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Interactions among culturally diverse personnel: an analysis of individual difference variables

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate attitudes toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging and developed markets. Differences in attitudes are assessed using liability-of-foreignness factors.

Design/methodology/approach – Purposive sample collected at a private university in Australia; hierarchical linear modeling approach examines differences across regions of Australia, Asia, Middle East, Europe, and North America; Type 2 moderated mediation procedures.

Findings – Findings argue for variations across individual difference variables relative to the inclination to interact with emerging markets foreign nationals. Europeans' willingness to interact with emerging market foreign nationals is diminished with high levels of tendency to stereotype, whereas North Americans' willingness to interact with developed market foreign nationals is enhanced with high levels of tendency to stereotype.

Research limitations/implications – Use of self-reported measures may limit validity and generalizability; cross-sectional data; common method variance.

Practical implications – A greater consideration of cultural diversity inherent in the workforce allows for diminished adjustment difficulties. Acknowledgment and contextualization of diversity is not an option but a necessity upon which organizations must act to reach their fullest potential in respective foreign locations.

Social implications – Supports greater respect for social and cultural beliefs, norms, and values. Respect has implications for relationships and performance.

Originality/value – Content presents diversity issues within global organizations on their quest to employ global talent.

Keywords Attitude, Personality, Emerging and developed markets, Global awareness, Region of origin, Stereotype

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Arguably one of the major obstacles challenging global organizations' successes is the apparent lack of knowledge relative to the effective management of global personnel (Beechler and Woodward, 2009; Economist Intelligence Unit, 2006) across headquarter and subsidiary locations. Critically speaking, while organizations may not fail to appreciate the significance of global personnel selection mechanisms, most organizations find themselves to be deficient in their ability to identify and retain suitable recruits who are considered capable of operating in complex, highly volatile, hypercompetitive global business environments (Boston Consulting Group, 2007; Collings and Scullion, 2006).

A cornerstone of successful global personnel management is identifying managers who possess the propensity to incorporate daily decision-making behaviors in a plethora of foreign contexts. Understandably, managers will carry individual traits (i.e. individual difference variables) that lead them to behave in ways that can be minimally or greatly different to the next person's behavior. If we subscribe to the argument that the behavior of managers can lead to positive global organizational outcomes, the phenomenon under study would beg the question as to how much diversity (i.e. relative to context and individual differences) a manager is willing/able to accept and utilize appropriately in an organizational context. Specifically, this manuscript addresses to what extent individual differences inherent in region of origin (ROO) such as global awareness, tendency to stereotype, and personality could influence an individual's attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging (EM) and developed (DM) markets. By building an understanding of how interactions can be influenced by individual managers' tendencies, we can also be better informed about their propensity to adjust to new situations and contexts.

As cultural distance between two managers working globally increases, the potential for mutual stigmatization is heightened. Stigmatization, the focus of the study's mediating and moderating influencers, is defined as a bias expressed relative to individuals who are believed to possess some attribute or characteristic that conveys a social identity that is devalued in a particular context" (Crocker *et al.*, 1998). This statement brings to the forefront the need for strategic attention at the individual level of analysis addressing the liability-of-foreignness which individuals inadvertently possess during overseas assignment (Moeller and Harvey, 2011).

Addressing the issue of managerial interactions globally are a crucial talking point of creating organizational success and may have implications for attracting, developing, and retaining global managers. The manuscript therefore progresses as follows: first, we explore the theoretical foundation that shapes the extent to which individuals will have the propensity to interact with foreign nationals from emerging and developed markets. Second, we address the sample selection, procedures, and measures utilized in this study specifically. Third, the Type 2 moderated mediation procedures used to analyze the data is presented and followed by explicit results. Finally, we present theoretical and managerial implications and make recommendations for future research.

Literature review and theoretical framework
By use of self-congruity theory (SCT) and evolutionary personality psychology (EPP), the manuscript addresses the ability to explain an individual's willingness to interact with individuals from emerging and developed markets. As a mean to delineate between the emerging and developed markets, this study defines the emerging context are characterized by rapid population growth and industrialization, while developed markets constitute advanced economies with a population growth rate of narrowing to zero (UNCTAD, 2009). Figure 1 illustrates the resulting hypotheses of this study.

ROO and global awareness
The study draws upon SCT to examine the psychological comparison between any two parties. The theory subscribes to the assumption that the act of comparing occurs on the individual level between constituents of differing cultural backgrounds, and
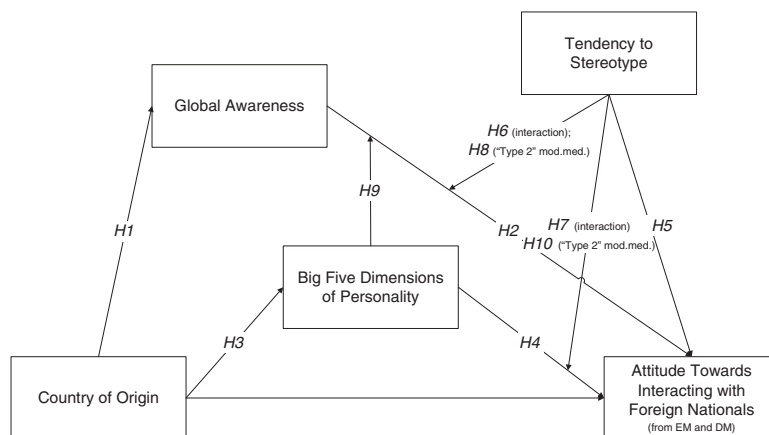
Figure 1.
A framework for
assessing attitude
toward interfacing
foreign nationals

depending on the perceived cultural similarity or dissimilarity, the respectively greater or lower the likelihood of experiencing a positive predisposition toward others, and therefore, willingness to interact with others (Sirgy, 1986; Sirgy *et al.*, 1997).

SCT predicts the relationship between an individual's ROO and attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals. The concept of ROO may be closely related to the country of origin effect (COOE) as addressed by Harzing and Noorderhaven (2008) and originated in the works of Schooler (1965). COOE refers to cognitive, psychological, and behavioral outcomes which are the result of the unique social and cultural beliefs, norms, and values associated with one's home-country (Ghemawat, 2007). Drawing upon self-image congruence, it is suggested that the cognitive, psychological, and behavioral comparisons made by individuals with respect to other foreign nationals are primarily based on their heritage (i.e. cultural, socio-economic, religious, etc. background) and may result in varying levels of willingness and/or tendencies to interact with culturally diverse individuals.

The self-congruity perspective would suggest that the cognitive, psychological, and behavioral comparisons between individuals can result in either high or low self-congruity categorizations. Low self-congruity is experienced in the presence of a greater array of perceived differences manifested in the context of socio-economic conditions, politics, religion, and the like. The perception of a lesser degree of cultural distance would translate into greater levels in the willingness to interact with individual who are of a foreign descent.

A concept that has to date received a limited amount of attention in the overseas adjustment literature is to the role of global awareness in the adjustment-performance context. Corbitt (2004) suggests that global awareness involves "a recognition and appreciation of the size, complexity, and diversity of the earth as a single entity" (p. 13) and enables individuals "to perceive the vastness of the world, its dynamic complexity, and the diversity of its people" (p. 14). The distinction between the concepts of "knowledge" and "awareness" lies in Corbitt's (2004) claim that global knowledge refers to our own context and experiences accumulated over a lifetime; conversely, global awareness is conceived as an all-encompassing identification and acknowledgment of the sometimes bewildering complexities inherent in the world or the global marketplace.

In an attempt to understand the potential impact of ROO on attitude formations relative to individuals from emerging and developed markets, Figure 1 proposes global awareness as a mechanism through which we are able to identify pre-dispositions stemming from the accumulation of cultural variances found in ROO. Linking the idea of low self-congruity to global awareness, it would appear plausible that perceived dissimilarities in how one perceives the world lead to reduced attention paid to an individual from another cultural background. The process of comparing cultural facets may thus lead to a diminished inclination to seek additional information, engage in, or pay attention to events concerning the region and/or context in question. The pre-disposition developed due to perceiving low or high self-congruity between two cultural backgrounds may thus either inhibit or contribute to an increase in overall global awareness. As a result, the following is hypothesized:

H1. ROO relates to an individual's global awareness.

Global awareness and willingness to interact with foreign nationals

The similarities and differences proposed to arise due to ROO is not the only means to determine attitude formations. In fact, self-image congruence may simultaneously be a response to one's level of global awareness, referring to the recognition and knowledge of regions and their environmental, political, geographic, religious, socio-economic, and cultural (Corbitt, 2004) past and present. The level of global awareness serves as a predisposition to identify with foreign nationals due to potential similarities. Theoretically speaking, the greater the level of global awareness, the less probable that an individual is threatened by ambiguities which may be experienced in terms of differing values, assumptions, and cultural norms expressed by other individuals, and the greater the willingness to interact with individuals regardless of any organizational dependencies experienced. The following hypotheses result:

H2. Global awareness relates positively to an individual's attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from other nations.

ROO, personality, and willingness to interact with foreign nationals

Willingness to interact with foreign nationals is presumed to be impacted by an individual's ROO and global awareness. Parallel to these relationships, EPP suggests that the Big Five personality dimensions may contribute in explaining and predicting attitudes. EPP recognizes personality traits as universal adaptive mechanisms for humans to reproduce and preserve life (Buss, 1991; MacDonald, 1998). For example, Buss (1991) suggests that a person who is agreeable, extroverted, emotionally stable, conscientious, and open to experiences may have the ability to form important work relationships, get promoted, attain a higher status, and so forth. These adaptive mechanisms include "humans' ability to learn hierarchies in society (i.e. extroversion), their willingness to cooperate (i.e. agreeableness), their capacity for reliable work and enduring commitment (i.e. conscientiousness), their ability to handle stress (i.e. emotional stability), and their propensity for innovation or astuteness in solving problems (i.e. openness to experience)" (Buss, 1991, p. 477). This study proposes that these adaptive mechanisms are experienced and/or displayed differentially among various cultures.

In addition to that, Figure 1 proposes that ROO has an influence on the formation of personality traits, as one's cultural background is in part formed with the intention to preserve life (Buss, 1991; MacDonald, 1998). This means that a person's level of conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, openness to experience, and

extroversion may be predicted or perpetuated by the respective individual's ROO for the sake of belonging to a society, form relationships with other members in a society, and/or attain a desired status in that society.

The personality trait of conscientiousness, meaning being organized and reliable (Costa and McCrae, 1985; McCrae and John, 1992), is proposed to play a role in determining attitudes toward interacting with foreign national to the extent that individuals anticipate attaining an elevated status should they choose to engage in conversations with other foreign nationals. Agreeableness, as a trait acts to preserve one's social position by allowing alliances to be formed (Buss, 1991; Costa and McCrae, 1985). By thriving to cooperate rather than compete (Liao and Chuang, 2004), individuals high in agreeableness are more likely to interact with foreign nationals opposed to those low in agreeableness.

Neuroticism, according to Perrewé and Spector (2002), is "the tendency to exhibit poor emotional stability and to experience negative affective feelings such as anxiety, insecurity, and hostility" (p. 5). Based on past research (e.g. Black, 1988), this study proposes that individuals, low in emotional stability, are less likely to experience a positive attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals. By exhibiting high levels (of emotional stability), it enables an individual to overcome anxiety of ambiguities or insecurity about uncertainties (e.g. on overseas assignments) associated with any cultural distance that is perceived and/or experienced.

The openness to experience personality trait or "intellect" (Goldberg, 1981) or "intelligence" as it has been referred to previously, is described as a dimension characterized by art, curiosity, imagination, insight, and originally (Costa and McCrae, 1985; McCrae and John, 1992). Individuals must possess the sensitivity to assess their social environment to respond in such a manner that allows for relationships to be formed. Lastly, individuals high in extroversion are described as being active, energetic, enthusiastic, outgoing, talkative, and assertive (Costa and McCrae, 1985; McCrae and John, 1992). Individuals who have the ability to successfully assert themselves, navigate through hierarchy (Buss, 1991), and through their sociability and ambitions (Barrick and Mount, 1991) feel compelled to develop a positive attitude toward foreigners. Conscientiousness is proposed to have the weakest effects on willingness to interact with individuals from emerging and developed markets due to the nature of the concepts. The following hypotheses are offered:

H3. ROO relates to an individual's personality dimensions of (1) conscientiousness, (2) agreeableness, (3) emotional stability, (4) openness to experience, and (5) extroversion.

H4a(b). The personality dimensions of (1) conscientiousness, (2) agreeableness, (3) emotional stability, (4) openness to experience, and (5) extroversion independently and positively relate to an individual's attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging (developed) markets.

Moderating effect of tendency to stereotype
Walter Lippmann's (1922) book Public Opinion defines stereotypes as "pictures in our heads" (i.e. our shared mental representations that facilitate our individual perceptions of complex environments). Link and Phelan (2001) go on to describe negative stereotypes as undesirable characteristics possessed by people who are labeled due to their dominant cultural beliefs. The term stereotype is perhaps best discussed in the realm of Goffman's (1963) seminal piece on stigmas. The author observes that a stigma

can be classified as a relationship between an "attribute" and a "stereotype" to produce the following definition of stigma – "a 'mark' (attribute) that links a person to undesirable characteristics (stereotypes)" (p. 4). This study essentially suggests that based on SCT, it is expected that the greater the tendency to stereotype, meaning the greater the perception that a trait is undesirable respective to one's cultural norms and values, the weaker the strength of the linked variable. As a result of this logic, the study tests the following hypotheses:

H5a(b). Tendency to stereotype relates negatively to an individual's willingness to interact with foreign nationals from emerging (developed) markets.

The predictive capacity of tendency of stereotype may also be explored in terms of interactive effects. In particular, the study proposes the influence of stereotyping to have a negative effect on prior established positive or negative relationships. For example, when individuals have a great level of global awareness and their tendency to stereotype is relatively high, the inclination to interact with either emerging or developed market constituents is predicted to be negatively impacted. Parallel to this thought pattern is the role of tendency to stereotype related to the proposed connection between personality and willingness to interact. Specifically, the idea is that when a personality trait is exhibited and coupled with a high tendency to stereotype the previously proposed relationship between personality and willingness to interact is diminished. When tendency to stereotype is low, the attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging and developed countries experiences less of an impact. The following hypotheses are tested:

H6a(b). Tendency to stereotype moderates the relationship between global awareness and attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging (developed) markets. It does so in a way that the attitude toward interaction will be weaker when tendency to stereotype is high vs low.

H7a(b). Personality dimensions of (1) conscientiousness, (2) agreeableness, (3) emotional stability, (4) openness to experience, and (5) extroversion will interact with tendency to stereotype in such a way that the relationship of (1) conscientiousness, (2) agreeableness, (3) emotional stability (4) openness to experience, and (5) extroversion with attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging (developed) markets will be weaker when tendency to stereotype is high vs low.

If tendency to stereotype does indeed moderate the effect of both global awareness and personality on willingness to interact, there is reason to believe that the mediating factors linking ROO and willingness to interact are moderated by tendency to stereotype also. If such a moderation is realized it restricts the moderating effect to the relationship after the occurrence of mediation. The same scenario applies when personality is represented as a moderator opposed to a mediator. The following hypotheses are tested:

H8a(b). Tendency to stereotype moderates the relationship between ROO and attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging (developed) markets after the mediating effect of global awareness.

H9a(b). The personality dimensions of (1) conscientiousness, (2) agreeableness, (3) emotional stability, (4) openness to experience, and (5) extroversion moderate the relationship between ROO and attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging (developed) markets after the mediating effect of global awareness.

H10a(b). Tendency to stereotype moderates the relationship between ROO and attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging (developed) markets after the mediating effect of personality dimensions of (1) conscientiousness, (2) agreeableness, (3) emotional stability, (4) openness to experience, and (5) extroversion.

Method

Sample and procedures

The data collection was conducted over a period of approximately two months at a university in Queensland, Australia. Participation for both questionnaires was voluntary, though at the discretion of the professor/instructor extra credit upon completion of both questionnaires was awarded. Across all classes sampled, the captive sample resulted in a response rate of above 90 percent. Justification for the appropriateness of using a student sample lies in the nature of the study, as the intent is to assess willingness to interact with foreign nationals independent of any pre-established (organizational) networks.

Business School student enrollment was composed of a 40 percent international student body and thus presented a high level of diversity and a good target for data collection in this study. In total, 329 undergraduate students with 33 different cultural origins enrolled in courses such as international business, international marketing, and entrepreneurship completed both questionnaires. Additional criteria were applied to result in a final sample size of 310 consisting of Australians ($n = 184$), Asians ($n = 40$), Middle Easterners ($n = 20$), Europeans ($n = 39$), and North Americans ($n = 27$) (see Fowler, 2008; Mason, 2002). Table I provides further information of the composition of each of the region clusters.

Samples sizes were deemed adequate based on Hofstede's (1980) stipulation that in order to obtain statistically reliable scores, groups of respondents should not be smaller than 50, although acceptable reliability can still be obtained for groups of between 20 and 50. The sample was proportional to the number of students in the Business School student body and was similar in terms of the class sizes and major educational focal points. The average age of participants was 20.60 (SD = 2.59),

Australia	(Includes Queensland, Northern Territory South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales) Tasmania	
Asia	China	Hong Kong
	India	Japan
	Malaysia	Philippines
	Russia	Singapore
	Thailand	Vietnam
Middle East	Iran	Iraq
	Jordan	Kuwait
	Lebanon	Oman
	Saudi	Arabia
Europe	Denmark	England
	France	Germany
	Greece	Hungary
	Italy	Norway
	Poland	Romania
	Serbia	Sweden
North America	Canada	USA

Table I.
Region of origin
clusters

49 percent were women, 51 percent were male, 82 percent had traveled to two or more countries, 66 percent had or are currently either living, studying, or working abroad, 48 percent had studied international/global business related courses at a university, and 78 percent anticipate to be involved in an international/global career. An overview of demographic variables of all clusters combined and categorized by nationality collected is presented in Table II.

Respondents of the study were to complete two questionnaires. Part A of the questionnaire consisted of an 84-item questionnaire assessing measures for the following variables: ROO; Big Five personality dimensions; tendency to stereotype; attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals; and demographics. Part A was administered during class time with an average completion time of 15 minutes. Respondents were asked to complete Part B, a 120-item questionnaire, outside of class and return it to the principal investigator during the following class period. Part B was not an intelligence test which was announced in written and verbal format at several stages of the administration process. Self-report measures were used for Parts A and B because it asks for information directly from the person that allows for the person to give their own perspective in the light of the world they live in.

The response rate (above 90 percent) for both questionnaires was substantial enough to rule out any non-respondents' bias. At the same time, because complete confidentiality could not be guaranteed due to the allocation of incentives, it was not possible to compare respondents to non-respondents to detect any bias. Instead, an independent sample t-test was performed to search for differences between early and late respondents (see Groves, 2006) on the demographic variables of age, gender, countries traveled, participation in study abroad/exchange program, and foreign language(s) studied. No significant differences on the aforementioned demographic variables were found. The sample is thus representative of the larger population of students at the respective university.

Common method variance was addressed using the Harman one-factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Using an unrestricted principal component factor analysis, the unrotated solution produced six factors with the first factor account for only 16 percent of the 66 percent explained variance. Because any single factor did not account for a majority of the explained variance, the findings suggest that common method bias is not likely to affect the study's results (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986).

Measures
ROO
ROO was acquired by asking respondents to indicate their nationality from a pre-established list followed by a country and/or region specification clustered according to the following six nationalities: Australian, Asian, Middle Eastern, European, North American, and other (dummy-coded as sequences of 0 and 1). This was to: first, be able to analyze the data such that exploration of the relationships between the regions and predicated outcomes was possible; and second, to keep in line with the purposive sampling technique employed in this study.

Global awareness
Global awareness ($\alpha = 0.87$) was measured using an established measure, namely, that of the global awareness profile commonly referred to as the GAP questionnaire. The GAP questionnaire is a 120-item questionnaire and a proclaimed self-awareness inventory asking questions based upon common knowledge in 13 dimensions across

Variable	Category	% of total sample
Gender	Male	51
	Female	49
Age	17-20	70.3
	21-24	19.7
	25-28	10.0
Nationality	Australian	59.4
	Asian	12.9
	Middle Eastern	6.5
	European	12.6
	North American	8.7
Number of countries traveled	0	6.1
	1	12.3
	2	6.8
	3-5	28.1
	5-8	10.6
	More than 8	36.1
Worked/studied/lived in other country	Yes	65.8
	No	34.2
Longest time worked/studied/lived in other country	Less than 3 months	11.3
	3-6 months	13.5
	1 year	9.4
	1-3 years	14.8
	3-5 years	9.0
	More than 5 years	7.7
Student exchange program (SEP)	Yes	20.0
	No	80.0
Length of time of SEP	Less than 1 semester	9.0
	1 semester	5.2
	1 year	1.9
	Longer than 1 year	3.4
Studied international/global business at university	Yes	48.4
	No	51.6
Number of international/global courses taken	1	23.2
	2	11.0
	3	7.4
	4 or more	6.8
Speaks foreign language(s)	Yes	55.8
	No	44.2
Number of foreign languages spoken	1	43.5
	2	8.7
	3 or more	3.5
Number of years studying language	Language 1	
	Less than 1 year	100.0
	Between 1 and 3 years	0.0
	More than 3 years	0.0
	Language 2	
	Less than 1 year	33.3
	Between 1 and 3 years	33.3
	More than 3 years	33.3
	Language 3	
	Less than 1 year	27.3
	Between 1 and 3 years	9.1
	More than 3 years	63.4
Anticipation of international/global career	Yes	78.4
	No	21.6

Note: For reporting purposes, age is grouped into ranges (17-20, 21-24, and 25-28)

Table II.
Sample
demographics

regions, context, and a general global section (see Corbitt, 2004 for more information). A previous study utilizing the GAP test shows a Cronbach's α coefficient of 0.93.

Big Five personality dimensions

To assess respondents' personality, the study used 50 items adapted from Goldberg (1992). Personality encompassed five distinct dimensions, namely, those of conscientiousness ($\alpha = 0.68$), agreeableness ($\alpha = 0.76$), emotional stability ($\alpha = 0.74$), openness to experience ($\alpha = 0.72$), and extroversion ($\alpha = 0.85$). Sample items include: "I am always prepared," and "I get stressed out easily" among others. The scale was anchored on a five-point response scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

Tendency to stereotype

The study assessed respondents' tendency to stereotype ($\alpha = 0.76$) using a five-point Likert scale anchored at 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree adapted from Dweck *et al.* (1995). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements relating to the level of intelligence an individual possesses, and the inclination or propensity of an individual to change who they are. Sample items include: "A person has a certain amount of intelligence and he/she really can't do much to change it" and "Everyone is a certain kind of person, and there is not much that they can do to really change that."

Attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals

Because "attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals" is a comparatively narrow construct, the range of attitudes potentially comprising the context was first determined. Measures were developed accordingly, taking into consideration refinements suggested by outside reviewers (i.e. focus groups and international experts). Prior to the analysis and in an effort to assess the robustness of the results, a principal components analysis (PCA) (Shadish *et al.*, 1979) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were performed. The CFA revealed a loading of below the 0.4 recommended threshold for willingness to interact with individuals from Australia. A decision was made to eliminate the above mentioned variable and proceed with four emerging market and three developed market depending variables.

The PCA and CFA were conducted on the full sample and on a holdout sample using oblique rotations (Basilevsky, 1994). The holdout sample consisted of Australians ($n = 184$) and was selected to provide sufficient power for multiple aspects of the confirmatory validation analyses. Comparing the PCA results for both the holdout ($n = 184$) and full sample ($n = 310$), it revealed that the variables comprising "willingness to interact with foreign nationals" have similar meaning for respondents from Australia and non-Australians. Specifically, a four-factor construct with eigenvalues greater than 1.00 emerged using the holdout sample and accounted for 65.19 percent of the total variance, while a two-factor construct explaining 65.14 percent of the total variance arose using the full sample. Loadings of the items were in acceptable range and carried an acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.80$ (two-factor); $\alpha = 0.82$ (four-factor)) (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The decision was made to select the full-sample design, which has been empirically validated to consistently outperform holdout designs (Brun *et al.*, 2008).

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements relative to their perception if they were to interact with foreign nationals. Elements included: level of comfort, respect, level of friendliness, ethicality of individuals to name a few. Brazil, China, India, and Russia (i.e. BRIC) were countries representative of the emerging markets, while Germany, Japan, and the USA. represented the developed markets. These eight categories were based on statistics and trends provided in the Global Relocation Trends Survey (2010), and were thus deemed pertinent and impactful to the research question raised in this manuscript.

Respondents indicated their willingness to interact with foreign nationals using a four-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Samples included: "Overall, I would feel comfortable interacting with an individual of [insert country/nationality] descent" and "If given the opportunity, I would be likely to interact with an individual of [insert country/nationality] descent" among others.

Control variables
The study's control variables included age and gender. Controlling for these demographic differences was particularly important to obtain information about possible variations in the relationship within regions because of the even distribution of male and female population.

Analysis: hypothesis testing
The analysis utilized in this study was a hierarchical linear modeling approach which provided a way of examining differences across different levels of aggregation, in this case across regions of Australia, Asia, Middle East, Europe, and North America. We used a moderated mediation analysis advocated by Muller *et al.* (2005). Moderated mediation is found when there is an unmoderated overall treatment effect, but the indirect effect of the treatment via the mediator is moderated. Langfred (2004) suggests this method to be the most practical yet comprehensive technique for analyzing this type of moderated mediation.

Results
Table III shows the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables included in this study. The results indicated no great concern for multicollinearity. Convergent validity was assessed, as all items loaded significantly ($p < 0.05$) on its respective latent construct. Based on Fornell and Larcker (1981), the model also showed discriminant validity as the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct was greater than its shared variance with any other construct. The AVE for all constructs included in the CFA ranged between 0.24 and 0.58, while the greatest shared variance between any two constructs was 0.21. Composite reliabilities of extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness to experience, willingness to interact with foreign individuals, global awareness, and tendency to stereotype are 0.85, 0.52, 0.58, 0.49, 0.50, 0.82, 0.89, and 0.66, respectively, which are above the recommended threshold (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). As a result, construct validity of the final instrument was confirmed with a comparative fix index of 0.87, incremental fit index of 0.88, and the root mean square error of approximation of 0.05 (Hu and Bentler, 1999) (see Table III). Table IV provides the moderated mediation results, while Figure 2 illustrates the overall results of the study.

H1 and *H3* predicted that ROO would be related to global awareness and the Big Five personality dimensions of conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, openness to experiences, and extroversion. Results of Stage 2 (Step 2) show significant

Table III.
Descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Region of origin																
1. Australia	0.59	0.49	–	1.00												
2. Asia	0.13	0.34	–	-0.47**	1.00											
3. Middle East	0.06	0.25	–	-0.32**	-0.10	1.00										
4. Europe	0.13	0.33	–	-0.46**	-0.15*	-0.10	1.00									
5. North America	0.09	0.28	–	-0.37**	-0.12***	-0.08	-0.23***	1.00								
6. Global awareness	52.37	17.20	0.87	-0.01	-0.18**	-0.05	0.26**	-0.02	1.00							
Personality																
7. Conscientiousness	3.31	0.70	0.68	0.05	-0.11*	-0.02	0.02	0.05	0.00	1.00						
8. Agreeableness	3.84	0.73	0.76	0.05	0.01	0.06	-0.11	-0.03	-0.11	-0.02	1.00					
9. Emotional Stability	2.95	0.85	0.74	0.15*	-0.07	-0.10	0.00	-0.08	0.03	-0.06	-0.20**	1.00				
10. Open to Experience	3.77	0.68	0.72	-0.02	-0.16**	0.09	0.04	0.11	0.04	0.00	0.10	0.22**	1.00			
11. Extroversion	3.74	0.75	0.85	0.24**	-0.31**	-0.07	-0.01	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.17**	0.09	0.26**	1.00		
12. Tendency to stereotype	2.71	0.85	0.76	-0.17*	0.19**	0.05	0.04	-0.01	0.05	-0.06	-0.24**	0.02	-0.07	-0.30**	1.00	
13. Willingness to interact	3.37;	0.63;	0.80;	0.04;	0.05;	0.00;	-0.05;	-0.07;	-0.04;	0.00;	0.27**;	0.00;	0.01;	0.18**;	-0.26**;	1.00
(EM and DM)	3.93	0.57	0.57	0.07	-0.19**	-0.02	0.01	0.11	-0.02	0.03	0.20**	0.03	0.16**	0.25**	-0.25**	1.00

Notes: $n = 310$. *$p < 0.01$; **$p < 0.001$; ***$p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

Predictor	Attitude Stage 1		Global awareness stage 2	Personality dimensions Stage 2					Attitude Stage 3		Attitude Stage 4	
	EM	DM		C	A	ES	O	E	EM	DM	EM	DM
Step 1												
Age	−0.01	0.08	0.02	0.03	0.04	−0.05	0.06	−0.17*	−0.01	0.06	−0.14	0.08
Sex	0.17*	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.23	−0.34**	−0.07	0.11	0.17*	0.02	0.17*	0.03
R^2	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.11	0.01	0.05	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.01
Step 2												
Region of origin												
Australia (AU)	0.23	−0.21	0.61	−0.05	−0.04	−0.14*	.00	−0.16**	0.25	−0.33	0.23	−0.21
Asia (AS)	0.13	−0.03	−0.15*	−0.11	0.01	−0.14	−0.15	−0.31**	0.13	0.00	0.13	−0.02
Middle East (ME)	0.03	0.02	−0.04	−0.03	0.07	−0.16*	0.07	−0.08	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03
Europe (EU)	−0.02	0.04	0.24**	−0.01	−0.14	−0.02	0.03	−0.05	−0.01	0.03	−0.01	0.01
North America (NA)	−0.03	0.14	0.20	0.03	−0.03	−0.13	0.09	0.00	−0.03	0.14	−0.03	0.14
GAP									0.00	0.12	0.00	0.09
Personality dimension												
Conscientiousness (C)	−0.04	−0.08							−0.04	−0.05	−0.04	−0.06
Agreeableness (A)	0.18*	0.16							0.18*	0.18*	0.18*	0.18*
Emotional stability (ES)	0.09	0.11							0.09	0.09	0.09	0.10
Openness to exp. (O)	−0.03	0.11							−0.03	0.10	−0.03	0.11
Extroversion (E)	0.12	0.05							0.12	0.04	0.12	0.06
Tend. to stereotype (TTS)	−0.20*	−0.20**							−0.20*	0.15	−0.20*	−0.21**
R^2	0.16	0.06	0.09	0.02	0.08	0.16	0.05	0.14	0.16	0.12	0.16	0.07
ΔR^2	0.13**	0.06*	0.09**	0.01	0.03	0.04*	0.04	0.09**	0.13**	0.12**	0.13**	0.07*
Step 3												
ROO×TTS												
ROO (AU)×TTS	−0.13	−0.18									−0.12 (−0.13)	−0.17 (−0.19)
ROO (AS)×TTS	0.03	0.00									0.00 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
ROO (ME)×TTS	−0.04	−0.04									−0.03 (−0.04)	−0.03 (0.01)
ROO (EU)×TTS	−0.16*	−0.05									−0.17* (−0.16*)	−0.04 (−0.03)
ROO (NA)×TTS	0.06	0.18**									0.06 (0.06)	0.18* (0.18**)

(continued)

Table IV.
Moderated mediation
results[a]

Table IV.

Predictor	Attitude Stage 1 EM	Attitude Stage 1 DM	Global awareness stage 2	Personality dimensions Stage 2 C	A	ES	O	E	Attitude Stage 3 EM	Attitude Stage 3 DM	Attitude Stage 4 EM	Attitude Stage 4 DM
ROO×PD												
ROO (AU)×PD (C)	0.08	−0.04									−0.03	0.00
ROO (AU)×PD (A)	0.09	−0.09									−0.21	−0.17
ROO (AU)×PD (ES)	0.18	−0.17									0.04	−0.22
ROO (AU)×PD (O)	0.01	−0.17									−0.04	−0.08
ROO (AU)×PD (E)	0.27	−0.10									−0.27	0.15
ROO (AS)×PD (C)	0.00	−0.09									0.00	−0.08
ROO (AS)×PD (A)	0.00	0.02									0.01	0.02
ROO (AS)×PD (ES)	0.01	0.05									0.01	0.05
ROO (AS)×PD (O)	−0.02	−0.04									−0.02	−0.04
ROO (AS)×PD (E)	0.07	0.13									0.07	0.14
ROO (ME)×PD (C)	0.08	0.02									0.08	−0.03
ROO (ME)×PD (A)	0.07	−0.04									0.07	−0.04
ROO (ME)×PD (ES)	−0.02	−0.03									−0.02	−0.02
ROO (ME)×PD (O)	0.04	0.03									0.04	0.01
ROO (ME)×PD (E)	−0.04	0.01									−0.04	0.00
ROO (EU)×PD (C)	0.02	0.02									0.02	0.02
ROO (EU)×PD (A)	0.05	0.04									0.04	0.05
ROO (EU)×PD (ES)	−0.02	0.05									0.02	0.06
ROO (EU)×PD (O)	−0.08	0.02									−0.09	0.01
ROO (EU)×PD (E)	0.08	−0.02									0.08	−0.02
ROO (NA)×PD (C)	0.03	0.02									0.04	0.03
ROO (NA)×PD (A)	0.07	0.00									0.08	0.02
ROO (NA)×PD (ES)	−0.01	0.03									0.00	0.03
ROO (NA)×PD (O)	0.10	0.03									0.11	0.00
ROO (NA)×PD (E)	−0.06	−0.08									−0.07	−0.08
PD×TTS												
PD (C)×TTS									0.04	−0.03	0.04	−0.02

| Predictor | Attitude Stage 1 (Global awareness stage 2) | | Personality dimensions Stage 2 | | | | | Attitude Stage 3 | | Attitude Stage 4 | |
	EM	DM	C	A	ES	O	E	EM	DM	EM	DM
PD (A)×TTS								−0.05	−0.07	−0.06	−0.06
PD (ES)×TTS								−0.05	−0.08	−0.04	−0.06
PD (O)×TTS								−0.10	0.00	−0.10	−0.03
PD (E)×TTS								−0.03	−0.08	−0.02	−0.09
GAP×TTS								−0.02	0.05	0.01	0.04
GAP×PD											
GAP×PD (C)								0.00	−0.01	0.02	0.01
GAP×PD (A)								0.05	−0.04	0.07	−0.05
GAP×PD (ES)								−0.02	−0.05	−0.02	−0.05
GAP×PD (O)								0.03	−0.04	0.05	0.02
GAP×PD (E)								0.02	0.01	0.02	−0.08
R^2	0.19 (0.20)	0.10 (0.20)						0.18	0.15	0.21 (0.19) (0.21)	0.11 (0.22) (0.23)
ΔR^2	0.03 (0.04)	0.04 (0.08)						0.02	0.03	0.05 (0.03) (0.05)	0.04 (0.10) (0.11)

Notes: ROO, Region of origin; GAP, Global awareness profile; PD, personality dimension; TTS, tendency to stereotype; AU, Australia; AS, Asia; ME, Middle East; EU, Europe; NA, North America; C, Conscientiousness; A, Agreeableness; ES, Emotional stability ; O, Openness to experience; E, Extroversion. [a]Standardized coefficients are reported. The coefficient in parentheses in Stages 1 and 4 represents ROO (AU, AS, ME, EU, NA)×TTS when ROO×PD and GAP×TTS is introduced to the model. The coefficient in parenthesis in Stage 4 represent values when PD (C, A, ES, O, E) is introduced as a moderator to the model * < 0.01; ** < 0.01; *** < 0.001 (two-tailed)

Table IV.

Figure 2.
A framework for
assessing attitude
toward interacting
with foreign
nationals (results)
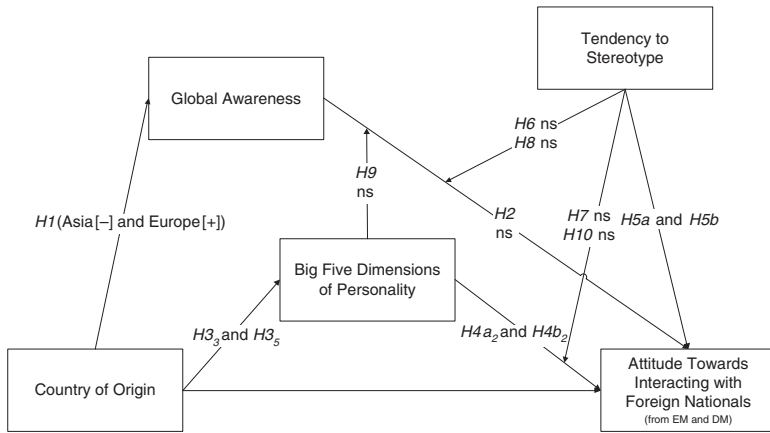
relationships between being Asian and global awareness ($\beta = -0.15$, $p < 0.01$) and
being European and global awareness ($\beta = 0.24$, $p < 0.001$). Results of Stage 2 (Step 2)
further show significant relationships between being Australian and emotional
stability ($\beta = -0.14$, $p < 0.01$) and extroversion ($\beta = -0.16$, $p < 0.001$), being Asian and
extroversion ($\beta = -0.31$, $p < 0.001$), and being Middle Eastern and emotional stability
($\beta = -0.16$, $p < 0.01$). The findings provide partial support for H1 and H3.

Results of Stage 3 (Step 2) show that the personality dimension of agreeableness is
significantly related to willingness to interact with foreign nationals from emerging
and developed markets ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.01$, in both instances). H4 is thus fully
supported. Furthermore, results of Stage 3 (Step 2) show that tendency to stereotype is
significantly and negatively related to an individual's willingness to interact with
foreign nationals from emerging ($\beta = -0.20$, $p < 0.01$), yet not from developed ($\beta = 0.15$,
ns) markets. H5 is, therefore, partially supported for both emerging markets. Global
awareness did not show a significant relationship for willingness to interact with
individuals from emerging ($\beta = 0.00$, ns) or developed ($\beta = 0.12$, ns) markets. As a
result, H2 is not supported by the data.

Results of Stage 3 (Step 3) do not show significant global awareness × tendency to
stereotype interactions ($\beta = -0.02$, ns (emerging); $\beta = 0.05$, ns (developed)). Stage 3 (Step 3)
also show no significant interactions between conscientiousness × tendency to stereotype
($\beta = 0.04$, ns (emerging); $\beta = -0.03$, ns (developed)), agreeableness × tendency to
stereotype ($\beta = -0.05$, ns (emerging); $\beta = -0.07$, ns (developed)), emotional
stability × tendency to stereotype ($\beta = -0.05$, ns (emerging); $\beta = -0.08$, ns (developed)),
openness to experience × tendency to stereotype ($\beta = -0.10$, ns (emerging); $\beta = 0.00$, ns
(developed)), and extroversion × tendency to stereotype ($\beta = -0.03$, ns (emerging);
$\beta = -0.08$, ns (developed)). Thus, H6 and H7 are not supported. Because no interaction
effects were found, statistically speaking there was no ground to proceed with the
analyses pertaining to "Type 2" moderated mediation.

To test for "Type 2" moderated mediation, H8 and H10 predict that tendency to
stereotype would moderate the relationship between ROO and one's willingness to
interact with foreign nationals from emerging and developed markets, and does so
after the mediating effect of global awareness and the Big Five personality
dimensions. Results of Stage 4 (Step 3) indicate that when the interaction of ROO and
tendency to stereotype is included in the same equation, all previously significant

interactions of ROO and tendency to stereotype from Stage 1 (Step 3) remain significant. The study concludes that the interaction of ROO (i.e. Europe and North America) and tendency to stereotype are significant regardless of the inclusion of global awareness and the Big Five personality dimensions. The hypothesized "Type 2" mediated moderation effects based on *H8* and *H10* were ultimately not found to exist in this data set.

Relative to *H9*, it was predicated that the Big Five personality dimensions would moderate the relationship between ROO and one's willingness to interact with foreign nationals from emerging and developed markets after the mediating effect of global awareness. Results of the Stage 1 (Step 3) indicate that the ROO and personality dimension interactions are non-significant (range: $\beta = -0.08$-0.27, ns (emerging); range: $\beta = -0.17$-0.13, ns (developed)). Results of Stage 3 (Step 3) show that the interactions between global awareness and the Big Five personality dimensions are not significant ($\beta = 0.00$ (conscientiousness), 0.05 (agreeableness), -0.02 (emotional stability), 0.03 (openness to experience), 0.02 (extroversion), ns (emerging); $\beta = -0.01$ (conscientiousness), -0.04 (agreeableness), -0.05 (emotional stability), -0.04 (openness to experience), 0.01 (extroversion), ns (developed)), and continue to remain non-significant with the addition of the global awareness × personality dimension interaction in Stage 4 (Step 3). *H9* receives no support.

Discussion and conclusion
The research question in this study identified willingness to interact with foreign nationals from emerging and developed markets as a focal point relative to our ability to explain and predict the decision-making dynamics within managerial teams in global organizations. Results showed that ROO variables were able to predict a general level of global awareness and individual facets of personality among cultures, yet no direct effects to willingness to interact were found within the array of ROO variables. The study did, however, identify interactive effects of ROO and tendency to stereotype for selected regions, namely, that of Europe and North America, that were able to predict respondents' willingness to interact with individuals from emerging and developed markets, respectively.

Theoretical implications
This study utilized "attitude toward willingness to interact with foreign nationals" from emerging and developed markets as a means to measure a situation-specific predisposition relative to adjusting to foreign contexts. Findings of the study support the key theoretical assumption of EPP in that "agreeableness" as a personality trait represents an adaptive mechanism analogous to managers' willingness to cooperate with other foreign nationals. This study simultaneously extends our understanding of EPP by contextualizing the findings to specifically predict interactions with individuals from emerging as well as developed markets.

SCT adds to the theoretical contribution of this study in that it subscribes to the notion that attitude formations are the result of cultural manifestations. These manifestations may take the shape of values, norms, and/or assumptions which are not necessarily visibly displayed in every day interactions. This study asserts that by focussing on culturally manifested mechanisms enables us to gather a more precise understanding of the effect of ROO on the across cultures adjustment process.

On the issue of global awareness, the study contends that while Asian cultures demonstrate a lack of global awareness, Europeans report a significantly greater level of global awareness. This particular phenomenon may rest on two ideas: first, in the

context of this study Asia as a cluster is composed of various geographic and cultural sub-regions (see Table I). Each of these sub-regions (i.e. Central, East, West, North, and South Asia) contains subcultures which may have contributed to potential variations in levels of global awareness. Based on the study's results, it may be speculated that emerging markets are characterized by lower levels of global awareness, while developed markets possess higher levels of global awareness, as evident in the strongly positive relationship between Europeans and their level of global awareness.

Practical implications
As the transference of human resources (HRs) between countries/regions across the globe is augmented by the need for managers at the "right place" at the "right time," so too will managers encounter a plethora of economic, social, and cultural environments which are likely to deviate from traditionally held, ingrained living, and working standards. The resulting kaleidoscope of cultural combinations existing in any one location is then suspect to an array of adjustment difficulties from the standpoint of the adjustment necessary to managing one's role given the diverse workforce in addition to the adjustment necessary to adapt to new living conditions establishing HR policies and practices that take into consideration the cultural diversity inherent in the workforce would allow for lesser adjustment difficulties experienced by managers and their respective families.

The role of region/country of origin should take precedence in the creation and implementation of HR policies and practices seeing that philosophies regarding gender roles may be as diverse as the cultural diversity present in the organization. In conclusion, the acknowledgment and contextualization of diversity is not an option but a necessity upon which organizations must act to reach their fullest potential in respective foreign locations (see Jonsen *et al.*, 2011).

Limitations, conclusion and suggestions for future research
The issue of common method variance is of concern as prior research has indicated that attitude measures contain an average of 40.7 percent method variance (Cote and Buckley, 1987). Common method variance was controlled by implementing the following: first, a time lag between the measurement of the predictor and criterion variables (i.e. procedural opposed to statistical remedy), particularly crucial in predicting attitude-attitude relationships; second, protecting respondents' anonymity; and third, careful construction of questionnaire items (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003).

This study focusses on the individual differences impacting a manager's attitude toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging and developed markets, which, ideally should be assessed before accepting an overseas assignment. The study presents an initial attempt at identifying the dynamics inherent in pre-specified regions to analyze attitudes toward adjusting to different cultural settings that may or may not be distinctly different from one's own. Prospective additions to the existing research model may range from individual differences variables (e.g. self-efficacy, self-esteem, stereotyping threat, intercultural competency, intercultural sensitivity, and so forth) to expanding the focus to the reciprocal nature of the adjustment process.

In conclusion, the study's major findings indicate that a managers' level of tendency to stereotype is a strong means of altering one's inclinations toward interacting with foreign nationals from emerging as well as developed markets. SCT and EPP have consequently provided partial explanatory power to the question of how much diversity a manager is willing and/or able to accept and the extent to which cultures are indicative of personality traits and accumulation of global awareness.

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