Expatriates' identity salience, work stressors, and work-nonwork conflict: Moderating role of gender and marital status

Executive Summary

Drawing from identity theory we proposed that individuals with high work salience experienced high work stressors (interpersonal conflict, workhours, workload) resulting in positive WNWC and individuals with high nonwork salience experienced lower work stressors resulting in negative WNWC. Furthermore, we tested for the moderating role of gender and marital status in the relationship. The sample for this study consisted of 415 Indian expatriates working in the USA IT industry. Findings supported the proposed model where work stressors completely conditioned the relationship between work/nonwork salience and WNWC. Work salient men worked longer hours compared to work salient women and were more prone to WNWC. In married individuals, increased workload was positively associated with WNWC and long working hours was negatively associated with WNWC. Additionally, the participants in this study identified themselves to be more nonwork salient. We argue that identity salience predicts role behavioral intentions and corresponding theoretical/practical implications are discussed.

Introduction

Global organizations and increased international mobility challenge expatriate workers in both work and nonwork (i.e., work-nonwork) life domains. There is a need to understand individual differences that may influence expatriates' ability to manage work-nonwork challenges. In the present study we focus on how differences in work-nonwork identity salience might play a role in the work-nonwork challenges of Information Technology (IT) professionals from India who work in the United States of America (USA). The work-nonwork challenges of workers in this sector are critical, given the tremendous value of the American IT sector (i.e., more than a quarter of the $3.8 trillion global IT market, with more than 100,000 software and IT service companies; SelectUSA, 2015).

Globalization and technological advances have increased communication and general work demands to the point where many IT professionals essentially face a never-ending work cycle. IT professionals also often work in high pressure environments, facing stressors such as high workload, long working hours, unrealistic project deadlines, and high pressure from clients (Upadhya & Vasavi, 2006). This is true for domestic and expatriate workers in this industry, including Indian expatriates in USA, as studied by Gai, Sumner, Bragger, and Nooner (2011). Also, men and women may manage these stressors differently (e.g., Hess & Hagen, 2006) within the IT industry especially, these differences have become particularly salient due to recent discussions of gender differences in several high-profile technology companies (Douthat, 2017).

Our present focus on identity salience is driven by the realization that expatriates are especially likely to reflect on their work-nonwork identities given the many work-nonwork role-related challenges inherent in an expatriate (vs. domestic) experience (Kraimer, Shaffer, Harrison, & Ren, 2012). Apart from the obvious challenges of working in a host country,

expatriation requires workers, and their spouses and families to adapt to new lifestyle that may be incredibly different from their home country reality. Previous studies have linked individuals' identity to repatriation turnover (Kraimer et al., 2012) and expatriates' work or family role commitment to expatriation willingness (Kim & Froese, 2012). However, no research has examined the extent to which expatriates' work-nonwork identity salience might explain experiences at work in the host country. In this present examination of these issues, we have also opted not to incorporate a cultural identity perspective, as employee roles are believed to be more relevant than established cultural values in both shorter and long term international assignments (Kraimer et al., 2012).

It is important to understand the influence of expatriates' work-nonwork identity salience because expatriates who face work and nonwork role management challenges and conflicts experience poorer wellbeing and are less likely to complete their assignments. Failed expatriate assignments often result from expatriates' inability to adjust to a host country environment, culture, unanticipated nonwork challenges, spousal adjustment issues, personal dissatisfaction, and lack of organizational commitment (e.g., Vogel, Van Vuuren, & Millard, 2008). The failure rate of expatriates has been reported to range from 10 percent to 80 percent (Vogel et al., 2008) and the estimated average cost of expatriation ranged from US$250,000 to US$1M (Nowak & Linder, 2016). These realities provide the justification for the present research.

Drawing from identity theory, we hypothesized that work salient individuals are more likely to experience work-related stressors that are interpersonal (i.e., interpersonal conflict) and job-related (i.e., increased workload and work hours). This exposure we further expected to result in higher levels of work-nonwork conflict (WNWC). In contrast, we hypothesized the opposite pattern of relationships for nonwork salient individuals (i.e., lower levels of

interpersonal and job-related stressors, and therefore lower levels of WNWC). Given known associations and complexities in work-nonwork role management for men versus women, and those who are married versus not married, we also hypothesized that gender and marital status moderate the relationship between identity salience, work stressors, and WNWC (as illustrated in Figure 1). The following sections provide pertinent background theory and research to support these hypotheses.

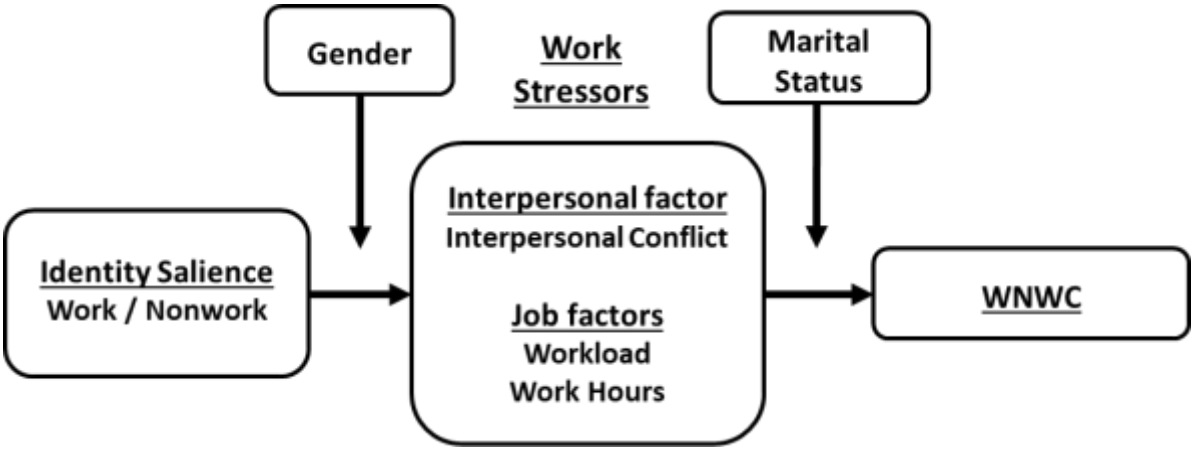

Figure 1. Conceptual representation of hypothesized relationships among study variables

Work-Nonwork conflict (WNWC)

Most people manage a complex web of interrelated work and nonwork roles that are difficult to manage or balance on a daily basis. Inevitably, one or more of a person's life roles dominates and can require resources to a point that creates conflict in other roles. The relationships between work and nonwork constructs are specifically explained using spillover, compensation, segmentation and congruence models, while the resource drain and work/nonwork conflict models help to explain outcomes related to work and nonwork role interactions (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000)

Individuals experience work-nonwork role conflict when, "role pressures from the work and nonwork domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (nonwork) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the nonwork (work) role" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). Such conflict can be further distinguished as emerging from a work role and affecting one's nonwork role(s) (e.g., work-to-nonwork conflict; WNWC) or vice versa (i.e., nonwork-to-work conflict). Research has shown that the former is more prevalent than the latter due to lower permeability of the boundary from nonwork to work role domains (e.g., Aryee, Luk, Leung, & Lo, 1999; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). This is the reason for our present focus only on WNWC.

It is also worth noting that not all forms of role interference are the same. According to Carlson and Frone (2003), internal and external interference between work and home domain causes work/nonwork conflict. Internal inference occurs when an individual is psychologically preoccupied with work when at home (with family) and psychologically preoccupied with family at work. External interference occurs when externally generated work demands (e.g., work deadlines) prevents spending time with family or fulfilling family responsibilities and when family demands (e.g., childcare) prevents spending time at work and fulfilling job responsibilities. This can lead to role conflict, where demands of one role interferes with the demands of other roles. Challenging work experiences (e.g., high demands and involvement) have been linked to stronger experiences of WNWC (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005) which in turn could result in negative wellbeing (e.g., Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002). Based on the concept of role conflict, the present study considers work stressors as an external interference and WNWC as strain-based outcome. The following section discuss the different types of stressors affecting IT expatriates.

Work Stressors

The development of WNWC takes time and is influenced by a complex set of factors. A well-document set of correlates with WNWC are the various work-related stressors that workers experience daily. There really are innumerable stressors present in most work environments, but within any occupation there are typically a handful that are most common and likely to be influential. In the present IT professional's context this includes interpersonal (interpersonal conflict) and job-related factors (workload and work hours).

Interpersonal conflict is defined as "a negative interpersonal encounter characterized by a contentious exchange, hostility or aggression" (Ilies, Johnson, Judge, & Keeney, 2011, p. 46). In a meta-analysis study by Spector and Jex (1998), interpersonal conflict was negatively related to job satisfaction and positively related to depression, somatic symptoms, and turnover intentions. Similar consequences have been shown for interpersonal conflicts with one's supervisor and coworkers (Frone, 2000). Research also shows a link between interpersonal conflict and WNWC, as negative behavior at work may result in displaced aggression towards family (Liu et al., 2015).

Workload is typically defined as the amount of work performed by an individual (Jex, 1998). This stressor has been known to be among the strongest predictors of WNWC (Geurts & Demerouti, 2004, p. 294). Frone, Yardley, and Markel (1997), among others, have shown workload to be positively related to work hours, and both to be further linked to WNWC. Workload is considered to be a stronger predictor of WNWC than work hours (Allan, Loudoun, & Peetz, 2007). In an IT context, workload is positively linked to WNWC among IT professionals working primarily at a client site away from home (Ahuja, Chudoba, Kacmar, McKnight, & George, 2007). Measurement of perceived workload can focus on quantitative

(e.g., amount within a timeframe) and qualitative (i.e., inability to meet demands) elements (Cooper, Dewe, & O'Driscoll, 2001; Jex, 1998). We focus on perceived quantitative workload in the present study, given the highly skilled participants and time-sensitive nature of their work.

Although workload may typically be seen as a more potent stressor than work hours, within the work-family research arena, there is still a need to consider the influence of work hours (e.g., Fein & Skinner, 2015; Major et al., 2002). Individuals who work long hours have reported increased WNWC (e.g., Byron, 2005; Major et al., 2002), and when such conflict is perceived, work hours are also negatively linked to personal health outcomes (e.g., Fein et al., 2015; Major et al., 2002). Taken together, the preceding evidence and supporting theoretical connections suggest that work stressors such as interpersonal conflict, increased workload, and work hours positively affect a person's WNWC.

Identity Salience, Work Stressors, and WNWC

As noted earlier, there are many individual differences that affect the way people manage work-related stress experiences and subsequent work-nonwork role relationships. For the present study, we focused on the individual difference of *identity salience*, which is associated with the aspects of life a person deems most important and central to who they are. Identity salience is defined as "the relative importance or centrality of a given role-identity for defining oneself" (Hoelter 1983, p. 141). Identities are also influenced by our social structures (e.g., Burke & Stets, 1999), the groups, networks, organizations, classes, and other social units to which we belong (Stryker & Burke, 2000). These units involve concrete relationships and interactions that mutually verify the identities held by each other which in turn increases their commitment towards each another (Burke et al., 1999). Commitment to a group or organization reflects the

density of our interpersonal and identity-based ties and connections, which together serve to activate our identities more in some situations than others (Stryker et al., 2000).

Based on the theory of social conflict, both conflict and cooperation are essential part of social function and network/group formation is a consequence of both association and dissociation (Coser, 1956). The more joint activities group members participated in the more knowledgeable they were about each other which could lead to discovery of incompatibilities (Altman & Taylor, 1973). According to Coser (1956), more frequency of interaction between group members led to increased probability for hostile interaction. Conflict between group members will more likely be intense given the closeness of relationship and strong mutual attachment (Coser, 1956). For example, members of a group who are concerned about group's continuance are more likely to react aggressively if someone whom they cared deeply wished to part ways from the group. The decision to break away from the close group is perceived as a symbolic threat to the group's identity. From this perspective, we expected that work salient IT professionals are likely to network and identify most closely with others and environments that support their work identification. This in turn may increase these individuals' likelihood of experiencing interpersonal conflicts compared to nonwork salient individuals.

Also, commitment shapes identity salience, which in turn shapes role choice behavior (Stryker et al., 2000); the higher a given identity salience, the greater the probability individuals will choose behaviors that match expectations associated with that identity (Stryker et al., 2000). Role enactment (Lobel & Clair, 1992) and role outcomes (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1995) are affected by the extent to which an individual identifies with a given role. For example, Rothbard and Edwards (2003) found that greater identification with the family/nonwork role was linked to greater amounts of time spent with family, while greater identification with the work role was

linked to greater amounts of time spent at work. Specifically, greater identification with the work role resulted in increased job opportunities (being a manager) and the number of jobs held by an employee. Greater identification with the family role was associated with a larger number of children for employees in a partnered relationship. Similarly, Thompson and Bunderson (2001) found that individuals who treated work and nonwork roles differently found one role to be more salient and central when compared to the other. Religious identity also predicts time spent in religious activities (Stryker & Serpe, 1982) and donor identity, one's frequency of blood donations (Callero, 1985).

Informed by the social identity perspective by Tajfel and Turner (1985), Ng and Feldman (2008) found through meta-analysis that work identity salience was positively related to work hours and family identity salience had limited negative association to work hours. Also, individuals who identified themselves with their career may exert extra effort (Lobel et al., 1992) and initiate new task or ventures at work. Based on these relationships, we expected work salient IT professionals to accept increased workload as a consequence of behaving in accordance with expectations attached to their work identity. Similarly, work salient individuals may also spend more time at work, while nonwork salient individuals may spend more time in their nonwork roles.

Regardless of one's identity salience, the total effect of these work stressors (both interpersonal factor and job factors) may prevent work salient individuals from spending time with family or nonwork activities, which can lead to WNWC. Also, nonwork salient individuals may spend more time with their families/other nonwork related roles and be less affected by work stressors, resulting in negative WNWC. Even though most work-family research has been conducted in Western populations and demographic groups, we fully expected these

relationships to hold true in our present sample of Indian expatiates, as these individuals face great responsibility and pressure to perform well in the host country (Upadhya & Vasavi, 2006). Based on these relationships, we hypothesized:

H1: Work salient individuals report higher work-related stressors (i.e., [a] more interpersonal conflict, [b] higher workload, and [c] longer work hours, resulting in positive WNWC.

H2: Nonwork salient individuals report lower work-related stressors (a-c), resulting in negative WNWC.

Gender as Moderator

Gender roles are defined by norms that prescribe behaviors and activities suitable for members of each sex (Eagly, 1987). Gender roles also influence how men and women form different socially constructed roles and place emphasis on these roles in their lives (e.g., Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003). According to Mainiero and Sullivan (2006), in a social context, men perceive themselves to be operating autonomously or independently whereas women perceive themselves to operate based on relationships and network of connections. Men have also been shown to work longer hours (Bailyn, 1993) and place greater emphasis on money, power, and career advancements than women (Eddleston, Veiga, & Powell, 2006).

For the present sample of IT professionals, engineering is among the most male-dominated occupations (Fox, 2006, p. 47), particularly in the USA where women represent only 11 percent of the engineering workforce (National Science Foundation, 2009). This gender imbalance has been linked to women engineers' experiences of resistance from coworkers, supervisors and subordinates for being the "odd" ones (e.g., Faulkner, 2009b). Women in engineering have also reported feeling excluded from workplace interpersonal interactions (Faulkner, 2009a) and in some cases, they have adopted more masculine interaction styles (e.g.,

aggressive displays of technical ability, self-promotion, self-confidence) to gain acceptance(e.g., Faulkner, 2000).

Men and women also differ in their way of handling interpersonal conflicts. For example, women may use indirect forms of aggression to avoid face-to-face confrontation (e.g., Hess et al., 2006). In terms of work and nonwork role management, women engineers also often place more importance on their personal/family lives than their careers (Kvande, 1999). They do so by deciding to work part-time, choosing work domains that are women-friendly or by completely giving up or postponing their careers to focus on family life (Kvande, 1999). Cinamon and Rich (2002) also noted that women identified more with family profile (high importance to family role) and men identified more with work profile (high importance to work role).

There is also some evidence of differences in work/nonwork role management preferences for Indians working in high technology firms in India or the USA. Employees in India preferred separation between work and family spheres, while the opposite has been observed among employees in the USA (Poster & Prasad, 2005). Other research further suggests that men in India identify strongly with occupational role rewards and commitment, whereas their wives identify strongly with homemaker and marital role commitments (Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000). Given the increasing rate of employment of women in the Indian IT industry, there is growing pressure within this population to manage work and nonwork roles. Within this population, although women in IT identify with their work, they simultaneously have to perform outside of work as homemakers due to societal expectations (Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). When supported by extended family members (in case of a joint family system), Indian women had improved work-life balance (Valk et al., 2011). When these individuals immigrate to the USA, however, these women often lose their social network and its resources, and have to adapt not

only to new cultural norms, but also increased household responsibilities (Shaffer, Harrison, & Gilley, 1999). Building on the preceding evidence, we expected that:

H3: The positive relationship between work salience and work stressors (a-c) is stronger for men than women in the mediated relationship between work salience, work stressors, and WNWC.

H4: The negative relationship between nonwork salience and work stressors (a-c) is stronger for women than men in the mediated relationship between work salience, work stressors, and WNWC.

Marital Status as Moderator

Marital status is a known factor affecting expatriates' ability to manage work and nonwork roles (e.g., McNulty, 2015). In addition to the general and potentially expatriate-specific challenges mentioned in the previous sections, spouse dissatisfaction and poor adjustment are top reasons for assignment failure among expatriates in general and Indian expatriates in Asia, Europe, North America and Australia (GMAC & NFTC, 2005; Gupta, Banerjee, & Gaur, 2012). Challenges with a spouse's career has also been identified as a family-related expatriate issues (GMAC & NFTC, 2005).

From a work perspective, some evidence suggests that employees who are unmarried may be more involved, interested in work, and likely to take advantage of opportunities for advancement or development, while married employees may be more concerned about striking a balance between their work and family life (Wong, Siu, & Tsang, 1999). Separate research suggests that married couples with children are less likely to be geographically mobile (Crowley-Henry, 2007). However, previous studies have also shown that married expatriates fare better than their unmarried counterparts (e.g., Selmer & Lauring, 2011). Expatriate spouses provide great support and encouragement to their husbands' career and repatriation opportunities

(Lauring & Selmer, 2010). Spouses may also influence certain decisions within organizations regarding working schedules, pay and benefits, and holidays (Lauring et al., 2010).

According to the immigration rules in the USA at the time of writing this manuscript, spouses of Indian expatriates (except for expatriates with approved L1, green card or naturalized citizenship; USCIS, n.d.), approved on dependent visa cannot work in the USA even if highly qualified. Even in situations where both spouses have permits to work, expatriate couples may find it difficult to keep two careers on track in a host country (Punnett, Crocker, & Ann Stevens, 1992). As discussed in the previous sections, interpersonal and job factors are positively associated with WNWC (e.g., Ahuja et al., 2009; Byron, 2005; Liu et al., 2015). Based on these supporting empirical and theoretical connections, we expected that:

H5: The conditional effects of work-nonwork identity salience on WNWC, through work stressors (a-c) is moderated by marital status, such that the positive relationship between work salience and work stressors (a-c) is strongest for married individuals.

Methodology

Participants and Procedure

All procedures for this study were approved by the researchers' university Institutional Review Board. Participants in this study were Indian Expatriates (born in India and expatriated to the USA as adults) who were working in the USA IT industry. Given this target population, purposive sampling took place at a regional convention for NATA (North American Telugu Association, Indo-American organization of Telugus from North America) held in Atlanta, Georgia. Potential participants meeting inclusion criteria were asked for contact information on-site; additional participants were solicited via social media networking sites and relevant professional association membership lists. Additional participants were recruited from Kannada

Koota (North American Kannada Association, Indo-American organization of Kannadigas) working in the USA IT industry. Approximately 1800 Indian expatriates were invited to participate by responding to a brief internet-based survey composed of the measures detailed in this section. Approximately 67% of the initially invited potential participants provided at least partial responses to the survey. After excluding individuals with less than 50% survey completion, the final sample consisted of 415 Indian expatriates. Of these individuals, 325 (78.3%) were male and 90 (21.7%) were female participants. The average age of these individuals was 34 years (*SD* =7.25). The participants had lived in USA for an average of approximately 9 years (*SD* = 6.64).

Measures

The survey included the following measures, presented to participants as ordered here.

Demographics. Information such as gender, age, marital status, number of dependents (children and elders), number of hours worked per week, IT job title, and number of years spent in the USA, was collected from the participants for sample description and to serve as covariates in the statistical analyses.

Interpersonal conflict. Perceived interpersonal conflict was measured using a four-item scale by Spector and Jex (1998). Responses to the items in this measure are made along a five-point scale, with higher ratings indicating more frequent perceived conflict with coworkers (present alpha = .77).

Workload. Perceived workload was measured as a primary work stressor. Participants responded to the five-item measure by Spector and Jex (1998), indicating the perceived quantity of work in their jobs on a daily basis (responses on a five-point scale, with higher ratings indicating heavier workload; present alpha = .89).

Work hours. Total work hours per week were reported by participants.

Work-nonwork conflict (WNWC). This was measured with the five-item work-interfering-with-family subscale from Fisher, Bulger, and Smith, (2009). Participants responded to statements on a five-point scale, with higher scores indicating higher frequency of work-nonwork conflict/interference (present alpha = .92).

Work and nonwork identity salience. Participant's work salience and nonwork identity salience was measured using a 10-item scale developed by Cunningham (2005). This measure was developed to provide a more generalized and comprehensive assessment of the extent to which individuals identify with either (or both) their work and nonwork role domains. Participant responses were made on a seven-point scale of agreement such that higher scores indicated stronger work and/or nonwork salience (present alphas for both salience dimensions = .83).

Results

Descriptive statistics (see Table 1) were generated with SPSS (v22) and the more complex, hypothesized conditional process models were analyzed using the PROCESS computational tool (Hayes, 2018, v3). This analytical tool provides an OLS-based approach to test direct, indirect (i.e., mediational), and otherwise conditioned (e.g., moderated) effects. For the present analyses, 5000 iterations were used to generate percentile bootstrap confidence intervals (CI) used to determine statistical significance of model estimates (via 95% CI). To be consistent with other studies and because of the aforementioned evidence of their effects on the core study variables, age, gender, number of dependents, marital status, and years in USA were included as covariates in all analyses.

Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 were tested using a simple mediation model (PROCESS Model 4; Hayes, 2018) linking work salience and nonwork salience to WNWC via all three work

stressors (i.e., interpersonal conflict, workload, and work hours). In the case of Hypothesis 1, when considered as a set, the work stressors significantly conditioned or mediated this relationship (β = 0.421). Consideration of the individual stressors revealed that perceived workload and work hours drove this effect and completely conditioned the relationship between work salience and WNWC (β = 0.202 and β = 0.155, respectively). Work salience was also positively and significantly associated with workload (β = 0.115) and work hours (β = 1.307). Hence, Hypothesis 1b and 1c was supported (except with respect to interpersonal conflict), as was the overall thrust of H1, that stressor (both individual and job factors combined) experiences at work would mediate the relationship between work salience and WNWC (see Table 2).

With respect to Hypothesis 2, the work stressors as a set mediated the relationship between nonwork salience and WNWC (β = -0.405). This effect was primarily through interpersonal conflict and work hours, which served as significant mediational pathways linking nonwork salience and WNWC (β = -0.081 and β = -0.159, respectively). Nonwork salience was also negatively and significantly associated with work hours (β = -1.412). Therefore, Hypothesis 2a and 2c were supported (see Table 3).

Hypothesis 3 and 4 were tested using PROCESS Model 7 (Hayes, 2018). In the case of Hypothesis 3, gender significantly moderated only the relationship between work salience and work hours (β = -2.187). Specifically, men with higher levels of work salience worked longer hours compared to women with high levels of work salience (see Table 4, Figure 2) and faced significantly higher WNWC (β = 0.208) compared to work salient women. However, gender did not moderate the relationship between nonwork salience and work stressors. Hence Hypothesis 3c was supported and there was no support for Hypothesis 4.

Hypothesis 5 was tested using PROCESS Model 14 (Hayes, 2018). Marital status significantly moderated the relationship between work hours and WNWC for highly work salient individuals (β = -0.260). Marital status approach significance as a moderator of the relationship between workload and WNWC for individuals who were both highly work or nonwork salient (β = 1.312, $p < .10$ and β = 1.211, $p < .10$, respectively), and the relationship between work hours and WNWC for individuals who were highly nonwork salient (β = -0.204, $p < .10$) (see Tables 5 and 6). It is also important to note here that workload had a significant positive impact on WNWC, whereas work hours had a significant negative impact on WNWC. Taken together, these results only partially supported the expectations outlined in Hypothesis 5.

Discussion

With the present study, we developed and tested a theory-based and research-informed model that helps to explain how identity salience might influence perception of work stressors and the experience of WNWC. We drew on the identity theory (Stryker et al., 2000), which asserts that individuals choose behavioral intentions aligned with the expectations attached to the identity that they perceive to be most salient. We identified work and nonwork salience as predictors of work-related stressors (interpersonal and job factors) which in turn affected WNWC in our sample of expatriate Indian IT professionals working in the USA.

In the case of individuals who are highly work salient, the mediating effects of stressors was most evident through perceived workload and work hours, which were both positively linked to WNWC. These findings suggest that work salient individuals may be more accepting of (and therefore affected by) higher levels of workload or more willing to report higher levels of workload and work long hours perhaps out of consistency with how they identify themselves (i.e., as "workers" with a strong connection to the work they do). Previous studies have shown

work identity salience to be positively related to work hours (e.g., Ng et al., 2008), but our findings go a bit further and are in-line with work that has highlighted the relationship between role prioritization and identity-specific role behaviors (e.g., Callero, 1985).

With respect to individuals who are highly nonwork salient, the mediating effects of stressors was most evident through interpersonal conflict and work hours, which were negatively linked to WNWC. This shows that nonwork salient individuals may be less affected by interpersonal conflict and long working hours. These findings were interesting because previous research has shown nonwork salience to share only a weak negative association with work hours (Ng et al., 2008). Hence, the present study sheds light on the role of identity salience in predicting one's work behavioral intentions.

We also considered the moderating impacts of gender and marital status on the relationships between work stressors and WNWC. Although gender did not moderate the relationship between nonwork salience and work stressors, it did moderate the link between work salience and work stressors, such that work salient men worked more hours than work salient women. This is consistent with previous research by Greenhaus, Peng, and Allen (2012) in which men worked longer hours than women irrespective of the workload. We also observed that work salient men who worked long hours faced higher levels of WNWC than work salient women. These findings suggest that work salient men may have been more willing to put in extensive time at work and this could be due to their focus on earnings, power, promotions (Greenhaus et al., 2012) or due to the immense pressure to perform well in the host country and provide for their family (in case of nonworking spouse or spouse having work restrictions in the host country). No differences were observed between work/nonwork salient men and women with respect to levels of perceived interpersonal conflict, and workload.

From our final analyses, marital status moderated the relationship between work hours and WNWC for individuals with high work salience. It is interesting to note here that marital status appeared to impact work salient individuals more than nonwork salient individuals. Although previous studies have highlighted the impact of marital status on the life of expatriates in general (e.g., Lauring et al., 2010; Selmer & Lauring, 2011), the present study focused on how the status affected work and nonwork salient expatriates differently. Furthermore, in the case of married individuals (both work/nonwork salient), work hours had a more negative impact on WNWC, whereas workload had a positive impact on WNWC. Additionally, these findings suggest that nonmarried individuals may face more WNWC when compared to married individuals when managing long working hours (see Figure 3); the opposite was observed in the case of increased workload (see Figure 4). This may be because nonmarried individuals are more willing or able to permit their work role demands to spillover or otherwise impact their nonwork lives, whereas married individuals may be more concerned to balance out or counteract the work demands. Most importantly, these findings suggest that being married does not necessarily lead to higher levels of all forms of WNWC.

Our present results also suggest that that work salient expatriates may be more prone to WNWC than nonwork salient expatriates. Furthermore, we found participants in the present sample to be generally more nonwork salient than work salient, which is contrary to the widely held stereotypical beliefs about work centrality among Indian professionals. This could be due to lack of social or family support in the participants' host country, resulting in a heightened emphasis on their families while on expatriate assignment. However, some studies have shown expatriates to construct a new distinct identity in the host country because of their international assignment (e.g., Kohonen, 2008). Overall, these findings help in extending the expatriate

literature and help organizations understand the salience and work/nonwork role relationship challenges faced by this specialized workforce in the host country.

Implications and Contribution

In sum, the present findings largely supported our expectations and contention that identity salience is associated with and may influence expatriate's work-related behaviors. Our findings have several theoretical and practical implications. The main contribution of our study is in proposing and testing a research model that shed light on various aspects to the complex relationship between identity salience, work stressors, and WNWC in expatriates. When considered as a set, as they are experienced in reality, interpersonal and job-related stressors conditioned the relationship between identity salience (work/nonwork) and WNWC. Although we explored these issues in a sample of Indian IT professionals expatriated to the USA, the model and its hypotheses can easily be tested in other populations.

In our model and in this study, we built on identity theory (Stryker et al., 2000) to suggest that an expatriate's work/nonwork identity salience may influence work-related stress experiences, and ultimately one's level of WNWC. We demonstrated that work salience in these expatriates is positively associated with workload and work hours, which are also positively linked to WNWC. Similarly, nonwork salience in expatriates is negatively and significantly associated with work hours and interpersonal conflict, and thus associated with lower levels of WNWC. We also found that work salient men worked longer hours than work salient women, and that this was positively associated with WNWC. Interestingly, we further observed that the WNWC for married expatriates was more strongly affected by workload than work hours.

An implication of these findings is that organizations can help in improving the quality of work and nonwork roles of expatriates like those sampled for this study. One strategy for doing

this is to work to understand expatriates' work and nonwork identity salience and designing training and support programs to align with the behavioral expectations linked to the roles to which expatriates most strongly identify. This type of role-identity congruent intervention could help organizations to develop effective strategies to train expatriates to better manage the demands they experience in their work and nonwork role domains. Our findings also should encourage organizations to select and develop managers who can and will support employees who are trying to manage competing work and nonwork role demands. For instance, training supervisors to be more work-family supportive has shown to lower work-family conflict in employees (Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner, & Zimmerman, 2011).

Limitations and Future Directions

Like all studies, ours has its limitations. In addition to common, yet unavoidable limitations associated with self-reported data, our core model involved only work stressors as mediators and basic demographic factors as moderators. Future research along these lines may be strengthened by including relevant nonwork stressors for this population, such as family issues, dual-career couple dynamics, and psychological acceptance (i.e., acceptance of expatriate by colleagues, subordinates, supervisor and organization as a whole). Future studies could also longitudinally study the developing relationships among the variables in the current model, particularly for expatriates before, during, and after their relocation to a host country.

Also, there is an obvious gender imbalance in our sample, though this is indicative of a broader imbalance within the IT industry, particularly within the expatriate population we studied. Future studies targeting gender differences are needed, preferably with more balanced samples, to examine how gender may factor into relationships between work/nonwork identity salience and work/nonwork stressors. Future research within this type of expatriate population

may also be strengthened by including other moderators such as expatriates' extent of cross cultural adjustment, organizational coping strategies, and cultural intelligence. The participants in this study identified themselves to be more nonwork salient than work salient. A further study is encouraged to compare the change in salience to improve our understanding of how and why a person's identity salience transition impacts perceptions, choices, and general quality of work and nonwork life.

The present study serves as a starting point for further investigation into the work/nonwork role relationships of Indian and other expatriates. Future researchers are encouraged to include other relevant stressors for expatriates such as cross-cultural adjustment, job/task characteristics (role ambiguity, role clarity, role discretion, role overload and role novelty), issues between parent and host country work set-up, communication issues, gender issues, blocked career. We hope this study and the present findings will encourage other researchers to develop more comprehensive and nuanced models of the relationships between stress and health outcomes, conditioned by individual and contextual differences. Such models can dramatically improve our understanding of work-nonwork interrole management in general, and the adjustment of expatriates more specifically.

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Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Study Variables*

	N	*M*	*SD*	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Age	416	34.002	7.248										
2. Gender	415	NA	NA	-.184**									
3. No. of Dependents	335	NA	NA	.585**	-.107*								
4. Marital Status	412	NA	NA	.348**	.012	.355**							
5. Work Hours	404	45.248	8.317	.189**	-.097	.141*	.053						
6. Years in USA	416	8.704	6.640	.795**	-.109*	.422**	.216**	.213**					
7. Work Salience	412	4.301	1.208	.080	-.037	.115*	-.056	.166**	.024				
8. Nonwork Salience	412	4.702	1.057	-.065	.010	-.057	-.017	-.147**	-.003	-.281**			
9. Workload	415	2.865	0.962	.159**	.018	.143**	-.001	.384**	.159**	.099*	-.090		
10. Interpersonal Conflict	416	1.619	0.572	.146**	-.016	.177**	.114*	.176**	.045	.072	-.103*	.254**	
11. WNWC	391	12.778	4.456	.072	-.032	.111*	.007	.392**	.059	.169**	-.178**	.497**	.349**

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 2. *Model 4, Direct and Indirect Effects of Work Salience via Work Stressors on WNWC*

	Coeff		SE	LLCI	ULCI
Direct effect of Work Salience on WNWC					
	0.341	*	0.173	0.000	0.683
Indirect effect of Work Salience on WNWC					
Total	0.421	*	0.134	0.168	0.699
Interpersonal Conflict	0.064		0.048	-0.004	0.187
Workload	0.202	*	0.086	0.052	0.395
Work hours	0.155	*	0.058	0.063	0.302

Note. N = 310 (after listwise deletion), Overall Adj. R^2 = .375, F=20.00, $df1$ = 9, $df2$ = 300, * $p<.05$; Results reported after controlling for the covariates age, gender, number of dependents, years lived in USA and marital status.

Table 3. *Model 4, Direct and Indirect Effects of Nonwork Salience via Work Stressors on WNWC*

	Coeff		SE	LLCI	ULCI
Direct effect of Nonwork Salience on WNWC					
	-0.671	*	0.194	-1.054	-0.289
Indirect effect of Nonwork Salience on WNWC					
Total	-0.405	*	0.151	-0.713	-0.114
Interpersonal Conflict	-0.081	*	0.056	-0.226	-0.001
Workload	-0.166		0.098	-0.375	0.012
Work Hours	-0.159	*	0.061	-0.307	-0.064

Note. N = 310 (after listwise deletion), Overall Adj. R^2=.391, F=21.420, $df1$= 9, $df2$ = 300, * $p<.05$; Results reported after controlling for the covariates age, gender, number of dependents, years lived in USA and marital status.

Table 4. *Model 7, Gender (dichotomous) moderating the relationship between Work Salience and Work Hours*

	Coeff		SE	LLCI	ULCI
Gender	7.560		3.971	-0.255	15.375
Work salience	3.956	*	1.172	1.650	6.261
Work Salience x Gender	-2.187	*	0.918	-3.993	-0.381

Note. N = 310 (after listwise deletion), Overall Adj. R^2=.375, F=22.558, $df1$ = 8, $df2$ = 301, * p<.05; Results reported after controlling for the covariates age, number of dependents, years lived in USA and marital status.

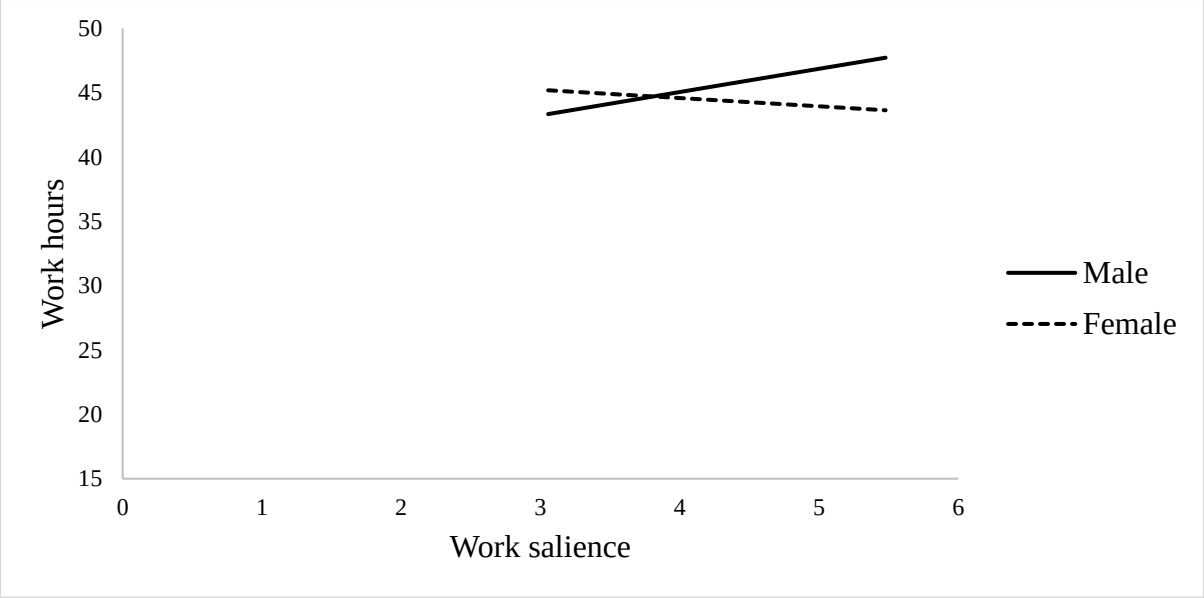

Figure 2. Moderating effect of Gender on Work salience and Work Hours relationship

Table 5. *Model 14, Marital Status (dichotomous) moderating the relationship between Work Stressors and WNWC in Work Salient individuals*

	Coeff		SE	LLCI	ULCI
Workload	-0.740		1.365	-3.426	1.946
Work Hours	0.621	*	0.201	0.226	1.017
Workload x Marital Status	1.312	ɨ	0.719	-0.103	2.727
Work Hours x Marital Status	-0.260	*	0.104	-0.464	-0.055

Note. N = 309 (after listwise deletion), Overall Adj. R^2=.396, F=16.194, $df1$ = 12, $df2$ = 296, * p<.05, ɨ p<.10; Results reported after controlling for the covariates age, number of dependents, years lived in USA and gender.

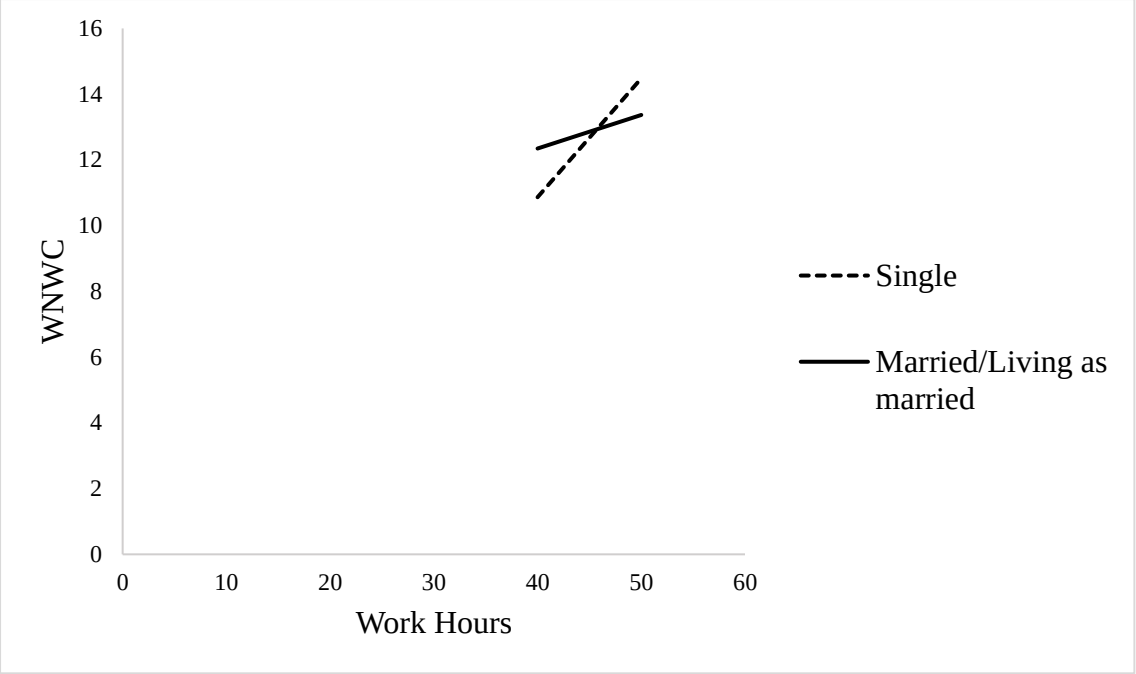

Figure 3. Moderating effect of Marital Status on Work Salient individual's Work Hours and WNWC relationship

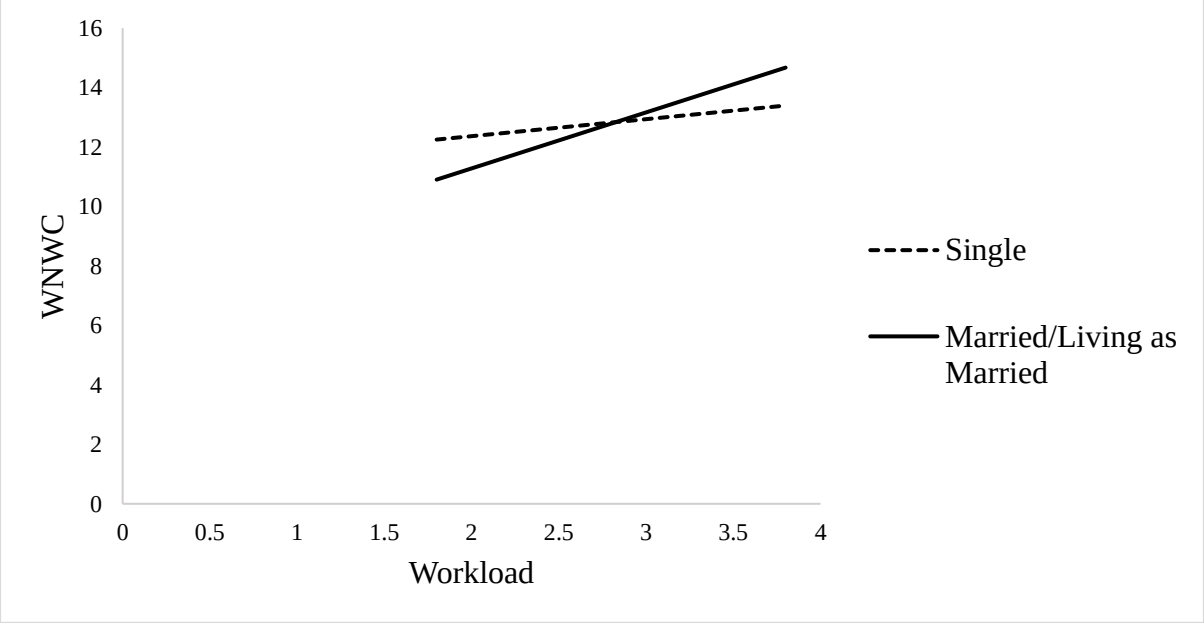

Figure 4. Moderating effect of Marital Status on Work Salient individual's Workload and WNWC relationship

Table 6. *Model 14, Marital Status (dichotomous) moderating the relationship between Work stressors and WNWC in Nonwork Salient individuals*

	Coeff		SE	LLCI	ULCI
Workload	-0.528		1.351	-3.187	2.131
Work hours	0.510	*	0.202	0.112	0.908
Workload x Marital Status	1.211	ɨ	0.712	-0.190	2.612
Work Hours x Marital Status	-0.204	ɨ	0.104	-0.409	0.001

Note. N = 309 (after listwise deletion), Overall Adj. R^2=.408, F=17.018, *df1* = 12, *df2* = 296, * p<.05, ɨ p<.10; Results reported after controlling for the covariates age, number of dependents, years lived in USA and gender.