A Key Challenge in Global HRM:
Adding New Insights to Existing Expatriate Spouse Adjustment Models

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*This study is an attempt to strengthen the existing knowledge about factors affecting the adjustment process of the trailing expatriate spouse and the subsequent impact of any maladjustment or expatriate failure. We conducted a qualitative enquiry using grounded theory methodology with 26 Indian spouses who had to deal with their partner's expatriate assignment relocation. The open and axial coding techniques and the process of theoretical sampling are discussed at length. Our investigation reveals the recurrence of several factors earlier studied in previous models such as cultural novelty, family and peer support, the organization's support and the spouse's personality. Additionally, we found that the Indian spouses' adjustment to expatriate assignments was influenced greatly by their perceived gender-role ideology and their marital obligations to their partners. The resulting extended model of spousal adjustment to expatriate adjustments may help management practitioners to enhance expatriate success in global assignments.
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An expatriate is a person who works and resides in another country other than his/her native country (Griffin & Pustay, 2002). They may also live in a host country while working for an organization from their home/parent country. Expatriate employees are a competitive advantage of the organization (Bauer & Taylor, 2001). In addition, expatriate employees are considered exceptionally good in their field of work. But if these expatriates fail on a foreign assignment, it results in a big financial drain for the company as well as affecting the expatriate's career. Most of these failures happen because of non-adjustment of the expatriate in the new country due to several reasons, including but not limited to culture shock, spousal problems, personal dissatisfaction and lack of organizational commitment (Vögel, Millard, & van Vuuren, 2008).

Research in expatriate failure has mostly looked into the issue from the expatriate's point of view. Very few studies have explored the problem from the spouses' perspectives. Why it is important to study the spouses' willingness to relocate internationally with the employee? A recent survey has revealed that the company may lose between US$25,000 and US$100,000 if the employee fails in an expatriate position

for any reason (Vögel et al., 2008). Indirect costs, such as damaged relations with host country or a negative impact on employee morale, may also impact the company.

A spouse can have a strong influence on their partner's decisions to quit the assignment (Andreason, 2008; Shaffer, Harrison, & Gilley, 1999). This can be avoided by providing effective preparation, support, and training to the employees and their families (Vögel et al., 2008). Expatriates with spouses and families have special requirements for an organization's support and training needs (Vögel et al., 2008). In fact, recent trends indicate that both dual-career couples and women expatriates are growing significantly (Harvey & Weise, 1998; Punnett, Crocker, & Stevens, 1992). Black and Gregersen (1991) have suggested that pre-departure training should have a positive impact on spousal adjustment during expatriate assignments.

Though some advances have been made regarding the study of spousal attitude towards expatriate assignments, more studies are required to get a better understanding of the antecedents behind such attitude formation. The majority of these studies revolved around expatriates moving to or out of the U.S. Exceptions included one study looking at repatriation adjustment issues of Finnish expatriate spouses (Gregersen & Stroh, 1997) and another recent study of Danish expatriate spouses in Saudi Arabia (Lauring & Selmar, 2010). To the very best of our knowledge, no previous study has been conducted with Indian expatriate spouses. India is a country with a 3,000-year-old patriarchal society (Sinha & Kanungo, 1997). Today, social malpractices of the dowry system, caste system and female child marriages are practiced in certain remote pockets of rural India (Riessman, 2000). The story of urban India, however, is quite different. Through economic liberalization and the wave of globalization, India has started to emerge as a strong economic power in the past two decades. Keeping in pace with the economic progress, there has been a significant rise in female employment and dual-career couples (Rajadhyaksha & Velgach, 2009). However, this trend is in conflict with the traditional gender-role orientation of Indian women; that is, to get married and perform the duties of a good housewife (Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000). Hence, it is all the more important to first explore the presence of any role-conflict that Indian wives experienced when they had to leave their career behind in order to accompany their husbands to another country. The male expatriate spouses would also have to go through the same conflict of trying to give priority to their wives' career over theirs, to which they are not traditionally accustomed.

Hence, we felt that given the different cultural backgrounds and traditional gender-role perceptions prevailing in India, and to understand expatriate spousal adjustment issues from India, this study required an inductive rather than deductive approach to uncover the perceptions of Indian spouses about their experiences with expatriate assignments. Therefore, we decided to first conduct a qualitative enquiry with native Indian spouses who have experienced expatriate assignments with their partners. We decided to ask our respondents open-ended questions to probe deeper into the different cognitive aspects of their adjustment to the new role and environment.

We have included a detailed description of all the available works on various factors affecting expatriate spousal adjustment and respective study limitations in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Existing Studies on Expatriate Spouse Adjustment

Title	Author(s) & Year	Journal	Objective	Methodology	Findings/ Discussions	Gaps/Areas not explored
The other half of the picture	Black, S. J., & Gregersen, H. B. (1991).	*Journal of International Business Studies, 22,* 461-477	To understand antecedents of expat spouse adjustment	Questionnaire mail survey to 1500 American expatriates and their spouses, 321 returned	Anticipatory adjustment (past experience, favorable pre-departure opinion, pre-departure training) In-country adjustment (length of assignment, social interactions, family support, living conditions, cultural novelty)	Not covered- spouse personality and nature; spouse host country's dominant gender role-ideology, spouse home country family issues, host country demographics not investigated in detail
The challenge for women expatriate managers and spouses: Some empirical evidence	Punnett, B .J., Crocker, O., & Stevens, M. A. (1992).	*The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 3*(3), 585-593	To understand the adjustment issues of male trailing spouses	Exploratory interviews with US expatriates Sample size-45 HRE-15; Women expats- 23; Male Spouses-7	Special training and support programs for male spouses to help them in their career Male spouses reported enjoying the experience but expressed dissatisfaction with being ignored by their partner's organizations	Lack of understanding about the gender role ideology of the male spouses Lack of understanding whether cultural factors affected their decision No individual level factors such as personality
Coming home to the Arctic cold: Antecedents to Finnish expatriate and spouse repatriation adjustment	Gregersen, H. B., & Stroh, L. K. (1997).	*Personnel Psychology, 50,* 635-655	To understand factors affecting repatriation adjustment of Finnish expatriates and their spouses	Survey method, 104 Finnish expat managers participated Cultural Novelty theory used	Factors creating problems for the spouses' repatriation adjustment were cultural novelty such as language, and anticipatory factors such as time of assignment and housing conditions	Lack of expatriation adjustment issues- focused more on repatriation
Families on global assignments:	Caliguiri, P. M., Hyland, M. M.,	*Current Topics in Management,*	To discuss antecedents of expat and	Conceptual paper where the authors	Family systems theory, Double ABCX & spill	No discussion about other factors which can affect the pile-up stressors and how

Applying work-family theories abroad	Joshi, A., & Bross, A. (1998).	*83*(4), 598-614	spouse adjustment	develop a model based on 3 theories of work/family	over theory, used to argue that the family's maladjustment can affect the expatriate's job performance	individual level characteristics can help to reduce such stressors; no empirical investigation done to justify the propositions
The dual career couple: Female expatriates and male trailing spouses	Harvey, M., & Wiese, D. (1998).	*Thunderbird International Business Review, 40*(4), 359-388	To propose customized training packages to facilitate different male spouse needs	Conceptual paper	Several cases of male trailing spouses discussed and possible levels of trainings are nicely outlined to facilitate better adjustment	Focus was entirely on organizational support issues, with little discussion on how to address specific antecedents of expat assignment adjustment; no empirical support: US-based conceptualization
Forgotten partners of international assignments: Development and test of a model of spouse adjustment	Shaffer, M. A., & Harrison, D. A. (2001).	*Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(2), 238-254	The authors developed and tested a model of spouse adjustment to international assignments in a sequence of qualitative and quantitative investigations	Semi-structured interviews to identify several factors effecting spouse adjustment, the model was then tested on 221 expat couples	Shaffer and Harrison's Model: Personal identity (language fluency, employment status, self-efficacy); Social Identity (family & social networks); Situational identity (cultural novelty, favorability of living conditions, and length of assignments)	No account of spouses personality aspects important to adjust to social identity, no mention of perceptions of marital roles, importance of employment and career for the spouse, no discussion about the role of organizations in maintaining such identities
Expatriate women talk about their lives	Huckerby, E., & Toulson, P. (2001).	*NZ Journal of HRM, 1, 1-16*	To identify the personal experiences of relocating partners and the issues relating to expatriate families and to examine the significance of dual career couples in the management of international staff	A focus group based discussion with 8 expatriate spouses from New Zealand	Country demographics were found to be a major factor in relocation decision; some respondents said they liked to move; spouses felt alienated from parents and extended family members which caused adjustment problems; the first few days were crucial for setting the tone of the stay in the host country	Very small sample size, representation of mostly spouses from Western world, most had relocation experience hence adjustment was not much issue

Title	Reference	Source	Purpose	Method/Sample	Results	Limitations
An examination of cross-over and spill-over effects of spousal and expatriate cross-cultural adjustments on expatriate outcomes	Takeuchi, R., Yun, S., & Tesluk, P. E. (2002).	*Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*(4), 655-666	To test cross-over and spill-over effect of spouse adjustment on expatriate adjustment	Survey of Japanese expatriates, their spouses, & their superiors and analysis using SEM	Results confirmed both hypotheses regarding cross-over effect and spill-over effect	Analysis did not focus on spousal adjustment; rather focus was mainly on expatriate adjustment, study may have been affected by common method bias
American expat spouses in Germany	Mohr, A. T., & Klein, S. (2004).	*IJHRM 15*(7),1189-1206	To understand spouse adjustment issues of American expatriates in Germany	44 female spouses located in Germany interviewed using two methods- semi-structured interviews and questionnaire survey	As per earlier models of spouse adjustment, the researchers found general living adjustments and interaction adjustments as major woes for the spouses. Also another issue was to adjust to the new role of traditional housewife as most were out of a job	Findings corroborated earlier models of expat spouse adjustment (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001) but limitations included the American spouse issues, no discussion about why the spouses felt role change was a challenge and how they felt personally about the role change
A preliminary model of spouse influence on managerial global assignment willingness	Konopaske, R., Robie, C., & Ivancevich, J. M. (2005).	*IJHRM, 16*(3), 405-426	Proposition and testing a model of expatriate spouse willingness to assume global assignments	Using family systems theory, a framework of spouse willingness to relocate was developed and then using a sample of 427 global managers and 167 spouses, the model was tested using SEM	Factors tested included

Individual factors- spouse job involvement and spouse adventurousness

Family factors- elderly relatives & children at home

Organizational factors- career support initiatives | Several additional factors were overlooked in the model- for example host country demographics, cultural novelty factor, gender role ideology and pre-departure orientation and length of assignments. Reduced scope of generalizability of the model as well to a certain extent |
| Struggling for balance amid turbulence on international assignments: Work family conflict, support and commitment | Shaffer, M. A., Harrison, D. A., Gilley, M. K.., & Luk, D. M. (2006). | *Journal of Management, 27*, 99-121 | To understand the impact of company support and two forms of work- family conflict | Empirical analysis with 324 expatriates in 46 countries

Use of Human Capital Theory | Evidence of impact of POS, spouse and family support | Lack of focus on spouse adjustment issues, spouses incorporated in the larger model of expat adjustment as a possible variable of interest |
| Nonlinear influences of stressors on general adjustment: | Takeuchi, R., Lepak, D. P., Marinova, S. V., & Yun, | *Journal of International Business Studies, 38,* 928-943 | To test impact of parental demand and perceived cultural | Non-linear hierarchical regression analysis using quadratic and | Using a sample of 170 matched pairs of Japanese expatriates and spouses assigned | No inclusion of organizational factors and individual adjustment factors such as role conflicts, role overload which may |

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The case of Japanese expatriates and their spouses	S. (2007)		novelty on expat and spouse adjustment	cubic terms	to the US, we found a quadratic effect of parental demands and a cubic effect of cultural novelty on spouse general adjustment but not on expatriate general adjustment	have non-linear impact on the relationships, also study was done with only Japanese expats and spouses, may not be generalizable
Expatriate adjustment of spouses and expatriate managers: An integrative research review	Andreason, A. W. (2008).	*International Journal of Management,. 25(2).* 382-395	A review of expatriate spouse literature	Discussion of factors involved in expatriate spouse relocation adjustment	Description of Shaffer and Harrison's model (2001) based on Identity Disruption theory	No mention of recent developments in expatriate spouse research and mainly discussed Shaffer and Harrison's model which was published in 2001. New insights are not discussed in this paper
The supportive expatriate spouse: An ethnographic study of spouse involvement in expatriate careers	Lauring, J., & Selmar, J. (2010).	*International Business Review 19,* 59-69	To understand spouse support of expatriate managers	Ethnographic observation of 16 Danish expat families placed in Saudi Arabia for 3 years. 26 semi-structured interviews and participant observation	Spouses enjoyed the traditional housewife's role; spouses took keen interest in their partner's work related events; spouses even tried to build social ties with members of company boards when they paid visits to their living facility	The findings of this study may be more generalizable to large metropolitan contexts with several business expatriates from the same country, or even the same business firm, than smaller population centers with few or no fellow countrymen around

Literature Review

Andreason (2008) suggested that the relocation experience of the expatriate and spouse may differ by varying degrees. The expatriate has limited interaction with locals whereas the trailing spouse has to interact more with the local people when conducting daily activities. Expatriate managers also have the advantage of being surrounded by people of the same organization whereas it is not the same for the spouse who has left his/ her familiar environment for a society full of unfamiliar faces. The view that the trailing spouse should be given separate training to adjust to the foreign conditions has also been supported by Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi, and Bross (1998).

Using identity disruption theory, Shaffer and Harrison (2001) divided the spousal adjustment dimensions into personal identity, social identity and situational identity. Within these dimensions they discussed concepts like cultural novelty, living conditions, certainty of assignment duration, language proficiency, employment status, self-efficacy, family and host country social network resources as crucial adjustment factors.

Konopaske, Robie, and Ivancevich (2005) identified some antecedents of spousal willingness to relocate and managerial willingness to accept foreign assignments using the cross-over spillover theory and family support theory. They incorporated only one of the big five model of personality dimensions, openness to change, to see whether this personality trait of spouse affected his/her willingness to relocate. The results supported the hypothesis that the adventurousness of the spouse was positively related to his/her willingness to relocate. However, Konopaske and his associates (2005) did not take other personality factors of personality dimension like extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness into account (Figure 1).

Figure 1. General Model of Spouse International Relocation and Manager Global Assignment Willingness
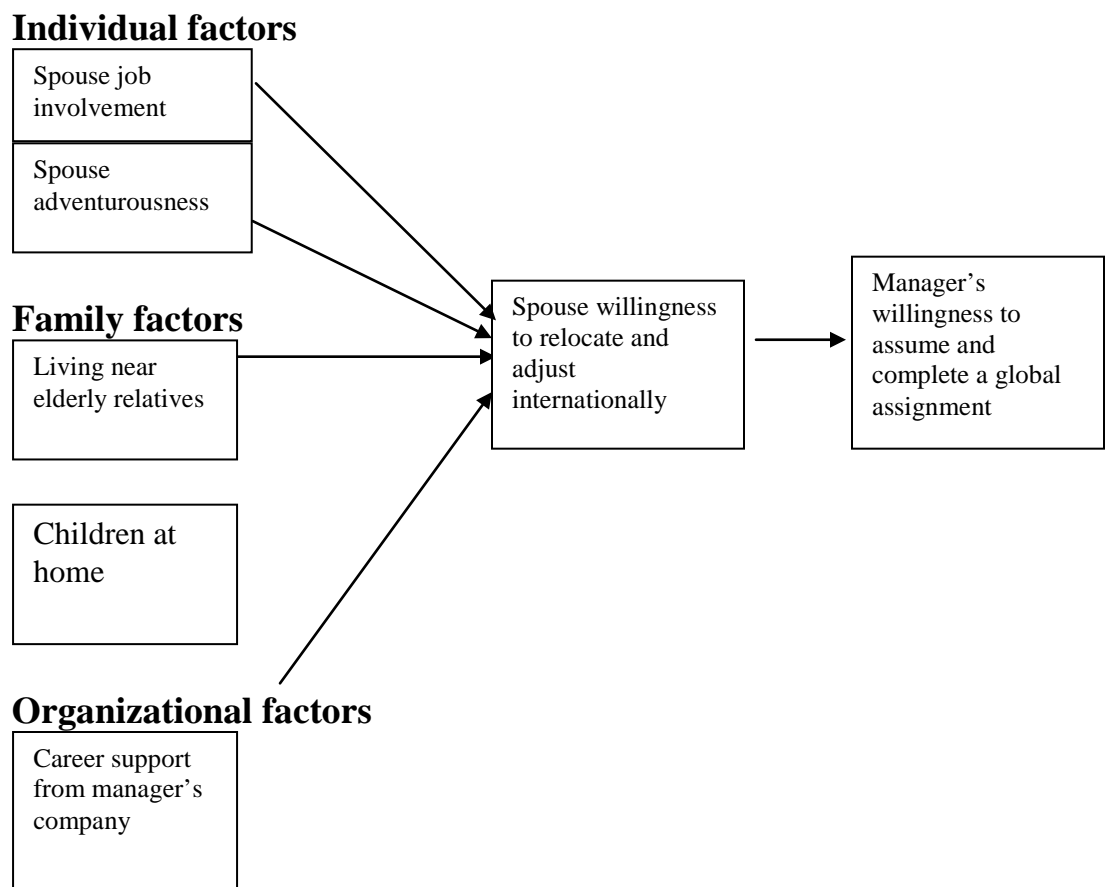
 [Source: Konopaske, R., Robie, C., & Ivancevich, J. M. (2005). A preliminary model of spouse influence on managerial global assignment willingness. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 16* (3), 405-426.]

There have been many attempts to operationalize the personality construct in the past, but the one framework which has received the greatest theoretical and empirical support is the Big Five Model of Personality (John & Srivastava, 1999). One dimension of the big five personality traits, neuroticism, has been found to negatively affect an

individual's ability to adjust to stressful stimuli (Bruck & Allen, 2003). In fact, Bruck and Allen (2003) studied the impact of the big five personality traits on type A behavior, and found that the neuroticism significantly correlated with negative effects on work-family conflict. Given that during the foreign assignment the expatriate and the spouse may have to live through periods of tension and conflict, it is expected that individuals with a higher level of agreeableness, extraversion and openness to change and a lower level of neuroticism will be better able to cope with the stress associated with such situations. A similar relationship may also exist with other personality variables such as extraversion, conscientiousness and agreeableness (Cheng & Furnham, 2002).

Barring the study by Konopaske and colleagues (2005), no research has been done with other personality variables in expatriate spouse research. There also seemed to be some incongruence in terms of how the researchers defined personality as a construct in previous studies. Caligiuri (2000) used the framework proposed by Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991) in a study on expatriate personality. In that study, personality was conceptualized in terms of different orientations such as self-orientation, perceptual orientation, and other orientation. We also observed that Konopaske and associates (2005) used adventurousness and curiosity as sub-dimensions of openness to change. We expected that personalities of expatriate spouses may be different for different nationalities and cultures (Hofstede, 2001; Lauring & Selmar, 2010), and decided to explore the personality aspect of our respondents from a subjective perspective. Expatriate assignments are generally associated with some amount of initial excitement similar to that of a holiday tour--a phase which is known as the honeymoon phase (Black & Gregersen, 1991). Although this phase is short-lived before the expatriate and the spouse start to experience culture shock, Black and Gregersen (1991) have suggested that successful adjustment to the subsequent culture shock would depend on how long the expatriates and their spouses could retain the excitement of the visit and the volatile lifestyle that follows. Such excitement is dependent on the basic nature of the spouses-- whether they are adventurous by nature or prefer a more monotonous routine. This helped us probe the expatriate spouses' personalities without being influenced by existing personality frameworks such as Neo PI or the Big Five Taxonomy. This also helped us understand the spouses' personalities from a subjective point of view and thus added to our theory building process.

Among other relevant factors, Black and Gregersen (1991) suggest that cultural factors of the host country are one possible hindrance to the spouses' adjustment. Cultural novelty--the perceived distance between the home country culture and host country culture--may strongly influence the spouses' relocation decision, as the more novel a foreign country's culture, the greater the difficulty in adjusting (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Bauer & Taylor, 2001; Davis, Hoch, & Ragsdale, 1986). Cultural novelty gets manifested in a variety of customs, religion, language, and social values of countries. The national culture may also play a role in the spouses' outlook on adjustment. For example, a spouse coming from a country with a patriarchal culture would be more likely to accept the rules of a male-dominated society, which encourages the wives to follow their husband's commands and give more priority to the husband's career than their own (Sinha & Kanungo, 1997).

Hofstede's (2001) five dimensions of national culture are widely used in cross-cultural studies. Individualism refers to the value of respecting others privacy, being self-

centered and having loose relational ties (Hofstede, 2001). Spouses with a high level of individualism were expected to have fewer issues in adjusting to an alien culture, as their necessity for a formal social network would not be very high. Similarly, if a spouse came from a collectivistic society, he/she would have to cope more with the pain of parting with close friends and with the fear of isolation. In this study, we dealt with mostly Indian female spouses. Although coming from a country with a tradition of collectivism, the cultural orientation of the Indian spouse is supposed to be deeply embedded in the country's rich and long history (Sinha & Kanungo, 1997). Indian spouses have been traditionally oriented to a marital contract of sacrifice and commitment to their partners (Rahman & Rao, 2004). Do the spouses of Indian expatriates still place importance on this marital bond when deciding to cope with the challenge of international assignments? Do they believe in sacrificing their career and facing up the challenge of adjusting to a new environment out of a sense of marital obligation? We wished to explore these questions.

Earlier models which have tried to capture the expatriate spouses' relocation adjustment issues have lacked comprehensiveness in their designs. In one of the earliest frameworks developed in this area, Black and Gregersen (1991) discussed several antecedent factors which may influence spousal adjustment in a foreign location such as previous experiences when visiting the new country, pre-departure training, and cultural novelty issues. However, their model did not take into account individual differences among spouses in coping with the adjustment such as personality and gender-role perceptions. Another well-developed model by Shaffer and Harrison (2001) incorporated spousal differences in handling expatriate stress such as language fluency and self-efficacy in addition to other socio-environmental factors such as cultural novelty, family and social networks, and employment status. However, they did not incorporate specific spousal personality factors or organizational support factors in their model.

Konopaske, Robie, and Ivancevich (2005) included expatriate spouses' personality traits and other family support factors for the first time in their expatriate spousal adjustment framework, but unfortunately, their model did not include cultural novelty factors and pre-departure training as possible antecedents of spouse adjustment. Other empirical approaches to develop understanding about the expatriate spousal adjustment process have also been plagued by the deficiency of not exploring all the major facets of adjustment in a single study (Bauer & Taylor, 2001; Huckerby & Toulson, 2001; Lauring & Selmar, 2010; Punnett et al., 1992; Takeuchi et al., 2007).

Our study wished to capture the impact of all these aspects in the decision of the spouse to relocate to a host country, and in the process, help to develop the existing frameworks of spousal adjustment. A review of the existing works showed that only Konpaske and colleagues (2005) have developed an empirically sound model of the expatriate spouses' decision to relocate using structural equation modeling (SEM). Other studies have mostly studied cause-effect relationships between various antecedents of spousal adjustment and willingness to relocate (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001; Takeuchi et al., 2007). A few qualitative studies conducted in this regard have not focused much on theory building, but rather on observing the phenomenon of expatriate spousal adjustment and interpreting the results subjectively (Lauring & Selmar, 2010; Mohr & Klein, 2004; Punnet et al., 1992).

We decided to use our study findings to extend the model constructed by Konopaske and associates (2005) for the principal reason that it had a well-structured and empirically validated framework tested with a comparatively large sample. What the model was lacking in terms of explanatory power, such as non-inclusion of factors such as host country demographics, cultural novelty factor, gender role ideology, pre-departure orientation, and length of assignments, we wished to address them using a theoretical platform. Later research may be able to use the extended theoretical framework from our study and test the overall model fit using a larger sample and SEM technique, which other studies did not provide.

Research Methodology

Motivation for the Study and Rationale for Using Grounded Theory

Our motivation for this study came from our own interactions with spouses who had gone through relocation experience. One source of such interaction came from the first and third author's association with a one-year visiting scholarship program (VSP) while completing their PhD programs. In this VSP, the research scholars spent approximately one year abroad at a foreign university that had a connection to their field of study. The first and third authors observed that in due course, married female PhD students opted out of this VSP while the married male students sometimes took their spouse along with them and sometimes left them back in the country due to family issues or financial constraints. The authors interacted with some of these spouses who accompanied their partners on such programs, which gave us some basic idea of the adjustment problems they faced. The second author had an idea of spousal adjustment issues from his experience of working in an HR consultancy firm, which had foreign subsidiaries in three different countries. There were repeated instances of expatriate and spouse failure to adjust to the foreign subsidiaries in the firm. With this shared exposure to the spousal adjustment issues, we decided to explore them rigorously and in-depth.

In order to capture the latent experiences and attitudes of the spouses about being part of expatriate assignments, we needed to use an interpretivist approach while simultaneously developing a theoretical background behind such an attitude formation. In a way, our study was a simultaneous attempt to explore the phenomenon of spousal adjustment in an alien country and confirming the existing research on this ill-researched topic. Hence, the Straussian approach of grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) was adopted as the research methodology, where one starts with a conventional literature review, gets a basic idea of existing research findings, starts data collection using open-ended questions, and finally builds new theory from the collected data and at the same time matches the data with the extant literature. The broad objective of the investigation was to understand the different antecedent factors which influence the adjustment process of the expatriate spouse in a new country. The choice of grounded theory as the methodology was also prompted by the fact the there was a scarcity of substantial work on expatriate spousal adjustment.

We used the models developed by Shaffer and Harrison (2001) and by Konopaske and colleagues (2005) to develop an initial guideline for conducting the interviews as these two studies nicely categorized the various individual, social, and national level

factors which could influence the expatriate spouses' relocation experience, and their models covered all the previously explored dimensions of spousal adjustment. An interview manual was developed, keeping in mind some initial questions presented to all respondents, such as the time duration of assignment, whether any training was provided for the spouses, and if they had to leave their jobs or stayed behind to support their family and children. These factors were included from the previous studies (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001; Konopaske et al., 2005). Following Straussian approach, the inclusion of these basic questions did not violate the principles of grounded theory, as these queries helped us structure the responses in a meaningful manner (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).This approach is contrary to the approach advocated by Glaser and his followers, who strictly forbid conducting any literature review at the start of a grounded theory investigation. However, the Glaserian stance is based exclusively on inductive logic. As a result, this approach may lack a proper structure/background to support the emerging theory as compared to the approach of Corbin and Strauss (1990). Keeping the research objective in mind, the researchers decided to adopt the guidelines proposed by Corbin and Strauss (1990) in this study.

Sampling and Data Collection

In a grounded theory enquiry, the conventional sampling techniques cannot be followed. In this case, each sample is the link to the subsequent sample. A constant iteration goes on in which the researchers analyze each and every response and match the responses with the findings from existing literature. Through the initial wave of responses, the next set of desirable candidates is identified and this goes on until the point when all theory becomes saturated. The process of identifying the initial and subsequent respondents based on the theoretical underpinnings of the study is known as theoretical sampling (Goulding, 2000) and the process of matching the sample to the existing theories as theoretical matching. We applied the logic of theoretical sampling in our sample selection and interview stage.

Following the studies reviewed in our literature review, we first started locating the individuals who accompanied their spouse due to work through personal contacts and other channels such as social networking sites like Facebook and Orkut. Indian laws and regulations for conducting social surveys did not require us to get any formal approval from the respondents or from any regulatory institution. We, however, understood that if we did not maintain any safeguards for confidentiality, the spouses may not cooperate with us to share information. Hence, before the commencement of each interview, we explained to them the objective of our study and assured them complete anonymity. Thus, the real names of our respondents have been concealed in this study and only mentioned as respondent, followed by a number. Finally, only those spouses who were willing to take part in the interview were included in the sample.

The spouses interviewed in this study had accompanied their partners in their expatriate assignments across four continents (Asia, Europe, North America, and Australia), each different from the other in terms of religion, climate, and socio-cultural structure. This helped to generate some interesting data on various aspects of adjustment issues. Interviews were conducted through personal appointments either at the interviewee's residence or at a pre-appointed meeting place (we chose cafeterias and

restaurants as it helped to make the background less formal). Those who were unable to meet in person were contacted be mobile phone. During the interview, we kept the loudspeaker on so we could record their responses. Two respondents had to be contacted through email. At the initial stage of interviews we were guided by the criteria of the interview manual. We identified some expatriate spouses who had been to geographically different continents with a different culture, climate, and religion. Choosing such respondents helped us to understand the impact of cultural novelty of spousal adjustment. We asked the respondents to give us their views on the reasons to adopt or reject the offer of trailing their partners.

The next level of enquiry included the process of theoretical sampling, where we allowed the respondents to discuss issues which were important to them. From these responses, the next set of questions evolved and the iteration continued until saturation was achieved. As we started identifying recurring factors which affected the spouse's decision-making process, we became more focused in our questions. We understood that we needed to interview some spouses who refused to accompany their partners for a better understanding of the phenomenon. We also realized we needed to interview some male spouses in order to explore the issue from a husband's perspective. New themes emerged from the responses themselves and these were later incorporated in the interview manual. After 26 interviews, we observed that the themes had become more or less saturated and at this juncture we decided to stop conducting interviews (see Table 2 for sample demographics).

Out of these 26 expatriate spouses, seven reported not accompanying his/her wife/husband or coming back midway into the stay. As a result, the expatriate manager had to quit his/her assignment. Four others came back midway into the assignment, but the expatriate still finished his/her assignment. There were only two male spouses among our respondents. Both came back midway between assignments, but their female partners came back later, only after completing the assignments.

We asked the respondents to share their views about the reasons to adopt or reject the offer of accompanying their partners. As we started identifying recurring factors which affect the spouse's decision-making process, such as climate, food, and social and cultural values, we became more focused in our questions. New themes emerged from the responses themselves and these were later incorporated into the interview manual. These new themes included the spouses' perceptions of their role in their in-law's home, relationship with his/her spouse, preception of post-marriage employment, career orientation, and relations with immediate and extended family and friends. Interviews were conducted in person, and through email, and over the telephone. All interviews were in English and transcribed by two independent coders. The respondents in our study came from different parts of India, meaning many of them spoke different regional languages such as Telegu, Bengali, Hindi, Marthi, Tamil, Malyalam and Gujarati. Also, a few of the respondents, especially those from Southern India, were not very comfortable with Hindi, the national language of India. All the respondents were, however, comfortable communicating in English. Hence, to make the interviews comprehensive enough for all our respondents, we chose to use English in the interviews. Another advantage of doing the interviews in English was the ease of transcribing the recorded conversations. This also allowed us to avoid the methodological errors and biases associated with translating

native languages in to English. Examples of our questions and respondents' answers follow.

> *Q1. Are/Were you working when you had to accompany your spouse? If yes, did you have to leave your job to go? Did you get the required leave easily?*
> *A: Yes, I have my own practice and a set of patients, so it was not a problem for me to leave.*
> *Q2. Did presence of elderly relatives or children at home or any other family reason create difficulties in your relocation decision? Or did they help in making the decision?*
> *A: No, my in-laws are adjusting and when we leave for longer durations they go to their other son's place. So I would say that elderly relatives actually supported me accompanying my husband.*
> *Q3. Did the organization of your spouse provide you with required training /support before going?*
> *A: There was no training per se, but they did provide us with transport fare and accommodation in the other country.*
> *Q4. Were you apprehensive or nervous about going to a foreign country? What were your initial thoughts when you heard the news?*
> *A: No, I was excited. I have always wanted to visit new places.*
> *Q5. Did you want to go to provide support to your spouse?*
> *A: I don't accompany him for all his trips, so I cannot say this. In fact, he is so busy that sometimes I think it's of no use to go.*

Each interview was transcribed verbatim within an hour of completion and analyzed simultaneously to give us a sense of direction for future interviews. While the primary author interviewed the respondents, the secondary authors wrote the memos of how the interview went, the body language of interviewee, etc. When the interviewees had trouble finding a word we prompted them but left their sentence intact. Whenever we did not understand their choice of words or when the meaning was not clear we asked for clarification, thus adopting the constructivist approach of grounded theory as we were reporting our perception.

Table 2. Demographics of the Sample

Respondent No.	Age	Gender (M/F)	Partner's Host Country	Accompanied (Y/N)	Duration of assignment	Employment status at the time of interview	Family Structure
1.	33	F	USA	Y	10 months	Homemaker	Nuclear
2.	38	F	UAE	Y	3 years	Working	Nuclear

3.	63	F	Germany	Y	6 months every year	Working	Nuclear
4.	30	F	USA	Y	10 months	Homemaker	Nuclear
5.	26	F	USA	Y	3 years	Working	Nuclear
6.	33	F	USA	Y	1 year	Working	Extended
7.	30	F	UK	Y	6 months every year	Working	Extended
8.	45	F	UAE	Y	5 years	Working	Extended
9.	28	F	USA	N	1-2 Months	Working	Nuclear
10.	25	F	USA	Y	3 Months	Working	Nuclear
11.	26	F	USA	Y	1 year	Working	Nuclear
12.	27	M	UAE	Y	2 years	Working	Extended
13.	23	F	UAE	N	2 years	Working	Extended
14.	45	F	UAE	Y	5 years	Working	Nuclear
15.	24	F	Singapore	Y	1 year	Homemaker	Nuclear
16.	28	F	Europe	Y	3 years	Working	Extended
17.	24	F	UAE	N	1 year	Homemaker	Extended

18.	35	F	Hong Kong	N	1.5 years	Working	Nuclear
19.	28	F	USA	N	10 Months	Homemaker	Nuclear
20.	35	F	Saudi Arabia	Y	2 years	Working	Extended
21.	33	F	Australia	N	4 Months	Working	Nuclear
22.	34	F	UAE	Y	3 years	Homemaker	Extended
23.	30	F	USA	N	10 months	Homemaker	Nuclear
24.	45	F	UAE	Y	3 years	Homemaker	Nuclear
25.	46	F	UAE	Y	2 years	Working	Nuclear
26.	27	M	USA	Y	3 years	Working	Extended

Data Analysis

The data was then broken down into separate codes based on the nature of the response. To maintain inter-coder reliability, the secondary coders independently generated the open codes and the primary coder carried out the axial coding.

Open Coding

Open coding is the process of disseminating, conceptualizing and assigning meaning to the vast body of accumulated data obtained from the interviews (Rodon & Pastor, 2007). The recurring codes that kept appearing in the transcripts have been tabulated in Table 3. In all, eleven codes emerged from the open coding procedure. To maintain inter-rater reliability, two coders did the coding independently and the final code selection was done through consultation with a third neutral coder (one faculty member). This helped to ensure that subjective rater bias did not influence the results (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Lombard, Snyder-Dutch, & Bracken, 2002). We calculated inter-rater agreement for our study to be 0.87 using the percent agreement method which indicated good inter-rater agreement (Lombard, Snyder-Dutch, & Bracken, 2002). Percent agreement was chosen because of the less complex nature of the process and

because we already had a structure already in place to guide the categorization. During the coder training, each coder was given the same amount of information about the study objective, its respondents, and the theoretical history behind the concepts. In order to reduce any bias from the percent agreement method, we asked the coders to code the transcripts and then let the primary coder check for any bias at the middle stage by recoding parts of the transcripts at random and matching them with the initial coding. We took care to simultaneously develop respective memos where we could include our own perceptions of the feedback.

Table 3. Open codes of factors influencing spouses' relocation decision

Open Codes	Factors affecting spouse's decision to relocate to host country
1.Climate	It was very cold for me. No, nothing of that sort, in fact we all wait for snow, once we get here. Yes, I don't go to UK during winters, those times I specifically stick at home. I wanted to see ice so I chose to go in the winters. The summer there was hot and it was actually impossible to go out in the afternoon. human life where ever he/she go time makes adjustment due to suitable reasons to stay where ever over the world; The extreme desert-like heat didn't dissuade me. The heat is simply unbearable;
2.Language	If we know that the place we are going to does not has English as a primary language then we are more apprehensive. I keep watching Indian movies and try to catch some words and today I can speak better than Pakistani and Indians. That's called a part of the education.
3.Local customs	I was worried about food. I did not know what to buy half the time, either it used to be too expensive or I did not know the right brands to pick; often I picked up the wrong item from the shelf because of a similar packing of the product as we see in India. Food habits of certain countries do make me nauseous like in Bangkok they were giving all kinds of insects to eat on the road-side. During their festivals like Roza, they stare at us if we eat or drink, then when we go out without burqa it is inconvenient for us. Also, there are no movie halls, since it's a Muslim country; internet services are blocked, like a lot of social networking sites.
4. Social networks	I had friends in US. I was home most of the time initially and had a lot of friends. Yes, I felt alone. I already knew families who were settled here, now we have Indian friends, otherwise it would have been very difficult.
5. Family composition (nuclear/ extended; little / adult children)	I have a small child at home. We wanted to come back before our parent got too old to manage by themselves. My in-laws are adjusting and when we leave for longer durations they go to their other son's place. That's' why we go abroad to support our family and parents, and build nice future with financial way. Initially I had to stay back because of my in-laws and children till they grew up;
6. Spouse support / Masculinity-orientation	He got a better opportunity, so it was an obvious choice. I cannot say this, I don't think I can't say that because I have gone very less number of times with him. Yes, because on the projects he goes the schedule is very hectic. I can find a better job but I can't leave her. I wanted to stand by his side.

7. Career orientation	I didn't see the harm in quitting since I wanted to study more. I only accompanied him when I had leaves. I have no intention to quit my job so early. I had to leave my job. I did not get leaves, so I quit and looked for a job in the new country.
8. Extraversion / curiosity about foreign culture	I was bored here, I wanted to see America. I think I am an introvert, I had trouble initially here. I don't particularly go out to meet people from other cultures. It is always nice to meet people from different cultures. Yes, it's actually fun to got meet people from different cultures and learn about how they do things and what all festivals they have and being a part of it is amazing. It's a new excellent experience, if we are ready to see new part of world and manage the same, then world is yours. I have traveled before, and it is always fun. Yes, a lot, it's a good experience, you learn a lot from such experiences. To know the culture of outside world other than India. I am more comfortable with my own Indian community. I like my own space, I am not an outgoing person.
9. Time duration	Almost one year, it is too long. It was for a short duration, that's why I wanted to go to a certain extent. Yes, had it been a short-term assignment the decision might have been different. Yes, if a project is of longer duration I go. I did not have to worry, because it was always for a short duration. Due to the length of the assignment I had to leave my job. Had it been a few months, I wouldn't have come here.
10. Organizational support	They provided us with transport fare and accommodation in the other country. The company covers the big amount of the cost like fare and accommodation. His company pays for the travel and the living accommodation and some other stuff; accommodation and travel fare and other facilities at the site.
11. Pre-departure training	Nothing, we had to do everything on our own. No, do they have to. Dinner with ex-expatriate's spouse so as to make her familiar with the foreign culture. Yes, they helped me get developed as per the requirement. There was no training; the company provided us with most of the facilities.

We started the interview process by asking the spouses general questions about their current family life. This served as a nice icebreaker at the start of the interview session. We gradually approached the subject of their experiences during the expatriate assignments once the respondents appeared relaxed and comfortable with the setting. We asked permission from our respondents whether we could use the recording device during our interview and further elaborated that we would not say the respondent's name during the interview. Only six respondents objected to its use in which case we decided to dictate their responses. Following Corbin and Strauss' (1990) suggestions, we developed an interview manual where we put the factors such as demographic variables (e.g., climate, geography, religion), social networks, pre-departure training, occupational status, and general nature of spouse as the initial list of questions.

In the initial round of interviews, we received responses from nine spouses. Respondents reacted to cold weather and negatively to hot climates. That is, spouses were apprehensive to visit Middle Eastern countries known for their acute desert climate and preferred assignments to countries with colder climates instead. This was a little surprising for us as India is predominantly a hot, tropical country, and Indians are naturally more resistant to heat than cold. This finding adds to the understanding of previous research regarding the impact of host country's climate on expatriate spouse

adjustment, especially the theory of cultural novelty (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Bauer & Taylor, 2001; Davis et al., 1986; Shaffer et al., 1999, Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). Specifically, this finding suggests that people like to experience different climatic conditions rather than living in a similar environment in the host country. However, this finding is also a country-specific phenomenon. We also found that the perceptions regarding climate differed among age groups and for those with previous experience. Younger respondents were less critical about visiting cold countries, while those who had already experienced such harsh climates found it more difficult to adjust to such conditions. This may be due to the fact that younger respondents were able to cope with the extreme cold while the older spouses found it problematic to live in the bitter cold. This is all the more reason to provide pre-departure training, such as an on-site holiday for the partner and the spouse, to help them adjust to such climatic conditions.

Spouses were more at ease if they were traveling to countries with English as the official language. This was expected as our respondents were familiar with the English language and consequently they did not have to face communication hurdles. In addition, spouses also viewed countries with conservative religions with unease. Jenkins and Mockaitis (2010) support this in their study of expatriate adjustment. Therefore, we once again received empirical support of our findings. One new aspect of spouse adjustment issues was that of the host country's cuisine. While designing pre-departure orientation programs for the trailing spouses, the management should try to acquaint the spouse with the local cuisine to prepare them for the type of food that will be available during the expatriate assignment.

> *Q. Did you face any problems adjusting to the new culture after going to the new country?*
>
> *Ans. Yes, I did not know what to buy half the time, either it used to be too expensive or I did not know the right brands to pick. More than often I picked up the wrong item from the shelf because of a similar packing of the product as we see in India…The local food is also so much different from India, most non-vegetarian items especially…*

Similarly, the social networks and family structure of the spouse were included into a broader category of peer support. The curiosity to meet new people and the willingness to interact with a foreign culture came under the heading of spouse personality. Spouses were more eager to make new friends and increase their social networks, yet leaving their existing social networks behind and opening themselves up to new people was not an easy process. This finding has also been supported by earlier research on social identity and social networking (Caligiuri et al., 1998; Konopaske et al., 2005; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001).

> *Qs. Were you worried about adjusting to the new culture before going?*
>
> *Respondent 15. Yes, I was apprehensive about adjusting, meeting new people… The fact that you don't know anybody there, the neighborhood used to worry me.*

In order to understand individual levels of adventure orientation, the spouses were asked to describe about what they liked most about their experiences in the foreign country. They were even asked to describe their wildest dreams that they would like to achieve one day. We asked the spouses how they pictured the visit to the foreign location would be when they first heard about the assignment. We asked them to recall their feelings when they finally reached their destination. When we asked them about their initial feelings about going to the host country, we hoped to get an approximate picture of their initial feelings. The objective of the question was to get an insight into how the individual spouse liked the idea of an adventure. We wished to capture the personality aspects of extraversion which was necessary for our subjective coding of the responses. Also, we believe that the informal settings and the fact that we probed them in each question rather than let them simply fill in a survey helped them to recall the initial moments of excitation more justifiably. The respondents became very animated while responding to the question about their initial expectations, which suggested that they remembered their feelings quite well, as it was a pivotal moment in their lives.

> *Qs. How did you feel when you first heard about the relocation? What were your feelings when you finally reached the place?*
>
> *Respondent 21. I felt good. Very excited. For me I saw it as an adventure. I was very excited. I enjoyed the experience as I like to meet new people and love to travel to new places.*

However, we could not specifically identify any unique personality characteristic of the Indian spouses. Our respondents described their inner personalities as adventurous, curious towards expatriate assignments, or naïve about such issues. The responses suggest that spouses who are extroverts by nature could cope with the new culture somewhat better than their introvert counterparts could (Cheng & Furnham, 2002; Bruck & Allen, 2003; Konopaske et al., 2005). As it is, these responses were not further justified using a quantitative investigation. Therefore, it is safe to say that we received some indication that extraversion and openness to change were helpful in the adjustment process for some spouses.

One new aspect of spousal adjustment which we came across during the first round of interviews was that Indian spouses generally considered it their duty to stand beside their husbands at all times. Even if that meant jeopardizing their own career and/or personal life, traditional Indian wives do not hesitate to take such action. However, the story was slightly different for spouses with children at home. For them, the main priority was their children's education and upbringing. There were three spouses in our study who did not go to the host country initially because they had children at home, which prevented them from accompanying their partners. Only when their children had vacation did they visit their partner. To further probe this factor, we interviewed eleven more spouses. The next wave of responses further corroborated our earlier findings.

Qs. Were you working when you had to accompany your spouse? If yes, did you have to leave your job to go? Did you get the required leave easily?

Respondent 3: Yes, I was working with a global supermarket chain as assistant manager, operations. I quit going with my husband who was going on an L1 visa which is a transfer and not a work visa. I had to quit supporting my husband's career growth.

Respondent 5: I did not get leave, so I quit and looked for a job in the new country. I could not think about my own career anymore. I had to consider my family's welfare first...

We continued our probing with six more spouses but failed to generate any further insights. After a mutual agreement among the coders, we decided to not conduct any further interviews since there was a strong indication of theoretical saturation at that point.

Memoing

At every step of the open coding, memos were maintained in order to facilitate the data categorization process while keeping in mind the guidelines illustrated by Corbin and Strauss (1990). The memos helped identify the next step of data collection and analysis. The memos contained the actual responses of the interviewees. At this stage, after each individual response was transcribed, the corresponding memos were developed by the respective coders to generate the latent themes hidden in the responses. Whenever some patterns could be identified in the responses, they were highlighted for future coding purposes. The excerpt below describes one such memo.

The subject is a housewife and did not accompany her spouse initially because of family reasons. The organization of her spouse did not provide any training but did provide some other facilities like travel fare, accommodation etc....Since it was a Muslim country, which has lot of restrictions on women, she was apprehensive before going. She found it very difficult to adjust to the new culture because it was quite conservative; therefore... Hot climatic conditions did influence her decision and was a matter of worry...

Axial Coding

"Axial coding is the appreciation of concepts in terms of their dynamic inter-relationships" (Goulding, 2000). Axial coding helps establish the causal links between discrete categories/concepts that appear during open coding. After analyzing the open codes and the corresponding memos, five distinct categories were identified where the different open codes could be classified. These were demographic factors, peer support, personality factors, cultural values, and organizational support. These core categories

were developed independently by the primary and the secondary coders and then we showed our individual interpretations to the neutral coder (the faculty member). As per the mutual agreement of the three coders, the core categorization was finalized after relating the categories to existing theories through the process of theoretical matching (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

The codes which pointed towards country specific variables such as climate, language, cuisine, and customs were all categorized under the umbrella of country demographics since all the individual factors together formed a country's features which created unique adjustment issues for expatriate spouses. Younger spouses preferred cold climate while older spouses did not. All spouses were more at ease if they were traveling to countries with English as the official language, which was expected as Indians are familiar with the English language. Finally, spouses viewed countries with conservative religions with unease by the Indian spouses. This may be due to the isolation that they felt in the foreign countries due to rigorous religious customs (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Bauer & Taylor, 2001; Davis et al., 1986; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001).

> *Respondent 7: Yes, during their festivals like Roza, they stare at us if we eat or drink. Then when we go out without burqa it is inconvenient for us. Also there are no movie halls, since it's a Muslim country, internet services are blocked, like a lot of social networking sites. There are several trivial issues…*

These findings match existing theories of cultural novelty (Davis et al., 1986; Shaffer et al., 1999; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). The greater the difference of a host country's demographic features from a parent country, the more the spouses experienced a discomfort. We observed some individual differences in the perceptions though: younger spouses especially had a different perspective on cultural novelty factors than their older cohorts.

Similarly, the social networks and family structure of the spouse came under the broader category of peer support. There was evidence of the social networking theory, as the stronger the spouse's social network in the host country, more effective their adjustment. The curiosity to meet new people and the willingness to interact with the foreign culture came under the heading of spouse personality. Interestingly, we found that spouses who were introverts by nature required fewer friends and did not find it difficult to live in the host country with few friends for the initial few months. But a longer duration of social isolation created adjustment problems for such spouses. Five such individuals returned midway between the assignments due to adjustment issues. Thus the personality factor of cultural curiosity and love for adventure latently affected the spouses' adjustment process in certain cases.

One salient feature of most of the spouses interviewed in this study was that Indian spouses generally consider it their duty to support their husbands through thick and thin. This mentality of marital obligation of Indian spouses may be attributed to the masculine culture of India (Hofstede, 2001). At the same time, such notions may also be attributed to the deeply rooted social importance of traditional marital roles which may have influenced the creation of such mindsets among the Indian spouses. What was surprising to see was that although our respondents were all from urban India and all

were career-oriented, well-educated women with a modern outlook on life, even they were not entirely free from the patriarchy embedded in Indian culture. We found evidence of the spill-over effect in the cases where the expatriates failed to complete their assignments. In each of the seven cases reported, the spouses were the ones who influenced their partner's decision to quit and return to the parent country (Caliguiri et al., 1998).

Finally, the tenure of the assignment, the degree of organizational support, and pre-departure training were categorized under organizational factors. It was observed that most Indian spouses were unaware about the importance of pre-departure training before going to the foreign countries. Barring one or two cases, the rest went to the host country without any briefing about the culture they were about to experience. Most of them had to face a series of discomforts due to such deficiencies. Spouses who are extroverts by nature could cope with the new culture somewhat better than their introverted counterparts. The axial coding is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Axial Coding

Axial Codes	Open codes	Link with theory and/or research
Demographic factors	**Climate** **Language** **Customs** **-Food habits** **- Religion** **- Shopping**	**Cultural novelty theory** (Davis et al., 1986; Barrick & Mount,1991; Bauer & Taylor, 2001; Shaffer et al., 1999, Shaffer & Harrison, 2001)
Peer Support	**Family** **Social networks/ Friends**	**Social Identity theory, Spillover theory** (Caligiuri et al., 1998; Shaffer et al., 2001; Konopaske et al., 2005)
Personality factors	**Adventurous** **Curious/open to change** **Extrovert/Introvert**	**Big Five Personality theory; Neo PI theory** (Konopaske et al., 2005)

Cultural factors	Masculinity orientation	National culture
	Individualism/collectivism	(Black & Gregersen, 1991; Hofstede, 2001)
	Gender role ideology	Gender Role Identity theory (Rajadhyaksha & Velgach, 2009)
Organizational Factors	Time duration of assignment	Signaling theory
	Organizational support	(Shaffer et al., 2001; Konopaske et al., 2005)
	Budgets; Logistics	
	Pre-departure training	

Checking for Validity and Reliability of the Study

In qualitative research, the measure for validity is the rigor associated with the research (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). Chiovitti and Piran (2003) have lain down the foundation for establishing the validity and reliability checklist for a grounded theory study. The three criteria for judging the validity and reliability of a grounded theory based study are credibility, auditability and fittingness.

Credibility is "how vivid and faithful the description of the phenomenon is" (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). In grounded theory research, credibility is achieved when the respondents recognize the researcher's description of experiences as their own. This is achieved by letting the respondent take the initiative to talk about the issue. We let the participants guide the course of the interviews at all stages and chose not to prompt them at any instant, since that could have biased our findings. To maintain understanding of the raw transcriptions, we frequently went back and checked our corresponding memos during the coding process. We also took care to carefully match our findings with related theories in order to theoretically ground our data.

Auditability refers to "the ability of another researcher to follow the methods and conclusions of the original researcher" (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). Here, special care was taken to document the different aspects of the study methodology, data collection, and data analysis so that future researchers can easily follow the logic behind every step of this research. In this way, we tried to achieve the auditability of our research. We have tried our best to articulate the various steps involved in the data collection and data analysis of this study within a reasonable length of discussion. Any further clarification or intimation in this regard can be readily obtained from the second author on request. We hope other researchers around the world can start similar inquiries so that researchers may gain a global perspective of this problem.

Fittingness, also known as transferability, is "the probability that the research findings have meanings to others in similar situations" (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). This research can be extended further to the understanding of cross-cultural phenomena such as racial abuse, religious fanaticism, etc. One can use the model of this research to

examine the adjustment issue of expatriate children during such assignments to see which factors affect their willingness to relocate.

Table 5. Eight Methods of Research Practice for Enhancing Standards of Rigor

Standards of Rigor	Suggested Practice
Credibility	1. Let participants guide the enquiry process 2. Check the theoretical construction generated against participant's meanings of the phenomenon 3. Use actual words in the theory 4. Articulate personal views through memos, personal records, and monitoring the literature
Auditability	5. Specify the research criteria 6. Specify how and where the participants were selected
Fittingness	7. Articulate the scope of the research in terms of the sample 8. Describe how the literature relates to each category which emerged from the theory

[Source: Chiovitti, R. F., & Piran, N. (2003). Rigor and grounded theory research, *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *44*(4), 427-435.]

The model developed in this study (Figure 2) will mold into any such research endeavor. We hope to achieve that level of generalization through our study findings. As and when applicable, the codes linked with existing theoretical frameworks and with prior empirical research to draw support in favor of our argument.

Extending the Model of Expatriate Spouse Adjustment

The results showed that the decision-making process of the spouse about relocating with his / her wife/ husband was a complex interaction of cognitive reasoning and psychological and cultural value factors. It was interesting to find that Indian female spouses gave their male partner's career higher priority over their own if the assignment's duration was long. As India is a country that places a heavy emphasis on strong marital values, (Hofstede, 2001; Sinha & Kanungo, 1997) it was not surprising to come across female respondents who gave priority to their husbands' career over their own when they went for long-term overseas assignments.

The phenomenon could be best explained as the spouses' assessment of the impact of such an assignment on the future of their marital relationships. If the nature of the assignment was such that not accompanying their husbands could create a possibility of dissolution of their marital ties, Indian women chose to accompany their spouses at the cost of quitting their career. If the assignment was only for a few months, the majority of the spouses was reluctant to accompany their partners and wanted to stay in their jobs or to look after elderly family members or small children. If they accompanied their

husbands/wives to the host country, certain factors played a huge role in their adjustment process. First were the demographic characteristics of the foreign land such as local customs, the language, the climatic conditions, etc. With a little pre-departure training, the spouses could have been better equipped to deal with these factors. Maybe this is an indication for organizations about the importance of pre-departure training to the accompanying spouses.

An individual level factor, which made a huge difference in the degree of ease of adjustment of the spouses, was the personality trait of extraversion. While extroverts were quick to make new friends and thus eradicate the loneliness in no time, some introverts also were able to cope with the new culture well at the initial stage, as they did not require a large social circle and were comfortable living in solitude. However, for the majority of spouses with an introvert personality, adjustment became a huge issue later on, ultimately resulting in the spouse returning midway into the assignment. Hence, we get the indication that organizations must take care to analyze the psychological aspects of the spouse before sending an executive on an expatriate assignment.

It was observed that in all the seven instances when the expatriate returned to the parent country without finishing his/her assignment, it was the spouse, whose inability to cope with the alien culture, provoked this decision. Thus, the study threw some light on the spouses' impact on expatriate failure. Prior investigation of the spouses' thoughts about the expatriate assignment and an attempt to provide support to them to help overcome the various issues from the organizations' part can help the expatriate to fulfill the overseas assignments with a higher level of efficiency and purpose. It is time that organizations start recognizing the importance of spousal training and support before assigning foreign assignments to their employees.
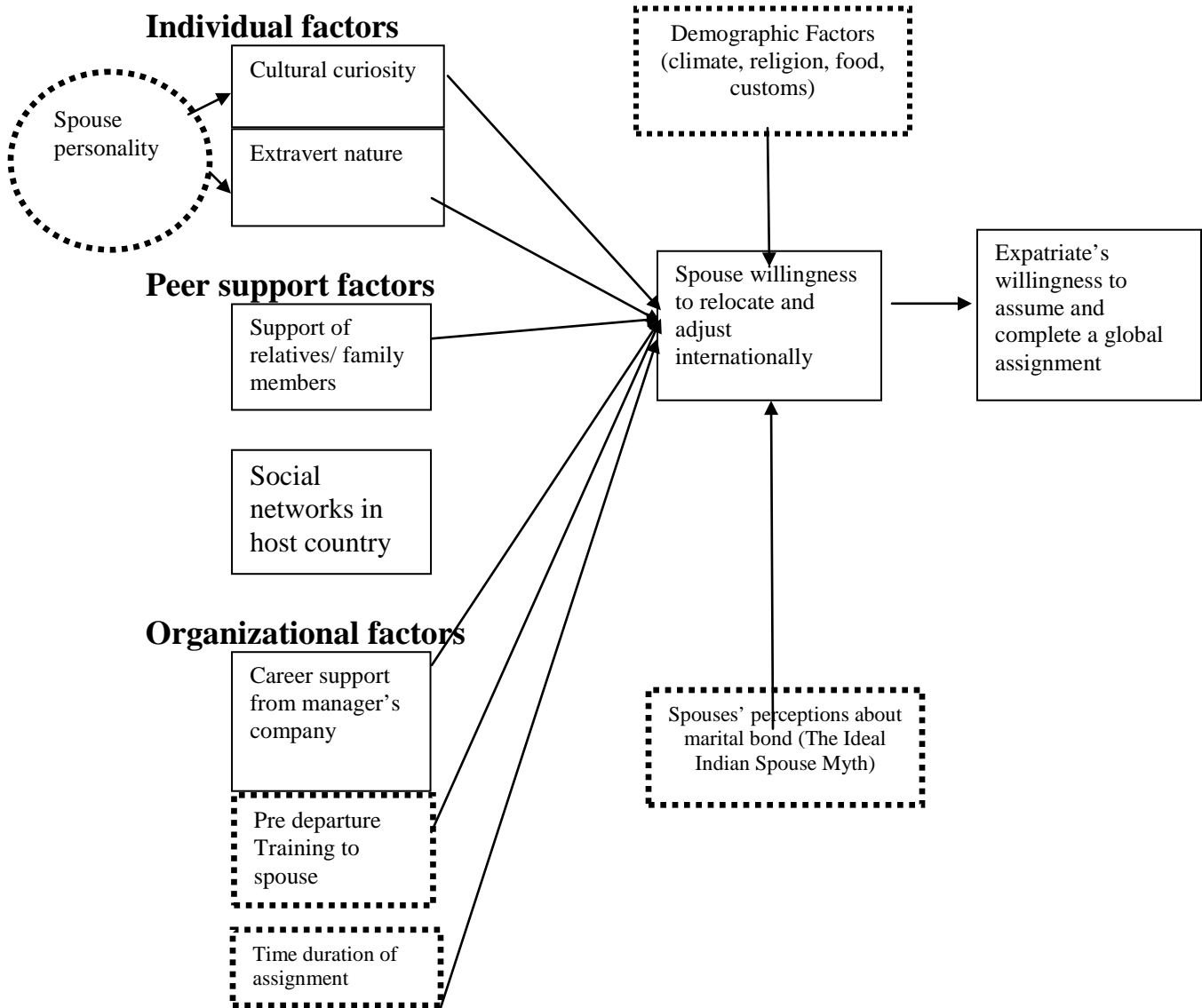
In light of the discussions in the preceding section, we propose further empirical investigation into the model of expatriate and spousal willingness to relocate (Figure 2). Our analysis makes the following extension of Konopaske and colleagues' model (2005) possible.

At the individual level, we identified the cultural curiosity of the spouses as a typical personality trait which was dominant in some spouses and latent in others. Love of adventure was also found to be an important individual level trait which, again, was strong in some spouses and weak in others. We paired these two under the broader construct of spouse personality. We expect future researchers to build on this concept and develop specific personality scales to quantify such individual level orientations to help identify the ideal expatriate-spouse combination for successful assignments.

At the family level, our study did not identify any new adjustment-related factors, and we merely confirm the findings by Konopaske and colleagues (2005). At the organizational level, however, while Konopaske and his fellow researchers included only career support, we found that pre-departure training and providing anticipatory adjustment towards the duration of stay can help in a more positive spousal adjustment. We have included these factors in our model. We also extended the earlier model by including the country demographic factors such as local language, religious customs, food, and climate as a crucial part of the spouses' orientation program to help them better adjust to his/her new country. Finally, our model has, for the first time in expatriate spouse literature, included the gender-role ideology of the spouses' home country and showed its impact on the overall spousal willingness to adjust.

Proposed Extended Model of Factors affecting Spouse Adjustment in Host Country Individual factors

Figure 2. Proposed Model of Expatriate and Spouse Relocation Willingness

Individual factors

Spouse personality

Cultural curiosity

Extravert nature

Demographic Factors (climate, religion, food, customs)

Peer support factors

Support of relatives/ family members

Social networks in host country

Spouse willingness to relocate and adjust internationally

Expatriate's willingness to assume and complete a global assignment

Organizational factors

Career support from manager's company

Pre departure Training to spouse

Time duration of assignment

Spouses' perceptions about marital bond (The Ideal Indian Spouse Myth)

[Extending the model of Konopaske, R., Robie, C., & Ivancevich, J. M. (2005), *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *16*(3), 405-426.]

*Extended variables shown in dotted boxes

This qualitative inquiry has helped to develop the required theoretical platform from where further quantitative studies can be carried out to substantiate the findings of this study. Such investigations would be able to provide practitioners with even deeper evidence about the critical importance of spouses in determining the success of an

expatriate project. Organizations can avoid the undesirable losses associated with such failures by taking appropriate care to address the adjustment issues of the spouse.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study is not without its limitations. Firstly, we interviewed only the spouses. Having their partners involved in the interview process may have led to a better triangulation of the findings. We could not include the children and other family members in this study due to time and scope constraints. Future studies should be conducted to include all these stakeholders in one study to further explore latent issues behind this phenomenon. Due to the sensitive nature of the questions asked, the spouses were not always willing to open up to the interviewers despite all possible efforts. As such, the respondents may have withheld parts of the truth unknown to the researchers. Future studies should be conducted with larger samples of expatriate spouses to confirm the validity of this research. Finally, only two male spouses were interviewed. Future studies would benefit from a more exclusive view from the male expatriate spouses' standpoint.

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