UP TO NO GOOD? GENDER, SOCIAL IMPACT WORK AND EMPLOYEE PROMOTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The direct participation of employees in corporate social impact initiatives has been increasing as firms seek different means to engage with society. To date, employee participation in social impact work has been assumed to benefit individual employees through skills development and career advancement within the firm. In contrast to this positive view, we propose that participation could also have negative effects to the extent that social impact work has lower legitimacy and is considered a form of non-standard work. We anticipate that employees' decisions to participate in social impact work lead decision makers to question the employees' commitment to the firm's commercial goals and their careers, reducing their likelihood of promotion. Furthermore, because the male gender role stereotype is less congruent with social impact work, we expect that the promotion penalty will be greater for men than for women. Our analysis is based on panel data for 1,768 employees from 2008 to 2013 from archival records from a global management consulting firm. A discrete hazard model of the effect of participation in social impact work on promotions to manager shows that men who do social impact work have the longest time to promotion, providing support for our arguments. Our findings suggest that whereas women are afforded greater latitude, men appear to face greater labor market constraints for engaging in social impact work than women. Thus, stereotypes regarding appropriate gender behaviors may limit men's abilities to contribute towards the social impact agendas of their firms.

INTRODUCTION

Is doing social good good for one's career? The role of business in society has been the subject of significant research attention (Bies et al., 2007; Campbell, 2007; Margolis and Walsh, 2003; Tilcsik and Marquis, 2013), with accumulating evidence of financial and reputational benefits to corporate social responsibility (Eccles, Ioannou and Serafeim, 2014; Henisz *et al*., 2014). Companies have begun exploring different means to engage with society, expanding beyond traditional charitable giving. Recent years have seen a proliferation of a new form of corporate social engagement - corporate social initiatives through which employees have the opportunity to make a visible and positive impact on society within their corporate roles in part time or temporary roles (Marquis and Moss Kanter, 2009; Murray, 2016). Examples include disaster relief operations, consulting services for not-for-profit organizations or community work.

Such corporate social initiatives have been associated with several organizational benefits including improved recruitment (Hedblom, Hickman and List, 2016; Jones, Willness and Madey, 2014), mitigation of adverse employee behavior (Flammer and Luo, 2016), and increased employee identification and retention (Bode, Singh, and Rogan, 2015; Glavas and Godwin 2013; Carnahan, Kryscynski, and Olson, 2015). Benefits to employees thus far identified in prior research have included primarily psychic benefits such as an enhanced sense of fulfillment and meaning in their jobs due to increased person-organization fit (Greguras et al., 2014; O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell, 1991). However, whether participation in corporate social initiatives is beneficial for employees' career advancement is less clear.

To date, scholars and practitioners have argued that participating in social initiatives benefits individual employees' career advancement through enhanced skills development, increased work efforts and greater advancement possibilities in the firm (Bartel, 2001; Bhattacharya, Sen and Korschun, 2008; Burbano, Mamer and Snyder, 2013; Peterson, 2003). This view holds that participation provides employees with "stretch roles" that grant them responsibilities not normally associated with their position in the firm and opportunities to interact with diverse and often senior stakeholders. After participating in the social initiative and returning to their regular role in the firm, employees can apply these skills and knowledge to the firm's commercial work. Accordingly, the skills development view suggests that employee participation in corporate social initiatives should improve employees' career advancement in the firm.

While prior research has begun to address the question of how participation in corporate social initiatives affects employees' skill development, the associated career outcomes have generally been assumed to be positive. Yet, there are at least three reasons why participation in corporate social initiatives could have no effect or even a negative effect on career advancement. First, despite increases in the popularity of corporate social initiatives and employee participation in these initiatives, social impact work as a corporate activity is relatively new and suffers from low legitimacy within commercial organizations (Dougherty and Heller, 1994). Second, social impact work is similar to other types of non-standard work such as temporary work, part-time work or contract work, in that it takes place outside of the normal work environment and often involves little or no compensation because the beneficiaries of the work lack the ability to pay (Kalleberg, 2000). Lastly, social impact work involves gendered role expectations whereby the nature of social impact work is more consistent with the female role stereotype (Eagly, Wood, and Diekman 2000; Fiske et al, 2002). Thus, participation could affect career outcomes for men and women differently. Consideration of these characteristics of social impact work provides the opportunity to develop more complete arguments for the effect of employee participation in corporate social initiatives on career advancement.

To address the question of how participating in corporate social initiatives affects employees' career advancement, we examine the effect of participation in a corporate social initiative on employees' likelihood of promotion, and how gender moderates the effect. We propose that the lower legitimacy of corporate social initiatives and the non-standard nature of social impact work mean that participation is likely to be perceived as a signal of an employee's lack of fit with the firm and lower commitment to the commercial goals of the firm and their career. Thus, in terms of its net effect, on average participation is likely to reduce promotion likelihood despite the potential for skills development. Furthermore, building on arguments for gendered role expectations, we propose that social impact work is more congruent with female role stereotypes (Eagly, Wood and Diekman, 2000; Lee and Huang, 2016). Decision makers' often hold prior beliefs regarding women having a lower commitment to purely commercial goals (Marsden, Kalleberg and Cook, 1993). Women’s participation in social impact work is less likely to lead to updating of the decision maker's beliefs (“we already knew that about her”) and therefore participation is less likely to change promotion likelihood for women. In contrast, a man’s choice to participate contradicts role stereotypes regarding appropriate career choices, which leads to an updating of beliefs by decision makers ("so, he is not so serious about his career after all."). Thus, we hypothesize that men's participation in corporate social initiatives will have a greater negative effect on their promotions than women's participation.

We test our predictions using longitudinal, confidential human resource data on employees' project assignments including their participation in social impact initiatives and their subsequent promotions to manager in a large multinational consulting firm during a seven-year period. Controlling for observables including employee performance, using a discrete hazard model, we estimate the effect of participation in the corporate social initiative on the likelihood of subsequent promotion within the firm, and how this effect varies for men and women.

The issues we examine are important for researchers studying corporate social engagement from a strategic human capital perspective (Burbano, 2016; Carnahan *et al.*, 2016; Flammer and Luo, 2016, Jones et al., 2014). Studies thus far have focused on the benefits of corporate social impact work either for firms themselves (e.g., by examining the effect on firm profitability, attacks by social activists or employee retention) or on external stakeholders such as customers, communities, or governments (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Godfrey 2005; Henisz, Dorobantu, and Nartey, 2014; Luo and Bhattacharya, 2006; Schneiberg, King, and Smith, 2008; Zhao, 2012). However, whether engaging in corporate social initiatives is beneficial for the individual employee, has not been sufficiently addressed, especially in terms of their longer-term career progression and not only immediate human capital outcomes.

Our research question is also relevant to scholars studying the effect of non-standard work on career advancement (Kalleberg, Reskin and Hudson, 2000; Leslie, Manchester, Park and Mehng, 2012; Pedulla, 2016). As firms increasingly are pressured to engage in societal issues, they are encouraging their employees to participate in social impact work that diverges from preconceptions of regular corporate work (i.e., a “nine-to-five job” in a specialized role within a purely commercially-driven organization). Beyond providing an interesting empirical context to study non-standard work, corporate social impact work also differs from previously studied non-standard work in important ways. Much prior research into the career effects of non-standard work has focused on work occurring either outside of employees' corporate careers (i.e. contract work) or off the career track (i.e. part-time), where career penalties are perhaps less surprising. In contrast, the social impact work we study occurs within the employee's corporate role and is approved (even encouraged) by the employing firm. Nevertheless, as we argue, negative career consequences could be likely for many employees who take up such practices.

Lastly, our investigation addresses the question of how gender role stereotypes interact with characteristics of work to affect career advancement (Barbulescu and Bidwell, 2013; Beckman and Phillips, 2005; Kennedy, McDonnell and Stephens, 2016; Merluzzi and Dobrev, 2015). To the extent that social impact work is consistent with a female gender role stereotype but not with a male one, participation by men in such work might be perceived particularly negatively. At a general level, the findings of our study suggest that whereas women are afforded greater latitude to explore alternative work than men, men appear to face greater labor market constraints for engaging in non-standard work than women. This has important practical implications not only for men's career advancement but also for the potential participation of men in work with explicitly societal objectives inside commercial organizations.

CORPORATE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC HUMAN CAPITAL

In recent years, there has been an increasing recognition that corporate social engagement and firm performance can be positively linked (Eccles, et al., 2014; Henisz et al., 2014; Margolis and Walsh, 2003). Explanations for this relationship often relate to the ways in which such engagement helps firm manage different sets of stakeholders: communities (Henisz et al., 2014; Schneiberg et al., 2008), governments (Zhao, 2012), customers (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Luo and Bhattacharya, 2006) and employees (Backhaus et al., 2002; Turban and Greening, 1997). Focusing on employees, there is evidence that corporate social engagement can facilitate recruitment (Jones et al., 2014), improve their identification with the firm (Glavas and Godwin 2013) and reduce the likelihood of (high performing) employees voluntarily leaving the firm (Bode et al., 2015; Carnahan et al., 2016). Furthermore, recent work has shown that firms strategically use such engagement as a lever to manage absenteeism and shirking (Flammer and Luo, 2016).

For the individual employee, participation in corporate social initiatives could also be personally beneficial. Participation typically provides opportunities for employees to interact with diverse stakeholders and to take on more demanding roles with greater responsibilities earlier in their careers (Burbano et al., 2013). Through these roles, they gain skills in managing different types of stakeholders which they can bring back to their commercial work which in turn should help them advance in their careers (Bartel, 2001, Bode and Singh, 2016; Grant and Berry, 2011). The skills development perspective on social impact work suggests that participation should have a positive effect on employee promotions. However, while this view focuses on the (primarily positive) events that could take place during the actual participation, it does not consider how decision makers in the firm perceive an employee's choice to participate in a social initiative. Thus, whether participation in corporate social initiatives actually improves internal promotion possibilities for individual employees remains unanswered.

Social Impact Initiatives and Promotions

Employee promotion decisions have been shown to be highly subjective in many firms where factors other than past performance often affect these decisions (Beckman and Phillips, 2005, Hitt and Barr, 1989; Powell and Butterfield, 1994). In particular, promotions are driven not only by an employee's past performance, but perceptions of that individual's fit with the firm (Pfeffer and Cohen, 1984; Burt, 1998). The perception of fit is largely determined by employees' conformity to the role expectations set by others, in particular those senior leaders who make promotion decisions (Kristof, 1996; Ng *et al*., 2005; Podolny and Baron, 1997; Turban and Dougherty, 1994).

Another important driver that is central in determining the promotions of employees is the level of perceived commitment of the employee (Bielby and Bielby 2002; Correll and Benard 2006; Leung, 2014; Turco 2010). For example, Becker (1985) proposed an allocation of energy model whereby engagement in activities unrelated to work, such as childcare, would reduce the employees' likelihood to seek out challenging work and thus reduce their human capital, leading to lower rates of promotions. Extant work has also shown that individuals who take a leave of absence, whether for private reasons or illness, are less likely to be promoted (Judiesch and Lyness, 1999) and similarly employees exercising the option for flexible work practice can be seen as lacking commitment (Leslie et al., 2012).

How would participation in a corporate social initiative affect an employee's likelihood of promotion? As described above, this depends on how participation affects decision makers' judgments of the employee's fit with the firm as well as their commitment to the firm and career. Participation in social impact work will negatively affect these judgments the more that it is viewed as having a low fit with the firm’s objectives and the more it is interpreted as an indication of a lower commitment to the primary career-track and the firm.

What differentiates social impact work from commercial work is its focus on delivering social impact to a target beneficiary (e.g. a logistics company's aid to a community affected by a disaster or a law firm's pro bono work) rather than increasing the firm's financial performance. It is this aspect - the creation of social impact over achieving commercial goals - that is thought to provide employees with meaning that they do not necessarily receive in their daily jobs (Bartel, 2001; Glavas and Kelley, 2014; Penner and Finkelstein, 1998; Rosso, Dekas, and Wrzesniewski 2010; Wilson, 2000). However, because social impact, not profit, is the goal of such initiatives, from a firm’s perspective, corporate social engagement is not the most (if at all) profitable way to engage a firm’s resources. The alternative focus on social impact underlies two characteristics of social impact work that could negatively affect perceived fit and commitment of employees who participate.

First, despite the increasing prevalence of employee participation in corporate social initiatives, the legitimacy of social impact work in for-profit firms is often questioned at least by organizational members. While many firms engage explicitly with society with the support from top management due to pressures from external and internal stakeholders, such corporate social initiatives may nevertheless be viewed as illegitimate by other members of the firm because they are motivated by non-commercial goals (Jay, 2013). For example, Rodell and Lynch (2016) showed that employees who engaged in volunteer activities were stigmatized by their colleagues suggesting that participation in corporate social initiatives could also be perceived negatively.

Second, because social impact work is not usually considered a standard work practice in commercial firms, participation could serve as an indicator of an employee's lower commitment to the commercial activities at the firm. Building on theories of labor market signaling, research into the effect of non-standard work on career advancement has shown that engaging in non-standard work can increase perceptions of lower competence and commitment (Pedulla, 2016).

To be sure, it is possible that employees do develop skills through participation in corporate social impact work as the extant literature has suggested. However, participation in social impact work can send a signal to decision makers regarding employees fit and commitment to the firm (Spence, 1973). When concerns around fit and commitment outweigh the potential positive effects of skills development, promotion likelihood will be lower. Thus, we expect that on average, participation in a corporate social initiative will negatively affect an employee's promotion likelihood. Formally:

Hypothesis 1: Participation in a corporate social initiative will be negatively associated with an employee's likelihood of promotion.

Gendered Roles, Social Impact Initiatives and Promotions

Given the subjective nature underlying the decision to promote employees, it is not surprising that in general some employees are systematically less likely to be promoted than others. This subjectivity also suggests not all employees will be penalized for participation in social initiatives to the same degree and that there is likely to be variance in promotion likelihood among those who participate. In other words, decision makers may judge participation in the same type of work differently depending on characteristics of the participant because person-organization fit and organizational commitment are likely judged differently for different types of individuals.

While there are several demographic and personality factors that can influence career advancement (Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2004; Fang et al., 2015), a large body of evidence shows that gender is an important factor that affects decision makers' judgments. The main emphasis of gender studies in the careers literature to date has been on explaining the persistent pattern of lower career advancement for women (Bertrand and Hallock, 2001; Burt, 1998; Castilla and Benard, 2010; Gorman and Kmec, 2009; Hultin and Szulkin 1999; Merluzzi and Dobrev, 2015). Promotion decisions are often made in such a way that the leadership structures of firms are replicated. Thus, in traditionally male dominated firms a catch 22 exists whereby women are not promoted until a critical mass of women have been promoted (Baron, Davis-Blake and Bielby, 1986; Beckman and Phillips, 2005; Cohen, Broshak and Haveman, 1998; Kanter, 1977).

Therefore, on average men are more likely to be judged as fitting with the role expectations of more senior roles in a corporate context whereas women are viewed as less legitimate than men regardless of their behaviors (Eagly and Karau, 2002).

Assessment of gender differences in the effect of participation in a corporate social initiative on promotion depends on whether the lower legitimacy and non-standard work features of social impact work affect the perceived fit and commitment for men and women differently. Given the lower perceived legitimacy of women in a corporate context, it is possible that women would have lower promotion likelihood following participation in a corporate social initiative. Participation in a work practice that is also lacking legitimacy could compound the negative effect. The interaction between an actor who has low legitimacy with a practice that also has low legitimacy might trigger an assessment of the work as even less legitimate, further decreasing the perceived fit of the individual with the firm.

However the above argument does not consider the gendered role expectations of social impact work. Prior research indicates that in general, women are stereotyped as less competitive, less motivated by financial compensation, and more likely to value social impact than men (Barbulescu and Bidwell, 2013; Gilligan, 1977; Kish-Gephart, Harrison, and Travino, 2010). The nurturing and caring association of the female role stereotype is more consistent with social impact work than qualities associated with the male role stereotype (Cejka and Eagly, 1999). Women's involvement in social impact work is more expected and has higher cognitive legitimacy. Men's involvement, in contrast, violates gender role stereotypes, and is therefore could be considered less legitimate. The even though corporate social initiatives may be perceived as having lower legitimacy in general, men's participation may be viewed as less legitimate than women's.

To the extent that social impact work is similar to other types of non-standard work such as part-time work or contract work, the participation of men and women in a corporate social initiative is also likely to be assessed differently. In prior research on non-standard work, Pedulla (2016) found that men were penalized more heavily than women for part-time work practices because decision makers attributed men's part-time work to lower commitment and lower competence. In related research in the context of a consulting firm, Reid (2015a) found that men were permitted to take off time for events like exotic vacations which are seen as a symbol of commercial career success, but doing the same for work-life balance reasons or child-rearing was not seen as permissible. Furthermore, men tend to avoid revealing that they engage in such practices, whereas women do not (Reid 2015b). Engaging in non-standard work practices is seen as violating normative ideals regarding men's role in society (Thebaud and Pedulla, 2016), and therefore, to the extent that social impact work is viewed as non-standard work, men are likely to be penalized more than women for engaging in it.

Participation by any employee in a corporate social initiative provides a signal to the decision maker (Spence, 1973). Yet, the interpretation of the signal is likely to vary with the gender of the employee. For a male employee, participation signals that he may not be as committed to the commercial goals of the firm and his career as previously thought. Because in general men are assumed to be more committed to their careers and commercial goals than women, the inconsistency of the participation signal with masculine gender role stereotypes leads decision makers to update their beliefs about the fit and commitment of the male participant. In contrast, for the female employee, although participation could also signal lower fit and commitment, because the decision makers' prior beliefs already based on an assumption of lower concern for commercial goals and commitment to career associated with a female gender role stereotype, women’s participation does not lead to the same updating of beliefs. In other words, participation in corporate social initiatives offers less new information for the promotion decision for women than for men, and so participation by women is less likely to affect promotion, whereas for men, the effect will be negative. Formally:

Hypothesis 2: Participation in a corporate social imitative will have a larger negative effect on men's likelihood of promotion than on women's likelihood of promotion.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

The context of our study is a management consulting firm that had recently launched an initiative to offer its services to non-profit organizations and development agencies, which we refer to as “CSI” for confidentiality reasons. CSI extended the firm’s consulting offering to clients that were non-profit organizations, foundations or development organizations, all of which had explicit social impact goals, were unable to afford the firm’s consulting services, but could in principle derive value from these. While the motivation for CSI was primarily to leverage the firm’s unique capabilities to offer solutions to societal problems, internally it was framed as a self-sustaining venture that would yield intangible benefits including increased employee motivation, retention and skills development. Since its inception in 2002, the initiative had received sponsorship from the highest level of leadership including the CEO.

Employees had an option to join one of the CSI projects in lieu of their commercial work on a short-term basis. Unlike philanthropic initiatives such as volunteering to build houses for the underprivileged or work in a soup kitchen, CSI work drew on the same set of skills used in commercial consulting projects. However, the clients were charged a reduced fee, and employees were paid a reduced salary for the duration of the CSI project.

Assignments to CSI projects were made as follows. First, interested employees applied for CSI projects. Information on upcoming projects including the location, length and client identity was made available on the company's intranet. Employees could apply to multiple projects. Second, the staffing manager proposed a match based on the employee's skill fit and availability, conditional upon the employee meeting the minimum performance requirement of above average or average performance in the last performance review. Given the important relationship between performance and promotions, this is a point we will return to in the empirical part of the paper. Third, employees could accept or decline the offer.

Our interviews with the firm indicated that scheduling – in terms of the end of a prior project coinciding with the beginning of a CSI project – was the most challenging aspect (as it also was when staffing commercial projects), and that consultants' demands to participate often exceeded the supply of CSI projects. This is important because it means that many non-participants may have had similar preferences for engaging in social impact work as participants. Because they did not participate, these preferences remain hidden (unless they revealed them in another way that we do not observe), whereas the preferences of those who do participate were revealed. We cannot observe hidden preferences and therefore cannot control for them directly. But the difficulty associated with matching the timing of consultant availability with CSI project needs injects a random element to the assignments, and therefore preferences to engage in social impact work will not be perfectly correlated with actual preferences. A perfect correlation between participation and actual preferences would be worrisome because differences in promotions between non-participants and participants could have been driven by actual lower fit and commitment to the firm's commercial goals (to the extent that these are correlated with preferences for engaging in social impact work) in contrast to the signaling arguments we propose. Thus, to the extent that preferences for engaging in social impact (rather than the signal that participation sends) drive promotion differences, because these preferences also exist among non-participants, our analysis is biased against finding a significant difference in promotions for CSI participants and non-participants.

Empirical Approach

The firm provided access to individual-level data for employees in four of the countries where the firm has significant business (USA, UK, Canada and Ireland). The data included 10,634 individuals employed at the firm at any time during the period September 2007 to June 2013. As the firm uses fiscal years in its records, where September 1st denotes the first year of a given fiscal year (e.g. September 1st 2007 is the first day of the fiscal year 2008), we follow the same convention throughout the paper. We abbreviate fiscal year with the term "FY".

Individuals typically entered the firm as analysts, before promotion to consultant, then manager, senior manager, junior partner and finally partner. Participation in CSI at the analyst level was relatively rare, and the majority of participants were consultants and managers. Thus in order to meaningfully study the effect of CSI participation in subsequent promotions, we restrict our sample to those individuals who started their position as a "consultant" during our observation window and were therefore at risk of promotion to manager.

Concretely, we limited our sample to employees that started in their position as a consultant during the period 2008-2012, and analyzed whether and when they were promoted to the position of a manager between 2008 and 2012. Note that promotion decisions were made once a year. We dropped 43 employee cases in which the employee was in the role of consultant as of 2012 and who were older than 40 years of age because this suggests an unusual career path. For consultants who progress reasonably well, the average time from starting as a consultant to promotion to manager is approximately three to five years, so our observation window is sufficiently long for us to observe significant promotion activity. This approach allows us not only to analyze whether a employee is promoted to manager but how long it takes employees to be promoted.

Our final sample is comprised of 1,423 employees: 715 men and 708 women. Annual data regarding these employees was used to construct an unbalanced panel of 3,028 employee-year observations. The panel was unbalanced for two reasons. First, not all employees started at the very start of our observation window (FY 2008) but instead joined the firm in later years. Naturally, the likelihood of observing a promotion for individuals entering at the end of the observation window is lower due to truncation, something we account for in our analysis. Second, not all individuals remained with the firm until the end of the observation window, so our empirical approach also accounts for this truncation.

Variable Definition and Summary Statistics

The data source for all variables was the internal human resources records of the firm, gathered from offices in four countries (USA, UK, Ireland and Canada). As discussed each employee enters the sample the year they become a consultant, and we observe that employee until they are promoted to manager, leave the firm or the end of our observation period. Our dependent variable, *Promoted to Manager*, is an indicator variable set to 1 if the employee is promoted in that year or 0 otherwise. *Post CSI*, our main explanatory variable, is also an indicator set to 1 for every year after an employee participated in a CSI project. The second explanatory variable in our analysis is *Female*, which is an indicator variable for gender. We control for *Age*, which is a continuous variable, *Experienced Hire* which is an indicator variable set to 1 if a person was hired with prior experience and set to 0 if not, *Start Year*, which is the year an individual first joined the firm and *Country* which indicates which of the four countries in our analysis an employee is assigned to (Canada, Ireland, UK or USA). In addition, we control for an employees' ability using their performance as measured by the firms' formal evaluation system. Each employee is evaluated on a yearly basis. As prior performance of an individual is an important predictor of promotions, in our analysis we consider the variable *Previous Performance Rating*, which takes the previous year's rating to predict promotion in the current year.

Table 1 provides variable definitions and summary statistics for the variables for our panel dataset (person-year as the unit of analysis).

-----Insert Table 1 About Here-----

Analysis

We estimate a discrete hazard model of the likelihood of promotion in each year conditional upon the employee not having already been promoted or censored. Individuals are censored if they leave the firm during our observation window. Our observations are employee-years, and our estimations use dummies to control for duration effects, start-year fixed effects and country fixed effects. Including *start year* and *country* fixed effects results in the loss of some observations because some of these perfectly predict the outcome in our model, resulting in 3,021 person-years. All models includes robust standard errors clustered on employee.

RESULTS

Table 2 presents the results of the main analysis. Before considering the effects of our main independent variables, we report the effect of our control variables on *Promotion to Manager* in Model 1 in Table 2. As expected, *Previous Performance Rating* has a positive and significant effect on *Promotion to Manager*. None of the other control variables are statistically significant. We do not find evidence that women differ from men in likelihood of promotion in general, in contrast to the gender inequality in promotions observed in prior research.

-----Insert Table 2 About Here-----

Model 2 in Table 2 tests Hypothesis 1, which predicted a negative effect of CSI participation on subsequent promotion likelihood. The coefficient estimate for *Post CSI* is less than one and significant at 10%. The odds of promotion are 40% lower following

CSI participation compared to the baseline promotion rate, and so the effect is not only statistically significant but also of a large magnitude, supporting Hypothesis 1. Model 3 of Table 2 tests Hypothesis 2, that the negative effect of CSI participation on promotion likelihood would be greater for men than women. We find that the likelihood of promotion is significantly lower for men who do participate in CSI relative to those who do not. Thus, our findings also show support for Hypothesis 2. The marginal effects of participation are shown in Figure 1. The baseline promotion rate for women in the sample is 0.15 while for men it is 0.13. As depicted in Figure 1, the discrete change associated with participation in CSI for women is -0.003, and is not statistically significant. However, for men the discrete change is -0.05, which corresponds to a 38% reduction compared to the baseline.

-----Insert Figure 1 About Here-----

Additional Analyses

Differences in Tenures

In considering the effect of participation in CSI on promotion likelihood in general, one concern might be that individuals who participate in CSI differ in their likelihood of leaving the firm, and so they leave the firm before they are promoted. We examine this issue in two ways. First, we excluded all individuals who left the firm during our observation period from our regression analysis, and we obtained the same pattern and significance of results, and our hypotheses are supported. Second, we modeled promotion to manager and leaving the firm as competing choices in a multinomial logistic regression. Recall that promotions take place on the first day of a given fiscal year, thus if an individual received a promotion that year, we considered them as having been promoted. If an individual did not get promoted but left the firm at some point in that fiscal year, we coded them as having left the firm. The decision of an individual to leave later in the same year (i.e. any day after the first day in the fiscal year) during which they received a promotion to manager, did not affect our coding: this person was still considered to have received a promotion, but not as having left the firm that year.

-----Insert Table 3 About Here-----

Model 3 of Table 3 shows the main results of this model. The base outcome is no action (neither promotion nor leaving). We find that both men and women who participated in CSI were less likely to leave the firm but there is no difference in rates of leaving between the genders. We interpret these findings as additional evidence that the lower promotion rates subsequent to CSI participation are not driven by (male) CSI participants leaving the firm more rapidly than their peers who do not take part in CSI.

Differences in Performance

Another explanation for the lower promotion rates of male CSI participants could be that they were lower performers relative to non-participants (although we do control for performance in our main analysis). A comparison of means for performance shows no performance difference between men who participate in CSI and those who do not. However, it may be the case, that in the years following their participation in CSI, individuals become less engaged with the firm's commercial activities and thus perform worse than their peers – or, they may be rated less favorably by their managers, for the same reasons they may be less likely to get promoted - because CSI work is not seen as equally legitimate as commercial work. A comparison of means shows that there are no performance differences within the sub-sample of men or sub-sample of women in their post-CSI performance relative to their same-gender non CSI peers. Given these results, it is unlikely that the lower promotion rates for participants, in particular for men, are driven by low effort by those individuals or the perception of managers in the firm that

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Using a unique original dataset of project assignments and promotions for sample of consultants in a large multinational consulting firm, we have provided evidence consistent with the argument that employee participation in the social impact activities of their firms can impede their chances for promotions. This argument contrasts previous studies suggesting that participation in corporate social initiatives should have a positive effect on employees' careers due to the acquisition of new skills while working on these initiatives (Bartel, 2001; Bhattacharya, Sen and Korschun, 2008; Burbano, et al., 2013; Peterson, 2003). Most interesting, our findings suggest that an attribution bias exists for men who choose to engage in corporate social impact initiatives. That is, promotion decision makers may attribute men's choices to engage in social impact work as signs of lower commitment to the firm and their careers. It is possible that decision makers also make the same attributions for women. However, because they already likely assume that women are less committed to their careers, the additional act of participating in a social impact may have little bearing on their promotion decision. The gendered role expectations of social impact work give rise to a gender bias in promotions for the men who participate.

Our study was conducted in the setting of a single consulting firm, which has certain limitations. First, because we studied a single firm, it is possible that our findings may not generalize to other settings. Consulting firms provide an extreme context to study corporate social initiatives because such firms are highly competitive, profit-oriented and historically they have been associated with male gender role stereotypes. Future research could consider whether the effects we find in this paper hold also in more female dominated industries such as advertising or fashion. At the same time, our firm may also be unique because we did not find evidence of a baseline gender difference in promotions. Gender diversity and CSR have been found to be positively associated in prior research. For example, Soares, Marquis and Lee (2011) found that companies with more gender-inclusive leadership contributed more on average to charitable funds. Future research is needed to understand if the positive correlation between female representation and social impact is also contributing to an unintended bias against men who participate in social impact work. Scholars might also consider how promotion decisions following participation in a corporate social initiative differ depending on the characteristics of the manager deciding on the promotion (e.g. following Carnahan and Greenwood, 2016). In particular, male and female managers may perceive participation in a corporate initiative differently depending on the gender of the employee up for promotion. Unfortunately, due to data limitations, we were unable to further explore this question. As a final limitation, it is important to note that although the pattern of evidence we provide is consistent with the argument that decision makers' perception of commitment and fit is negatively affected by participation in social impact work due to its lower legitimacy, non-standard features, and gendered role expectations, we do not observe these mechanisms directly. Future studies in laboratory settings could simulate the promotion decision to test these mechanisms directly, albeit at a loss of external validity.

Despite these limitations, our study offers several important contributions. First, it contributes to a growing stream of research addressing corporate social engagement from a strategic human capital perspective (Bode et al., 2015; Burbano, 2016; Carnahan et al., 2016; Flammer and Luo, 2016, Jones et al., 2014). In contrast to much of the existing literature, our study did not focus on the perceptions or actions of employees who take part in social impact work (e.g. whether participation is associated with an increase in organizational identification or loyalty with the firm), but rather on the reaction of the firm to employees who took part in such an initiative. We believe that focusing on promotion decisions is particularly valuable in this context because unlike recruitment or retention, internal promotions decisions represent a one-sided decision: employees themselves have little control over whether they get promoted or not.

Our research also contributes to research into the effect of non-standard work on career advancement (Kalleberg et al., 2000; Leslie et al., 2012; Pedulla, 2016). Unlike other forms of non-standard work, the social impact work we study occurs within the employee's corporate role and is approved (even encouraged) by the employing firm. Nevertheless, as we argue and find, many employees – in particular men - who take up such practices experience negative career consequences. This finding parallels findings from research by Pedulla (2016) showing the negative effect of part-time work on labor market outcomes for men. Like part-time work, social impact work may call into question male employees' commitment to their careers. This also suggests that social impact work may often be considered a primarily female agenda, and therefore should be approached cautiously by men.

Lastly, our investigation deepens our understanding of how gender role stereotypes interact with characteristics of work to affect career advancement (Barbulescu and Bidwell, 2013; Beckman and Phillips, 2005; Kennedy, McDonnell and Stephens, 2016; Merluzzi and Dobrev, 2015). The promotion penalty experienced by men who participated in social impact work is consistent with the idea that social impact work carries with it gendered role expectations. Gendered role expectations regarding social impact work have been shown to be helpful to women in contexts in which social impact is a relevant goal. For example, in a study of entrepreneurs' pitches, Lee and Huang (2016) found that women were more positively evaluated when making pitches that involved a social impact mandate, despite the fact that in general women are significantly less likely to receive venture funding than men (Brooks *et al*., 2014). However, the flipside of this argument is that men may be unfairly penalized in these contexts. This dynamic has important practical implications not only for men's career advancement but also for the potential participation of men in work with explicitly societal objectives inside commercial organizations. As noted by Ridgeway and Correll (2004: 510-511) gender involves cultural beliefs that affect not only patterns of behavior at the interactional level, but also the distribution of resources at the macro level.

To the degree that our observed pattern becomes known to employees, there is a risk that this will undermine the positive identification and retention benefits associated with participation in corporate social initiatives highlighted by extant research. However, we interpret our findings not as suggesting that firms halt their corporate social initiatives, but instead that they must carefully manage the unintended bias that could affect promotion decisions for employees that participate in these initiatives. We see our findings as a strong support for the idea that firms are not unitary actors and that the biases of managers can present challenges when implementing a new practice.Engaging employees in societal issues can be one way to counteract the trend towards a more transactional approach to employment (Cappelli 1999) by providing employees the opportunity to engage in meaningful work (Glavas and Godwin 2013; Greguras *et al*., 2014) which can have positive strategic implications for firms in terms of employee recruitment and retention (Bode *et al*., 2015, Carnahan *et al*., 2015, Jones *et al.,* 2014). However, our findings suggest that for firms whose management is trying to integrate societal engagement into their overall strategy, there may emerge unintended consequences originating from lack of buy-in from lower levels of the management, undermining that effort. Indeed, in order for firm's external stakeholder engagement to deliver strategic benefits, firms also may require a revision of attitudes of internal stakeholders.

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Table 1: Summary Statistics (N=3,028 person-year observations)

Variable	Definition	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
<u>Dependent Variable</u>					
Promotion to Manager	Indicator variable for whether a person was promoted to Manager in our observation period (2008 - 2012)	0.14	0.35	0	1
<u>Independent Variables</u>					
Post CSI	Indicator variable for the years an individual is observed post CSI participation (for participants: 1=for all years subsequent to CSI participation, 0=for years preceeding CSI participation; for non-participants: all years=0)	0.04	0.20	0	1
CSI	Indicator variable set to 1 for all years if an individual participates at any point during our observation period (2008-2012)				
Female	Indicator variable for gender (1 = female, 0 = male)	0.52	0.50	0	1
<u>Control Variables</u>					
Age	A continuous variable indicating the age in years of an individual	27.31	2.18	23	39
Previous Performance Rating	Performance rating the year before Promotion to Manager (1=low, 5=high)	2.75	0.97	1	5
Experienced Hire	Indicator variable for whether an individual was hired with prior work experience (1=hired with prior experience, 0=hired without prior experience)	0.09	0.28	0	1
Start Year	The year an individual was hired by the firm (restricted to start years of 2002 and later)	2007	1.51	2003	2011
Country	Indicator variable for the country in which an individual is employed: Canada (N=236), Ireland (N=108), United Kingdom (N=750), United States (N=1,934)				

Table 2: Discrete Hazard Model: Odds of Promotion to Manager

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Output	Odds-Ratio	Odds-Ratio	Odds-Ratio
Model	Logit	Logit	Logit
Sample	Full Sample	Full Sample	Full Sample
Unit of Analysis	Person-Year	Person-Year	Person-Year
Dependent Variable	Promoted to Manager	Promoted to Manager	Promoted to Manager
Post CSI=0, *Female*=1			1.104
			(0.180)
Post CSI=1, *Female*=0			0.316**
			(0.137)
Post CSI=1, *Female*=1			1.058
			(0.339)
Post CSI		0.605+	
		(0.158)	
Female	1.200	1.205	
	(0.186)	(0.187)	
Age	1.020	1.024	1.019
	(0.049)	(0.049)	(0.049)
Previous Performance Rating	6.627**	6.721**	6.769**
	(0.719)	(0.735)	(0.742)
Experienced Hire	1.257	1.211	1.239
	(0.431)	(0.415)	(0.427)
Start Year Fixed Effect	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country Fixed Effect	Yes	Yes	Yes
Duration Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,021	3,021	3,021
ll	-568	-567	-565
chi2	521	524	524

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered at the employee level

** $p<0.01$, * $p<0.05$, + $p<0.1$

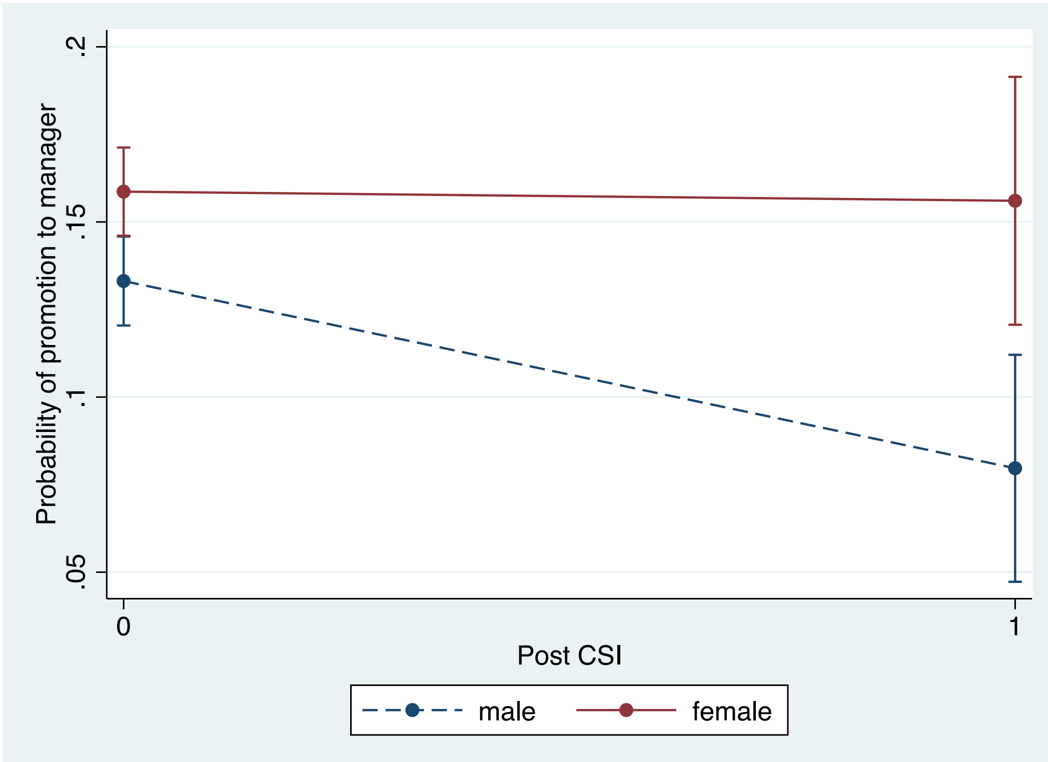
Omitted category in Model 3 is Post CSI=0 / Male
7 person-year observations dropped due to start year fixed effects leading to perfect prediction of failure

Table 3: Discrete Hazard Model: Relative Risk of Promotion to Manager and Relative Risk of Leaving the Firm

	(1)		(2)		(3)	
Output	Relative Risk Ratio		Relative Risk Ratio		Relative Risk Ratio	
Model	Multinomial Logit		Multinomial Logit		Multinomial Logit	
Sample:	Individuals from Observed Promotion to Consultant (2008-2012)					
Dependent Variable:	Promoted to Manager	Leaving Firm	Promoted to Manager	Leaving Firm	Promoted to Manager	Leaving Firm
Post CSI=0, *Female*=1					1.011	0.827+
					(0.164)	(0.085)
Post CSI=1, *Female*=0					0.238**	0.447+
					(0.110)	(0.199)
Post CSI=1, *Female*=1					0.729	0.337*
					(0.235)	(0.158)
Post CSI			0.461**	0.432**		
			(0.123)	(0.140)		
Female	1.090	0.823+	1.102	0.828+		
	(0.169)	(0.084)	(0.171)	(0.085)		
Age	1.018	0.986	1.022	0.986	1.017	0.986
	(0.051)	(0.027)	(0.050)	(0.027)	(0.050)	(0.027)
Previous Performance Rating	6.552**	0.968	6.674**	0.976	6.725**	0.977
	(0.710)	(0.058)	(0.729)	(0.058)	(0.737)	(0.058)
Experienced Hire	0.976	1.073	0.944	1.054	0.959	1.055
	(0.331)	(0.208)	(0.321)	(0.203)	(0.327)	(0.203)
Start Year	1.169*	1.016	1.184*	1.024	1.187*	1.024
	(0.084)	(0.039)	(0.085)	(0.039)	(0.086)	(0.039)
Country Fixed Effect	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Duration Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,021		3,021		3,021	
ll	-1669		-1663		-1662	
chi2	1520		1506		1510	

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered at the employee level
** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1;
Base outcome is no change in level or employment
Omitted category in Model 3 is Post CSI=0 / Male
7 person-year observations dropped due to start year fixed effects leading to perfect prediction of failure
Start year fixed effects not included to avoid estimation errors due to singleton dummies

Figure 1: Marginal Effect of CSI Participation on Promotion*



*Graph is based on estimates from Model 3 of Table 2. Post CSI and Female are set to 0 or 1 respectively, and all other covariates are set their means.