$, $p < .05$). Lastly, when gauging if the profession lacked inspiring female role models, 6 to 10 years of experience had significantly the highest perception in agreement ($M = 3.25$, $S.D. = 1.41$) compared to more than 10 years of experience ($Mean_{diff} = .22$, $S.E. = .08$, $p < .05$).

RQ4: Who is Capable of Changing the Gender Inequality Situation

Diving deeper into who communication practitioners identify as a leader for changing the current situation of women in communications, the main actor chosen was organizations (i.e., by changing structures and cultures) with 54.7% across regions. Followed by female communication practitioners and professional communities/associations (i.e., by uniting and

supporting female practitioners) with 22.8% and 22.5%, respectively. Going into the data by region, it was found that organizations were selected the most in South America (26.7%), followed by Northern North America (18.6%), Central America and the Caribbean (5.9%), and Southern North America (3.6%). Female practitioners themselves were selected in 15.1%, 5%, 1.6%, and 1%, in Northern North America, South America, Central America and the Caribbean, and Southern North America, respectively. Lastly, professional communities/associations were indicated the most in Northern North America (8.9%), subsequently by South America (8.1%), Central America and the Caribbean (3.4%), and Southern North America (2.1%). There were statistically significant differences for the three answer options between the different regions ($n=1758$) ($X^2 = 141.486$, $d.f. = 6$, $p < .001$).

Different Standpoint between Men and Women

When evaluating at this vital demographic factor, interestingly the option “organizations” was selected significantly the most by female respondents (35.9%, $X^2 = 655.149$, $d.f. = 3$, $p < .05$) over men (18.7%). Followed by individual female practitioners and professional communities/associations being selected significantly the most by female respondents (13.4% and (13.9%) over men (9.3%) and (8.5%), respectively (**Table 4.30**).

Table 4.30: Frequencies of the who is most capable of changing the current situation of women in communications vs gender.

Crosstabulation			Female	Male	Total
Who is most capable of changing the current situation of women in communications	Female practitioners themselves	Count	236 _a	163 _b	401
		% within Gender	21.2%	25.4%	22.8%
		% of Total	13.4%	9.3%	22.8%
	Organizations	Count	631 _a	328 _b	962
		% within Gender	56.8%	51.2%	54.7%
		% of Total	35.9%	18.7%	54.7%
	Professional communities/associations	Count	244 _a	150 _a	395
		% within Gender	22.0%	23.4%	22.5%
		% of Total	13.9%	8.5%	22.5%
Total	Count	1111	641	1758	
	% of Total	63.2%	36.5%	100.0%	

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of gender categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level. Chi-square value is $X^2 = 655.149$, $d.f. = 3$.

Does the type of organization matter?

An additional demographic component assessed was the type of organization where the respondents worked at. Respondents working at a private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) selected organizations the most (15.5%, $X^2 = 23.597$, $d.f. = 10$, $p < .05$) with a significant difference compared with nonprofit organization or association (5.2%). Followed by individual female practitioners (6.8%) significantly when compared with government-owned, public sector or political organization (2.8%), and professional communities/associations (6.3%).

Different Perspectives Offered by Work Position

When analyzing this demographic, the respondents identifying themselves as a team leader/unit leader, selected organizations as the most important entity to drive change (21.3%, $X^2 = 32.551$, $d.f. = 6$, $p < .05$) when compared with head of corporate or organizational communication/agency CEO (12.8%) and team member/consultant (15.4%). Followed by individual female practitioners (9.8%), when compared with head of corporate or organizational

communication/agency CEO (9.6%) and team member/consultant (4.6%), and professional communities/associations (8.9%).

Panorama Based on Career Length

For the last demographic assessed, professionals with more than 10 years of experience identified organizations as the most important entity to drive the change (26.8%), followed by individual female practitioners (11%) and professional communities/associations (10.2%) (**Table 4.31**).

Table 4.31: Frequencies of the entity who is most capable of changing the current situation of women in communications vs years of experience.

Crosstabulation			≤ 5 yrs.	6 -10 yrs.	>10 yrs.	Total
Who is most capable of changing the current situation of women in communications	Female practitioners themselves	Count	105 _a	103 _a	193 _a	401
		% w/n y.e.	23.7%	21.9%	22.8%	22.8%
		% of Total	6.0%	5.9%	11.0%	22.8%
	Organizations	Count	239 _a	251 _a	472 _a	962
		% w/n y.e.	54.0%	53.4%	55.9%	54.7%
		% of Total	13.6%	14.3%	26.8%	54.7%
	Professional communities /associations	Count	99 _a	116 _a	180 _a	395
		% w/n y.e.	22.3%	24.7%	21.3%	22.5%
		% of Total	5.6%	6.6%	10.2%	22.5%
Total	Count	443	470	845	1758	
	% of Total	25.2%	26.7%	48.1%	100.0%	

Note: Chi-square value is $X^2 = 2.25$, $d.f. = 4$.

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of years of experience (y.e.) categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

RQ5: The current landscape of women in leading communication positions

The last research question investigates the situation regarding women in leading communication positions, with the aim of obtaining a current image of whether women were overcoming the phenomenon of the glass ceiling. Specifically related to a woman being the top

leader of the communication department/CEO of an agency, where a positive answer across the regions was 52.3% and negative (45.1%), with a non-applicable answer of 2.6% (n = 2523). At the regional level, most women were in a managerial communications position in the South America region (22.9%, n= 1047), followed by Northern North America (18.9%, n= 1046), Central America and the Caribbean (5.9%, n= 257), and Southern North America (4.2%, n= 189) as displayed in Figure 2. There were statistically significant differences for the two answer options between the different regions ($X^2 = 112.130$, $d.f. = 6$, $p < .001$).

When examining if there were more women than men in the communication department/agency, the analysis indicated that most responses were affirmative with a 61.6% compared to negative answers with 35%, and non-applicable answers of 3.3% (n= 2,516). Moreover, the region with more positive answers were South America (29.2%, n = 1043), then Northern North America (20.6%, n = 1046), Central America and the Caribbean (7%, n = 263), and Southern North America (4.8%, n = 164). There were statistically significant differences for the two answer options between the different regions ($X^2 = 189.822$, $d.f. = 6$, $p < .001$).

Different Standpoint between Men and Women

Analyzing the crosstabulation test of the data related to the top leader in my organization is a woman, with the demographic factor gender, were found that the positive option was selected significantly the most by female respondents (36.2%, $X^2 = 69.756$, $d.f. = 4$, $p < .05$) compared to their male counterpart (16%), followed by other with (0.2%). In the same touch, when looking into the answers if there are more women than men in your communication department/agency, more females responded significantly positive (40.2%, $X^2 = 32.411$, $d.f. = 4$, $p < .05$) compared to males (21.1%), and other with (0.3%) (**Table 4.32**).

Table 4.32: Frequencies of the the situation regarding women in leading communication positions vs gender.

Crosstabulation		Female	Male	Total	
The top leader of my organization is a woman	Yes	Count	913 _a	403 _b	1320
		% within gender	58.9%	41.8%	52.3%
		% of Total	36.2%	16.0%	52.3%
	No	Count	601 _a	531 _b	1137
		% within gender	38.7%	55.1%	45.1%
		% of Total	23.8%	21.0%	45.1%
	N/A	Count	37 _a	29 _a	66
		% within gender	2.4%	3.0%	2.6%
		% of Total	1.5%	1.1%	2.6%
Total	Count	1551	963	2523	
	% of Total	61.5%	38.2%	100.0%	
Overall, there are more women in my organization	Yes	Count	1012 _a	532 _b	1551
		% within gender	65.8%	55.0%	61.6%
		% of Total	40.2%	21.1%	61.6%
	No	Count	475 _a	404 _b	881
		% within gender	30.9%	41.7%	35.0%
		% of Total	18.9%	16.1%	35.0%
	N/A	Count	52 _a	32 _a	84
		% within gender	3.4%	3.3%	3.3%
		% of Total	2.1%	1.3%	3.3%
Total	Count	1539	968	2516	
	% of Total	61.2%	38.5%	100.0%	

Note: Chi-square values are $X^2 = 69.756$, $d.f. = 4$ and $X^2 = 32.411$, $d.f. = 4$.

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of gender categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

Does the type of organization matter?

Another demographic component evaluated was the type of organization where the respondents worked at. Respondents working at a private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) selected a positive response significantly higher when asked if their top leader is a woman (13.6%, $X^2 = 43.744$, $d.f. = 10$, $p < .05$), if compared to communication or public relations agency (11.4%), and nonprofit organization or association (5%). When looking if overall there are more women than men in my communication department / agency the group

identified as working in a private company (small number of owners, not on the stock market) responded positive and significantly higher (16.9%, $X^2 = 38.741$, $d.f. = 10$, $p < .05$) compared to communication or public relations agency (13%), and nonprofit organization or association (5.8%).

Different Perspectives Offered by Work Position

When analyzing this demographic, the respondents identifying themselves as a team leader/unit leader, selected a positive answer when asking if the top leader of their communication department/the CEO of my agency is a woman (17.6%, $X^2 = 43.056$, $d.f. = 6$, $p < .05$) and significantly higher when compared with head of corporate or organizational communication/agency CEO (16.4%) and team member/consultant (12.6%). To the question if overall there are more women than men in their communication department/agency the responders identified as a team leader/unit leader gave an affirmative response (22.9%, $X^2=17.562$, $d.f. = 6$, $p < .05$) and significantly higher than team member/consultant (15.4%).

Panorama Based on Career Length

Lastly, for the last demographic evaluated, professionals with more than 10 years of experience responded in a positive manner to their top leader communication department /CEO being a woman (27.8%, $X^2 = 14.478$, $d.f. = 4$, $p < .05$) and was significantly higher than practitioners with 6 to 10 years (12.6 %) and up to 5 years (11.9 %). Similarly, the data showed that professionals with more than 10 years of experience provided an affirmative answer to whether in general there are more women than men in their communication department/agency (32.9 %, $X^2 = 19.770$, $d.f. = 4$, $p < .05$) and was significantly higher compared to practitioners with 6 to 10 years (14.8 %) and those with up to 5 years of experience (14%).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This thesis makes a unique contribution as the first study analyzing data from most countries in the Americas concerning major aspects of gender equality in communication and public relations. By having the secondary data analysis as the main research method, it was possible to combine and compare responses collected from communication and public relation professionals in four regions of America (i.e., Northern North America, Southern North America, Central America and the Caribbean, and South America) on the matter of gender equality in communications. This study provides the current status of gender equality in today's communication profession in this important geographical region, which has a diverse historical background and culturally rich, focusing in the two key themes that has shaped the last decade of gender studies in public relations: job discrimination and prejudice against women.

The first research question explores whether gender equality has been improved in the past five years in four regions of America. The findings suggest that, even though communication professionals have acknowledged that an undeniable degree of improvement has been witnessed in the past five years, they also addressed that more efforts are needed in order to advance gender equality. Serious efforts are needed in the regions of South America, Central America and the Caribbean, and Southern North America, where gender stereotypes are deeply rooted in history and societal cultures (Benavente et al., 2015). In addition, practitioners in South America noted a greater lack of support for women in the field compared to the other three regions.

Additionally, it was very interesting to note the significant gender differences when assessing the improvement in gender equality. Men rated significantly higher than women did in all four regions. Men also consider enough support has been offered, if compared to female respondents who also significantly lower indicated that not enough support is offered nowadays. This shows that a division has been established between men and women in the awareness of gender-related issues based on their experiences. According to what have been reviewed in the literature, issues related to gender inequality have been presented in a variety of ways, including professional roles, salaries, opportunities for advancement, and discrimination and sexual harassment (Aldoory & Toth, 2002).

When speaking of years of experience, the trend reflects clear significant differences between groups, where people with more than 10 years of work experience perceive a greater improvement in gender inequality. However, this concordance decreases as their experience decreases. Similarly, people with more than 10 years of experience and those with 6 to 10, agree to the same extent that support for women has improved. However, the group with fewer experience rate lower on this question, as they believe less efforts have been made by supporting women in communications. This trend continues in the job category, where those in the highest positions in their organizations/agencies perceive greater increases in gender equality and support for women. This strong positive association between years of experience and top positions suggests that the efforts towards gender equality can be perceived more by senior practitioners. However, it is important to notice that the majority of leading positions are male holding, as men are reported to hold nearly 80 percent of CEO positions at major public relations agencies (Dubrowski et al., 2019). Thus, this trend could be skewed towards the perspective from male professionals.

To answer **the second research question**, the perception of the glass ceiling phenomenon in public relations, the results identified a strong pattern in which communication professionals from all the four regions confirmed that this issue affected the communication profession in their country, with a strong and significantly high response from professionals in Southern North America. Communication professionals in South America and Southern North America also expressed the concern of the glass ceiling problem affecting their own communication department, agency, as well as female professionals in their organizations.

Moreover, this followed the same trend when evaluating female respondents. Women rated strong and significantly higher in agreement, if compared to men concerning all the glass ceiling issues raised. Respondents with the highest academic degree (i.e., Ph.D.) also were in strong agreement with this position. In addition, self-employed respondents and team members/consultants were the highest in agreement with this position, as well as people with 6-10 years of work experience. This suggests that the perception and importance of the glass ceiling issue is across all key demographic variables. More importantly, it is perceived as a major issue by female practitioners across the four regions regardless of the type of employer, job role, and educational level. These findings echoed with the findings revealed previous studies of *Women in public relations: How gender influences practice*, where the researchers reviewed the literature on women in management and entrepreneurship and examined parallels between the experiences of women in public relations and female workers in fields as diverse as law, veterinary medicine, and espionage. With the use of in-depth interviews and focus-group studies, the authors gave women a voice in articulating their experiences in this occupation (Grunig et al., 2013).

The third research question refers to factors hindering women from reaching top leadership positions. When looking at the factors that prevent women from reaching top positions in public relations and communications, multiple differences across the regions were identified. Specifically, professionals in Southern North America (i.e., Mexico and Puerto Rico) addressed that the glass ceiling is directly linked to the organization's nontransparent and informal policies when it is about promotion. Professionals in this region also expressed they lack specific networks and development programs for women. The profession itself also lacks inspiring female role models. Professionals in South America expressed similar concerns, but not as strong opinion as expressed by their peers in, Northern North America and Southern North America as results show that the majority of leadership positions in this region are held by women.

Such findings help us build a grand picture depicting the gender inequality in communication at a much broader level geographically. This helps us ascertain the similarities, gaps, perceptions, and the concerns from communication professionals in the culturally rich and geographically diverse region that is America. Interestingly, these findings followed the same trend "across the pond" with the report published by the European Union. The authors analyzed 223 articles from 2018 to 2019 to compare and contrast the positions of women and the issues that women practitioners are concerned. Two main themes were identified: 1) work discrimination (i.e., technical versus managerial positions, glass ceiling and the pay gap, masculine work culture, and diversity) and 2) bias against women (i.e., stereotypes about women's organizational skills, power, stereotypes on communication skills and intersectionality and criticism of liberal feminism) (Topić et al., 2020).

When looking at the differences between respondents by gender, the data suggested that men perceived women to be ill-equipped to advance in their career, lack the ambition to reach senior levels, or lack of specific networks and development programs. However, this could be due to the lack of time that women have because of other commitments such as motherhood and household responsibilities. Additionally, respondents with a doctoral degree had a significantly higher agreement compared to people with some college education or a master's degree suggesting having the highest degree gave these a more objective perception. Moreover, the head of corporate or organizational communication/agency CEOs were also in agreement when referring to women lacking specific competencies necessary for more senior levels compared to the other work positions categories, which suggested that women already in high career positions accepted that there is a lack of competencies to reach this top tier positions.

In response to **the fourth research question**, about the responsible party capable of changing the current situation of gender, most surveyed professionals in the four regions believe organizations carry the biggest responsibility to drive change by changing structures, policies, and cultures and by building more development programs to support women in communication. Similarly, previous research conducted by Stamarski and Son (2015) confirmed that gender inequality in organizations is a complex phenomenon that manifests itself in organizational structures, processes, and practices. They recognized and identified some of the most harmful practices such as policies, decision-making, and its enactment, which affect the hiring, training, payment, and promotion of women. This suggests that professional women understand and recognize the importance of change at the structural level of organizations so that there is a tangible transformation in the situation of women in communications. Organizations also benefit from including women in all levels of decision-making, research has shown that the lack of

gender diversity in the boardroom could limit an organization's opportunities for learning and innovation (Adams & Ferreira, 2009).

To overcome the glass ceiling issue, practitioners working at a private company selected organizations as a leader to be in charge. In the same manner, practitioners holding some college education/college degree and master's degree and people with more than 10 years of experience in their careers, identified that organizations would be the main route to obtain a change.

Consistent with previous research, many of the PR professionals said they do not see women as being equally represented and advocate for changes at the macro level. It is indicated that gender and race are two important focus areas in the design and implementation of diversity management strategies, for this reason, the failure of effective diversity management affects structures, policies, and results within the place of work (Greene & Kirton, 2011).

To answer **the fifth research question**, which asks about the current landscape of women in top communications positions, the region of South America count with most women in managerial communications position, followed by Central America and the Caribbean and Southern North America. Surprisingly, Northern North America is the only region where most responses indicated that leadership positions were not held by women.

Additionally, the data indicated that in the four regions most of the labor force in communications and public relations is occupied by women. Thus, it can be inferred that the professionalization and size of the communication and public relations industry plays an essential role in establishing guidelines and power relations. This should be considered as a factor that allows or prevents women from reaching leadership positions in their workplaces to reach an equal representation with regards to their workforce in the industry. Because, the context of the North American region where the communications industry is much more

developed, it is found the problem of underrepresentation of professional women in high-level positions (Meng & Neill, 2021)

Assessing gender demographics regarding women in leadership positions and working in communications, there was a higher number of affirmative responses from women compared to men. This is in line with Aldoory and Toth (2002)'s research, which states that women in public relations occupy more than 70% of jobs. Their research indicates that men tend to be favored in hiring, with higher salaries and easier to be promoted to managerial positions (Aldoory & Toth, 2002). No surprisingly, this followed the same trend when looking into the demographics of education background where respondents with some college education/college degree answered significantly positive with regards if the top leader in their department/agency is a woman and overall are more women in their workplace.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

This thesis has made several contributions to the field of communications and public relations. First of all, the thesis attempts to answer several fundamental questions in the field of public relations concerning the issue of gender equality in culturally diverse regions (i.e., North America and Latin America). Regarding theoretical contributions, with these findings, there has been an advancement/development in the feminist theory, as subtle and obvious gender inequalities across the Americas have been revealed. Furthermore, these analyzes can trigger the transformation in order to eradicate or reduce these inequalities. Society as a whole can continue the dialogue of equal rights for women and expand the conversation to issues of gender bias not only in the workplace but in society in general.

Based on the findings, it can be said that education is an important factor. To illustrate, professionals with a higher educational degree (i.e., Ph.D.) believed the most that gender equality and support for women in public relations have improved in recent years. Also, the trend meaningfully changed for the groups with lower educational background, non-college degree/high school, some college degree, or college degree. This could lead us to notice the strong influence that the educational experience could generate on the formation of perspectives about the advances in the issue of gender inequality. Education provides opportunities for the development of professional and social skills and offers spaces for interaction with peers, educators, and professionals in the region of practice. This interaction generates more networking opportunities to support women and help minimize the gaps in gender equity. In addition, education has long been highlighted as a central factor in fostering non-traditional gender attitudes. However, it has not been studied how education shapes different types of beliefs about gender inequality and whether education has a similar impact on the beliefs of men and women (Kane, 1995). Moreover, these results also suggest that the efforts and support for women in Communications and public relations do not reach equally at every level across organizations.

Not all types of organizations bring the same experience or are based on the same ethical values and developmental policies. Gender inequality in organizations is a complex phenomenon that manifests itself in organizational structures, processes, and practices (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015). Surprisingly, it did not result in significantly different positions being presented by practitioners from the different types of organizations. However, it is important to highlight that those professionals working in communications or public relations agencies presented a more positive position about the advances in gender equality. While those identified as workers in a

publicly held company evaluated more positively that enough has been done to support women in communications. This suggests that the type of organization did not influence in how practitioners perceived the support for women and the improvement in gender equality. Consequently, a possibility is open to make a stand for a particular type of organization(s) to lead a change.

At the same time, it is disheartening to admit that the profession itself does not have a sufficient number of women as role models in top leadership positions. This is particularly problematic in Southern North America and Central America and the Caribbean regions. Such a fact does not only discourage aspired junior female professionals. More critically, it may also slow down the progress of qualified women advancing into senior leadership in organizations because there are not enough role models and/or influential mentors to advocate for them. The bright side of this study is that a substantial percentage of women are currently taking on junior or middle management roles along the leadership pipeline.

Overall, more practical implications emerged as the research investigated the sub-regions in the Americas based on geography in order to compile and compare responses, which would be a useful foundation for future studies. Lastly, we have conclusively demonstrated the usefulness of communication monitors like the North American and the Latin American help the profession advance knowledge at an international level.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite the persistent challenges in overcoming glass ceiling and achieving gender equality, the profession shall adopt joint efforts that go beyond the cultural and geographic boundaries to support women in public relations in the near future. Since the Velvet Ghetto study

was published in 1986, most academic studies have focused on the US, leaving behind more than 20 countries in the region and limiting the spectrum of knowledge in the field of communications and public relations in other countries and cultures.

As previous research in Latin America points out, the reality is that research on the practice of public relations and its professionalization in Latin America is limited due to the political history of the region, and the scenario it experienced after various authoritarian regimes and dictatorships during the 20th century (Mellado & Barría, 2012). However, the importance of public relations in the region began to emerge, only after the authoritarian government regimes began to decline in the 1970s and 1980s (Mellado & Barría, 2012). Another characteristic notes by scholars in the Latin American region that has contributed to the delay in the development of the public relations profession is that the profession is highly connected with the profession of journalism. This phenomenon, which is not found in most developed countries, has contributed to blurring the boundaries between the two professions (Mellado & Hanusch, 2011). This particular situation of Latin America makes it difficult to recognize public relations as an individual profession, to study it, and therefore make efforts to improve gender equality in this field even more challenging.

Further, in terms of being able to find published literature specifically related with public relations in Latin America, this was a challenge. First, this goes back to the point of the lack of public relations been considered as an independent profession. Second, in the communication research in Latin America there are different denominations when referring to this area such as strategic communication, corporate communication, and business communication. However, in the Latin American region there is research being produced in Spanish and Portuguese such as articles, theses, and repositories. This leads to the third point, the language barrier, the majority

of the studies included in this thesis are English-centric, due to the difficulty to access the research done in Latin America as these are not translated or published in internationally indexed journals.

Speaking of gender equality studies in the Latin American region in general, there is different power dynamics, political, and socio-cultural constructions that limit and deepen the gender expectations associated with women in Latin American cultures. By focusing on the topic of gender equality in communication in four regions in America, this study takes a first step to explore this topic at an international level. However, the findings revealed the current situation as compared across four regions in America, future research is needed to place gender-related barriers in a developmental context.

As identified for most of the respondents, organizations and professional associations should be at the forefront of driving forces to advance gender, diversity and leadership in public relations and communication. Organizations have an enormous stake in ensuring women and minorities having equal access to involvement and development opportunities. For this to be possible, it is necessary to work on development and research to obtain more knowledge about gender and communication in different countries and regions. Future research needs to be focused on the position of women in public relations through socialist and radical lenses and examine the organizational and social structures that thwart women who want to advance and achieve their full potential. This contribution is only the beginning of the story for evaluating gender equality in the communications and public relations field and an incentive for the birth of new international and intercultural research that helps enrich the knowledge of the fields in the Americas region.

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