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Overview

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In this volume, we scan a sample of empirical work on family businesses – focusing on the Latin American cluster. The societies in the Latin American cluster share the Catholic religion, a Roman law heritage, and a common Iberian colonial past. The culture is characterized by the values of personalism, particularism, and paternalism. The family’s boundaries are guided by co-parenting, in which a child’s godparents move beyond friendship to formalize a closer bond to the family in the baptismal ceremony. There is a fairly low level of trust of those who are not part of their family or close friends (Gupta and Hanges, 2004).

The sample of selected articles in the Latin American cluster is given in Table 1. The articles cover eight countries – Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru. A diversity of research methodologies is represented: vignettes, historical analysis, situational analysis, and in-depth case studies.

In the following paragraphs we present data on culture and socio-techno-economic work culture of the societies in the Latin American cluster, in order to better understand the context in which the region’s family businesses operate.